



UNIVERSITY OF
CHICHESTER

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY
FOR STUDENTS RECEIVING U.S. FEDERAL AID**

Last reviewed: October 2023

Policy Owner: Chichester International Advice (Financial Aid Team), international@chi.ac.uk

All students in receipt of U.S. federal aid (Subsidised, Unsubsidised and PLUS) must make satisfactory academic progress to remain eligible to receive their loans. U.S. Federal regulations require that the University checks the students' progress at regular intervals. This policy explains how SAP is measured and reviewed and what happens if a student fails to meet the SAP requirements.

How to measure SAP?

- Qualitative standard (results)
Students must achieve minimum standards as required by the academic department and academic standing consistent with graduation requirements.
 - Undergraduate students require a pass mark of 40%.
 - Master's students require a 'pass' mark.
 - PhD students' progression milestones are monitored by the postgraduate research team. Students are required to demonstrate satisfactory progress as outlined in the postgraduate research students' handbook.

Degree classification for undergraduate study are as follows:

- First-class Honours (70% and above)
- Upper-Class Honours (60-70%)
- Lower Second-Class Honours (50-60%)
- Third-Class Honours (40-50%)

Degree classification for postgraduate (MA/MSc) study are as follows:

- Distinction
 - Merit
 - Pass
- Quantitative standard (pace)
Students must complete their educational programme within a timeframe no longer than 150% of the published length as measured in credits.

Pace of progress is calculated as follows: The number of credits required to complete the degree programme divided by 1.5 times the published length of the programme.

E.g. an undergraduate student on a three year degree programme requiring 360 credits is allowed to take 4.5 years (3 years x 1.5) to complete their studies. The student would be expected to have achieved an average of at least 80 credits per academic year to be progressing at an acceptable pace ($360 \div (1.5 \times 3) = 80$).

Examples:

Degree type & standard published programme length	Credits	Max. timeframe & minimum credits
Bachelor's degree 3 years	360 credits in total. 120 credits per level.	4.5 years. Minimum 80 credits per academic year. Maximum 540 attempted credits in total.
Master's degree 12 months	180 credits in total. Each postgraduate stage is worth 60 credits.	18 months. Minimum 120 credits per academic year. Maximum 270 attempted credits in total.
PhD 3 years	No credits. Progression is measured through reaching milestones which lead to successful completion of studies and publication of thesis.	4.5 years. Credits n/a.

Any period of study in which a student did not receive U.S. federal aid will also count towards the maximum timeframe. Students should also remain enrolled at least half-time in order to remain eligible for federal aid.

Examples of changes and how they impact on SAP:

Change to enrolment	Impact on SAP measurements
Period of approved suspension including maternity/paternity/adoption leave	Does not count towards SAP measurements
Change of programme of study	Does not count towards SAP measurements, unless elements contribute towards the new programme of study.
Transfer of credits	Counts towards SAP measurements. If credits are for the same grade level they will count towards the 150% timeframe.

Repetition or reassessment due to academic failure (module repetitions + examination resits)	<p>Counts towards SAP measurements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students resubmitting work or resitting exams, but are not in attendance are not eligible for aid. • A student who is required to retake modules or retake a year and is attending at least half time will be eligible for aid subject to meeting the SAP standards.
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How SAP is reviewed?

Both, the qualitative and quantitative standards, are reviewed at each evaluation point. For students on degree programmes lasting one year or less (e.g. some postgraduate degrees*), SAP is evaluated towards the end of each payment period.

For students on programmes lasting more than one year, SAP is evaluated annually at the end of each academic year, once the Board of Examiners have met. The Board of Examiners is responsible for determining students' onward progression in accordance with University's Academic Regulations, which are available on the University's website: <https://www.chi.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-statements/academic-quality-and-standards>

PhD students' progress is evaluated at the following points, as outlined in the Higher Degree Regulations.

1. Research approval
2. Annual review
3. Major review
4. Thesis submission
5. Viva examination
6. Successful completion examination

Chichester International Advice liaise with Academic Registry, assessment office and the relevant academic department(s) to assess whether a student meets the SAP standards.

*The University of Chichester course dates and semester dates are available here: <https://www.chi.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/course-semester-dates>

See Appendix A for further information on SAP review points.

What happens if a student fails to meet SAP?

If a student fails to meet SAP standards they will be notified that they are ineligible for further disbursements of U.S. student loans. Eligibility can be regained by submitting a successful appeal to be placed on probation or by taking action that brings them into compliance with the SAP standards in the subsequent years.

Financial Aid Warnings

Please note that we do not use Financial Aid Warnings. You will be notified if you do not meet the SAP standards and given information on how to appeal.

How to Appeal?

A student may appeal on the basis of injury, illness, death of a relative or other special circumstances. The appeal must be submitted within 14 days of notice of suspension and it must explain why the student failed to make SAP and what has changed in their situation that will allow them to make SAP at the next evaluation point. Documentary evidence to support the appeal will be required e.g. medical certificate, death certificate etc. Appeals should be submitted to: Chichester International Advice (international@chi.ac.uk).

Meeting SAP standards in subsequent years

If a student does not appeal the decision or the appeal is unsuccessful, they can, in subsequent years meet SAP requirements, and regain eligibility for aid. It is the student's responsibility to notify Chichester International Advice team that SAP requirements have been met and to apply for US Direct Loans. Chichester International Advice will verify SAP requirements have been met prior to originating any US Direct Loans.

Please note: students who exceed 150% of the published length of their programme are no longer entitled to receive Federal Aid.

How a student can bring themselves into compliance with the SAP standards - examples

Reason for not meeting SAP standards	Action to take to bring them into SAP compliance
The Board of Examiners do not allow progress to next level of studies due to too many failed modules (irrevocable fails).	A student is required to repeat modules/retake a year/part year before being able progress to the next level.
A student is required to re-sit an exam of re-submit an assessment (first time).	A student is required to pass a re-assessment(s)/re-sit(s) before being able to progress with their studies. If the student is not required to attend any taught sessions, the student is not eligible for aid until reassessments/resits are successfully completed.

Unsuccessful appeal

If the appeal is unsuccessful, the student will be ineligible for further disbursements of federal aid until they take action to bring themselves into compliance with the SAP standards.

Successful appeal

If the appeal is successful, and the outcome is that the student should be able to meet the SAP standards by the end of the next payment period, the student will be placed on probation for the duration of the next payment period. Students can be placed on probation for one payment period after which their progress is reviewed. If the student is not meeting the SAP standards, they will not be eligible for further disbursements of federal aid until they take action to bring themselves into compliance with the SAP standards.

If the appeal outcome is that the student will need 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 put in place to support the student. This will be done in consultation with the student's academic adviser and/or head of department. If the student meets the academic plan requirements they will be eligible to receive U.S. loans as long as they continue to meet those requirements. If the student fails to meet

the requirements of their academic plan they will no longer be eligible for federal aid until they take action to bring themselves into compliance with the SAP standards.

Further information:

Students with questions regarding the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy can contact Chichester International Advice (international@chi.ac.uk) or visit: www.studentaid.ed.gov

Appendix A

SAP review points explained

SAP review points depend on the programme level, length, start date, the payment period end date or the date that the board of examiners meet to agree on progression.

Undergraduate (September start) 3-year degree – SAP is evaluated at the start of the course and annually after the BOE meet in the summer (June – July).
BOE decision confirm SAP.

Postgraduate (September start) up to 1 year – SAP is first evaluated at the start of the course and then evaluated at the end of each payment period = before next disbursement is due:

- Start of first Semester (payment period starts): Sept/Oct (Chiview registration check)
- Start of second Semester (1st payment period ends): January/February (SAP form*)
- After the Spring break (second payment period ends) March/April. (SAP form*)
- Start of new academic year (third payment period ends): September/October (Chiview registration check)

*Student's academic department confirms SAP by completing a SAP progress form.

Postgraduate (January Start) up to 1 year – SAP is first evaluated at the start of the course and then evaluated at the end of each payment period = before next disbursement is due:

- Start of first Semester (payment period starts): January /February (Chiview registration check)
- After the Spring break (1st payment period ends): March/April (SAP form*)
- Start of the next academic year (second payment period ends): September/October (SAP form*)
- Start of Second semester (third payment period ends): January/ February (Chiview registration check)

*Student's academic department confirms SAP by completing a SAP progress form.

Postgraduate (any start time) longer than 1 year -SAP is evaluated at the end of each academic year after the Board of Examiners meeting. BOE meetings are held throughout the year:

- Postgrad. September start – interim board in Feb/March and final board in September or February/March depending on start/end date (SAP form*)
- Postgrad. January start – Interim board in September and final board in Feb/March or June/July depending on start/end date (Chiview registration check)

Interim BOE decision is confirmed by the academic department by completing a SAP progress form.
Final BOE decision is confirmed by the BOE.

PhD students

PhD students' progress is evaluated at the following points, as outlined in the Higher Degree Regulations.

1. Research approval

2. Annual review
3. Major review
4. Thesis submission
5. Viva examination
6. Successful completion examination

In addition to above points, we have an academic concern process that will be followed if a student is not engaging/progressing in their studies. In addition to above points, we have an academic .SAP is confirmed by checking Chiview status (Full time) before each disbursement.