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Document title: **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) STANDARDS FOR FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY AND SAP APPEALS**

Approval date: **April 2017**

Purpose of document: To ensure students receiving federal funds are aware of SAP Standards for Financial Aid eligibility and SAP appeals

Office/department responsible: Office of Student Financial Affairs and Scholarships

Approved by: Brian MacDougall - Executive VP for Administration & Finance

Document classification level: **PUBLIC**

Document accessible: <http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/university-policies>

Document includes: **Policy**

Related documents/see also:

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**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) STANDARDS FOR FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY AND SAP APPEALS**

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**Policy Statement**

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Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) represents an acceptable level of performance in meeting degree requirements within specific time periods. Students maintain SAP by meeting the requirements of the Academic Regulations published on the university website. U.S. students who borrow federal loans have an additional level of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) that they should maintain to keep their eligibility for federal loans and instructions for appeals.

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**Reason for Policy/Purpose**

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To ensure students receiving federal funds are aware of SAP Standards for Financial Aid eligibility. The FAO review for SAP is done in accordance with the U.S. Title IV regulations with the purpose of ensuring that students not achieving SAP, do not receive financial aid, and to reinstate financial aid when the student regains satisfactory academic progress status.

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**Who Approved This Policy**

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Brian MacDougall –  
Executive VP for Administration & Finance  
April 2017

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## Who Needs to Know This Policy

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Students who should be aware of the policy, and AUC faculty and staff who review the SAP standards for financial aid borrowers.

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## Web Address for this Policy

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<http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/university-policies>

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## Contacts

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Responsible University Official: Ania Rejman,

Responsible University Office: Student Financial Affairs and Scholarships

If you have any questions on the policy or procedure for SAP policy and Appeals, you may:

1. Call Ania at 212-730-8800 or
2. Send an e-mail to [arejman@aucegypt.edu](mailto:arejman@aucegypt.edu)

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## Definitions

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| Term (alphabetical order) | Definition as it relates to this policy |
|---------------------------|---|
|                           |   |

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## Policy/Procedures

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### SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) STANDARDS FOR FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY

#### Satisfactory Academic Progress Overview:

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) represents an acceptable level of performance in meeting degree requirements within specific time periods. Students maintain SAP by meeting the requirements of the Academic Regulations published on the university website <http://catalog.aucegypt.edu>. Students are urged to become familiar with the rules and regulations which are available in the catalog. The Registrar's office as well as the Financial Aid Office (for borrowers) evaluates each student's academic progress at the completion of each semester.

Students who are U.S. student loan borrowers have an additional level of SAP which must be reviewed by the Financial Aid Office (FAO) at the end of each semester/payment period and prior to the disbursement of funds. This review is done in accordance with the U.S. Title IV regulations with the purpose of ensuring that students not achieving SAP, do not receive

financial aid, and to reinstate financial aid when the student regains satisfactory academic progress status.

#### **Title IV Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

Title IV SAP (T4 -SAP) is reviewed separately from the academic progress reviews. At the end of each semester the Financial Aid Office reviews borrower's academic transcripts to determine if the student is maintaining satisfactory academic progress. The review includes both qualitative and quantitative elements measuring whether the student can successfully complete the degree program within 150% of the published length of the program.

The reviews are handled for each group of students as follows:

Undergraduate 1<sup>st</sup> year students with no previously attempted post-secondary coursework are considered as meeting SAP for their first semester.

Graduate Students with no transfer coursework being applied to their graduate level transcript are considered as meeting SAP during their first semester.

Continuing Students, Returning Students and Transfer Students have their last semesters transcript reviewed to determine if they are making SAP.

#### *Evaluation Based on Qualitative and Quantitative Criteria:*

There are two criteria a student must satisfy in order to be viewed as making T4 -SAP: Qualitative (Grade Point Average), Quantitative (Attempted Credit Threshold) which includes a measurement of the pace on which the student is progressing through their program.

All non-remedial institutional and transfer coursework including repeated courses, attempted by the student regardless of whether or not the student received U.S. Financial aid for the coursework are included in the FAO's SAP review. Repeated courses and courses with grades of Incomplete or Withdrawal while may not be included in cumulative GPA, are included in the student's attempted credit total for the determination of Pace and Attempted Credit Threshold.

**Qualitative Standard:** The qualitative standard measures whether the student has achieved the minimum cumulative Grade Point Average required to make satisfactory academic progress toward the degree. AUC's students must have achieved a cumulative average of at least a "C". Grades not included in the Grade Point Average are:

|    |                         |
|----|-------------------------|
| P  | Pass                    |
| F  | Fail                    |
| I  | Incomplete              |
| S  | Satisfactory            |
| U  | Unsatisfactory          |
| W  | Withdrew                |
| AU | Audit                   |
| IP | Incremental/In Progress |

*GPA: Grade Point Average is the quotient obtained by dividing the total quality points by the total quality hours. A “C” Grade Point Average (2.00) is the academic standard required to graduate from the American University in Cairo.*

**Quantitative Standard/Attempted Credit Threshold:** The number of credit hours for which a student may receive U.S. Federal Aid may not exceed 150% of the credit hours required to complete the degree. The quantitative measure evaluates the student’s pace of progression through the education program within the maximum timeframe. The pace of progression is calculated by dividing the cumulative course credits that the student has successfully completed by the cumulative course credits that the student has attempted. Students are subject to a pace of progression rate of 66.67%.

### **Consequences of Failure to Maintain T-4 SAP**

**Warning Status:** *The first time a SAP review finds the student has not maintained T4 -SAP, the student is given the status of “Financial Aid Warning” and may continue to receive one U.S. federal loan disbursement. However, the student is expected to meet the minimum standards (2.0 GPA and a minimum 66.67% overall completion rate) by the end of the warning semester in order to continue to receive financial aid. Failure to meet the minimum standards after a warning semester results in termination of eligibility for Direct Loans.*

**Termination of Eligibility** The Financial Aid Office will send the student written notification (in most cases by email) that their eligibility for Direct Loans has been terminated in the following cases:

- Students that fail to meet the requirements of the warning or probation status.
- Students that may be readmitted or a first-time applicant whose prior coursework is below the minimum SAP threshold, and thus ineligible for U.S. Federal aid unless the student submits a successful appeal.
- Students that have exceeded the maximum time frame limits for the degree.

### **Financial Aid SAP Appeal Process:**

In some cases, students whose aid eligibility has been terminated may apply for reinstatement on a probationary basis by submitting a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal in writing to the Executive Director of Student Financial Affairs and Scholarships, Sohair Saad at ssaad@aucegypt.edu

- Death of a relative
- Personal injury or illness
- Other extraordinary circumstance
- Documentation that the standards are now being met

Students receiving aid on a probationary basis may be required during the probation period and subsequent semesters to maintain compliance with an academic plan developed with their academic advisor during the appeal process.

Appeal results will be determined and communicated to the student within approximately 14 days after the appeal has been received. Students submitting a SAP Appeal will be responsible for all financial obligations made to the University, regardless of whether this appeal is approved or denied.

Students who have their aid eligibility suspended after a probationary period may re-appeal and receive probationary eligibility status again only if NEW extenuating circumstances which are unique from the previous appeal can be documented as existing and now resolved.

Students whose current appeal has been denied are encouraged to submit an appeal for a future term only if there is significant improvement in performance since the previously denied appeal and they appear able to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress standards within their maximum timeframe.

### **APPEALS INSTRUCTIONS FOR FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

Students who receive a letter terminating their eligibility for U.S. Direct Loans due to lack of Satisfactory Academic Progress must submit a written letter of appeal directly to the Executive Director of Student Financial Affairs and Scholarships. Letters must be submitted to the following email address: [ssaad@aucegypt.edu](mailto:ssaad@aucegypt.edu)

#### **Please consider the following points when submitting your appeal letter:**

1. A student whose aid eligibility has been terminated may apply for reinstatement on a probationary basis by submitting a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal letter to the Office of Student Financial Affairs & Scholarships.
2. Appeals are accepted for the following conditions only.
  - Death of a relative
  - Personal injury or illness
  - Other extraordinary circumstance
  - Documentation that the standards are now being met
3. Students **MUST** submit documentation to support the appeal. In most cases, documentation must verify (1) the dates that the extenuating circumstance occurred/existed and (2) that the extenuating circumstance has been resolved to such an extent that it will no longer impact academic performance.
4. Appeals may be submitted during the first half of the semester for which reinstatement is being sought. Appeal results will be determined and communicated to the student by email within approximately 14 days after the appeal has been received with all appropriate documentation.
5. Students submitting a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal will be responsible for all financial obligations made to the University, regardless of whether this appeal is approved or denied.

6. Students receiving aid on a probationary basis through the appeal process may be required to maintain compliance with an academic plan assigned at the time the probationary status is granted. Failure to comply with the assigned academic plan will result in termination of future aid eligibility.
7. Students who have their aid eligibility terminated after a probationary period may re-appeal but will only be assigned probationary eligibility status if NEW extenuating circumstances which are unique from the previous appeal can be documented as existing and now resolved.
8. Students whose current appeal has been denied are encouraged to submit an appeal for a future term if there is significant improvement in performance since the previously denied appeal and they appear able to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress standards within their maximum timeframe.

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**Forms/Instructions**

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**Related Information**

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**Appendices** *(optional)*

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**History/Revision Dates**

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Origination Date: April 3, 2017

Last Amended Date: April 3, 2017

Next Review Date: August 1, 2017