



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

# **Satisfactory Academic Progress 2023-2024 Policy**



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## What is the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy?

The Federal Department of Education requires that Federal Title IV Financial Assistance recipients meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy standards each payment period. Federal Title IV Financial Assistance includes the Federal Direct Student Loan and Federal Direct PLUS Loan programs. Each university determines its own policy regarding satisfactory progress standards.

At the end of each semester or upon students' re-enrollment at the University, students' academic performance is reviewed to determine if a student is making satisfactory academic progress. The review is based on qualitative (grade point average) and quantitative measures (credits completed vs. registered credits); it is also cumulative for all academic work attempted at the University of Amsterdam and transferred credits.

Students who fail to meet the minimum qualitative (average grade) standards for the first time in that year will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. Students will continue to receive financial aid during the warning period. Students who fail to meet the average grade requirement after the warning period will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension and will not qualify for financial aid.

### In short: what does my SAP Status mean?

- Eligible – You meet all SAP requirements and are eligible to receive financial aid.
- Warning – A student on financial aid warning may continue to receive assistance under the title IV/HEA programs for one payment period despite a determination that the student is not making satisfactory academic progress. Financial aid warning status may be assigned without an appeal or other action by the student.
- Suspension – Financial Aid Suspension means that you have not met the SAP requirements and are ineligible for financial aid until you can either demonstrate to the Financial Aid Office that you are meeting the requirements or successfully appeal your suspension status.
- Probation – Financial Aid Probation is a status assigned by the Financial Aid Office to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and was placed on Financial Aid Suspension, however, the student has successfully appealed this suspension state and therefore has his/her financial aid reinstated.
- Ineligible – You are not eligible for financial aid or for a tuition deferment when your status is ineligible.

If you have questions about your Title IV program funds, you can call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-433-3243. You will also find the answer to many questions at [Studentaid.gov](http://Studentaid.gov).

If you have questions about the number of credits obtained by you, please contact your program coordinator or the Education Desk of your program.



## Student Standards for Undergraduate students

To meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy, undergraduate students must meet all of the following standards.

- **Cumulative average**  
All undergraduate students must maintain a cumulative average total grade of 6 or above. See Appendix 1 for the full UvA grading scheme, including a conversion table.
- **Maximum Time Frame**  
Undergraduate students must complete their program of study within 150% of the published length of the program, as measured in credit hours. Example: if the published length of an academic program is 180 credits, the maximum time frame for completion is 270 attempted credits. All credits attempted while attending UvA and all credits transferred to UvA (earned) are counted toward the 150% maximum time frame regardless of whether financial aid was received. This means that students pursuing a second (or more) baccalaureate degree remain eligible until they've reached 150% of the published length of their current program. Courses with assigned grades of 5.4 or lower and "repeated" courses all count as attempted credit hours.
- **Pace Requirement**  
The pace requirement sets an expected progression to earn your degree. You must earn 67% of all attempted credit hours. Pace is determined by dividing the total number of credit hours you have earned by the total number of credit hours attempted. All credits attempted and earned from all schools you have attended are included in determining pace.
- **Completion Rate**  
All undergraduate students are expected to complete a certain amount of credits per every year. You can calculate your Completion Rate with the checklist below.

### Calculating the Completion Rate – Undergraduate students

This calculation is based on a regular undergraduate program, which lasts three years, totaling 180 ECTS (60 per year).

- After 1st semester: completed a minimum of 18 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
- After 2nd semester: completed a minimum of 42 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 3rd semester: completed 60 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 4th semester: completed a minimum of 84 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*



- After 5th semester: completed a minimum of 102 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 6<sup>th</sup> semester: completed 120 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 7<sup>th</sup> semester: completed a minimum of 144 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 8<sup>th</sup> semester: completed a minimum of 162 ECTS in total?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 9<sup>th</sup> semester: completed 180 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Financial aid stops

*\*Students have the option to appeal a Financial Aid Suspension decision. Students who appeal the SAP decision and are successful are placed on Financial Aid Probation. See [“What happens if I fail to meet the SAP standards”](#) for more information.*



## Student Standards for Graduate students

To meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy, graduate students must meet all of the following standards.

- **Cumulative average**  
All Master (graduate) students must maintain a cumulative average total grade of 6 or above. See Appendix 1 for the full UvA grading scheme, including a conversion table.
- **Maximum Time Frame**  
Graduate students must complete their program of study within 150% of the published length of the program, measured in credit hours attempted. Example: if the published length of an academic program is 60 credits, the maximum time frame for completion is 90 attempted credits. All credits attempted while attending UvA and all credits transferred to UvA (earned) are counted toward the 150% maximum time frame regardless of whether financial aid was received. This means that students pursuing a second (or more) baccalaureate degree remain eligible until they've reached 150% of the published length of their current program. Courses with assigned grades of 5.4 or lower and "repeated" courses all count as attempted credit hours.
- **Pace Requirement**  
The pace requirement sets an expected progression to earn your degree. You must earn 67% of all attempted credit hours. Pace is determined by dividing the total number of credit hours you have earned by the total number of credit hours attempted. All credits attempted and earned from all schools you have attended are included in determining pace.
- **Completion Rate**  
All graduate students are expected to complete a certain amount of credits per every year. You can calculate your Completion Rate with the checklist below.

## Calculating the Completion Rate – Graduate students

### One year Programs (60 ECTS total)

- After 1st semester: completed a minimum of 24 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
- After 2nd semester: completed a minimum of 42 ECTS in total?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 3rd semester: completed 60 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Financial aid stops



## Two year Programs (120 ECTS total)

- After 1st semester: completed a minimum of 24 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
- After 2nd semester: completed a minimum of 42 ECTS in total?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 3rd semester: completed 60 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 4th semester: completed a minimum of 84 ECTS in total?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 5th semester: completed a minimum of 102 ECTS in total?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Placed on Financial Aid Warning
  - No and already received Financial Aid Warning: Financial Aid Suspension\*
- After 6th semester: completed 120 ECTS?
  - Yes: Everything is fine
  - No: Financial aid stops

For students not enrolled with the regular programme, we make the calculation based on a minimum requirement of 40% of the length for 1 year after the first semester and 70% of the length of 1 year after the second semester. Example: if the published length of an academic program is 45 credits, you will need to earn a minimum of 18 ECTS after the first semester and a minimum of 32 after the second semester.

*\*Students have the option to appeal a Financial Aid Suspension decision. Students who appeal the SAP decision and are successful are placed on Financial Aid Probation. See [“What happens if I fail to meet the SAP standards”](#) for more information.*



### When does the Financial Aid Office determine SAP?

- End of Semester Review – SAP status is calculated at the end of each semester, after grades are posted to academic history by the Registrar, which is normally between 10 to 13 business days after the end of final exams. The SAP calculation is normally scheduled for the fifth week after the first semester has ended and in the first week of July for the second semester of the academic year.
- New freshmen or students are considered to be meeting SAP during the first UvA semester.
- New transfer students must meet all SAP requirements prior to the start of the UvA semester.
- Readmitted students will have SAP recalculated prior to the start of the semester readmitted, which may result in an ineligible status.
- If students have not met the SAP requirements, then the Financial Aid Office will set up an appointment with a student counselor and the Faculty's contact person will be informed. A study scheme will be set up so that the student will finish on time.





## What happens if I fail to meet the SAP standards?

If students fail to meet any of the quantitative or the qualitative standards of the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy specified for the first time, the student will be notified by the Financial Aid Office that the student is placed on a Financial Aid Warning for one semester. Students will continue to receive financial aid during the warning period. If students fail to meet the SAP requirement after the warning period, financial aid assistance will be suspended and student will be notified of his/her ineligibility for financial aid.

## How can I appeal the Suspension Status?

If student has extenuating circumstances the student may appeal the suspension decision to the Financial Aid Office.

The Financial Aid Office will forward each appeal to a case review board of Student Counselor who may grant waivers to the policy under the following documented conditions:

- death of a relative
- illness of the student
- illness of a close relative of the student
- other special circumstance

Submit within thirty (30) days of financial aid suspension the SAP Appeal File with the Financial Aid Office, consisting of the following items:

- An academic plan that has been agreed upon by the student and academic advisor
- A detailed appeal letter by the student describing the extenuating circumstances that caused the student not to be in compliance of the SAP requirement(s) and how the extenuating circumstance(s) has changed.
- Third party documentation to support the appeal case (e.g. letter from the Faculty's contact person, physician or lawyer).

After the Financial Aid Office has received the SAP Appeal File, an appointment will be made for the student with a Student Counselor. The Student Counselor will get access to the SAP Appeal File and will sign a SAP Appeal Form. The Financial Aid Office will notify the student of the decision in writing. That decision is final.

If the SAP appeal is approved, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and has one semester (or as stated on the SAP Appeal Approval Condition(s)) to meet the SAP requirements in order to remain eligible for financial aid. Students continue to receive aid while on Financial Aid Probation. Financial Aid Probation will not be extended.

If the SAP appeal is not approved, the student's SAP status remains suspension. The student is not eligible for financial aid.



## Appendix 1: UvA Grading Scheme

### Grading scheme

UvA Grades	UvA Letter	Grade point	UvA Descriptive grade	Grade point	UK Letter*	US Letter*
9.0 - 10.0	A+	9.5	Excellent	9.0	A+	A+
8.5 - 8.9	A	8.5				
8.3 - 8.4			Good	8.0	A	A
8.0 - 8.2						
7.8 - 7.9	B+	7.5				
7.5 - 7.7					Satisfactory	7.0
7.3 - 7.4	B					
7.0 - 7.2		B-	6.8			
6.7 - 6.9				C+		
6.5 - 6.6	C	6.0	D			
6.4				E	D	
6.0 - 6.3			D			5.0
5.5 - 5.9				Fail	4.0	
4.6 - 5.4	F					
1.0 - 4.5						

The given conversion scheme is suggested for broad orientation purposes only. For more information on the Dutch grading culture in comparison to other cultures, please consult [www.nuffic.nl](http://www.nuffic.nl).

### Credit system and marking

A student's workload (both contact hours, and hours spent studying and preparing assignments) is measured in ECTS credits, whereby under Dutch law one credit represents 28 hours of work and 60 credits represents one year of full-time study.

The marking system has been the same for several decades: the scale is from 1 (very poor) to 10 (outstanding). The lowest pass mark is 6. The mark 9 is seldom awarded, and the highest pass mark 10 is extremely rare.

Decimal values may be used (e.g. 7.8).