

## Solent University – Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) 2023-24

All students who are in receipt of US Federal Aid (this applies to Direct Subsidised, Unsubsidised, Graduate PLUS and Parent PLUS loans) whilst studying at Solent University are required to make satisfactory progress on their course of study and to abide by all Ordinances and regulations of the University. Students must be studying at least half time to be eligible for federal aid and if undertaking any part of their course in the USA or drop below 50% full time equivalent study are not entitled to Federal Aid. Students who are taking out a federal aid for the first-time part way through their course, will also need to demonstrate that they have the SAP requirements throughout their degree so far.

The US Department of Education require Solent University to check the student's progress at each evaluation point and to ensure that they are meeting both the quantitative and qualitative requirements. For students on courses lasting one year or less, the SAP is evaluated towards the end of each payment period, i.e. October – December, January – March and April – July. For students on courses lasting more than one year, SAP is evaluated annually towards the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester i.e. May – July. Satisfactory Academic Progress is assessed as follows:

### Quantitative requirement (Pace)

Students are expected to be in attendance at Solent university and must progress through their course at a pace which ensures that they will graduate within the maximum timeframe. The maximum timeframe for completion is 150% of the published length of the course as measured in credit hours. For undergraduate study this is equal to 120 UK credits and for postgraduate study 180 UK credits.

Degree /Course length	Credits for completion	Maximum timeframe	Pace
BA/BSc (3 years)	360	540 credits (4.5 years)	67%
BA/BSc (4 years)	480	720 credits (6 years)	67%
Masters (9 months)	135	202.5 credits (13.5 months)	67%
Masters (12 months)	180	270 credits (1.5 years)	67%
DPhil (3 years)	540	810 (4.5 years)	67%
DPhil (4 years)	720	1080 (6 years)	67%

### Qualitative requirements (Grades)

#### Undergraduate students

Undergraduate students are expected to maintain satisfactory progression through their course of study as required by the faculty and academic standing consistent with graduation requirements on a cumulative basis. These should be equivalent of at least a Lower Second-Class degree for undergraduate courses. A lower second class is an overall average in excess of 50%. Each module that a student completes requires at least a pass grade of 40%. No progress confirmation is required for the first disbursement for a student's programme of study.

#### Postgraduate students

Postgraduate students are expected to maintain satisfactory progression through their course of study as required by the faculty to at least a pass (40%) for postgraduate taught courses and at least at the level to allow a postgraduate research student to progress to the next research degree stage.

Generally, all periods of a student's enrolment count when assessing progress, even periods when the student did not receive federal aid. Some examples of changes to enrolment and how these impact on the measurement of SAP, are outlined below;

#### **Change to enrolment**

#### **Counts towards SAP measurement**

Period of approved suspension

The period while suspended from studies would not be counted towards the quantitative standard (pace).

Change of Course

We do not include credits completed elsewhere as per of our overall classification. The amount of study / pace / timeframe will be dependant upon the entry point of the student.

When all elements of the new course are unrelated to the old course, then credit hours will not be included in the quantitative standard (pace)

Withdrawal or non-completion of a course and subsequent re-enrolment

If a student withdraws in the middle of the academic year, any credit hours completed, would be counted in the quantitative standard (pace)

Repeating or re-assessment due to academic failure

Any credit hours already completed would be counted in the quantitative standard.

#### **Failure to meet SAP and regaining eligibility.**

A student who fails to meet the SAP standards will be notified that they are not eligible for further federal aid disbursements. Reinstatement of eligibility for these loans is not automatic, a student can regain eligibility only by submitting a successful appeal to be placed on probation or by taking action that brings them into compliance with the SAP standards.

#### **Appeals procedure**

A student who fails to meet the SAP standards may appeal on the basis of health, death of a relative or other special circumstances. To appeal the financial aid suspension, a student must, within 14 calendar days of notification, submit to the Student Funding Team a signed and dated letter of appeal explaining why they should not have Financial Aid suspended. Students will need to state what has changed in their situation that will allow them to meet Satisfactory Progress at the next evaluation date. Documentation verifying the situation may be requested.

The Student Funding Team will consider the appeal and render a decision, which the Head of Student Experience will convey in writing to the student within two weeks of the student's appeal. The decision of the Appeal panel is final. If the appeal panel determines that the student will not be able to meet the SAP standards, then the student will be ineligible for further disbursements of US

federal aid until they are able to take action that brings them into compliance with the SAP standards.

Please send your appeal either via email or letter to Student Funding Team, Solent University, East Park Terrace, Southampton. SO14 OYN or email [student.funding@solent.ac.uk](mailto:student.funding@solent.ac.uk)

Receipt of the appeal will be acknowledged within seven working days and the panel will aim to hold a review within thirty working days of the date of acknowledgement. If further documentation is required these timescales may be extended.

If the Appeal Panel determines that the student should be able to meet the SAP standards by the end of the subsequent payment period, the student will be placed on probation. The student's progress will be reviewed at the end of the payment period, as probation status is for one payment period only. If the student is not meeting the SAP standards at this point, then they will not be eligible for further disbursements of US student loans until they are able to take action that brings them into compliance with the SAP standards.

If the appeal panel determines that the student will not be able to meet the SAP standards, then the student will not be eligible for further Federal Aid disbursements until they are able to take action that brings them into compliance with the SAP standards.

If the Appeal Panel determines that the student will require more than one payment period in order to meet the SAP standards, the student will be placed on probation and an academic plan will be drawn up, in collaboration with the student's supervisor, tutor and/or department. The student's progress will be reviewed at the end of the payment period to determine if the student is meeting the requirements of the academic plan. If the student is meeting the requirements of the academic plan, the student is eligible to receive US Federal Aid as long as they continue to meet those requirements. If a student needs to change their academic plan, then they must submit another appeal, explaining what has happened to make the change necessary and how they will be able to make academic progress. If the student fails to meet the requirements of their academic plan or their appeal to change their academic plan is unsuccessful, then they will not be eligible for further disbursements of US Federal Aid until they are able to take action that brings them into compliance with the SAP standards.

### **Definitions**

**Appeal:** a process by which a student who is not meeting SAP standards petitions the University for reconsideration of their eligibility for US student loans.

**Probation:** A status the University assigns to a student who is failing to make SAP and who successfully appeals. Eligibility for US student loans may be reinstated for a limited period.

### **For any further Information**

Please contact [student.funding@solent.ac.uk](mailto:student.funding@solent.ac.uk) for more information.