

## **Federal Aid - Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

All students in receipt of U.S Federal Aid are required to make satisfactory progress through their academic programme. In registering, students agree to be bound by the University's Academic Regulations and associated policies and procedures. A student's Satisfactory Academic Progress will be reviewed annually. These Regulations incorporate the key progression criteria and are summarised below. Full Regulations are available here: [Academic Regulations](#)

The payment periods for Undergraduate and Postgraduate students will be divided into two separate disbursements per academic year. The periods will coincide with each Academic term for Undergraduate students, and at the start of the academic year and the academic year mid-point for Postgraduate students.

Students on taught programmes are expected to be in attendance at the University for the full duration of each term of their programme. All seminars, tutorials and other small-group classes are compulsory. Any student who wishes to be away for a short period during term time must have a good reason, and must first obtain the consent of their department and the UKVI Team. Students away through illness must inform their department and each member of academic staff leading the compulsory sessions from which they are absent.

Regular absences without prior approval, or evidence of illness, will result in students being called to a meeting with their course team, to enable them to seek support in order to improve their attendance patterns. Unsatisfactory attendance after the meeting may lead to exclusion from the University which will result in the withdrawal of Federal Aid.

Please refer to the University's [Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy](#) for further information.

### **Qualitative Requirements (Grades)**

To maintain eligibility for Federal Aid students must maintain progression through their programme as per the University's progression requirements. Information on academic progress can be found online at: [Academic Progress](#)

Students who meet the progression criteria are placed in good standing for Federal Aid. Students on undergraduate degree should maintain at least a Lower Second Class grade (40% cumulative grade) and students on a postgraduate taught course should maintain at least a pass grade (40% cumulative grade). This is broadly equivalent to a GPA of 2.0. Those that are unable to meet the progression criteria, and subsequently drop below half-time, will become ineligible for Federal Aid during the period of repeat study.

### **Quantitative Requirements (Pace)**

#### **Maximum Timeframe**

For students to remain eligible to receive the Federal Aid they must progress through their course within the maximum timeframe. Federal regulations stipulate that their degree may not exceed 150% of the length of their programme. For example, 360 credits x 150% = 540 attempted credits to include transfer credits is Maximum Timeframe.  $360 \text{ credits} / 540 \text{ credits} = 66.67\%$  (usually rounded to 67%) is the pace of completion. As a rule, Maximum Timeframe and Pace of completion should align on a cumulative basis each evaluation. Examples of maximum timeframes are below:

Degree and course length	Credits for completion	Maximum Timeframe	Pace
Undergraduate 3 years	360	540 credits (4.5 years)	67%
Taught Masters 1 year	180	270 credits (1.5 years)	67%
PhD 3 years	N/A	4.5 years	N/A

*Students must also be studying at least half-time in order to be eligible for Federal Aid.*

Periods of suspension from a course will not be included in the maximum timeframe. *Please note*, you will become ineligible for Federal Aid as soon as it becomes clear that you will exceed the maximum timeframe to complete your programme of study and NOT at the point when you actually reach the maximum timeframe. The Student will be notified by email if they do not meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements by the end of the Academic Year.

### **Recording Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Students who fail to make Satisfactory Academic Progress will have their student record amended accordingly, and these records are referred to before any loan funds are released to a student. Federal Aid may be suspended if the student does not make Satisfactory Academic Progress. The table below shows the status codes that may be used on the student record, and the implication for eligibility for Federal Aid.

Status Code	Progression Status	Eligibility for Federal Aid	Impact on SAP Measurement if there is a change to enrolment/interruption of studies
REG	Registered	Eligible	N/A
REG	Registered, repeat units (half-time or above)	Eligible	Yes, any credit hours already completed (including repeat units) would be counted in the quantitative standard (pace).
CBR	Interrupted	Ineligible	If a student is interrupted during the academic year, any credit hours completed would be counted in the quantitative standard (pace). The period while suspended would not be counted towards the quantitative standard (pace).
WDR	Withdrawn	Ineligible	If a student withdraws in the middle of the academic year, any credit hours completed would be counted in the quantitative standard (pace). SAP will be measured each term.  For Example: If a student were to withdraw in the middle of the term you will be given a pace of 0 per cent.  In order to determine SAP the School is required to look at the students' cumulative pace.

Credits can be transferred from another institution and count towards the SAP. The credits will need to have been 'completed' not attempted and will be recorded as such.

### **Appeals**

To appeal the suspension of Federal Aid, a student must, within 14 calendar days of notification, submit a signed and dated letter of appeal explaining why their Federal Aid should be reinstated to the Direct Loans Team ([directloan@port.ac.uk](mailto:directloan@port.ac.uk)) detailing the grounds for appealing their Federal Aid suspension.

A student may appeal due to an emergency condition (e.g., health, family catastrophe etc) and state what has changed in their situation that will allow them to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress at the next evaluation date. Documentation verifying their circumstances may be requested. This appeal will be reviewed and a decision made and sent to the student within 14 calendar days of the formal appeal being received. If an appeal is approved then the student will be reinstated. ***All decisions made are final.***

### **Probation**

A student can be placed on probation if an appeal against the suspension of their financial aid has been submitted or an appeal has been approved. The probation period will last no longer than one payment period. After this probation period, if the student meets SAP they will become eligible. If the student does not meet SAP they will become ineligible.

Please be aware, this guidance is entirely separate to the requirements to remain on your program of study. It does not influence the outcome of your course. If you fail to make Satisfactory Academic Progress you may be re-admitted onto your program of study but may still be ineligible for U.S Federal Aid.

If you have any questions regarding this guidance, please email: [directloan@port.ac.uk](mailto:directloan@port.ac.uk)