



Federal Financial Aid SAP Appeal FACT Sheet

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What is Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)?

Federal regulations require all students to meet specific academic criteria prior to receiving Federal Student Aid (PELL, FSEOG, Federal Work Study, Federal Perkins Loan and/or Federal Direct Loans). This is known as Satisfactory Academic Progress or SAP and refers to the level of progress a student is making towards their academic goal of completing their program of study.

What is a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal?

SAP Appeals are an option available to students who have not met the standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress. An appeal can be on the basis of personal injury, illness, death of a relative, or other extenuating circumstances (such as loss of employment, and/or changes in the academic program, etc). The appeal must explain why you failed to make satisfactory progress and what has changed in your circumstances that will now allow you to make satisfactory progress in the near future.

How do I submit the SAP Appeal?

To be able to complete the SAP Appeal, you must first complete the **2026-2027 FAFSA Application**. This can be done at <https://studentaid.gov/> After 3-5 Business Days when successfully completed, this information will cross over to CUNYFirst allowing you to use Student Forms to submit your appeal. You will sign in with your CUNYFirst credentials here to submit: <https://cuny-hos.studentforms.com/>

Why do I have to submit a SAP Appeal?

There are 3 components to the federal Satisfactory Academic Progress standard. Failing to meet just one component is enough to be placed on Financial Aid probation.

1. Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA)

You must achieve the GPA required to meet the college’s minimum retention standard. This means that you cannot be on Academic Probation or Academic Dismissal. It is weighed using the credits attempted against the current GPA.

Cumulative Credits Attempted	Minimum Cumulative GPA
0.00 – 12.50	1.50
13.00 – 24.50	1.75
25.00 – Upward	2.00

2. Pace of Progression

You must successfully complete a certain percentage of the total number of credits that you attempt according to the chart below.

Credits Attempted	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72	78	84	90
Credits Earned	0	2	4	6	13	19	23	27	33	39	44	49	55	61

3. Maximum Time Frame

A student may not attempt more than 150% of the credits normally required for the completion of the degree. For example, if your major requires earning 60 credits, you may attempt no more than 90.

Writing Tips for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal

If you have difficulty submitting the SAP Appeal, please visit our computer lab.

1. Personal Statement – Explain the Circumstances

Write at least five sentences explaining the extenuating circumstances that caused you to not meet SAP.

- Provide a concise explanation of the extenuating circumstances that were out of your control, that affected your academic performance.
- Describe how these factors had a direct impact on your academic performance (be specific)
- How much of the semester was affected by these circumstances?
- Were there any extenuating circumstances that affected your ability to focus or complete assignments?
 - Family Circumstances, Work/Life Balance, Legal Issues, Health & Medical etc.
- Did you seek help from your professors, advisors, or anyone on campus? If not, why?
- If you performed well in other courses but not a specific course, be very clear about what factors influenced your performance in that specific course and why others were not affected.

2. Academic Plan – Plan to Succeed

Write at least five sentences explaining the steps you will take to meet SAP in the future.

The Academic Plan does not need to be created with your academic advisor.

- If the problem was resolved, what, if anything changed allowing you to succeed now?
- What changes have you made, or plan to make to overcome the challenges you faced?
 - Share the steps that you are taking now and any action that you will take to prevent this from happening again
- What resources on campus do you plan to use to improve your academic standing?
 - Office Hours, Tutoring, Personal Advisement, HALC, ARC etc.

3. Supporting Documentation – Proof of Circumstances

Upload a PDF document with dates and/or legal verification to support your Personal Statement.

If there is no applicable document, provide a statement explaining why instead as your supporting documentation.

- Be mindful that the documentation must coincide with the duration of the semester being appealed.
 - For example, for the Spring 2026 semester the documentation must be between when the semester began (January 26, 2026) and when it ended (May 26, 2026)
- Supplied documentation **must include dates and/or legal verification**. These include:
 - Family Circumstances – Birth/Death Certificate, Legal Report, etc.
 - Medical – Letter from Doctor, Counselor, Therapist, etc.
 - Accident – Police Report, Medical Documentation, etc.

Please note: Submitting incomplete documentation may result in delays in processing and/or denial of your appeal.

Why Did My Submission Get Rejected?

**A section of the appeal being rejected is not the same as the appeal itself being denied.
It is an opportunity to revise the submission.**

- If the personal statement includes the phrase “Personal Issues” but does not explain the circumstances nor how it affected you, it will be rejected.
- If the Personal Statement and Academic Plan are too short, and do not adequately explain what the respective sections require, it will be rejected.
- If the Personal Statement & Academic Plan are too vague, or it has been submitted in a previous SAP Appeal, it will be rejected.
- If the supporting documentation is outside the range of the related semester, and there is no connection between that document and the circumstances presented within the personal statement, it will be rejected.
- If the supporting documentation is a blank document, it will be rejected.
- All 3 Parts of the SAP Appeal must be properly submitted. If 2 or less are, it will not be reviewed as it will be treated as an incomplete submission.