

## US Federal Loan Application – Process Overview 2020/21

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This document will aid you through the Direct Loan process, and complements the details held on the University of Southampton's website.

## What you need to do...

### Complete your FAFSA

Your FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is your application to the U.S. Department of Education for a Direct Loan. It can be completed at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/> (the code for the University of Southampton is **G08399**).

### Complete your Entrance Counselling

The US Government requires you to complete entrance counselling to ensure that you understand the responsibilities and obligations you are assuming. So Entrance Counselling is required before you can receive your first loan. Details can be found at [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov).

Once you have completed your Entrance Counselling, please save a screenshot to show that you have done this. You will need to send this to us with your Cost of Attendance.

### Complete your Financial Awareness Counselling

The US Government requires you to complete financial awareness counselling to ensure that you understand the responsibilities and obligations you are assuming. It can be completed at <https://studentaid.gov/app/counselingInstructions.action?counselingType=fa>.

### Complete your Master Promissory Note(s)

The MPNs are your loan agreements. You need to complete one for each type of loan that you are applying for. If you want a Parent PLUS loan then it is your parent that will have to complete the MPN. Details can be found at [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov). When you have completed your MPNs, please save a copy of each of them. You will need to send them to us with your Cost of Attendance.

### Download and complete your Cost of Attendance

In order to receive Federal Student Aid at the University of Southampton, you need to complete one of our Cost of Attendance forms (in MS Excel format). This can be downloaded from the [US Direct Loans webpage](#).

### Submit your documents to the University

Send your completed COA to us here at [stufunds@soton.ac.uk](mailto:stufunds@soton.ac.uk), along with your MPNs and your Entrance Counselling screenshot.

## What we will do...

We will process the applications as soon as we possibly can. When doing this we will:

### Confirm your eligibility

We will check that you meet all of the eligibility requirements, and we will let you know as soon as possible if there is any problem. We also check that the loan amount requested in your COA is within the published guidelines. If there is any adjustment needing to be agreed then we will talk to you about this. Once we are satisfied that all the requirements have been met, we can go ahead and originate your loan.

### Originate your loan

This means that we will set your loan up on the US Government's system, complete with details of the amounts, loan types, disbursement dates, etc. At this point the US Government might carry out a credit check for those of you taking a PLUS Loan. If the credit check fails, you would not be able to receive a PLUS Loan, and we would advise you of this as soon as possible.

### Issue a Visa funding letter (if appropriate)

If you are applying for a UK Tier 4 visa (a student visa), you will need to be able to show that you have sufficient funding in place before the visa can be issued. We will produce a letter confirming your Federal Aid funding for the year ahead that you can use as evidence to support your application. This will be sent to the address you quoted in your COA spreadsheet. Let us know if you want this urgently, as we will be able to send it to you by courier, if necessary, at no extra cost to you.

## Flowchart

