

# Financial Aid Policies: Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

## Overview

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) represents an acceptable level of performance in meeting degree requirements within specific time periods. It is used in both academic evaluation and determination of financial aid eligibility. In order for students to maintain eligibility for financial aid at the Medical University of Silesia, they are required to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress.

Academic Progress standards established by the University and published in the University Study Regulations are applied to all students, including foreign students enrolled at the Medical University of Silesia in Katowice. We urge students to become familiar with the Study Regulations which are available on the school's website. It is the duty of the Teacher's Board to evaluate students' academic progress at the completion of each academic year. Appeals to their decisions are handled by the Dean as described in the Study Regulations.

It is the duty of the Financial Aid Office (FAO) to track students' satisfactory academic progress at the end of each semester (payment period) to ensure that students who are not achieving Satisfactory Academic Progress do not receive financial aid, and to reinstate financial aid when the student regains satisfactory academic progress status.

There are three criteria a student must satisfy in order to be viewed as making Satisfactory Academic Progress, for financial aid. The criteria are as follows:

- **GPA** – defined as the minimum cumulative GPA a student must earn.
- **PACE** - defined as the percentage of a student's total attempted hours the student must earn.
- **ATTEMPTED CREDIT THRESHOLD** (also known as TIMEFRAME) – defined as the maximum number of credits a student may attempt in pursuit of completing their degree program.

### **FAO's SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS STATUS:**

As SAP status is re-calculated at the end of each semester, students should review their academic progress in their Student's Index Book and Students Periodic achievement card. Students who are not meeting SAP criteria will be sent an email from the FAO, informing the student of how their status impacts their eligibility for aid. With this in mind, students are advised to monitor their email for communications from the Financial Aid Office regarding changes in their eligibility.

## FAO's Satisfactory Academic Progress Reviews

Academic Progress for financial aid recipients will be reviewed each at the end of each semester.

- **Undergraduate Freshman Students** with no previously attempted post-secondary coursework will be considered to be meeting SAP during their first semester at MUS.
- **New Graduate Students** with no transfer coursework being applied to their graduate level will be considered to be meeting SAP during their first semester.
- **Continuing/Returning/Transfer Students** will have their Satisfactory Academic Progress based on the most recent term listed on their transcript for their current academic level. The review will be based on all institutional and non-remedial transfer coursework attempted by the student at their current level, regardless of whether or not the student received aid for the coursework attempted.

## FAO's Satisfactory Academic Progress Criteria Standards

**Grade Point Average (GPA):** *Students must achieve a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 numeric grade (verbal - satisfactory) at the end of each semester.*

Consequence of Failure to Meet GPA Criteria Standard:

- Students who fail to meet the GPA standard of progress will be placed on a Financial Aid Warning and receive one semester of financial aid disbursement during that semester.
- Failure to achieve the criteria's 3.0 GPA at the end of the Financial Aid Warning semester will terminate the student's aid eligibility until the student regains satisfactory academic progress. Students may appeal the decision to terminate aid and if approved, may be placed on financial aid probation for an additional semester. See Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal section below.

**Pace:** Students must progress through their degree program at a pace that ensures they will meet the maximum credit threshold timeframe allowed. In order to meet the SAP requirement that students complete their coursework within a 150% timeframe, students must have earned a minimum of 67% of the total cumulative credits attempted in their current level at the end of each semester. This percentage is determined by dividing the total number of credit hours earned by the total number of credit hours attempted. All non-remedial institutional and transfer credits attempted by the student at their current level are included in determining pace.

**Consequence of Failure to Meet PACE Criteria Standard:**

- Students who do not meet the PACE criteria and do not qualify for "Financial Aid Warning" status (based on the criteria below) will have their financial aid eligibility

terminated. If eligibility is terminated, the student may apply for reinstatement on a probationary basis through the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal process described below.

- A status Financial Aid Warning for one semester will be assigned to any student who:
  1. Does not meet the PACE criteria but
  2. Meets both the GPA and Timeframe criteria
  3. Are mathematically determined to be able to meet the PACE criteria within their maximum timeframe, and
  4. Were determined to be meeting all Satisfactory Academic Progress criteria in their prior review.

The student on “Financial Aid Warning”, will be eligible to receive aid for that semester.

**Timeframe/Attempted Credit Threshold:** A student can only spend a specific amount of semesters to complete the program. A student may be given permission of the Dean to repeat a semester or year of study only once during the whole study period in case of undergraduate and graduate studies. This Study Regulation ensures a student to meet the requirement of completing their program within 150% of the M.D. programs instructional time. However, it is important to note that repeated courses negatively affect the SAP Timeframe since only one attempt may count as earned towards degree, both attempts count against the maximum number of credits the student may attempt in pursuit of completing their degree program.

### **Consequence of Failure to Meet Timeframe Criteria Standard**

- Students in the Medical University of Silesia M.D. program will be determined to be ineligible for aid due to violation of the maximum timeframe criteria if they (1) have an attempted credit total in their current level which exceeds their maximum timeframe or (2) are determined to be unable to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards within their maximum timeframe.

### **Coursework included in FAO’s Satisfactory Academic Progress Reviews**

Reviews for the GPA, PACE, and Timeframe Criteria will be based on all combined institutional and transfer credits attempted by the student at their current level.

**Remedial Coursework:** Remedial coursework is excluded from the Satisfactory Academic Progress review process.

**Repeat Courses:** Repeated Courses are included in the student’s attempted credit total in evaluating PACE and Timeframe. Repeated courses affect the Pace and Timeframe calculations by reducing the student’s completion percent. Although both attempts of a repeated course will be counted in the attempted hours total, only the repeated attempt will be counted in the earned hours total.

***Incomplete, Withdrawn Courses:*** Courses with grades of Incomplete or Withdrawal are included in the student's attempted credit total in PACE and Timeframe.

**Transfer credits:** Excessive transfer credits may cause students to reach their maximum attempted credit timeframe and lose eligibility, prior to earning their degree.

#### **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS APPEAL PROCESS:**

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 Aid. 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

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.

Appeal results will be determined and communicated to the student by mail (or email) within approximately 14 days after the appeal has been received with all appropriate documentation. 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.

Students receiving aid on a probationary basis through the appeal process are 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. Students who have their aid eligibility terminated after a probationary period may re-appeal to again be assigned probationary eligibility status 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 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.