

## Summary of Terms and Conditions

### FEDERAL STUDENT AID: DIRECT LOANS PROGRAM (STAFFORD LOANS AND PLUS LOANS)

The administration of Federal Student Aid is a complex process for both student applicants and the Institutes of Higher Education that they are attending and is further complicated by Durham University being a Foreign School.

The handbook of rules runs to over 900 pages, and it is not possible to outline every single regulation, further to this, there are the Durham University regulations to consider, and how the two regulation systems fit together.

1. The Summary of Terms and Conditions listed on this COA worksheet are not exhaustive, before any significant changes of circumstance within your study programme, residence status, dependency requirements or other costs of attendance, you must ensure that the proposed changes conform to both US Department of Education regulations and Durham University Regulations. With regards to US Department of Education requirements, you must not assume that because a "Concession" (Concession is the Durham University term used for a change in circumstance that is applied for by the student or their department and/or College) is considered or granted by Durham University, that it is compliant with US Department of Education (USDE) regulations. You must check with (or ask your department/ College to check with) the Scholarships and Student Funding Office of Durham University, the equivalent of the Financial Aid office of a US School, that any proposed Concession conforms to the USDE rules.

2. To be eligible to take out US Direct Loans you need to:

1) Register for an eligible course.

Ineligible courses include (but not be restricted to) those listed below:

-Undergraduate degree Courses that include a "a year abroad/Erasmus" option\*.

-Courses with field trips/fieldwork in the US \*\*.

-Any Courses including internships or placements\*\*\*.

-Non-degree programs (Graduate Diploma programs such as those in 'Theology and Religion' or Philosophy' or the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)).

2) Be a US Citizen or an eligible non-citizen.

3) Have a valid US social security number.

4) Be accepted to a programme of full-time or at least 50% part-time study) distance learning courses are not eligible).

5) If you are an existing student at Durham University, you are to have been assessed as having made satisfactory academic progress to continue your studies with us.

6) Be living in the UK during your studies at Durham (students who continue to live in the USA during their studies are not eligible).

7) Have not borrowed over your federal loan limits or are still in default on repaying previous loans.

8) Not have any outstanding convictions for a drug offence, sexual offence, felony, or misdemeanour offence.

3. Eligibility for Federal Student Aid at a Foreign School is assessed annually for each new academic year; please note that eligibility in one year does not automatically imply or guarantee continued eligibility for a future year. Federal rules affecting eligibility may change from year to year, and personal circumstances affecting eligibility may change from year to year.

4. Loans cannot be certified over the maximum value of your Cost of Attendance. All other sources of formal scholarships, awards and recognised education loans need to be considered on the calculator. If dual funding with Federal Student Aid and Sallie Mae, the combined total of loans between the two sources cannot exceed the maximum value of Cost of Attendance (less any scholarship/award income). Some Veteran Affairs (VA) Education support may be eligible to be disregarded on the Cost of Attendance, please contact the Scholarships and Student Funding Office for advice.

5. Federal Student Aid can only be used to fund students during their programme of study, whilst they are registered students. Students must progress through their programme at a pace that they will graduate within the maximum timeframe of 150% of the published timeframe of the course. This means that:

**Undergraduates**

Can be funded for 4.5 years for a 3-year course within the October-June academic year dates, requiring new applications each year.

**Taught Postgraduates (Generally Masters),**

Can be funded for 1.5 years for a 1-year course and 3 years for 2-year course within the October-September year

**Research Postgraduates (Generally PhD programme)**

**PhD:** can receive funding for 5.5 years for a 3-year Ph.D. degree (4.5 years of supervised study and one continuous 12-month period of continuation period.

**MPhil/MLitt:** can receive funding for 3 years for a 2-year course (requiring an application for each 12 months of study), plus one 9-month period of writing up (Continuation year), which must commence immediately after the 3 years of supervised study ends.

**MA/MSc by Research:** can receive funding for 1-5 years for a 1-year course, plus 6 6-month period of writing up (Continuation year), which must commence immediately after 1.5 years of supervised study ends.

Registered Student status ends after these periods and does not extend to the publication of pass-lists, or the graduation/congregation ceremonies.

6. Federal Student Aid issued through a Foreign School is only permissible for study outside of the United States. You cannot receive the Federal Aid programme through Durham University, whilst residing and/or studying in the United States. This means that you must not be resident in the United States during your studies (vacation visits "home" is of course permissible), it also means that Federal Aid cannot be used to fund components of field-work studies or placement studies which may take place in the United States, during the duration of your course.

7. The one exemption to item 6 above is for a single 12-month period of the writing-up period for a PhD programme only. The writing-up period at Durham University is termed being "on

continuation". Federal Rules currently permit this period to be in the United States. This is the only exemption to the residency requirement, you must notify the Scholarships and Student Funding Office to confirm continuing entitlement to this rule if you are proposing to use it and to determine how disbursements may be made.

8. Federal Student Aid cannot be used to fund any "Distance Learning" courses at Durham University (for example, some of the Business Studies Courses at Durham)

9. Federal Student Aid can be used to help pay towards the cost of childcare needed while the student is attending school. Dependents must be of full-time schooling age or younger (age 16 or less, where children are in UK school "6th Form", please get in touch with Scholarships and Student Funding Office) and residing with the Federal Aid applicant student in the UK. Federal Student Aid cannot be used to support dependents still resident in the United States, or not in the immediate care of the applicant. Scholarships and Student Funding Office require names and dates of birth of dependents being claimed for by the Federal Aid applicant student. Federal Student Aid cannot be used to pay for the subsistence of a student's family.

10. Federal Student Aid eligibility ceases, even if previously approved, if you cease being a registered student within the year (or cease being a student on continuation in the single 12-month period of writing up for a PhD student). Various circumstances can result in you not being a registered student, such as Withdrawal from Durham University, Leave of Absence from Durham University (often called a concession) for many reasons including long-term ill health, internships, and personal circumstances. Of particular importance is "Thesis Submission". Once a PhD thesis is submitted, you cease being a registered student (or student under continuation), and further disbursements are not permitted after this date. PhD students need to ensure their funding between thesis submission and examination/corrections. If you believe that you may enter a period whereby you will not be a fully registered student (even temporarily), you must contact the Scholarships and Student Funding Office to discuss your funding eligibility.

11. Federal Student Aid is dependent upon "Satisfactory Academic Progress" (SAP) continuing to be made during the period of study. If SAP is not maintained within accordance with Durham University Regulations, then eligibility for Federal Student Aid may be lost.

12. Disbursements of Federal Student Aid are generally made three (3) times a year (just after the start of each term, Durham University operates a three (3) term system over the academic year, not a semester system), and where possible disbursement values are equally spread between the disbursement dates. Loans are disbursed in USD to Durham University. Durham University will convert incoming USD loans to GBP. Access to a GBP bank account in your name is recommended.

13. There are several documentation requirements for students accessing Student Federal Aid, most of these are required in the application process (e.g., Master Promissory Notes, Entrance Counselling etc). Please note that Federal Aid will not be approved by Durham University without the required documentation. Exit Counselling is also required, before the end of the Academic Year. This will be requested before your final disbursement, or if you are cancelling further aid. Final Disbursements or cancellations will not take place without the required Exit Counselling being submitted. Loans are issued every year and Exit Counselling shall be required yearly.

14. Durham University reserves the right to request further appropriate documentation from you during the Federal Aid process where Durham University deems it necessary to clarify for either application or ongoing eligibility. Such further documents may include (but are not limited to) Passports, Social Security Documentation, Official Letters, proof of dependents and/or their location.

15. Durham University has an obligation to the USDE to report any evidence of fraud about Student Federal Aid.

16. Durham University takes part in the "Student National Clearinghouse System" for In-school deferments of student loan payments. The Durham University policy on reporting rules to the Clearinghouse, and the effects different enrolment/registration states within the University Student Record system have on loan repayments, are outlined in the following link:

[DurhamUniversityUSEducationLoanDefermentPolicy.pdf](#)

17. Durham University reserves the right to update and revise this Summary of Terms and Conditions to consider changes to Federal Rules, Durham University Rules, or changes to the interpretation of such rules. For advice on the interpretation of the Federal Rules of Durham University Rules; or significant changes in circumstances; or unusual circumstances please contact:

[us.loans@durham.ac.uk](mailto:us.loans@durham.ac.uk)

Updated 26/03/2024.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_