



Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Cranfield University is required by US regulations (34CFR 668.16) to ensure that all students applying for, or receiving, Federal Aid (subsidized, unsubsidized and PLUS) are making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) in order to remain eligible to receive US loan support. The SAP review will be conducted at the end of each payment period for students on one-year courses and annually for others, typically whenever a current or continuing student submits an application for Federal Aid. For students about to start a course, SAP is met by being accepted to Cranfield and reaching our entrance criteria.

The SAP policy consists of two main components:

- 1) Qualitative – assessing marks achieved or satisfactory progress documented
- 2) Quantitative – providing a completion timeframe, which is
 - a. Divided into increments;
 - b. Specifies minimum work requirements; and
 - c. Specifies the effect of suspension of studies or course withdrawal

General conditions

This policy outlines a number of specific points which apply to students in receipt of a Federal Loan. These statements are made in the context of the [University's Laws](#), which outline a series of regulations which will affect your time at the University and contain all the relevant rules and regulations that should be observed over the course of your involvement in the University community. Particular attention should be paid to [Senate Regulations](#) Section 2, General Provisions for Students, which could affect your eligibility to continue to receive your Federal Loan.

A student who has applied for a Federal Loan and appealed formally against exam failure will be considered to have automatically appealed against their SAP status. The Academic Registrar, who administers academic appeals, will notify the Financial Aid Officer of the outcome of the appeal and confirm if successful appellants are deemed upheld in terms of SAP.

Qualitative Measurements

For taught course students, all courses outline the required pass marks and other conditions in formal documentation. These are available on request from the relevant Course Director or can be viewed at <https://www.cranfield.ac.uk/about/governance-and-policies/quality-assurance/course-libraries>. To demonstrate academic progress, you are required to meet the pass criteria attached to individual modules as well as the course as a whole.

Where pass marks for an individual module are not achieved, the Course Director will be asked to provide a confirmation that you are still likely to meet the pass criteria for the course as a whole. Where applicable, any decisions by exam boards on interim progress of taught course students will determine continued eligibility for Federal Loans.

For research students, Section 5 of the Senate Handbook on Managing Research Students describes the University's Progress Monitoring and Reporting Requirements. Where progress is unsatisfactory, you will be placed on academic probation for up to six months in line with the Senate Handbook on Managing Research Students after which time your academic progress will be reviewed. You will also be issued a Financial Aid Warning in

writing. If you subsequently meet the requirements you will be placed back into good Financial Aid Standing (SAP). If you fail to make satisfactory progress then your registration will be terminated and you will become ineligible for your Federal Loan.

Quantitative Measurements

For all taught course students the timeframes allowed to complete the programme are specified in Regulation 52.

For taught course students, satisfactory progress includes attending and completing all modules that you elected to study at the beginning of the academic year. Where formally agreed with the Course Director in advance, modules may be substituted as long as the total credit value of the course is maintained. Where modules are not completed, the Course Director may under exceptional circumstances permit a repeat sitting of the module but continued eligibility for Federal Loan support will depend on the timing of the repeat module.

For Research students, supervisors will be required to report any significant periods of non-attendance including suspension and LOA to the review panel. These periods will be reported to the Academic Registrar and the Federal Aid Administrator who will then calculate the eligibility for Federal Funds within the appropriate increment.

In order to be making satisfactory academic progress a student should also not exceed 150% of the published time frame for the course and should remain at least half time. In order for a student to complete the course within the maximum timeframe they must be progressing in the course at a minimum pace of completion of 67%.

Financial Aid Warning

Failure to achieve the required standard of academic progress will result in a Financial Aid Warning. This warning will last for one payment period (i.e. until the next disbursement), during which time the student can still receive US Federal Aid. Students will be notified of this Warning in writing. If the student regains satisfactory academic progress by the next disbursement due date, the next disbursement will be released, and they will be removed from the Financial Aid Warning status. If the student fails to regain satisfactory academic progress by the next disbursement, they will no longer be eligible for Federal Aid, unless an appeal is submitted (see below), and funds will not be disbursed.

Periods when a student doesn't receive Title IV aid

Any student receiving Federal funds who has been placed on academic probation, or is required to resit a part of the course, and does not meet the relevant requirements will be ineligible to receive aid until such a time as they achieve the required standard. This period of time will be included in the maximum timeframe allowed for Title IV aid.

Changes in majors or degrees

In exceptional circumstances, students will be allowed to transfer between courses. This is an academic decision of the University. Students who transfer into a new course will also transfer with any SAP warning or sanction and will still need to meet the specified criteria in the new course before re-establishing eligibility to receive aid. The time already spent registered at Cranfield University will be counted in the maximum timeframe allowed for Title IV aid.

Transfer Students

In exceptional circumstances, the University may recognise studies and credits gained at other universities, to a maximum of 50 credits for a full Masters award. The student must

demonstrate before registration how the existing credits match the intended learning outcomes of the proposed course. These credits will be counted towards the timeframe eligibility in proportion to the total credits for the course; e.g. for a 200 credit MSc, 50 credits gained externally would count as 25% of the eligible timeframe.

Students who transfer into a new academic course will also transfer with any SAP warning or sanction and will still need to meet the specified criteria in the new course before re-establishing eligibility to receive aid. The time already spent registered at Cranfield University will be counted in the maximum timeframe allowed for Title IV aid.

Pursuit of a second degree

No student may study for two degrees at the same time: the University will consider progression from one course to another in line with its standard admissions policies: such consideration will not prejudice the student against Title IV aid entitlement, but it may preclude financial sponsorship depending on the length of the proposed courses. Federal loan eligibility will be limited to the aggregate program maximums under Federal Regulations.

Repeated courses and grade changes

All courses outline the required pass marks and other conditions in formal documentation. These are available on request from the relevant Course Director or can be viewed at <https://www.cranfield.ac.uk/about/governance-and-policies/quality-assurance/course-libraries>. The examiners may permit a student to resit a module under circumstances outlined in the formal documentation: where this happens, the mark awarded for that module shall be a maximum of 50%. Any resits will count towards the maximum timeframe eligibility. Once marks have been agreed by the examiners, they are not able to be changed except through a re-assessment allowed through a formal appeal.

Withdrawal from course components, or uncompleted components

The inability of a student to complete a module or component of a course (for example a group or individual project) may be deemed to be a formal academic failure of that component by the relevant Exam Board unless sufficient marks have been accumulated to achieve an overall pass mark or a formal LOA has been granted. Exam Board rules may allow marks for general assessments to be compensated in the light of good performance elsewhere in the course and the qualitative requirements of the SAP may therefore be met. If this is not the case then the student's registration may be terminated by the Exam Board, at which point the student ceases to be eligible for Federal Loans.

The amount of time already accumulated by the student within the relevant time increment will be used to calculate the student's eligibility for Federal Funds under the R2T4 policy. Total withdrawal from a course makes a student ineligible for further Federal Loan support and in this case the R2T4 policy will be applied to determine the amount of funds earned.

Appeals

Students who have received written advice that their Financial Aid has been terminated may appeal (within 10 days of receiving written notification) where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

Exceptional circumstances may include:

- a. Death or extended illness of an immediate family member (parent, spouse, sibling, dependent child).
- b. Extended illness or personal injury of the student.
- c. Other exceptional circumstances as determined by the Academic Registrar.

Students will be required to indicate why they believe financial aid should not be terminated and provide reasons for failing to meet the satisfactory academic progress requirements.

Students will also be required to supply documentary evidence in support of their appeal. This may include:

- Copy of death certificate
- Medical certificate from a registered doctor or psychiatrist
- Statement from tutor or other senior School official
- Bank statements
- Financial accounts
- Other relevant evidence specific to the appeal

All appeals should be submitted in writing along with supporting documentation to the Academic Registrar, Financial Aid Appeals, Cranfield University, MK43 0AL.

Disbursement of loan funding will not be made while an appeal is being processed. (In the absence of the Academic Registrar an Assistant Registrar will act in his/her stead).

Appeal Decision

The decision of the appeal will be communicated to the student in writing within 14 days of submission, if all necessary supporting evidence is complete.

The decision of the Academic Registrar is final, although students have recourse to the University student complaints procedure in the normal way.

Financial Aid Reinstatement

Where a student successfully appeals their satisfactory academic progress, the student will regain eligibility for the entire period of enrolment in which they were determined to be meeting the satisfactory academic progress requirement.

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