

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY (US Federal Loan programme)**

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*Students in receipt of Federal (FAFSA) loans are required to be in good standing and to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree requirements for each semester in which they are enrolled. This policy applies only to eligible US and eligible non-US citizens receiving Title IV (FAFSA) aid. SAP is measured in two components: Qualitative and Quantitative  
Richmond offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, but not doctoral programs.*

**Timeline:** Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), as described below, is evaluated twice each year, at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters (January and June). Students failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress, as described below, may be ineligible to access Federal loans. This SAP policy is in line with the university's academic policy, and it applies to full-time and part-time students.

**Qualitative:** Federal loans students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0. This is also in line with Richmond's institutional requirements for minimum satisfactory performance. This applies to both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Federal regulations require that the University tracks the academic progress of student loan recipients from the first date of enrolment at Richmond, whether or not student loans were received at that time. Credits transferred from all other credit sources will be considered as attempted and completed credits in the evaluation of the completion rate standards, but these courses do not affect the calculation of the GPA.

Course withdrawals (W) after the drop/add period are not included in the GPA calculation but are considered a non-completion of attempted course work.

Incomplete (I) grades are not included in the GPA calculation, and are considered a non-completion of attempted course work until the Incomplete grade is replaced with a permanent grade and academic progress can be re-evaluated. In all cases where no grade is assigned, an 'I' grade will be used in the determination of satisfactory academic progress.

An audit (AU) grade is not considered attempted course work. It is not included in the GPA calculation or completion rate determinations.

A satisfactory grade (S) is treated as attempted credits that are earned, but is not included in calculation of GPA.

F-grades are treated as attempted credits that were not earned, and so are included in both the calculation of GPA and minimum completion rate.

For a course that is repeated, the GPA computation will take account of the most recent grade earned, but every repeated attempt will be included in the completion rate determinations. No student loans can be disbursed for a repeated attempt if the student has already achieved a passing grade for that course, and Richmond's policy means that a student receives aid for only one repeat of a course.

**Quantitative:** Maximum Timeframe and Pace of completion are calculated. Undergraduate Students must complete their educational programme within a time frame no longer than 150% of the

published length of the educational programme as measured in credit hours, including attempted credits and transfer credits (for example, completing the programme after attempting a maximum of 180 credits for a 120-credit published programme). In calculating maximum timeframe for a 120credits program, the calculation will be  $120 \text{ credits} \times 150\% = 180 \text{ attempted credits}$  (including transfer credits)

In calculating pace of completion on a 120 credits program, the student must maintain a minimum cumulative completion rate of two-thirds of credits attempted (67%); i.e.  $120 \text{ credits} / 180 \text{ credits} = 66.67\%$  (rounded to 67%).

In order for first year undergraduate students to complete their program in maximum timeframe, they should complete at least 20 credits.

**Financial Warning:** Students that do not meet SAP after qualitative and quantitative review will be placed on Financial Warning for one payment period. They will be notified in writing (by email). If they fail to meet SAP after the payment period, they will be placed on Loan denied status.

Students will be placed on Financial Warning for one payment period if their attempted credits, including transfer credits, exceed the 150% time frame (fail to complete at least two-thirds of cumulative credits attempted) with a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) below 2.0. No financial aid will be disbursed for the student during subsequent semesters unless the student has made a successful appeal. Students who have completed their degree requirements, but who are still attending courses, are not eligible to continue to receive aid even if they are below the maximum time frame.

Student loans can be received during the semester of Financial Warning. Student loan disbursements for the next period of enrollment will be held until the grades and course completions have been reviewed for the semester the student was on Financial Warning. Students receiving financial aid for the first time will be placed on Financial Warning if they have fail to meet this policy's minimum grade point average or course completion standards during a previous semester of enrollment at Richmond.

**Loan Denied Status:** While students are on Student Loan Warning they must maintain the minimum completion rate and/or a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better. Failing to do so will place a student on Student Loan Denied status for subsequent semester/terms of enrollment. No financial aid will be disbursed during subsequent semesters/terms until the student is removed from Student Loan Denied status.

**Reinstatement of Financial Aid:** Reinstatement of financial aid after a student is placed on Student Loan Denied status is achieved in one of the following ways:

The student attends Richmond, pays for tuition and fees without the help of student financial aid, and does well enough in the course work to meet all the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards. The student regains aid eligibility. Students whose attempted credits have exceeded 150% of their programme cannot regain financial aid eligibility except through the appeals process and on a semester-by-semester basis.

The student submits a written letter of appeal to the Associate Dean for Financial Assistance in accordance with the appeal process, and the appeal is approved.

If the appeal is declined, the student will have to use other sources of funding, such as a private loan.

**Appeal Process:** The student must submit an appeal of Student Loan Denied status in writing to the

Associate Dean of Financial Assistance by the date specified in the Student Loan Denied notification letter. Students should explain the exceptional circumstances that prevented them from meeting SAP and provide supporting documents from independent professionals who can attest to their situation (such as Medical Doctors, Certified Counsellor, etc.). The student's Academic Adviser should also outline an educational plan in writing, outlining the academic steps that will be taken for the student to meet SAP. Financial Assistance will review the appeal and notify the student in writing of its decision within 14 working days after the Review. All decisions made by Financial Assistance are final.

**Financial Probation:** If the appeal is approved, the student will be eligible to apply for loans and the student will be placed on Financial Probation for one payment period (i.e. one semester). Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress, or meet the established conditions, at the end of the probationary period will lose their aid eligibility.

Students are encouraged to work with their Academic Advisors and if necessary develop an academic plan during the probationary semester.

Academic Policy: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/#toggle-id-2>