



Procedure on Satisfactory Academic Progress for US Financial Aid Recipients

All students who are in receipt of US Federal Aid whilst studying at Newcastle University are required to make satisfactory progress on their course of study and to abide by all Regulations of the University. See (<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/2023/>)

The US Department of Education require the University to check the student's progress at intervals, and to ensure that they are meeting the satisfactory academic requirements.

Academic staff will conduct a review at the end of each academic term to determine the student's successful progress toward obtaining a degree. In order to remain enrolled in the Direct loan programme or to continue receiving aid, a student must satisfy the requirements in the University's Progress Regulations (<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/2023/>)

Failure to make satisfactory progress may be grounds for:

- (a) further monitoring the progress of the student or requiring the submission of written work in addition to that required by the degree programme regulations;
- (b) delay of the student's first attempt at the whole assessment for the module(s) concerned to the August/September resit examinations in the same academic year. Where such a delay is imposed, the attempt shall count as the second attempt;
- (c) interruption or termination of the student's programme of study.

Pace requirements, grade and credit requirements as well as degree durations are specified in the University's Progress Regulations:

- Regulations for Taught Programmes (Undergraduate and Postgraduate)
(<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/2023/>)
- Regulations for Research Degree Programmes
(<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/2023/>)

Qualitative Requirements

- **Undergraduate students** are expected to maintain satisfactory progression through their course of study. If a student's average marks drop below an equivalent of 40% the Student will be given a Financial Aid Warning until the next disbursement by which time their grades will be expected to be at the required level. If the student achieves the required standard they will be placed in good standing for financial aid. If the marks do not meet the required standard at the next attempt the student will be suspended for the purpose of financial aid. If the student fails at the next attempt and does not proceed on his course of study then Financial Aid will be

suspended. If the student meets the requirements for progression on the course of study they will be placed in good standing for financial aid.

- **Postgraduate students** are expected to maintain satisfactory progression through their course of study. If a student's average marks drop below an equivalent of 40% the Student will be given a Financial Aid Warning until the next disbursement by which time their grades will be expected to be at the required level. If the student achieves the required standard they will be placed in good standing for financial aid. If the marks do not meet the required standard at the next attempt the student will be suspended for the purpose of financial aid. If the student fails at the next attempt and does not proceed on his course of study then Financial Aid will be suspended. If the student meets the requirements for progression on the course of study they will be placed in good standing for financial aid.

Financial aid will be disbursed on the first week of each academic term. Students who withdraw after that will have the eligibility to retain part of their financial aid calculated on the percentage of the semester attended. Students who attend more than 60% of the term may retain all of their aid. See the section on Return to Title IV (R2T4).

Quantitative requirements

Students must note that there is a maximum timeframe to receive aid. The maximum timeframe only entitles students to receive aid for 150% of the allocated programme of study time frame.

Students will be notified of their SAP in writing once it has been confirmed prior to disbursement 2 and 3. Students who are placed on a warning will also be notified of this in writing prior to disbursement 2 or 3.

Students must maintain a minimum cumulative completion rate of two thirds of credit attempted which equals 67% for progression to the following year of study in order to meet the SAP maximum completion timeframe. For example, a student on a 3-year undergraduate degree would attempt 120 credits over one academic year. Students must pass a minimum of 80 of the 120 credits in that year to meet SAP standards for financial aid purposes.

There is no "incomplete" status at Newcastle University, rather the student will be given a Fail status for not meeting required thresholds and will count towards the maximum timeframe.

Attendance

In order to remain eligible for Direct loans, student must attend at least 50% of all classes. Students whose attendance is below 50% will receive a Financial Aid Warning. If attendance remains below 50% during the following payment period, payment will be suspended until at least 50% attendance is achieved.

Transfer students

Degree programme directors may permit a student to transfer from one stage of a degree programme to the same stage of another degree programme at any time, provided that there is significant overlap in the modules previously studied by the student. This permission also applies to transfers between corresponding stages of Bachelor's and Integrated Master's programmes, provided this permission is given before the meeting of the Board of Examiners.

Degree programme directors may permit a student who has satisfied the examiners in all the assessments in a stage of a degree programme to transfer to the same or subsequent stage of another degree programme at the start of the next academic year. Such permission may be conditional upon a student following specified variations to the degree programme in order, for example, to ensure that:

- (a) compulsory modules not previously studied are taken;
- (b) there is no repetition of modules studied.

A degree programme director may grant permission to a student transferring to repeat modules they have failed subject to the following conditions:

- a) If the total number of credits to be repeated is no more than 20, then the student shall be deemed not to have been previously assessed in these modules.
- b) If the total number of credits to be repeated is more than 20, then all previous attempts at these modules will be carried forward.
- c) students cannot repeat a module in which they have already been assessed twice, which might render a transfer impossible.

If a student is permitted to transfer to Stage 3 or 4 of another degree programme, they will carry forward their performances in the earlier stages of the previous degree programme.

Credit hours that are accepted from another institution toward the student's educational program will be counted as completed hours.

Repeat students

A student who:

- (a) either fails the assessment relating to a stage wholly or in part; *or*
- (b) who is given permission to interrupt normal progress within a degree programme because of compelling medical or personal reasons

may be permitted by the degree programme director, subject to the payment of the appropriate tuition fees, to repeat, wholly or in part, the programme of tuition under the degree programme regulations. The degree programme director may not set aside any existing assessments.

The final module mark for repeat students is calculated by using the most recent component marks. In some cases, this may be a combination of second and first attempt component marks, depending on the resit arrangements for the module. It is not the case, however, that the best component marks automatically carry forward to the final module mark.

If a student repeats a year, the extra year will contribute to the maximum timeframe and as such reduce the number of years the student will be eligible to borrow loans for.

Withdrawals

If a student withdraws from the University during the academic year they will be considered for the appropriate exit award at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Examiners. Students considering withdrawing from their programme are encouraged to follow the withdrawal guidance and to seek advice of the effect withdrawal can have on loans eligibility and repayment options.

Withdrawal or non-completion of a programme of study and subsequent re-enrolment will not count towards SAP measurements.

Financial Aid Warning

Students who fail to make Satisfactory Academic Progress will firstly be issued with a Financial Aid Warning via email. This will be sent to their University e-mail address. This warning will last for 1 payment period (i.e. until the next disbursement), during which time a student can still receive financial aid. Students that fail to regain Satisfactory Academic Progress by the next disbursement will no longer be eligible for aid, unless they are successful in an appeal.

Appeal Procedure

When students lose financial aid eligibility because they failed to make satisfactory progress, they may appeal that result on the basis of special circumstances. Student special circumstances include injury or illness of student, family illness, catastrophe, etc. Students must within 14 calendar days of notification, submit to the Deputy Manager, Student Financial Support Team a signed and dated appeal from (available from the Student Financial Support Team) explaining why they failed to make satisfactory progress. Students must state what has changed in their situation that will allow them to meet satisfactory progress at the next evaluation date. Documentation verifying the student's claim must be produced.

The Federal Funding Appeal Group (FFAG) will consider the appeal and render a decision, which the Manager of Student Financial Support will convey in writing to the student within two weeks of the appeal.

Appeals should be sent to:

Irena Rencesova, Deputy Manager, Student Financial Support Team, King's Gate, Newcastle University.

All decisions made by the Appeal Group are final.

Financial Aid Probation

If an appeal is successful then the student will be placed on probation for the payment period.

Students who have their Federal aid suspended but continue their course under their own means and subsequently meet Satisfactory Academic Progress standards will be entitled to regain a probationary status and apply for, or receive loans.

Students that fail SAP after a period of probation cannot receive Federal aid.