

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) - Follow Rules to Remain Eligible for Financial Aid

What is SAP?

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the federal requirement that students make real and measurable progress toward their degree in order to be eligible to receive federal aid. SAP was created due to increasing accountability for the use of federal, state, and institutional student financial aid funds. Universities and students are required to demonstrate that financial aid funds are being used to assist students in efficiently completing their academic goals. In order to remain eligible for federal, state, and most institutional financial aid, students must comply with the SAP standards represented in the University of Alaska SAP Policy.

All students are monitored for SAP whether or not they applied for or received financial aid during prior semesters. Students are not eligible for federal, state, or institutional financial assistance if they do not meet SAP requirements.

To view your SAP status...

1. Go to [UAOnline Student Account](#),
2. Click on the **Financial Aid** tab,
3. Select **UAA**,
4. Select **Financial Aid Status**,
5. Select the appropriate **Academic Year**.
6. Review your overall financial aid status. Your SAP (academic progress) status will be listed.

What does my SAP status mean?

<u>Status</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Eligible	The student is meeting all SAP standards and is eligible to receive financial aid.
125% Early Alert	The student is meeting all SAP standards and is eligible to receive financial aid. This is an informational status to advise students they are approaching the 150% maximum timeframe for their primary degree program. The student has been placed on financial aid warning for one semester after they failed to meet the GPA and/or the cumulative completion rate standards.
Warning	This warning status allows students to receive financial aid for one additional semester of enrollment without need for appeal or any other action. This gives students an opportunity to rectify their academic progress for the next semester. Students must meet ALL SAP standards by the end of the warning term or have financial aid eligibility suspended. The student has been suspended from receiving financial aid if they did not meet the GPA or cumulative completion rate by the end of their warning semester. The student may have also been suspended for failing to complete their program by the established maximum timeframe.
Ineligible	Students on financial aid suspension are ineligible for federal, state, and institutional aid. The financial aid suspension affects only financial aid and

Status

Definition

does not prevent a student from enrolling and paying for classes on their own. Suspension will persist until the student either reinstates their eligibility or successfully appeals for an exception to policy.

Probation

The student was on financial aid suspension but successfully appealed. Students on probation are eligible for financial aid disbursements but must meet the requirements of their academic plan and the conditions of their appeal until they can reinstate their eligibility. Students who fail to meet the requirements of their academic plan or the conditions of their appeal will be placed back on financial aid suspension.

What are the minimum requirements to be in a status eligible for financial aid?

1. Cumulative grade point average measures quality of course completion by evaluating GPA. The minimum GAPA for undergraduate students is 2.0 (equivalent to a C average) using a 4.0 scale. All credits taken at other UA campuses (UAA, UAF, UAS & PWSC) are included in this calculation.
2. Cumulative completion rate measures pace of completion to ensure students making steady progress toward their degree by completing at least 67% of all their attempted credit hours. For example, a student who has attempted 16 credits must successfully earn at least 11 credits to meet the 67% required minimum completion rate. All credits taken at other UA campuses (UAA, UAF, UAS, & PWSC) are included in this calculation.

Attempted credits include:

-All credits for courses in which a student is formally enrolled at the end of the add/drop period or after. This includes credits taken at the undergraduate, graduate or professional degree levels and credits taken during enrollment as a non-degree student.

-All credits for courses in which the student enrolled but did not complete successfully. This includes incomplete grades, withdrawals, 'F's, and/or courses changed to audit after the add/drop period.

-Transfer credits from another school that are accepted by UAA.

-Credits earned through examination, testing, or other non-standard means that are accepted by UAA.

Earned Credits include:

-All credits completed with grades of 'D' or better, excluding credits for repeated coursework.

-All credits completed with a 'P' passing grade.

-Transfer credits from another school that are accepted by UAA.

-Credits earned through examination, testing, or other non-standard means that are accepted by UAA3.

- The maximum timeframe standard, also known as the 150% rule, stipulates that students will be eligible to receive financial aid only if their attempted credits is equal or less than 150% of the length of their primary degree program. This is measured based on the number of attempted credits the student has taken compared to the number of credits required for their degree. If students changes their degree program, their 150% maximum timeframe determination may also change. All credits taken at other UA campuses (UAA, UAF, UAS, & PWSC) are included in this calculation, even if they do not apply toward the student's current degree program.

The examples shown in the chart below represent minimum requirements for the degree programs listed, and the corresponding maximum **attempted** credits allowed for purposes of student financial aid eligibility.

Degree Program	Credits Required	Maximum Credits
Associate's	60 credits	90 credits
Bachelor's	120 credits	180 credits

Certificates and OEC (Occupational Endorsement Certificates) are based on the same requirement that student eligibility is dependent on maintaining the 150% rule.

When does evaluation and notification happen?

UAA evaluates SAP at the end of each semester after grades are posted. Students are evaluated to determine their financial aid eligibility for the upcoming semester.

Every student who receives financial aid must be making SAP, regardless of whether they are a first-time applicant or have received financial aid in the past. First-time freshman with no prior post-secondary coursework are presumed to be meeting the SAP standards for their first semester of enrollment and will be eligible for financial aid.

Enrollment Status

SAP evaluations are based on the student's enrollment status. Undergraduate students will have only undergraduate coursework counted in their SAP evaluation. Similarly, graduate students will have only graduate coursework counted in their SAP evaluation.

Notification

Shortly after SAP is evaluated, Financial Assistance staff will notify students who fail to meet the minimum SAP standards. Staff will inform students via email to their preferred email address that they have been placed on financial aid warning or financial aid suspension. SAP is evaluated for each student within the UA system regardless of whether they are using financial aid or not.

SAP status can also be found on [UAOnline Student Account](#), under the "Financial Aid" tab under "Eligibility".

How can I appeal my current status or regain eligibility for financial aid?

UAA does not have the authority to waive SAP requirements. However, the UAA Office of Financial Aid may make exceptions to the requirements in individual cases, if the student can demonstrate his or her failure to meet the minimum standard was caused by **exceptional or unusual circumstances**

beyond his or her control. To be eligible for an exception to policy, students must appeal their SAP status.

The Office of Financial Aid will email students notifying them of their status and advising them of their right to appeal while providing a link to the appeal form and instructions. Students may obtain additional copies of the appeal form at the UAA Enrollment Services Center in the Student Union building or from the UAA Financial Aid Forms website.

How can I reinstate my eligibility without filing an appeal?

Students placed on financial aid suspension for failing to maintain the SAP GPA or cumulative completion rate minimums may regain their financial aid eligibility by bringing themselves back into compliance with the SAP Standards.

Students who have exceeded the 150% maximum timeframe requirement cannot regain eligibility through the reinstatement process.

Also note that students may not re-establish their financial aid eligibility by successfully completing a few classes or by leaving school for a period of time. However, students may appeal their SAP status based on exceptional circumstances or act to reinstate their SAP eligibility by succeeding with coursework sufficient to meet the minimal SAP standards.

How to file a SAP appeal:

If you are a student who would like to appeal your financial aid suspension you must complete the following process:

1. Meet with your academic advisor. Your academic advisor will help you create a plan for success including a degree plan in *DegreeWorks* and will discuss with you how to complete the appeal form. Advisors will assist students by:
 - Reviewing and/or helping students to complete the appeal form
 - Helping students create a strategy for success by identifying the needs of the student and assist them in creating a strategy to help them return to good standing. This may include putting the student in contact with the various Student Resources [UAA Student Resources](#).
 - Creating a degree plan which will be saved into *DegreeWorks* for later reference
 - Establish an ongoing relationship to support the student's continuing academic endeavors since it is critical that students meet with their advisor prior to withdrawing from a course, or otherwise altering their registration because this can impact their appeal and/or their status while on probation
2. Complete the appeal form (located by academic year under [UAA Financial Aid Forms](#))
 - Students are required to clearly explain and document the reasons they failed to meet the minimum SAP requirements and to explain their plan for reinstatement. Required documentation depends upon each student's specific reasons for insufficient SAP and must originate from an objective "third party" perspective.
 - Be sure to read, initial and sign where appropriate.
 - Request that your advisor sign page 2 of the appeal form.
 - Include a detailed statement describing the reasons for failing to meet the minimum SAP requirements. Be specific and concise in your explanation since incomplete information may cause a denial or a delay in the review of your appeal.
 - Include a detailed explanation of the measures you have taken to ensure that your academic performance will improve and/or actions you have taken to correct the

circumstances that prevented your prior lack of academic progress. For example, if you are appealing due to an illness, you must explain why the illness you experienced will no longer affect your ability to succeed.

- You may use extra pages if necessary.
- Attach supporting documentation. Documentation should confirm your circumstances and include some sort of time frame. Examples of documentation include:
 - Doctor's letters
 - Court documents
 - Death certificates
 - Obituary
 - Please note, letters of support from friends or family members are not sufficiently objective and will not be considered.

1. Once completed, you or your advisor may submit the appeal packet in one of the following ways:

- Fax to (907) 786-6122, "Attention: SAP Appeals"
- Scan and email to [UAA Financial Aid](#).
- Mail to the Office of Financial Aid, SAP Appeals, University of Alaska Anchorage, 3211 Providence Drive, ESC, Anchorage, Alaska 99508

What are acceptable circumstances?

It is the responsibility of the student to demonstrate that his or her failure to meet the minimum standard was caused by exceptional or unusual circumstances beyond his or her control. Examples of extenuating circumstances include:

- Personal injury or illness
- The death of a relative
- Unexpected military deployment
- Other special circumstances outside the student's control

Students who choose to appeal and do so successfully will be placed on probation. Students whose appeals are not approved will continue on financial aid suspension and may need to consider other ways of funding their education.

What are unacceptable circumstances?

Circumstances commonly experienced by most students will not constitute unusual circumstances and such appeals will not be approved. For example, the following scenarios are generally NOT extenuating circumstances and are not an acceptable justification for appealing:

- Youthfulness, immaturity, or lack of focus
- Difficult coursework or attempted too many credits and could not handle the workload
- Conflicts between student and instructor(s)
- Transportation issues
- Poor time management
- Financial aid processing late or delayed

- Medical reasons that were known to the student prior to the start of the semester, unless he or she can document unforeseen complications
- Work conflicts, unless the student can document an unexpected, unavoidable, and involuntary change to his or her work schedule that directly hindered academic success
- Lack of childcare, unless the student can document an unexpected, unavoidable, and involuntary change to his or her childcare situation along with an explanation of how it prevented the student from succeeding and why it could not be resolved in a timely manner

What is the appeal time frame?

Allow 30 days from receipt of your completed appeal packet for the Office of Financial Aid to carefully review your appeal. You will be notified of the decision by e-mail to your preferred email account. Complete appeal forms and attached documentation must be received no later than two weeks prior to the end of the semester for which you are appealing.

Incomplete appeals may result in processing delays or the denial of your appeal.

Students are responsible for satisfying any tuition and fees that are due prior to the results of your appeal. Approval is not automatic and not guaranteed. It is in your best interest to submit the appeal form and required documentation as soon as possible.

What happens if my appeal is approved?

Students who successfully appeal their SAP status will be placed on financial aid probation and must comply with the requirements of their academic plan as stipulated in the UAA SAP Policy. Students must maintain:

- A 100% semester completion ratio (i.e., successfully completing all classes attempted)
- A minimum semester GPA of 2.0 for undergraduates or 3.0 for graduates

In addition, students are expected to comply with the conditions of their appeal:

- Follow the degree plan saved in *DegreeWorks*
- Meet with their advisor to update their degree plan as necessary
- Take only courses required for their degree
- Other conditions as stipulated

Students on probation will be evaluated each semester to ensure they are adhering to their academic plan. Financial Aid will not be disbursed until this is done.

What happens if my appeal is denied?

If a student's appeal is denied, and he or she feels that their circumstances were not accurately represented and merit further review, the student may submit an appeal to the Director of Financial Aid within 30 days after their appeal was denied. It is the responsibility of the student to submit additional information that may assist with explaining the circumstances for which he or she was not able to maintain SAP. The Director will review the secondary appeal and notify the student of their decision. The decision of a secondary appeal is final.

Students who did not submit or receive an approved secondary appeal may continue enrollment at UAA without financial assistance or with the assistance of an alternative student loan from a private lender.

Secondary Appeals may be:

- Fax to: (907) 786-6122, Attention Director of Financial Aid
- Scan and email to [UAA Financial Aid](#), Attention: Director of Financial Aid
- Mail to: University of Alaska Anchorage, Attn: Director of Financial Aid, 3211 Providence Drive, ESC, Anchorage, Alaska 99508