



## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for US Financial Aid Recipients

**DATE OF APPROVAL:** 2008

**AMENDMENTS:** Nil

**REFERENCE AUTHORITY:** International Coordinator (Compliance)

**CROSS REFERENCES:** Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual 2008

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### **PREAMBLE**

The purpose of this policy is to define the standards of Satisfactory Academic Performance (SAP) required to be met by students who access US Federal funds, in accordance with US Federal legislation.

This policy applies only to those students who access US Federal funds.

### **POLICY**

The academic performance of students receiving Stafford funds will be reviewed at the end of each semester. This review will include consideration of the student's progress against the following criteria:

- Academic standing
- Maximum timeframe

To be eligible to receive US Federal funds, students must satisfy the above criteria whilst simultaneously adhering to academic progress rules as set out in the University's Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual 2008 and to Australian immigration (eg. visa) legislation.

#### **1. Academic standing**

Students must have a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 5.0 at the end of each semester. Information relating to calculation of the GPA is set out in paragraph 8 of the Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual 2008.

#### **2. Maximum Timeframe**

An undergraduate student is entitled to receive aid for 150% of the duration of their program. For example:

<b>Duration of program</b>	<b>Eligibility for aid</b>
3 year degree	4.5 years
4 year degree	6 years
5 year degree	7.5 years

Students are hereby advised that while they may be eligible or continue to be eligible to receive US Federal funds, individual academic progress rules and student visa restrictions may impact on students' ability to continue studying within the program.

#### **3. Undergraduates and postgraduates by coursework**

Students who receive Stafford funds are entitled to modify their enrolment within the first two (2) weeks of each semester and retain eligibility for aid, provided they maintain a full-time enrolment. Students who have less than a half-time enrolment are not eligible for Stafford funding.

#### **4. Postgraduate by research**

Students undertaking postgraduate study via research mode must also satisfy the same criteria in relation to time in which they are able to access aid and successful progression towards completion of their research. Students studying in this mode are required to achieve a pass grade by the University's Research and Innovation Services.

#### **5. Remedial, Non-Credit Courses and "Incomplete" Grades**

Non-credit courses will not be included in assessing full-time hours.

Students are required to achieve a grade on any deferred or supplementary assessment within six (6) months of completing the relevant course.

#### **6. Notification**

Students' academic progress will be assessed at the end of each relevant semester to determine eligibility for continued award or disbursement of aid. Students will be notified in writing if placed on Financial Aid probation or if Financial Aid eligibility is suspended.

#### **7. Financial Aid probation and suspension**

Students who fail to achieve the required GPA commensurate with the duration of their program and their academic level within that program structure, will be placed on Financial Aid probation for six (6) months.

Students who have been placed on probation and subsequently meet the GPA requirements in the next semester will be removed from probation.

Students who have been placed on probation and do not meet the requirements applicable to the program and level will be suspended and ineligible to receive Financial Aid until such time as they meet the required GPA.

Students who transfer into a new academic program will also transfer subject to any probation or suspension, and will be required to meet the specified criteria in the new program before re-establishing eligibility to receive Financial Aid.

#### **8. SAP appeals**

Students who have their eligibility for US Federal Aid suspended may appeal the suspension if compassionate and compelling circumstances exist, and are supported by acceptable documentary evidence.

Compassionate and compelling circumstances may include:

- death of a family member (parent, spouse, sibling, dependant child);
- extended illness of the student (extended illness is defined as a documented chronic or recurring medical condition that causes the student to be absent from class for at least 20 days);
- extended illness of a family member (parent, spouse, sibling, dependant child) that places hardship on the student;
- mitigating circumstances as determined by the Director, UniSA International.

All appeals must be received in writing within ten (10) days of the date of notification of suspension.

Students must indicate in writing to the Director, UniSA International clearly stating the reason(s) for failing to meet the SAP requirements and why financial aid should not be suspended.

All documentation to support the appeal must be provided at the time of submitting the appeal.

The appeal will be considered on its merits and a response to the appeal will be provided within fourteen (14) days.

#### **9. Reinstatement of Eligibility**

Students who have been denied access to aid as a result of their failure to meet the SAP requirements are required to monitor their own academic progress.

When the student believes that they have regained eligibility, they are required to notify the International Coordinator (Compliance) in writing and provide supporting documentation.

Students who are reinstated will automatically be placed on Financial Aid probation.