



## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for US Federal Loan Recipients

All students in receipt of US federal loans (Stafford and PLUS) must progress satisfactorily towards completion of a chosen academic programme in order to remain eligible to receive federal loans, in accordance with federal regulations. In addition, students need to be studying at the equivalent of at least a part time course load to remain eligible for receipt of federal loans.

Academic regulations for students studying undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degree programmes can be found at:

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/ecampus/academicsupport/regulations/home.aspx>

### Progression guidelines for undergraduate students

- Undergraduate students should complete their programme of study within 150% of the published timeframe of the course to remain eligible for federal loan funding, as required by US federal regulations.
- They should progress towards completion as specified in the academic regulations of Royal Holloway.
- They must have passed, been allowed or been granted exemption from courses to the value of at least three units from the first stage to progress to the second stage, and they must have passed, been allowed or been granted exemption from any courses denoted as compulsory for progression onto the second stage in the programme specification.
- They must have passed, been allowed or been granted exemption from courses to the value of at least three units from the second stage to progress to the third stage, and they must have passed, been allowed or been granted exemption from any courses denoted as compulsory for progression onto the third stage in the programme specification.
- In the case of an MSci (four stage) programme they must have passed, been allowed or been granted exemption from courses to the value of at least three units from the third stage to progress to the fourth (final) stage, and they must have passed, been allowed or been granted exemption from any courses denoted as compulsory for progression onto the fourth (final) stage in the programme specification.
- Methods of assessment will be determined in order to measure the specific learning outcomes of each course and will be communicated to students in the course specifications.
- Achievement of each course outcome depends on whether attendance requirements and assessment requirements as stated in the course specification have been met.
- For all courses that carry an individual pass requirement students have to receive a pass mark overall and a pass mark of 40% or above for elements with an individual pass requirement as stated in the course specification.

### Progression guidelines for postgraduate taught students

- Postgraduate taught students should complete their programme of study within the timeframe specified in the academic regulations of Royal Holloway to remain eligible for federal loan funding.
- They should progress towards completion as specified in the academic regulations of Royal Holloway.
- Programmes leading to the award of MA, MBA, MMus and MSc will comprise courses leading to the assessment of at least 1,800 notional learning hours at HE Masters Level, including the preparation of a significant piece of individual work of between 10,000 and 20,000 words.

- Methods of assessment will be determined in order to measure the specific learning outcomes of each course and will be communicated to students in the course specifications.
- Achievement of each course outcome depends on whether attendance requirements and assessment requirements as stated in the course specification have been met.
- For all courses that carry an individual pass requirement students have to receive a pass mark overall and a pass mark of 50% or above for elements with an individual pass requirement as stated in the course specification.

### Progression guidelines for postgraduate research students

- Postgraduate research students should complete their programme of study within the timeframe specified in the academic regulations of Royal Holloway to remain eligible for federal loan funding.
- Although there was no timeframe for completion specified for students that started their research degree before September 2006, the College will not award federal loans to PhD students beyond four years of full time study or seven years of part time study, and MPhil students beyond three years of full time study or five years of part time study, irrespective of when they started their programme.
- A student's academic progress will be formally reviewed at least once every 12 months, unless the student has interrupted his/her studies under the provisions of Section 5 of the academic regulations and is consequently unavailable to attend a review within 12 months, in which case a review will take place not more than two months after the student has formally resumed his/her studies.
- Each department or school will determine and publish at the beginning of each academic year its own procedures, requirements and criteria for the reviews, including those for upgrading to the degree of PhD, subject to the minimum requirements set out in these regulations. Where a student has supervisors in more than one department or school, the lead supervisor will be responsible for determining the procedures, requirements and criteria which will apply and for notifying the student at the beginning of his/her programme of study.

### Checking a student's academic progress

We will check a student's academic progress at the end of each payment period. You will be emailed a form at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> payment period that would have to be completed and signed by your department and returned to Nicole Bester to confirm your satisfactory academic progress in accordance with the College's academic regulations. Your progress at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> payment period will be determined by checking that your student record has been rolled forward to the next academic year. Students who make a loan application after the 1<sup>st</sup> payment period are required to submit a satisfactory academic progress report before their 1<sup>st</sup> disbursement.

Please be aware that without this confirmation we cannot disburse federal loan funds to a student. Satisfactory academic progress is expected to include departmental confirmation that a student has been in adequate attendance, whether for classes, seminars or supervisor's meetings, and has submitted all work for assessment within the deadlines specified.

### Procedures when a student is not progressing satisfactorily

If we have determined that a student has not progressed satisfactorily at the end of a payment period, we will place a student on financial aid warning and disburse the next disbursement. If at the end of the payment period that the student is on financial aid warning we determine academic progress remains unsatisfactory, we will place the student on financial aid probation if the student has appealed the determination and we have determined that the student should meet the satisfactory academic progress standards by the end of the subsequent payment period. If the student does not submit an appeal or the appeal does not meet the requirements as listed below, federal loan funds will not be disbursed to the student for the payment period following the period the student was on financial aid warning. We will not disburse any federal loan funds to a student on

financial aid probation for a subsequent payment period unless the student makes satisfactory academic progress.

### Appealing a determination of unsatisfactory academic progress after financial aid warning

A student may appeal a determination of unsatisfactory academic progress at the end of the payment period during which the student had been on financial aid warning on the basis of:

- The death of a relative
- An injury or illness of the student
- Other special circumstances

A student should submit in writing the reason(s) as set out above why they have failed to make satisfactory academic progress, and what has changed in their situation that will enable them to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress at the next determination. The appeal should be submitted to: Nicole Bester, International Student Support, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 OEX.

*Revised May 2019*