

Guidelines for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for Federal Financial Aid Eligibility

Federal regulations require students receiving Federal Student Aid to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward a degree or certificate in order to be eligible to receive Federal aid. Federal Financial Aid includes Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Work Study, Veteran (VA) Benefits and Federal Direct Student Loans.

Progress will be measured at the end of each semester according to three factors:

- 1) a semester and cumulative grade point average (GPA);
- 2) completion of credit hours; and
- 3) the time frame allowed for completing a certificate or degree.

SAP Requirements:

1. GPA - A minimum 2.0 GPA measured **by semester and cumulative credit hours**. After a student has completed 12 credit hours at HCC, all transferred hours, except for developmental and audit hours, are counted in a student's GPA. Developmental hours are included as hours paid and passed, but are not calculated in the GPA. Audit hours are not considered for financial aid. An incomplete grade ("I") present on the student's record at the time of review will be calculated as an "F" until the incomplete grade is updated.

2. Minimum Completion Rate - Students must complete 66.67% or 2/3rd of all hours attempted. This will be measured **by semester and cumulative credit hours**. Completion rate is calculated as follows: Hours Completed / (divided by) Hours Attempted x (multiplied by) 100. This number is rounded two decimal points out. For example: 70.155% = 70.16% and 70.154% = 70.15%

3. Maximum Time Frame 150% - Two-year degree seeking students may not receive financial aid for more than 150% of the required hours to complete a degree. The chart below gives a breakdown of the maximum number of credit hours a student may take before losing eligibility for financial aid.

Type of Degree or Certificate	Credit Hours Required	150% of Credit Hours Required
Certificate A	30	45
Certificate B	45	68
Certificate C	55	83
Associate	60-68	90-102

Returning Students

A student's SAP status and prior history with Highland Community College remains on the student's record and will be counted toward the student's Satisfactory Academic Progress calculations.

Good Standing Status

Good Standing is defined as meeting all three of the above SAP requirements.



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Warning Status

Students who have been in good standing but fail to meet the minimum SAP requirements in the most recently completed semester will be placed on Warning for the following semester of attendance. Students on Warning will continue to be eligible for Federal Financial Aid. At the end of the Warning semester, students who do not return to Good Standing status will be placed in Financial Aid Ineligible status.

Financial Aid Ineligible Status

Financial Aid Ineligible means a student's eligibility for Federal Financial Aid has been suspended due to not making Satisfactory Academic Progress. Suspension from Federal Student Aid will occur if a student on Warning does not meet the requirements for Good Standing. Suspension will also occur if a student has exceeded the Maximum Time Frame of 150%.

SAP Appeals

Any student placed on Financial Aid Ineligible Status may submit an appeal. To appeal the student must complete the online form at <https://highlandcc.edu/pages/sap-appeal-form>. Students requesting an appeal must provide the reason(s) for not meeting SAP requirements and the changes made in his/her life to now be able to meet those requirements. Documentation to support the reason(s) must be included.

Examples of reasonable appeal requests include, but are not limited to, death of a close relative, injury or illness of the student, family difficulties such as divorce or illness, or other situations beyond a student's control.

The SAP appeal is reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid. Any appeals denied by the Director go to the Financial Aid Appeal Committee for a secondary review.

A student with an approved appeal will be notified in writing to his/her student issued e-mail account and will be placed on "Probation" for the semester in which the appeal was approved. A student whose appeal was denied will be notified in writing to his/her student issued e-mail account of the committees' decision and the reinstatement process.

The deadline to submit a SAP Appeal (and Academic Plan if applicable) is the first day of the student's classes in the semester for which the student wishes to receive financial aid. Any Appeals received after that date will be considered as submitted for the next semester.

SAP Probation

As part of the SAP Appeal process, a student who is granted a successful appeal is placed into SAP Probation status. There are two levels of SAP Probation.

- SAP Probation with an Academic Plan
- SAP Probation without an Academic Plan



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SAP Probation with an Academic Plan

If the SAP Committee determines the student cannot meet SAP requirements after one semester OR feels the student would benefit from an Academic Plan, the student's appeal may be approved with the requirement of an Academic Plan. The student must meet with his/her advisor to develop an Academic Plan for the next semester of attendance. The Academic Plan is unique to each student and may include, but is not limited to the following items: requirements to enroll in fewer credit hours, stipulations for enrollment in only certain classes, a specified GPA and/or Completion Rate, and/or a required number of hours in tutoring.

All requirements of the Academic Plan will be communicated with the student and must be agreed to by the student. A student is required to follow the Academic Plan in its entirety in order to remain in SAP Probation status and receive Financial Aid. If a student does not complete the Academic Plan or does not fulfill any portion of the required actions, the student's Academic Plan will be voided and the student will no longer be eligible for Federal Financial Aid until back in SAP Good Standing. Examples of reasons the Academic Plan may be voided include changing degree programs, not enrolling in the semester for which the Academic Plan was intended or not meeting the requirements of the Academic Plan.

The deadline to submit an Academic Plan to the Financial Aid office is the first day of the student's classes in the semester for which the student wishes to receive financial aid.

SAP Probation without an Academic Plan

If a student is placed on SAP Probation without an Academic Plan, the student is eligible to enroll in classes that go toward his/her degree program and receive financial aid for one additional semester. At the end of the semester, the students' academic progress will be reviewed again. If the student meets all SAP Requirements, the student will be placed back into SAP Good Standing and may continue to receive financial aid. If a student does not meet SAP requirements by the end of one semester, the student will be placed back into Financial Aid Ineligible Status. A second SAP appeal cannot be submitted in this situation. The student must return to Good Standing status in order to receive Financial Aid in the future.

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