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## Alternative Format

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact the Apprentice Enrolment and Support Team (AEST) by email on [apprentice-support@open.ac.uk](mailto:apprentice-support@open.ac.uk), or telephone (+44 (0) 300 303 4121).

Welsh-speaking Apprentices are welcome to speak with a student support adviser in Welsh on +44 (0) 29 2047 1170.

## Introduction

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.
- The guidance and support you will be offered to help you to apply to return to study following an academic study restriction.

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 2024/25 \(Apprentices\)](#) D1(b).

For specific guidance on how this policy may relate to your personal circumstances, please [contact us](#).

In addition to the academic progress rules in this policy we will contact you and your Employer if you fail any module, because this may have implications on your eligibility to continue with the Apprenticeship Programme.

## Scope

### What this policy covers

The rules on monitoring academic progress in this policy apply to Apprentices studying undergraduate modules as part of an apprenticeship qualification at Open University Level 1, 2 or 3 which equates to FHEQ levels 4, 5 and 6. There is a separate Academic Progress policy for other Students and Learners.

If you have a study restriction applied and you then wish to register as an Apprentice for either further undergraduate study or postgraduate study, you will need to contact us for permission to resume study as set out in this policy. If you are on an Apprenticeship Programme which is subject to a Supplementary Agreement you should also refer to this document for additional information about continuing study after failing a module.

### What this policy does not cover

This policy does not apply to Apprentices studying postgraduate modules, or to Students or Learners studying other modules, microcredentials, vocational qualifications or standalone courses.

This policy does not cover other potential conditions or restrictions to further study which are set out in the Fitness to Practice procedure or the Fitness to Study policy.

If you were studying on an apprenticeship programme, but are returning to study on a non-apprenticeship route, the [Academic Progress Policy 2025/26 \(Taught Courses\)](#) and the [Fee Rules](#) will now apply to you.

## Support and Information

### How to contact us

If you have any queries about the content provided within this document and how to interpret it please contact the Apprentice Enrolment and Support Team (AEST) by email, [apprentice-support@open.ac.uk](mailto:apprentice-support@open.ac.uk), or telephone (+44 (0) 300 303 4121).

Welsh-speaking Apprentices are welcome to contact a student support adviser in Welsh by email, [OU-Wales@open.ac.uk](mailto:OU-Wales@open.ac.uk), or telephone (+44 (0) 29 2047 1170).

## Further Information

Online information that aligns with this policy is available in this article:

- [Implications-of-unsuccessful-study](#)

## Policy

### 1. Policy 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 also explains how to apply to return to study an apprenticeship qualification following a study restriction.

### 2. Principles of Academic Progress

- 2.1 You are making sufficient academic progress if you have successfully completed your most recent undergraduate study.
- 2.2 Successful completion of study means that you have been awarded credit for one or more modules, including being awarded a pass result following a postponement or a resit/resubmission.
- 2.3 If you are enrolled on multiple modules in the same presentation, successful completion of at least one module will mean you are making sufficient academic progress in the context of this policy, even if you do not successfully complete the remaining module(s) being studied in that presentation.
- 2.4 If you do not successfully complete any of your undergraduate study in your most recent presentation this will affect your academic progress status.
- 2.5 You will be considered to have **not** successfully completed your study if you have not been awarded credit for at least one module within the presentation. This can happen if:
  - you have been withdrawn from the Apprenticeship Programme
  - you were deferred or withdrawn from your module(s)

- you receive a fail (no resit/resubmission) result for your module(s)
- you received a fail result in a resit/resubmission attempt for your module(s)

### 3. How academic progress is monitored

- 3.1 Stopping study or failing one or more undergraduate modules even if you are making sufficient academic progress under the terms of this policy may have implications for your eligibility 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 have not successfully completed any undergraduate study in your most recent presentation according to the principles in Section 2 of this document, and you are permitted to continue on the Apprenticeship Programme, we will apply an academic progress status to your student record. There are three progressive stages of academic progress status: At Risk, Alert and Restricted.
- 3.3 **At Risk.** If you have not successfully completed any of your most recent undergraduate study in a single presentation you will be considered to be at risk of not making sufficient academic progress. You may still be enrolled on another module with the agreement of your Employer and/or Funding Provider.
- 3.4 **Alert.** If you already have at risk status and you stop studying or fail outright all undergraduate modules in your next presentation so that you have not successfully completed any study in two consecutive presentations, you will be placed at alert status. We will notify you and your Employer. The AEST will be able to provide you with advice and guidance about your plans for future study. You may still be enrolled on another module with the agreement of your Employer and/or Funding Provider.
- 3.5 **Restricted.** If you are already at alert status and you stop studying or fail all undergraduate modules in your next presentation so that you have not successfully completed any study in three consecutive presentations, you will be placed at restricted status. We will notify you and your Employer that you are not eligible to continue studying on the Apprenticeship Programme

unless your application to return to study is supported by your Employer and/or Funding Provider and approved [as set out in Section 4 of this policy](#).

- 3.6 If you are placed at restricted status and you have already been enrolled on a module that has not yet started, we will withdraw your enrolment.
- 3.7 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 on 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 with a value of 30 credits or more, you will be deemed to be making sufficient academic progress, and the restricted status will be removed.
- 3.8 When you successfully complete a module any academic progress status marker on your record is removed. Any academic progress status applied under these rules will show on your study record only for as long as it is in place. Once it is cleared, it will not be retained. This means that it will not appear on any certificate, transcript, or other document issued on completion of your studies. If you think that an academic progress status has been applied incorrectly or has not been cleared as expected, you should contact the [Apprentice Enrolment and Support Team](#) for an explanation and advice on next steps.

#### **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. You will need permission from your Employer and/or Funding Provider to make an application for approval of further study on your Apprenticeship Programme.
- 4.2 The application process requires you to reflect on the reasons you did not successfully complete your previous study, and how your circumstances or approach to study have changed and/or improved. We may approve your application for further study if your application demonstrates you have the potential to succeed with future study.

- 4.3 The AEST (or equivalent Nation contact) and your Practice Tutor will be able to support you in making an application for permission to undertake further study. As part of this process, the support team will liaise with you, your Employer and your Practice Tutor to review your suitability for requesting the restriction to be lifted.
- 4.4 Your application will be reviewed and assessed by an Educational Adviser (relevant to your academic study area), who will determine whether your restricted status can be lifted, to allow you to continue to study on the Apprenticeship Programme.
- 4.5 If you are given permission to continue to study whilst at restricted status, this permission may be limited to the study of a specified module, level or category of modules. We will apply a limit where our academic judgement expects this would increase the potential for successful completion of 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 placed at restricted status, you will remain at restricted status. You may make a further application for permission to study with the express permission of your Employer and/or Funding Provider if you feel that there are new reasons that were not considered in any earlier application which mean you will be successful with future study.

## **5. Your Data**

Your data will only be used for the purposes set out in the [Student Privacy Notice](#). 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. We may also share relevant information with external parties.

## **Definitions**

### **Alert**

If you are not awarded any module credit in two consecutive presentations in which you were enrolled for study, we will place you on alert status. We will tell you and your Employer and /or Funding Provider. You must pass your next module to continue studying. This applies to any module of 30 credits or more at Open University Level 1, 2 or 3.

### **Apprentice**

A Learner 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.

### **Apprentice Enrolment and Support Team (AEST)**

Provides support to apprentices throughout their Apprenticeship journey. The Apprentice Enrolment and Support Team comprises a team of Senior Advisers who 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 University online learning platforms, or when experiencing difficult circumstances that are having an impact on their studies.

The Apprentice Enrolment and Support Team will liaise with other teams across the University, to ensure the right information, help and support is provided to an apprentice.

### **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 (previously approved by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) up to 2025) from the Department for Education (DfE) in England and Wales 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 are not awarded any module credit in a presentation in which you were enrolled for study, we say you are 'at risk' of not making good academic progress. This applies to modules of 30 credits or more at Open University Level 1, 2 and 3. If you are continuing on the Apprenticeship Programme we can enrol you on modules whilst at risk.

## **Completion of study/module**

Successful completion of study is when you pass your module and gain academic credit for it. If you have done any of the following, you have not successfully completed your study:

- withdrawn from all the module(s) in the presentation
- deferred from all the module(s) after start date
- failed all the module(s) in a presentation without being offered a resit/resubmission
- failed all resit or resubmission opportunities within a presentation.

## Presentation

The period of time between module start and end dates. Module presentations are referred to by their first month e.g. a module that is presented from February to October is a February presentation. When we refer to all modules in a presentation, this means all modules that start in the same month/year. If you are studying modules which overlap but do not start in the same month, those modules are not in the same presentation.

## Restricted

If you are not awarded any module credit in three consecutive presentations in which you were enrolled for study, you will be given a restricted status. We will not enrol you on any more modules. We will tell you and your Employer and /or Funding Provider. You can apply to study at restricted status. Your Employer and /or Funding Provider must support this. The Open University would need to approve the application. Nursing apprentices should read the [Supplementary Agreement \(Nursing\)](#).

## Related Policies and Legislation

- [Academic Regulations 2025/26 \(Apprentices\)](#)

## Welsh language standards

### [Safonau'r Gymraeg \(Welsh Language Standards\)](#)

The Open University is one of several universities named in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. This means that any students in Wales can expect to receive certain services from the OU in Welsh. These are outlined in what's called the [OU's Welsh language standards](#).

This means that you can speak to our student recruitment and support team in Welsh or contact the university in Welsh. You can find out more about your rights as a Welsh language user on the [OU in Wales website](#).

## **Reporting Bullying and Harassment**

The Open University is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment where everyone feels safe and is treated with dignity and respect. Unlawful discrimination of any kind across The Open University will not be tolerated. We encourage staff, students, learners and visitors to report incidents of assault, bullying harassment, hate crime or sexual harassment through [Report + Support](#). This platform also provides information about what you can do if you or someone you know experiences such incidents, and where you can find support.

## **Our Student Charter Values**

[The Student Charter](#) was developed jointly by The Open University and the OU Students Association. It is a declaration of our shared values and the commitments we make to each other. This document has been developed with the Student Charter values as its foundation.

## **Our commitment to Equality Diversity and Inclusion**

Our commitment to equality and inclusion is embedded in all that we do and reflects our mission to be open to people, places, methods and ideas. We celebrate diversity and the strengths that it brings, whilst challenging under-representation and differences in outcomes within our institution. We promote and manage equality and diversity to meet both our strategic goals and our statutory equality duties. We achieve this in many ways, including the development of inclusive policy.

## **Give Us Your Feedback**

If you have any comments about this policy document and how it might be improved, please share this with us, by emailing [SPR-Policy-Team@open.ac.uk](mailto:SPR-Policy-Team@open.ac.uk).

## **Charity Statement**

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England and 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.

## **About this Document**

### **Summary of Significant Changes since last version**

The following changes have been made:

- The policy has been set out in an updated policy template. Sections may have moved position. The new policy template has been designed to be more accessible.
- The policy has been rewritten in clearer, easily understandable paragraphs where needed.
- A short summary of the policy will be published for the first time.
- Definitions have been re-written in plain English where needed.
- Contact details for Apprentices have been checked and clarified where needed.
- The Education and Skills Funding Agency transfers its work to the Department for Education (England and Wales) in March 2025. References to the ESDA have been updated in line with this.

### **Policies Superseded by this Document**

Academic Progress Policy 2025/26 (Apprentices) replaces the Academic Progress Policy 2024/25 (Apprentices) with effect from 1 August 2025.

### **Document Information**

Version number: 1.0

Approved by: Delegate, Director Academic Services

Effective from: 1 August 2025

Date for review: March 2026