



Title: #VI-10B. Financial Aid Appeal for Students Not in Compliance with Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Standards

Date: June 15, 2023

Statutory Guidance

Federal regulations, HEA Sec. 484(c), 34 CFR 668.16 and 34 CFR 668.34 and state policies require schools to establish written appeal procedures to be followed when a student fails to meet the minimum standard of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). West Virginia University at Parkersburg (WVUP) allows students to appeal for eligibility reinstatement after failing to achieve the SAP standard for two consecutive semesters or continuation of federal and state financial aid eligibility past their enrolled program's maximum timeframe allowance. Appeal criteria, requirements, and documentation expectations are defined below.

Appeal Submissions Deadlines

- **July 15** – Deadline to submit SAP appeal to receive aid for the fall semester
- **December 31** – Deadline to submit SAP appeal to receive aid for each spring semester
- Students on financial aid suspension for grade point average and/or completion rate deficiencies at the end of the spring term cannot appeal to attend summer courses due to their condensed structure. The student may elect to attend summer courses if they pay all costs with funds other than financial aid funds. Additionally, the student may appeal to be reinstated for financial aid in the fall term.

Appeal Form

[A Financial Aid Suspension Appeal Form](#) is available on the college's Financial Aid webpage. Completion of this form is the first step in the financial aid appeal process.

SAP Appeals Process

All students who have their financial aid eligibility suspended due to failure to meet SAP may appeal to the Financial Aid Office to have their financial aid eligibility reinstated in subsequent semesters. Failure to comply with an academic plan is automatic grounds for suspension. An appeal must be based on extenuating circumstances or a situation that prevented the student from completing/passing their courses, or that required they withdraw from classes. A work conflict, transportation issues, difficulties adjusting to college, repetitive withdrawals and/or failures are not extenuating circumstances. The appeal should include:

- A detailed explanation of the extenuating circumstances that occurred during the specific semester in which the student failed to meet the SAP standards.
- All necessary documentation to support the existence of the circumstances described (examples would include letter from doctor, clergy, professional, therapist, etc. or an, obituary, police report, etc.) and evidence that the circumstances have been resolved.
- Incomplete appeals will not be reviewed. If additional information is required, an email will be sent to the student's WVUP email account. After 30 days being incomplete, the appeal may be denied.
- All documents received with the appeal form become the property of the Financial Aid Office. Students are advised not to submit originals.
- Once all required documentation is submitted, students will be notified electronically of the outcome of their appeal.
- All appeal decisions are final.

Academic Plan Submission

All students must submit an academic plan as part of their SAP appeal. Students with a grade point average or completion rate deficiency will develop their academic plan with the help of their academic advisor. Plans for students with a maximum timeframe issue will be developed by the Financial Aid Office. The academic plan should include information printed from MyDegree and may only include the courses needed to graduate with a degree in the student's current program of study. The academic plan requires the student to list their registered courses for the semester and agree to completion of those courses (no withdrawals, incompletes, or failing grades). A minimum grade of C or better must be listed for each course on the academic plan. A review of the academic plan will be conducted by a financial aid staff member at the end of each semester. If the student is adhering to the plan and making successful progress, their eligibility will remain intact. An academic plan can include no more than three semesters, but it is possible for an academic plan to be approved for fewer than three semesters.

Appeal Decisions/Timeline

Students should allow up to 3 weeks for a decision to be received on their appeal. The appeal will be communicated via email with a status of either *Denied*, **or** *Approved for Financial Aid Probation with a requirement to submit Academic Plan*.

- An appeal is good for a period of one to three probationary semesters only, which means that the student is eligible to receive one to three semesters of funding while on the Academic Plan.
- If the student is not enrolled in the semester for which the Financial Aid Probation with a requirement to submit Academic Plan was assigned, when the student returns they must develop a new Academic Plan and meet with a financial aid counselor before financial eligibility will be restored.
- If a student receives approval for an appeal based on exceeding the maximum number of credit hours in their program, the approval will allow them to receive aid under the terms of an Academic Plan developed by the Financial Aid Office
- At the financial aid counselor's discretion, the number of hours in which a student is permitted to enroll may be reduced.

- An appeal may be approved only if the school has determined that the student will be able to meet the minimum SAP standards after successful compliance with an approved Academic Plan. Approval of financial aid based on appeal is normally approved one time during a student's academic career at WVUP. If a student has not achieved the minimum SAP standards after the the completion of the Academic Plan period, the student will be placed on suspension and ineligible for aid until the minimum SAP standards are met.
- During the evaluation of the student's appeal the financial aid counselor may, at their discretion, use professional judgment to consider on a case-by-case basis the length of time since the student last attended a higher education institution and/or their pattern of recent academic performance . If a student has not attended WVUP for more than two academic years but can demonstrate consistent work experience to establish that they possess a minimum level of reliability and commitment and/or demonstrate improved academic performance it may serve as evidence that the student has refocused and recommitted to finishing their degree program.

Responsible Administrator: Director, Financial Aid, 304-424-8310