Academic Progress Policy 2023/24 (Apprentices)

Contents

Version number: 1.0	Approved by: Delegate, Director Academic Services
Effective from: 1 August 2023	Date for review: March 2024

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England & Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302). The Open University is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority in relation to its secondary activity of credit broking.

Alternative format

If you require this Academic Progress Policy (Apprentices) document in an alternative format, please contact the Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team (AEST).

Students living in Wales can speak with a student support adviser in Welsh on (029) 2047 1170, should they wish to do so.

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

Scope

What this policy covers

This policy applies to Apprentices studying undergraduate modules at Open University Level 1, 2 or 3 ('undergraduate study'). There is a separate version of this policy for non-Apprentices.

This document may be updated throughout the year to correct errors, improve clarity or accessibility, or to reflect changes in legal or regulatory requirements. If these amendments occur after you have registered, you will be notified by email of any significant changes to this document.

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What this policy does not cover

The rules on monitoring academic progress within this document do not apply to Apprentices studying postgraduate modules, or Students or Learners studying non-apprenticeship modules, microcredentials, vocational qualifications or standalone courses. If you are returning to study a non-apprenticeship module, the Academic Progress Policy 2023/24 (Taught Courses) will apply to you.

The Open University Student Charter Values

The Student Charter was developed in partnership by The Open University and the OU Students Association. It sets out our shared values and the commitments we make to each other as a community of staff and students. This document has been developed with the Student Charter values as its foundation.

Commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion at The Open University

Our policies are inclusive of all Open University Students, Learners, Enquirers and Alumni, regardless of age, civil status, dependency or caring status, care experience, disability, family status, gender, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, marriage and civil partnerships, membership of the Traveller community, political opinion, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, socio-economic background, sex, sexual orientation or trades union membership status.

Safe Space Reporting

The Open University is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment in which everyone feels safe and is treated with dignity and respect. Unlawful discrimination of any kind across The Open University will not be tolerated. Safe Space Reporting is available through an online tool through which staff, students, learners and visitors are encouraged to report incidents of assault, bullying, harassment, hate crime, or sexual harassment. It also provides information about what you can do if these incidents happen to you or to someone you know, and where you can find support.

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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 2023/24 (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 Enrolment and Support Team (AEST) 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 2023/24 (Apprentices). If you are unable to successfully complete a module, this may have implications on your ability to continue with the Apprenticeship Programme".

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 the Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team (AEST) or equivalent contact. Learners living in Wales can speak to a student support adviser in Welsh on 029 2047 1170.

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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.

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 Level 1, 2 or 3 with a value of 30 credits or more on the start date of that module, and that you remain enrolled on that module until the end date, that you are awarded credit for the module, and you are not withdrawn from the apprenticeship qualification during that time.

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) being studied in that presentation.

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.

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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 any modules for which you were enrolled in three consecutive presentations 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, 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 AEST (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 modules you do not complete successfully. If you stop studying or fail all the undergraduate modules on which you are enrolled in two or more presentations 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 all undergraduate module(s) in a single presentation.

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 AEST (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 Level 1 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 all undergraduate module(s) in two consecutive presentations.

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 AEST (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 Level 1 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 all undergraduate module(s) in three consecutive presentations.**

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 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 Level 1 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.

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. Please refer to paragraph 4.5 below.

4.2   The restriction will remain in place for undergraduate study at Open University Levels 1, 2 and 3, 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 AEST (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 AEST (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 Advisers 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 AEST (or equivalent contact). Your application will be reviewed and assessed by an Educational Adviser, 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.

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 Level 1 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

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 Enrolment and Support Team (AEST)

The Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team (AEST) provides support to apprentices throughout their Apprenticeship journey. The Open University's team of Senior Advisors offer advice and support for a range of queries apprentices may have whilst studying their modules, including advice on an upcoming assignment or exam, navigation around the OU online learning platforms, or when experiencing difficult circumstances that are having an impact on their studies. The AEST can reach out to a wide range of support teams within The Open University to help support our apprentices.

The AEST has been listed within this document as a first point of contact for brevity, in line with Apprenticeship Programmes in England, Scotland and Wales.

Email: apprentice-support@open.ac.uk Telephone: 0300 3034121

For Apprentices in Northern Ireland and for Apprentices studying Nursing Programmes, Social Work or Advanced Clinical Practice in other Nations, your most appropriate contact may be your Staff Tutor, Education Manager, or Faculty Co-ordinator.

Email: hsc-support@open.ac.uk Telephone: 01908 541070

Students living in Wales: You can speak to a student support adviser in Welsh on 029 2047 1170

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Apprenticeship Programme

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

In England, Apprenticeship Programmes follow an Apprenticeship Standard (approved by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE)). It is a skills development programme that accompanies a job including training and an End-Point Assessment (EPA), leading to an Apprenticeship qualification. In Scotland, Apprentices follow the Apprenticeship Framework (approved by the Skills Development Scotland (SDS)) and consists of only the set qualification.

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

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 been enrolled on an undergraduate module at Open University Level 1, 2 or 3 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.

Related Documentation

Refer to the following documentation in conjunction with this document:

Academic Regulations 2023/24 (Apprentices)

Further Clarification

If you have any queries about the content provided within this document, please contact the Apprenticeship Enrolment and Support Team (AEST) for England Scotland and Wales.

Email: apprentice-support@open.ac.uk Telephone: 0300 3034121

For Apprentices in Northern Ireland and for Apprentices studying Nursing Programmes, Social Work or Advanced Clinical Practice in other Nations, your most appropriate contact may be your Staff Tutor, Education Manager, or Faculty Co-ordinator.

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Depending on the information you share with us, we may carry out our statutory obligation to inform other internal departments such as the Safeguarding Referrals Team or the Prevent Coordinator, and to share relevant information with external parties. For further information please refer to the Safeguarding – Ensuring the Safety of Children and Vulnerable/Protected Adults policy and the Prevent Principles.

Feedback

Comments and feedback about this policy and how it might be improved are welcomed. Please submit these to SPR-Policy-Team@open.ac.uk.

Policies superseded by this document

Academic Progress Policy 2023/24 (Apprentices) replaces the Academic Progress Policy 2022/23 (Apprentices) with effect from 1 August 2023.

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Summary of significant changes since 2022/23 version

a)   Document layout has been adjusted.

b)   The Student Charter Values paragraph has been re-written in response to changes made in the annual review of the Student Charter in 2022.

c)   A new section, 'further clarification' was added to the policy.

d)   A new subsection welcoming feedback has been introduced at the end of the document.

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