

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Standard

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS STANDARD (SAP)

The United States Department of Education (ED) requires that all students must be enrolled in an eligible program for the purpose of completing an ADT/AA/AS Degree, transfer requirements, or certificate program. Students applying for federal, state and institutional aid must have their academic progress reviewed to determine if Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) has been achieved. RCCD treats all students the same for SAP determination regardless of program of study or enrollment status. ED requires that students who apply for financial aid meet two standards.

Qualitative Standard

All students at Riverside Community College District (RCCD) must have a Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0.

Quantitative Standard

All students must complete their program of study within a certain number of units and complete a certain percentage of units attempted in order to make progress toward their goal. There are two parts to this standard:

- 1. Pace of progression:** Students must complete at least 67% of the total (cumulative) units attempted. For example, a student has attempted 20 units at Riverside City College. They successfully completed 13.5 of those units. Their completion would be 67.5% (units completed divided by units attempted equals completion percentage— $13.5 \div 20 = 67.5\%$). Students who do not meet the pace of progression may lose eligibility for most types of financial aid.
- 2. Maximum Time Frame:** The Maximum Time Frame for completion of a degree or certificate is 150% of the published length of the program. All units attempted at RCCD, as well as any applicable transfer and accepted units, will be included since the Maximum Time Frame is based upon units attempted. A student can receive financial aid for a maximum of 150% of the published length of the program. For example, if the published length of a degree program is 60 units, the student may receive financial aid for up to 90 attempted units ($60 \text{ units} \times 150\% = 90 \text{ units}$). If the published length of a certificate program is 40 units, the student may receive financial aid up to 60 attempted units ($40 \text{ units} \times 150\% = 60 \text{ units}$). If students are unable to finish their program within the Maximum Time Frame, as explained, they may lose eligibility for most types of financial aid.

Evaluation

All students, regardless if they are Title IV or non-Title IV recipients, will be evaluated at the end of each semester to determine if they are meeting the standards listed above.

Grade Standards

All semester units at RCCD include:

- Attempted units include: A, B, C, D, F, EW, CR, P, NC, NP, FW, W, I, IB, IC, ID, IF
- Completed units are units with a grade of: A, B, C, D, CR, P
- Applicable transfer units from other institutions will be included in the SAP calculation
- AP credits, Credit for Prior Learning, Articulated Exam Credits and College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) credits will be included in the SAP calculation
- Courses in which a student receives a grade of F, NC, NP, FW, EW, W, I, IB, IC, ID and/or IF will not be counted as completed units for satisfactory academic progress purposes, but will be counted as attempted units.
- Courses in which a student receives an EWC will not be counted as for satisfactory academic progress purposes.

Only practicum/labs that are required, recommended or academically beneficial should be taken at the same time as the corresponding course.

Grade	Definition
F	Fail
NC	Non-Credit
NP	No Pass
FW	Failed withdrawal
W	Withdrawal
I	Incomplete
IB	Incomplete B
IC	Incomplete C
ID	Incomplete D
IF	Incomplete F
EW	Withdrawal due to Extenuating circumstances
EWC	Withdrawal due to COVID related Extenuating circumstances

Repeated Courses

Repeated course units will be counted in the pace of progression calculation as attempted units. When courses are repeated, only the earned units associated with the higher grade will be counted in the pace of progression calculation as completed units. If both grades are equal, only the earned units from the earlier course will be included as completed units in the pace of progression calculation.

Adding and/or dropping units after the first disbursement will require a review and possible adjustment of any future disbursements. Financial aid follows all Title IV regulations for repeated courses and IP grades.

Regaining Eligibility

Students may reestablish eligibility for financial aid by meeting the GPA and Pace of Progression requirements prior to exceeding Maximum Time Frame or after a successful appeal is granted. If a student regains eligibility by meeting SAP requirements after review, the student will be notified via email of their updated eligibility.

SAP Statuses

SAP Satisfactory (SA): A student is meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress as long as the student maintains a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (Qualitative Standard), a Pace of Progression percentage rate of 67% (Quantitative Standard) and the student has not exceeded the Maximum Time Frame of their selected program of study (Quantitative Standard).

SAP Warning (WA): Students failing to meet SAP will be placed on a one semester “Warning,” which will allow students to receive financial aid even though they are not meeting the SAP standard(s). If after the “Warning” semester, students are still not meeting the SAP standard, they will become Ineligible. Students who have exceeded the 150% Maximum Time Frame do not receive a Warning semester. Students are notified via email of their warning status.

SAP Warning Students’ Responsibilities

Students on Warning Status are encouraged to meet with an academic counselor to complete an official and current two-year Academic Plan (AP)/Student Educational Plan (SEP)/Academic Evaluation (AE) on file (within the last year). To schedule an appointment to meet with an Academic Counselor to complete an SEP, contact the RCC Counseling department at (951) 222-8440. Students on financial aid Warning status will continue to receive certain types of financial aid during the Warning period. Warning status students must improve their academic standing. Students who do not meet the SAP standard(s) after their Warning period will be determined ineligible for financial aid.

SAP Ineligible (IN): A student can become Ineligible for two reasons:

1. Student failed to meet SAP standards after their “Warning” semester and/or
2. Student exceeds the 150% Maximum Time Frame of program of study under the quantitative standard.

Students that become ineligible will receive an SAP Ineligible notification indicating they did not meet satisfactory academic progress standards and, therefore, will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid (with the exception of the California College Promise Grant). Students will be provided with an option to appeal within the information provided on the notification.

Appeal Process

Students with an SAP Ineligible status can Appeal this status.

Appealing due to not meeting the GPA and/or Pace of Progression Standard: In order to appeal, the student must have extenuating/mitigating circumstances that occurred during the period that the student did not meet SAP and must document those circumstances. To appeal, the student must document the circumstance(s) for not meeting SAP and must submit official documentation online, via the FA portal at <https://rcc.studentforms.com> or in person at the Student Financial Services office.

Examples of extenuating/mitigating Circumstances that must be supported by providing official documentation may include but are not limited to:

- Death of a relative or significant person
- Documented illness, major accident or injury of yourself or an immediate family member, pregnancy or birth of a child
- Victim of a crime
- Homelessness
- Loss or change in employment, transportation
- Natural disaster

Steps to appeal online at <https://rcc.studentforms.com> include:

- SAP Appeal web form:
 - Statement from the student explaining the extenuating/mitigating circumstances that caused the student to not meet SAP AND
 - Statement from the student explaining what has changed to allow the students to now meet SAP standards
- Official 3rd Party documentation verifying the student's extenuating/mitigating circumstances
- Official two-year Academic Plan/Student Educational Plan/Academic Evaluation (current within the last year)
- Proof of Completed SAP Online Appeal Session (Completion Certificate or Email Confirmation)
- Download, sign and upload the Probation Contract

Appealing due to exceeding Maximum Time Frame Only:

Students who have exceeded the Maximum Time Frame must have one of the following valid reasons:

- One time change of program of study after student has completed one major/goal.
- Returned for a second goal
- Completed ESL courses
- Completed Basic Skills courses
- High unit majors (Nursing, Vocational Nursing...)
- High unit transfer majors (Math, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, Engineering...)
- Completed Military or AP courses/credit

Steps to appeal online at <https://rcc.studentforms.com> include:

- SAP Appeal web form with a statement explaining the valid reason for exceeding the Maximum Time Frame
- Official two-year Academic Plan/Student Educational Plan/Academic Evaluation (current within the last year)
- Proof of Completed SAP Online Appeal Session (Completion Certificate or Email Confirmation)
- Download, sign and upload the Probation Contract
- For the 3rd party documentation: upload your Student Educational Plan

For additional information or assistance with submitting an appeal, visit the Student Financial Services office.

NOTE: Submission of an appeal does not guarantee that a student will regain financial aid eligibility. Students must submit their appeal to RCC only. The financial aid SAP Appeal Committee will review the validity of the documentation presented for extenuating/mitigating circumstances and connection to the timeframe in which the student did not meet SAP. After reviewing the appeal, the SFS committee will render a decision, and the student will be notified in writing/email of the decision.

Each student who is approved, is placed on a “probationary” period. Students will have an **official Approved Class List** developed, which will outline the courses for which the student may receive financial aid.

Incomplete appeals will receive notification via email regarding more information needed to complete the SAP appeal process. If your appeal is denied, you can request a 2nd review by contacting the Student Financial Services office.

SAP Probation (PE): Students will be placed on Financial Aid “Probation Status” only if their SAP Ineligible status is approved through the appeal process. Students on Probation must meet SAP standard(s) each semester, beginning with the semester of approval, in order to maintain their Probation Status.

- Approved Class List: Probation students will only receive financial aid for courses that are listed on their Approved Class List (ACL), which is created from the student’s official Education Plan submitted during the appeal process. If an appeal is submitted and approved, funding will be disbursed for the semester in which they were approved and applicable future semesters. Eligibility for federal, state and institutional aid will be determined after the appeal has been approved and the appeal contract is received by Student Financial Services. No retroactive disbursements will be granted.
- Continued Probation status: if you complete the term with a 2.0 GPA and 67% pace of progression (units attempted vs completed) for that term, your appeal will be automatically continued without further action.
- Loss of Probation status: If students fail to complete the term with a 2.0 GPA and 67% pace of progression (units attempted vs completed) for that term, they will lose their probation status and become ineligible to receive financial aid. Students can regain eligibility by:
 - Bringing their SAP up to Qualitative Standard of 2.0 GPA and Quantitative Pace of Progression of 67% completion rate prior to exceeding the Maximum Time Frame OR
 - By submitting an additional appeal request if the student had **new** extenuating/mitigating circumstances occur during the term they were on Probation.