



# Academic Progress Policy 2020/21

(Apprentices)



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## Summary of policy

This policy defines:

- What constitutes sufficient academic progress for Apprentices to be able to continue studying for their apprenticeship qualification
- How academic progress is monitored
- How and when study restrictions are applied to Apprentices
- How to apply for permission to undertake further study if a study restriction has been applied, and who to obtain permission from

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### Summary of significant changes since 2019/20 version

No changes to policy.

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### Policies superseded by this document

This document replaces the Academic Progress Policy 2019/20 (Apprentices) with effect from 1 August 2020.

## Scope

### What this document covers

This document applies to Apprentices studying undergraduate modules at Open University first level or above ('undergraduate study'). There is a separate version of this policy for non-Apprentices.

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### What this document does not cover

The rules on monitoring academic progress within this document do not apply to Apprentices studying postgraduate modules, or students studying non-apprenticeship modules, Microcredentials or standalone courses. If you are returning to study a non-apprenticeship module, the [Academic Progress Policy 2020/21 \(Taught Courses\)](#) will apply to you.

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## Related Documentation

Refer to the following documentation in conjunction with this document:

- [Academic Regulations 2020/21 \(Apprentices\)](#)

## The Open University Student Charter Principles

This policy aligns with the following [Open University Student Charter](#) Principles:

- Principle 2: We aim to inspire and enable learning
- Principle 4: We work together to secure the University's mission and to promote the University's values

## Introduction

When you register for a qualification (as part of an Apprenticeship Programme) The Open University will enrol you onto the modules required to complete that qualification. We will continue to enrol you onto each module as required if you are deemed to be making sufficient academic progress in your previous module study.

This policy explains the rules for determining whether you have made sufficient academic progress in relation to the rule in The Open University's [Academic Regulations 2020/21 \(Apprentices\)](#) D1(b) which states:

"You will not be eligible to be enrolled for further modules unless you have made sufficient academic progress in your previous undergraduate studies. Your Apprenticeship Programme Delivery Manager (APDM) and Practice Tutor will be able to advise whether you are making suitable progress and will be able to support you in making an application for permission to undertake further study if you are not deemed to be making suitable progress. Full rules and procedures are set out within the Academic Progress Policy 2019/20 (Apprentices). If you are unable to successfully complete a module, this may have implications on your ability to continue with the Apprenticeship Programme".

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This policy also outlines the guidance and support you will be offered to help you to apply to return to study, following a study restriction, and who (if applicable) is required to provide permission for you to continue to study as an Apprentice. Returning to study outside of the Apprenticeship Programme will require you to self-fund any fees (as advertised on the Open University website and governed by the [Fee Rules](#)) and abide by all other regulations applicable to Open University students.

For specific guidance on how this policy may relate to your personal circumstances, please contact your Apprenticeship Programme Delivery Manager (APDM) or equivalent contact.

## Policy

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to explain how we monitor whether sufficient academic progress is being made by individual Apprentices and how we apply study restrictions to those Apprentices who experience repeated difficulties in successfully completing study. It explains how to apply to return to study an apprenticeship qualification following a study restriction.

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### 2 Principles of Academic Progress

- 2.1 You will be deemed to be making sufficient academic progress in the context of this policy if you have successfully completed your most recent undergraduate study.
- 2.2 As an Apprentice, we will enrol you onto the modules required to complete your apprenticeship qualification. Successful completion of study means that we have enrolled you on an undergraduate module at Open University first, second or third level with a value of 30 credits or more on the start date of that module, you remain enrolled on that module until the end date and are not withdrawn from the apprenticeship qualification during that time, and you are awarded credit for it.
- 2.3 If you are enrolled on multiple modules in the same presentation, successful completion of one eligible module will mean you will be deemed to be making sufficient academic progress in the context of this policy, as per the definition in Section 2.2, even if you do not successfully complete the remaining module(s).

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- 2.4 Your eligibility to request a postponement of an examination or submission of an examinable component will require the consent of your Employer and/or Funding Provider, and APDM (or equivalent contact).  
This may have implications on your ability to continue with the Apprenticeship Programme. If you postpone an examination or submission of an examinable component and/or receive a 'Fail: Resit' or 'Fail: Resubmission' result and are subsequently awarded credit for either the postponed module or following your resit or resubmission, you will be considered to have successfully completed your study in the context of this policy, as per the definition in Section 2.2.
- 2.5 You will be deemed not to be making sufficient academic progress as per the definition in Section 2.2 if you have not successfully completed three consecutive modules as part of your undergraduate study.
- 2.6 You will be considered to have not successfully completed a module if you have been withdrawn from the Apprenticeship Programme, or you are deferred from the module after it begins, or if you receive a fail result for the module in either your first attempt or a resit or resubmission attempt. Your APDM (or equivalent contact) will contact both you and your Employer if you have failed one undergraduate module, which may have implications on your ability to continue with the Apprenticeship Programme.
- 2.7 We will monitor how many consecutive modules you do not complete successfully. If you stop studying or fail two or more undergraduate modules in succession, we will apply an additional status to your student record. These statuses are explained in detail in Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of this document.

### **3 How academic progress is monitored and additional statuses are recorded**

#### **3.1 If you stop studying or fail one undergraduate module**

- 3.1.1 If you have not successfully completed your most recent undergraduate study you will be considered to be 'at risk' of not making sufficient academic progress, and both you and your Employer will be notified by your APDM (or equivalent contact). If permitted by your Employer and/or Funding Provider, we will enrol you for another module and there will be no additional status added to your student record.

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3.1.2 You will no longer be 'at risk' as per the definition in Section 2.2 when you have successfully completed a module at Open University first level or above (including postgraduate level modules) with a value of 30 credits or more. However, stopping study or failing one or more undergraduate modules may have implications on your ability to continue with the Apprenticeship Programme, and your Employer and/or Funding Provider will be required to provide permission for you to continue.

### **3.2 If you stop studying or fail two consecutive undergraduate modules**

3.2.1 If you are considered to be 'at risk' and we have enrolled you for further undergraduate study as required for completion of the apprenticeship qualification, but you do not successfully complete that study, you will be placed at 'alert' status. You will receive notification that you are now at 'alert' status. Both you and your Employer will be notified of your 'alert' status by your APDM (or equivalent contact), who will be able to provide you with advice and guidance about your plans for future study.

3.2.2 If you are placed at 'alert' status and your Employer and/or Funding Provider permits you to continue the Apprenticeship Programme, we will enrol you for another module but you will also be informed that you must complete your next undergraduate module successfully in order to freely continue your studies in the future.

3.2.3 You will no longer be at 'alert' status or considered to be 'at risk' as per the definition in Section 2.2 when you have successfully completed a module at Open University first level or above (including postgraduate modules) with a value of 30 credits or more. However, stopping study or failing one or more undergraduate modules may have implications on your ability to continue with the Apprenticeship Programme, and your Employer and/or Funding Provider will be required to provide permission for you to continue.

3.2.4 An 'alert' status applied under these rules will show on your student record only for as long as it is in place and, once it is cleared, will not be retained in your student record. It will not appear on any certificate, transcript, or other document issued on completion of your studies.

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### **3.3 If you stop studying or fail three consecutive undergraduate modules**

- 3.3.1 If you are at 'alert' status and we have enrolled you for further undergraduate study as required for completion of the apprenticeship qualification, but you do not successfully complete that study, you will be placed at 'restricted' status. You and your Employer will receive notification that you are now at 'restricted' status.
- 3.3.2 If you are placed at 'restricted' status, you will be considered not to be making sufficient academic progress under this policy and Regulation D1(b) and you will be notified that we will not enrol you for further Open University study unless an application to return to study is approved, as set out in Section 4 of this document. Both you and your Employer will be notified by your APDM (or equivalent contact) that you are not eligible to continue studying your qualification as part of an Apprenticeship Programme unless your application has been approved.
- 3.3.3 If, when you reach 'restricted' status, we have enrolled you on a module that has not yet started, your enrolment will be withdrawn.
- 3.3.4 If you are placed at 'restricted' status after the start date of a module that you are currently studying, and your Employer and/or Funding Provider permits you to continue the Apprenticeship Programme, you may continue to study that module. If you successfully complete that module and it is at Open University first level or above (including postgraduate modules) with a value of 30 credits or more, you will be deemed to be making sufficient academic progress again as per the definition in Section 2.2 and the 'restricted' status will be removed.
- 3.3.5 A 'restricted' status applied under these rules will show on your student record only for as long as it is in place and, once it is cleared, will not be retained in your student record. It will not appear on any certificate, transcript, or other document issued on completion of your studies.

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## **4 Applying for permission to undertake further study whilst you are at ‘restricted’ status**

- 4.1 If you are placed at ‘restricted’ status we will not enrol you on further modules unless you are given permission to do so by an Open University Educational Advisor.
- 4.2 The restriction will remain in place for undergraduate study at Open University first, second and third levels, unless you make an application for your ‘restricted’ status to be formally lifted.
- 4.3 If your Employer and/or Funding Provider permit you to study further undergraduate modules as part of your apprenticeship qualification, you will need to make an application to have your ‘restricted’ status formally lifted. The application process allows you to reflect on the reasons you did not successfully complete your previous study, and on how your circumstances or approach to study have improved. We will approve your application for further study if your application demonstrates potential for you to succeed with future study.
- 4.4 Your APDM (or equivalent contact) and Practice Tutor will be able to support you in making an application for permission to undertake further study if you are not deemed to be making suitable progress. As part of this process, your APDM (or equivalent contact) will liaise with you, your Employer and your Practice Tutor to review your suitability for lifting the restriction, seeking advice from Educational Advisors within the Student Support Team. If it is deemed suitable for you to continue your undergraduate studies on the Apprenticeship Programme, you can then use the Application for permission to return to study after being placed at ‘restricted’ status form which is available via your Apprenticeship APDM (or equivalent contact). Your application will be reviewed and assessed by an Educational Advisor who will take the decision on whether or not your ‘restricted’ status can be lifted to allow you to continue to study for the Apprenticeship Programme.
- 4.5 If you are given permission to study whilst you are placed at ‘restricted’ status, that permission may be limited to the study of a specified module, level or category of modules and there may be a limit to the amount of credit that may be studied. Any such limit may be applied where, in the academic judgement of The Open University, it would enhance the potential for successful completion of further study.

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- 4.6 If you are given permission to study whilst you are placed at 'restricted' status, the restriction will remain in place during that period of study and will only be removed on the successful completion of a module at Open University first level or above (including postgraduate modules) with a value of 30 credits or more.
- 4.7 If you do not successfully complete an Open University module that you have been given permission to study whilst you are placed at 'restricted' status, you will remain at restricted status. You may make a further application for permission to study if you feel that there are new reasons why that future study will be successful, which were not considered in any earlier application.

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## Glossary of terms

### Alert

If you are placed at 'alert' status and you are permitted by your Employer and/or Funding Provider to continue the Apprenticeship Programme, we will enrol you for another module but you will also be informed that you must complete your next undergraduate module successfully in order to freely continue your studies in the future.

### Apprentice

An Apprentice is a student aged 16 or over, who is registered on an Apprenticeship Programme which combines working with studying for a work-based, academic or combined undergraduate or taught postgraduate qualification. They are in paid employment for the duration of their apprenticeship.

### Apprenticeship Programme

Apprenticeship Programmes vary by Nation. Your Apprenticeship Programme will have Planned Start and End Dates, and a predicted Apprenticeship Duration.

In England, Apprenticeship Programmes follow an Apprenticeship Standard (approved by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Institute for Apprenticeships). It is a skills development programme which accompanies a job including training and (where required) an End-Point Assessment, leading to a qualification.

In Scotland, Apprentices follow the Apprenticeship Framework (approved by the Skills Development Scotland Co. Ltd) and consist of only the set qualification.

In Wales, Apprentices follow an Apprenticeship Framework (approved by Instructus and Welsh Government) which currently consists of only the set qualification. Apprentices are required to complete their Apprenticeships through evidenced on and off the job training.

### Apprenticeship Programme Delivery Manager (APDM)

APDMs support Apprentices and Employers throughout their Apprenticeship Programme. They offer support and advice on recruitment, registration and eligibility; act as the conduit between the Employer and the OU; and provide support to line managers/workplace mentors and Apprentices.

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APDMs also review, track and respond to Apprentice progression by working with the Employer, the Apprentice and the Faculty to achieve successful completion. They collect and act upon feedback from the Employer and the Apprentice to continually enhance this process.

APDMs have been listed within this document as a first point of contact for brevity, in line with Apprenticeship Programmes in England, Scotland and Wales. For other Nations and some faculty areas (e.g. Social Work), your most appropriate contact may be your Staff Tutor, Education Manager, or Faculty Co-ordinator.

### **At Risk**

If you have not successfully completed your most recent undergraduate study, you will be considered to be 'at risk' of not making sufficient academic progress. If you are permitted by your Employer and/or Funding Provider to continue the Apprenticeship Programme, we will enrol you for another module and there will be no additional status added to your student record.

### **Completion of study/module**

Successful completion of study means that having registered or enrolled on an undergraduate module at Open University first, second or third level with a value of 30 credits or more on the start date of that module, you remain enrolled on that module until the end date, and are awarded credit for it. You will be considered to have not successfully completed a module if you have been withdrawn from the Apprenticeship Programme, or you are deferred from the module after it begins, or if you receive a fail result for the module in either your first attempt or a resit or resubmission attempt.

### **Restricted**

If you are placed at 'restricted' status you will be notified that we will not enrol you for further Open University study towards your apprenticeship qualification unless an application to return to study is approved.

## **Alternative format**

If you require this document in an alternative format or if you have any queries about the content provided within this document, please contact your dedicated APDM or equivalent contact.

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