

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) FOR TITLE IV FINANCIAL AID RECIPIENTS

The University of Liverpool is required by US Federal Law to report that any students applying for or receiving US federal aid (subsidized Stafford, unsubsidized Stafford and Federal PLUS) are making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) towards completion of a chosen academic programme.

The University of Liverpool has a set of Ordinances governing academic programmes, a [Code of Practice on Assessment](#) for Undergraduate and Postgraduate taught degrees and a [Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#) which clearly set out the academic requirements for progression through and completion of degree programmes. [Appendix E \(Guide on the Progress of Students on Taught Programmes of Study\) of the Code of Practice on Assessment for taught programmes specifically indicates the formal procedures to be followed when the progress of students on taught programmes is a concern.](#)

SAP Evaluation and Review

- Students receiving financial aid will be evaluated at the end of each semester, prior to their subsequent disbursement of federal aid that they are making satisfactory academic progress
- The evaluation will consider a student's progress with regard to both quantitative SAP standards (maximum course completion timeframes) and qualitative SAP standards (academic standards) as described below.
- You will be notified in writing if your academic progress is not considered to be satisfactory in line with the progression requirements noted above.

Quantitative Criteria: Maximum course completion timeframes

Students must complete their course at a pace which ensures that they will graduate within the maximum timeframe.

Federal regulations specify that the maximum time frame for programme completion may not exceed 150 percent of the published length of the programme as measured in credit hours.

| Standard Published Programme length | Programme Length in credit hours | Maximum UoL period of registration | Maximum Federal timeframe for completion (in years) |
|--|---|---|--|
| 3 year Undergraduate degree | 360 | 6 years (720 hours) | 4.5 years (540 hours) |
| 4 year Undergraduate degree | 480 | 7 years (840 hours) | 6 years (720 hours) |
| 12 month Postgraduate Taught degree | 180 | 36 months (540 hours) | 18 months (270 hours) |

Pace and Progression: To continue to be eligible for financial aid, students must maintain a minimum cumulative completion rate of 66.7% as calculated by dividing number of completed credits by the number of attempted credits in order to meet SAP maximum completion timeframes.

The University's standard progression rules for undergraduate programmes accommodate this Federal requirement: [Progression requirements and degree classification](#)

Qualitative Criteria: Academic Standards

This evaluation process will consider the student's progress as per the requirements stipulated in the code and ordinance applicable to their degree and level, to determine their eligibility for continued awards of aid.

For undergraduate three-year non-clinical degrees, the criteria for completing each year of study, other than final year, and for progression to the next year/level of study, require a student to:

- Pass (i.e. achieve 40% module mark) all mandatory modules; and
- Pass (i.e. achieve 40% module mark) in modules amounting to 90 credits; and
- achieve at least 40% module marks averaged across all modules and a minimum mark of 35% in all modules.

Students who fail to meet the requirements for progression to the next year of study following re-assessment may be allowed by the Board of Examiners to re-take the modules in the following academic session. Students who fail a year of study on two occasions shall normally be required by the Board of Examiners to terminate their studies.

Where a student has failed up to 15 credits in Year 1 at the resit/re-take opportunity and they have extenuating circumstances in respect of re-assessment, and their average module mark is at least 50%, the Board of Examiners may allow the student to progress to Year 2, carrying the failed 15 credits.

For undergraduate four- and five-year Integrated Master's programmes the criteria for completing the first year of study and progressing to the second are as outlined above. However the criteria for progressing to the third, fourth or fifth year of study may require students to achieve at least 55% or 60% averaged across all modules, depending on the actual programme, at the first attempt. Students who do not meet these progression requirements will be allowed to transfer to the corresponding Bachelor's degree provided that they meet the progression requirements for that Bachelor's programme.

Postgraduate taught degrees are at one academic level (FHEQ level 7) and full time students are expected to complete within 12 months. Student achievement is therefore measured in credit accumulation rather than progression from one level to a higher level of study. The programme completion requirements are described in [the Handbook for Postgraduate Students and in Appendix C of the Code of Practice on Assessment.](#)

Progression requirements for postgraduate research degrees, which are non-credit bearing, are described in the [Handbook for Postgraduate Research Students and Supervisors.](#)

Remedial non-credit courses

The University does not allow recipients of Title IV aid to take non-credit remedial courses.

Impact of Transfers, Withdrawals, Failures, Interruptions and re-assessments on SAP Standing

- Change of major, transfer of credits and module changes for the same grade level will count towards the 150% time frame. Only those credits which count toward the award being sought will be considered for the purposes of Satisfactory Academic Progress.
- Students considering withdrawing from their programme are encouraged to follow the guidance at [Withdrawing from the University](#) to seek advice of the effect withdrawal can have on loans eligibility and repayment options.
- There is no 'incomplete' status at University of Liverpool, rather the student will be given a Fail status for not meeting required threshold and will count toward the maximum timeframe.
- For re-assessments please refer to the chart in Quantitative criteria for impact on the maximum timeframe. Re-assessment grades will be capped at minimum pass mark.

Financial Aid Warning

Failure to achieve Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) at the required standard as per the requirements stipulated in the Code of Practice on Assessment and [Appendix E \(Guide on the Progress of Students on Taught Programmes of Study\)](#), or [Handbook for Postgraduate Research Students and Supervisors](#) as appropriate, and also within the duration and pace noted above, will result in a Financial Aid Warning.

A student who receives a Financial Aid Warning will receive Title IV aid for one further payment period (i.e. the following semester).

At the end of that payment period an assessment will be made to determine if SAP has been made. If the student meets SAP standards they will regain eligibility for the following payment period.

If a student fails to meet SAP standards at this time they will be issued a Notice of Suspension of Aid and advised to submit an appeal.

Appeals

Students who lose eligibility for Title IV aid because they have failed to achieve SAP may appeal if one or more of the following circumstances exist:

- Death of an immediate family member (parent, spouse, sibling, dependent child);
- An extended illness which has resulted in absence from academic activities for at least 15 days;
- The extended illness of an immediate family member that places hardship on the student;
- Mitigating circumstances as determined by the Head of Student Administrative Services.

Students must provide:

- The reason(s) for failure to meet the necessary financial aid SAP requirements;
- Details of the change in circumstances which will allow SAP requirements to be met by the end of the next payment period (i.e. end of the next semester);

- A case as to why financial aid should not be suspended;
- All documentation to support the appeal, which must be submitted to accompany the appeal.

Appeals must be made in writing within ten days of receipt of the Notice of Suspension of Aid and should be addressed to:

Mr Phil Leonard
Head of Student Administrative Services
Student Administration & Support Division
1st Floor, Foundation Building
765 Brownlow Hill
Liverpool
L69 7ZX
Email: p.leonard@liverpool.ac.uk

Financial Aid Probation

An appeal will be deemed successful if the University determines that the student will be able to satisfy SAP requirements by the end of the next payment period (i.e. semester). A student who successfully appeals against the Notice of Suspension of Aid will instead be placed on Financial Aid Probation and will be entitled to receive Title IV aid for one further payment period. At the end of this period the University will again assess whether SAP standards have been satisfied.

Financial Aid Suspension

In the event that a student on Financial Aid Probation fails to meet SAP requirements by the end of the following payment period after being placed on Probation, eligibility to receive further Title IV aid will be suspended until such time as they achieve the required standards.

For further information

If you require further information about the requirements for progression for taught students, please contact Mr Phil Leonard, Head of Student Administrative Services, by emailing p.leonard@liverpool.ac.uk.

If you require further information about the requirements for progression for research postgraduate students please contact the PGR student administration team by emailing pgrs@liv.ac.uk

If you require further information about SAP requirements for Title IV aid recipients, financial aid probation or financial aid suspension, please contact Mrs Maria Muldoon by emailing merob@liverpool.ac.uk