

# Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Student Money Service

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## Introduction

The University is required by US Federal law (34 C.F.R 668.34.) to define and enforce standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). The guidelines have been established to encourage students to complete successfully academic programs for which aid is received.

To be eligible for US Federal Aid loans (federal or financial aid), a student must continue to make satisfactory academic progress (SAP).

US Department of Education regulations require that, to be eligible for continued financial aid, the University's SAP policy is applied to all students using US Federal Aid loans, regardless of course, level, or mode of study. Failure to make satisfactory academic progress will result in the termination of further disbursements.

By satisfactory academic progress we mean the following

- Consistent engagement with teaching and learning activities both in person (measured by my attendance) and online (measure by my engagement)
- Consisted engagement with assessment activities including the submission of course work, undertaking of controlled conditions examinations and other formal trust and evaluations.
- Early engagement with academic support services in the event of difficulties including the submission of appropriate requests for additional support or consideration of mitigating circumstances.
- We expect student to engage with assessment activities and to make every effort to pass all elements of assessment and to achieve sufficient credit to progress form one stage of their programme to the next.

This policy applies to students in receipt of US Financial Aid and is in line with the [UWE Bristol Academic Regulations](#).

## How is SAP measured

SAP is measured using both Qualitative and Quantitative measures which are assessed concurrently at each evaluation point. As noted in the introduction we will use evidence gathered from the following sources to assess SAP

- MyEngagement (online engagement platform) <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/study/it-services/myengagement> which draws information from
  - MyAttendance (online attendance monitoring platform) <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/study/it-services/myattendance> We use MyAttendance to record your attendance at teaching events (this is for face to face teaching only, you do not need to use MyAttendance to record your attendance at online sessions unless requested to do so by the lecturer).

- Library systems (access to books, journals)
  - log on to Blackboard
  - click to view course content on Blackboard
  - access an online taught session on Blackboard Collaborate
  - view a previously recorded taught session on Panopto
  - hand in a piece of coursework
  - submit coursework on Blackboard
  - take out a book from the Library
  - access Library e-resources and journals
  - view the online reading list
  - print, scan or photocopy documents
  - log in to a UWE Bristol computer
- Your full, cumulative, academic record showing submission and non-submission
  - The outcome of exam board processes.

## Qualitative standard (grade-based performance)

**Enrolment status:** all students must be enrolled at least half-time.

**Attendance:** Measured through MyAttendance and aggregated in to your engagement score.

**Engagement:** measured through MyEngagement – we expect you to maintain an engagement level of at least ‘Good’ with not more than 7 consecutive days of engagement at ‘poor’. <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/study/it-services/myengagement>

**Academic achievement:** In order to remain in good SAP standing, the following academic pass marks need to be met:

- **Undergraduate:** students must achieve at least an overall pass mark of 40% or above
  - **Postgraduate taught:** students must achieve at least an overall pass mark of 50% or above. For further details on the requirements for satisfactory academic progress and how it is assessed, please refer to the Universities Academic Regulations

<https://www.uwe.ac.uk/study/academic-information>

## Quantitative standard (timeframe)

Maximum Timeframe

The US Department of Education regulations also set a maximum timeframe for loan funding which is 150% of the published length of the course e.g.

| Degree and course length | Credits | Maximum Timeframe       | Pace |
|--------------------------|---------|-------------------------|------|
| BA/BSc (3 Years)         | 360     | 4.5 Years (540 credits) | 67%  |
| BA/BSc (4 years)         | 480     | 6 years (720 credits)   | 67%  |
| MA/MSc (1 year)          | 180     | 1.5 years (270 credits) | 67%  |

At the end of each payment period an assessment will be made using the below calculation to determine if a student is on track to complete their course within the maximum time frame above:

Credit Hours Completed / Credit Hours Attempted = Pace of Progress

**Example: 80 credit completed / 120 credits attempted = Pace progress of 66.6% which is uplifted to 67%**

**UWE Bristol will round up to the nearest % where .5 or above, as detailed in the UWE Bristol Academic Regulations policy**

Pace of Progression:

Students must maintain a minimum cumulative completion rate of two-thirds of credits attempted which equals 67%, for progression to the following year of study in order to meet the SAP maximum completion timeframes.

For example:

- Undergraduate: where full-time students pursuing a 3-year Bachelor's degree would typically attempt 120 credits over one academic year, students must complete a minimum of 80 out of 120 credits per year to meet SAP standards, and carry forward no more than 60 credits into the next academic year as trailing units.
- Postgraduate Taught: where full-time students pursuing a 1-year Master's degree would typically attempt 180 credits over one academic year, students must complete a minimum of 120 out of 180 credits per year to meet SAP standards, and carry forward no more than 40 credits into the next academic year as trailing units.

## Frequency of assessment

SAP is evaluated using both the Qualitative and Quantitative component measures towards the end of each payment period in line with Subject Examination Committees:

- For Undergraduate students we evaluate in January, following a September enrolment. This is the earliest point in which we are able to assess the Qualitative components of the SAP process. The evaluation is completed prior to the payment

- For Postgraduate students we evaluate in both January and in May, prior to the disbursement date for that payment period.
- We assess whether a student is on track to complete the course within the 150% maximum timeframe for their course at each evaluation point, not at the point in which the maximum timeframe has been reached.

## Impact of Transfers, Withdrawals, Suspensions and Repetitions on SAP

All periods of a student's enrolment count when assessing SAP, even if the student was not in receipt of federal student aid. Please see below examples of the way in which changes to a student's enrolment impact on SAP measurements:

| Change to Enrolment  | Would this count towards SAP measurements?   |
|--|--|
| Period of approved suspension or maternity/paternity/adoption leave                      | No   |
| Change of Programme of Study   | Not unless credits previously gained credits contribute to the new course.   |
| Repetitions  | Yes. For repeated modules, we will use the most recent mark awarded in assessing qualitative measures. Any credit attempted will be used to determine the rate of completion and maximum timeframe (quantitative). Repetitions can have an adverse effect on the student's rate of completion and maximum timeframe calculations and may affect the student's eligibility to meet SAP requirements |
| Withdrawals or non-completion where there is a subsequent re-enrolment onto a new course | No   |
| Transfers in to UWE Bristol  | Yes. Approved credits transferred from other Institutions will be included in the number of credits attempted and completed and will be counted towards the maximum timeframe for completion (Quantitative measure). Please note that the marks gained on transferred credits would not be considered in Qualitative calculations.   |

## Failure to meet sap

### Warning<sup>1</sup>

- Should a student fail to meet SAP standards, they will first be issued with a Financial Aid Warning.
- Students will be notified via their UWE email if they are to be placed on a warning.
- This warning will last until the next disbursement, during which time a student can still receive financial aid.
- Students who fail to regain Satisfactory Academic Progress by the end of the warning period will no longer be eligible for financial aid unless they submit a successful appeal (see 'Appeal' below).

**Note:** A student may be given a Warning on more than one occasion during course enrolment, but cannot receive warnings in consecutive payment periods

### Suspension of funding

- Failure to make satisfactory academic progress will result in the suspension of financial aid unless the student submits a successful appeal and is placed on probation.
- The student will be notified that they have not met SAP via their UWE Bristol email account
- No further federal aid will be issued until the student meets the SAP standards.

### Appeal<sup>2</sup>

- Where a student is given notification of termination of their financial aid due to failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), they may appeal within 10 days of receiving the notification
- Notification will be issued by email to the students UWE and personal email address.
- Appeals can be made if exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated e.g. injury, illness or bereavement caused them to fail to make satisfactory academic progress.
- Appeals should be submitted to the Student Money Service via email at [US.Loan@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:US.Loan@uwe.ac.uk)
- The appeal will need to be submitted with fully documented evidence supporting the appeal. Appeals should also explain what has changed to allow the student to regain SAP at the next payment period.
- An appeal will be considered by the head of the Student Money Service supported by the Deputy Director Student Support and Wellbeing
- The appeal will be considered using the evidence supplied.

- If, during the appeal process, it is determined that the student has more remaining credits to complete, than is possible within the remaining timeframe (prior to reaching the maximum), the student would become ineligible.
- The outcome of an appeal will be notified to the appellant not more than 10 working after the receipt of the appeal.
- Notification of outcome will be sent to the student UWE and personal email address.
- Disbursement of loan funding will not be made whilst an appeal is being processed.
- The decision following an Appeal will be final in all cases.
- Students are able to make a complaint under the Complaints procedure if they feel there has been a material irregularity in the handling of their applications, funding or appeal, there has been a breach of the process laid out in this document or that information supplied has not been fully considered.

## Probation<sup>3</sup>

- A student who successfully appeals the loss of their financial aid termination will be placed on Financial Aid Probation for the following payment period.
- A student on probation may not receive Title IV Funds for the subsequent payment period unless they are now making SAP or following an academic plan designed between the student and the academic team to ensure the student will be able to regain SAP by a specific point in time.
- The conditions of the probation will be the same as the conditions for academic progress in the University regulations.
- Please note that SAP standards are used solely to determine financial aid eligibility. SAP federal aid eligibility standards do not cancel, modify or override the University's Regulations.
- Please contact the Student Money Service should you have any further questions.

## Regaining Eligibility

A student will regain their eligibility for funding once they have demonstrated satisfactory academic progress, having met the conditions of their probation.



<sup>1</sup>**Warning** – A status the University assigns to a student who is failing to make SAP. The University reinstates eligibility for aid for one payment period without the student needing to appeal.

<sup>2</sup>**Appeal** – A process by which a student who is not meeting SAP standards petitions the University for reconsideration of their eligibility for US Federal Aid.

<sup>3</sup>**Probation** – A status the University assigns to a student who is failing to make SAP and who successfully appeals. Eligibility for aid may be reinstated for one payment period only.

**Last Reviewed by the Student Money Service, June 2023**