

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

1. Satisfactory Academic Progress

1.1 London Film School (LFS) is required by US Federal Regulations (34CFR 668.16) to define and enforce standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress for students who wish to access US financial aid. This is in accordance with the LFS Assessment Policy and Regulations that applies to all students.

1.2 The guidelines have been established to encourage students to progress and successfully complete the academic programme for which aid is received.

1.3 Students who receive US financial aid will be evaluated at the end of each semester. This evaluation process will consider your progress under the following criteria:

Qualitative (grade-based) measurement

Quantitative (time-based) measurement

1.4 To receive US financial aid you must meet minimum standards for both the above-mentioned components while simultaneously adhering to academic progress in accordance with the [Regulations for Taught Postgraduate courses](#)

2. Qualitative (grade-based)

2.1 Students in receipt of Direct Loans must remain at all times in good academic standing and attain a minimum of 50% to achieve a pass grade

2.2 Those equivalents are outlined on a course-by-course basis as follows:

Grades (%) Classification

70+ Distinction - Pass

60-69 Merit - Pass

50-59 Pass

0-49 Fail

Grading Scale: MA Filmmaking

Modules 1 and 2

- Film component: Pass/Fail
- Work and Research Journals: Pass/Fail

Module 3

- Film component: Distinction/Merit/Pass/Fail
- Work and Research Journals: Distinction/Merit/Pass/Fail

Grading Scale: MA Screenwriting

Modules 1 and 2

- Script component: Pass/Fail
- Work and Research Journals: Pass/Fail

Module 3

- Script component: Distinction/Merit/Pass/Fail
- Work and Research Journals: Distinction/Merit/Pass/Fail

Grading Scale: MA Documentary Filmmaking

- All modules: required to have achieved a minimum of 50% to achieve a pass grade

3. Quantitative (time-based)

- 3.1 U.S. Department of Education regulations state that the maximum timeframe for completion of a degree programme may not exceed 150% of the published length of a programme in order to maintain Direct Loan eligibility.
- 3.2 Periods when a student does not receive funds will be included in the maximum timeframe.
- 3.3 Students must complete their course at a pace which ensures that they will graduate within the maximum timeframe.

Standard Programme Length	Length in Credits	Maximum Federal Timeframe	Pace
2 year postgraduate degree	180	3.5 years 270 credits	67%
1 year postgraduate degree	180	1.5 years 270 credits	67%

- 3.4 For example, for a two-year postgraduate that is 180 credits for completion:

- $180 \times 150\% = 270$ attempted credits. That is the maximum time frame.
- $180 \text{ credits} / 270 \text{ credits} = 66.6\%$, rounded to 67%

- 3.5 A postgraduate student must earn 67% of credits attempted to graduate in maximum time frame. Graduate students must progress at the pace required by their programme of study. Students who are unable to graduate within the maximum federal timeframe will lose eligibility for financial aid. At the end of each term academic progress is reviewed for eligibility to receive federal loan funds.
- 3.6 Please note that while a student may maintain his/her eligibility for US Direct Loans, institutional academic progress rules and student visa restrictions may impact on your ability to continue within the programme. Conversely, a student may lose eligibility for US Direct Loans, and still meet institution requirements for continued enrolment.
- 3.7 All periods of enrolment contribute when assessing progress, even periods when the student did not receive federal loan funds. The information below provides examples of a change in enrolment and its effect on SAP measurement.

4. Change in Enrolment

- 4.1 Typically, all periods of enrolment contribute when assessing progress, even periods when the student did not receive federal loan funds, however there are some exceptions and special cases as listed below:

5. Withdrawals

- 5.1 If a student did withdraw from a course, he/she must reapply to re-join the programme. If LFS did accept an application to re-join any prior credit would count against the applicable Maximum Time Frame. Likewise, the student would return at the same level of eligibility status regarding the Qualitative standards. For example, if he/she left on a Financial Aid Warning, they would return at the Warning level.

6. Incomplete Courses

- 6.1 Where a student did not complete a course, he/she would be discharged from the programme after their 3rd examination. If they were to be allowed to re-join, any prior credit would count against the applicable Maximum Time Frame. Likewise, the student would return at the same level of eligibility status regarding the Qualitative standards. For example, if they left on a Financial Aid Warning, they would return at the Warning level.

7. Change in Programme

- 7.1 If a student were to change programmes, that is possible after the first year of study. The work completed in the previous programme would count towards their Maximum Time Frame and their grades would also be considered as continuing towards their Qualitative grade measurement.

8. Course Repetitions

- 8.1 All attempted credits and courses count towards the Maximum Time Frame and grades will be calculated as part of Qualitative grade measurement.

9. Transfer Credits

9.1 Credits transferred from another university that are accepted toward the student's educational program will count as both attempted and completed hours.

10. Process of obtaining Satisfactory Academic Progress reports - Notification Procedure/SAP statements.

10.1 Prior to a loan disbursement of any Federal Financial Aid, SAP will be confirmed by the Academic Registry in the student administration system which records the student's academic progress, giving assurance that SAP is being maintained based on an assessment of student progress and achievement in line with qualitative and maximum timeframe measures.

10.2 These results will be obtained prior to the disbursement of loan monies at each semester in the academic year to determine whether students have formally met, or not, the semester pass mark and/or the progression requirements that will determine whether the pace of study remains within the specified parameters.

10.3 In instances where satisfactory academic progress has not been made, options for continuing their studies will be presented to students in writing.

10.4 Students are ineligible for funding at the evaluation point where the maximum time frame is exceeded, or satisfactory academic progress has not been made.

11. Financial Aid Warning

11.1 Where satisfactory academic progress has not been met at the end of a semester, the student will be placed on 'Financial Aid Warning' for the period of the next academic semester and will continue to be eligible to receive funding for that period only.

11.2 Maintaining eligibility for federal loans requires that students on a Financial Aid Warning complete that period of their academic study at a level that would bring their overall standing in line with Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements.

11.3 The Academic Registry office will communicate the Financial Aid Warning in writing and inform the student of the need to bring grades and progression in line with the SAP requirements.

11.4 If satisfactory progress has not been achieved at the end of the Financial Aid Warning period, a student's loan eligibility will be terminated. We do not have the right to waive the satisfactory academic progress requirement for any student, but the student may appeal.

11.5 Students who have lost eligibility for Financial Aid can only become eligible for Financial Aid by completed the required courses and/or achieving the required grades to meet SAP requirements or by successfully appealing, as described below.

12. Appeals against a decision to suspend Financial Aid and Financial Probation

12.1 Financial Aid probation is the status assigned by LFS to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and who has appealed and has eligibility for Aid reinstated.

13. Appealing a Financial Aid Decision

13.1 Students who are given a Financial Aid Warning or who subsequently lose eligibility for Federal Student Aid because they have failed to maintain SAP may appeal the SAP decision if one or more of the following circumstances exist:

- Death of an immediate family member (parent, spouse, sibling, dependent child)
- An extended illness which has resulted in an absence from academic activities for at least fifteen days
- The extended illness of an immediate family member that places hardship on the student
- Mitigating circumstances as accepted by Financial Aid Appeal Committee

13.2 Within 10 days of receiving the Financial Aid Decision, students wishing to appeal must have submitted their appeal in writing to the Registry Manager detailing the reason(s) for failing to meet the SAP requirements and/or why there should be no suspension of aid, and how the student will be able to meet SAP requirements in the future.

13.3 All supporting documentation should be submitted with the appeal. This process is separate to any academic appeals process.

13.4 Grounds for the appeal may be:

Extenuating circumstances as described above.

The department did not follow the University's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy.

The evidence submitted to challenge the decision to withhold financial aid was not considered by the International Office.

13.5 The appeal will be considered by the Academic Registrar. LFS will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the appeal decision. The appeal will be considered on its merits and a response to the appeal will be provided within 14 working days. Students who appeal the first appeal decision will be informed of the decision of the Academic Registrar in writing.

13.6 If the appeal is denied a student may regain eligibility if they continue to study and their minimum cumulative pass grade and progress reaches the required levels. They will be notified in writing of their change in status within 14 working days after they complete the applicable payment period.

14. Appeals against a decision to suspend Financial Aid and Financial Probation

14.1 Financial Aid probation is the status assigned by the LFS to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and who has appealed and has eligibility for Aid reinstated. This decision is final.

14.2 If a student’s appeal is successful they will be placed on Federal Aid probation for the duration of the subsequent payment period and will continue to be eligible to receive funding for that period. The student must meet SAP requirements in order to remain eligible for Federal Aid. Following this, if the specific probation requirements are not met, the student will once again become ineligible for Federal Aid. The student will be notified in writing. Please note: Regardless of the above, students who exceed 150% (where applicable) of the published length of their programme are no longer entitled to receive further Federal Aid.

15. Version Control: Policy

Version Number	Changes	Author, Title	Date
2.0	Rewritten to ensure compliance with US Federal Loans	Academic Registrar	22/03/2023