

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

All students applying for or receiving US Federal Aid (subsidized, unsubsidized and PLUS) at Maynooth University must progress satisfactorily towards completion of a chosen academic program.

Maynooth University is required by US Federal law 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.

While in receipt of US federal Aid loan funds for the academic period outlined on the loan application, students are required to be enrolled in their programme and to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress.

### Enrolment

Students are entitled to modify their enrolment within the first two weeks of each semester and retain eligibility for aid, provided they maintain a full-time enrolment. It is an Irish immigration requirement that students must be enrolled as full-time if registered with immigration authorities as a student in Ireland.

### Satisfactory Academic Progress

This evaluation process will consider the students progress under the following categories:

- a. Academic Standing
- b. Maximum Timeframe

#### a. Academic Standing:

A student needs to have an average mark of at least the pass threshold (normally 40%) and have passed the minimum credit value for progression. A normal academic year of full time study over two semesters is 60 ECTS credits. Programmes which involve full time study for the full year (12 months) are normally 90 ECTS credits. A student may be allowed to progress to the subsequent year with a shortfall of up to 10 credits, under certain circumstances. In addition, in most cases where assessment is by written examination, there is an option of a resit examination, normally held in August, which provides an opportunity to remediate a poor result.

Please see the Maynooth University [Marks and Standards](#).

Satisfactory academic standing means that students are required to comply with this standard in each year. **Failure to do so will result in students being ineligible to receive subsequent disbursements of their loan or future loans.**

b. Maximum Timeframe

An undergraduate/ postgraduate student is entitled to receive federal aid for 150% of the published length of the educational program as measured in ECTS credits. See examples below.

- (i) 3 year UG degree - eligibility for aid is 4.5 years
- (ii) 4 year UG degree - eligibility for aid is 6 years
- (iii) 1 year PG degree- eligibility for aid is 1.5 years
- (iv) 2 year PG degree- eligibility for aid is 3 years

Students should be advised that whilst federal eligibility may allow them to continue - individual academic progress rules and student immigration restrictions may impact on the students' ability to continue within the program. A student may repeat a year of study once. A student seeking to repeat a year of study for a second time will be deemed to be not making satisfactory progress for the purposes of US Federal Aid.

Notification of Suspension

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will be assessed for each student at the end of each year, to determine your eligibility for continued awards of aid. Students will be notified in writing if their Financial Aid is suspended. Appeal is possible for verifiable extenuating or unforeseen circumstances. Maynooth University cannot waive the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirement for any student to receive financial aid.

Financial Aid SAP Appeal

Students who have their eligibility for US Federal Aid suspended may appeal the suspension if one or more extenuating circumstances, such as the following exist:

- Death of a family member (parent, spouse, sibling, dependant child etc)
- The extended illness of the student - extended illness as defined as a documented chronic or recurring medical or emotional illness that causes the student to be absent from class at least 15 days or more.
- The extended illness of a family member that places hardship on the student. Immediate family member includes parent, spouse, sibling, dependants
- Mitigating circumstances as determined by the Financial Aid Appeals committee.

All appeals must be received within ten days of receipt of the Notice of Suspension. Students must indicate in writing to the chairperson of the Appeals Committee the reason (s) for failure to meet the necessary Financial Aid SAP requirements and why financial aid should not be suspended. All documentation to support the appeal is required at time of appeal submission. In particular the appeal must include information as to why the student failed to make SAP, AND what has changed that will allow the student to make SAP at the next evaluation.

Student must send appeals to:

- US Financial Aid  
International Office, Humanity House, South Campus, Maynooth University,  
Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland
- Or by email to: USFinancialAid@mu.ie

An SAP Appeals Committee will consider each case and their decision is final.

Appeals will not be accepted in cases where a student is not attempting any new modules, i.e. is registered to just repeats and/or resits.

Note: The SAP policy is separate from academic appeals relating to exam results or test scores. The outcome of a SAP appeal has no bearing on results achieved or grades awarded. SAP decisions are based on official exam results and test scores only. In cases where no scheduled testing occurs during a payment period, SAP is assessed and reported by appropriate members of the teaching staff.

If successful with an appeal students are placed on probation.

#### Financial Aid Probation

To be placed on Probation, a student must:

1. Appeal and have it approved by the University; AND
2. Student expected to be making SAP in next payment period; OR
3. Be successfully following an academic plan designed to ensure student will be able to meet SAP by a specific point in time. A student on Probation may only receive Title IV funds for ONE payment period.

A student on Probation may not receive Title IV funds for the subsequent payment period UNLESS:

1. Student is now making SAP; or
2. Institution determines student met requirements specified by the school in the academic plan and student still covered by academic plan.

SAP will be checked at the end of the probationary period. Students who have been placed on probation and subsequently meet the academic requirements in the next semester will be placed back into good Financial Aid (SAP) standing.

Students will be notified of probation or suspension by letter and/or email.

### Academic Plans

The academic plan is developed by the institution and the student individually. As part of general University procedures programme coordinators reviews student academic progression on an annual basis. Compliance of academic plans may be monitored collaboratively between, but not limited to, the following units:

- Academic Departments
- Programme Co-ordinator

The academic plan must be designed to ensure that the student is able to meet the institution's satisfactory academic progress standards by a specific point in time.

### SAP Evaluations

Each official evaluation will include evaluation of the qualitative (grade-based), quantitative (time-related) and maximum timeframe standards discussed above. Warning and probation statuses only last for one payment period, no matter how frequently SAP is evaluated.