Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) is required by US Federal Law (34CFR 668.16) to define and enforce standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for students who wish to access US Federal Aid. Students attending GSA, who are in receipt of Federal Aid, are required to make satisfactory progress in their degree program. Student's progress will be checked annually and prior to releasing second/third disbursements.

SAP guidelines have been established to encourage students to progress and successfully complete the academic programme for which aid is received. SAP is used to measure if a student is progressing adequately towards completion of his/her program of study.

Detailed information regarding US Loans is provided to all new students prior to enrolment and is published on the GSA website:

- https://gsadocuments.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/New-borrowers-US-Federal-Loans-at-GSA-2627.pdf
- https://www.gsa.ac.uk/study-at-the-gsa/student-support

At GSA, students must comply with the Regulations as set out in the document 'University of Glasgow/Calendar – Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates Awarded in Conjunction with the Glasgow School of Art':

- https://www.gsa.ac.uk/study-at-the-gsa/validation
- https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/policy/regulations-current/gsa/

Further details on the GSA regulations on academic progress can be found in the Code of Assessment:
https://gsadocuments.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Code-of-Assessment.pdf

Students receiving US Federal Loans must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress throughout the loan period in order to receive all of the instalments of their loans for that period and in order to continue receiving loans in subsequent loan periods, where applicable.

This definition of SAP may be different from other GSA policies and is not a replacement for GSA academic regulations. Satisfactory Academic Progress means that a student is proceeding in a positive manner toward fulfilling programme requirements and involves two standards; qualitative and quantitative. Students must meet both standards to continue receiving US Federal Loans and this policy applies to all Title IV students regardless of level or mode of study. This SAP policy applies to undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD students.

SAP Evaluation and Review

International students at GSA in receipt of a UK Student Visa are subject to regular monitoring of their attendance in accordance with the UK Government's immigration rules:
https://gsadocuments.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/UKVI-Student-Visa-Policy-1.pdf

Attendance is monitored for all GSA students in line with the GSA Student Absence & Attendance Policy:

https://gsadocuments.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Student-Absence-and-Attendance-Policy.pdf

GSA's Title IV SAP policy applies the same rules for students enrolled on the same programme but not receiving Title IV Aid, however, students who do receive Title IV Aid are subject to additional checks on their progress prior to disbursements 2 and 3 during the academic year.

Students who fail to make satisfactory progress will be contacted in writing. Students placed on a warning or suspended status will be notified of this prior to disbursement 2 or 3.

Students receiving Title IV funds, have their attendance and enrolment status checked monthly.

Quantitative Criteria: Pace and Progression - Maximum course completion timeframes -

Students must complete their course at a pace which ensures that they will graduate within the maximum permitted timeframe.

US Federal regulations for undergraduate students specify that the maximum timeframe for progression may not exceed 150% of the published length of the programme as measured in credit hours. For postgraduate programmes the maximum timeframe is based on GSA's maximum permitted registration period

Standard Published Programme Length	Programme Length in credit hours	Maximum Programme Length in credit hours (@150%)	Maximum GSA Period of Registration	Maximum Federal Timeframe for Completion
4-year undergraduate degree	480	720	6 years	6 years
12-month postgraduate taught degree	180	270	2 years	N/A
24-month postgraduate taught degree	240	360	3 years	N/A
Postgraduate research degree (PhD)	N/A	NA	48 months	N/A

To continue to be eligible for Financial Aid, students must maintain a minimum cumulative completion rate of 66.7% as calculated by dividing the number of completed credits by the number of attempted credits in order to meet SAP maximum completion timeframes.

The quantitative standards for Title IV loans Satisfactory Academic Progress may be stricter than those applied to other students (i.e. those not receiving loans) as the US Department of Education requirements have priority in regard for Title IV loans.

Qualitative Criteria: Academic Standards

In order to maintain eligibility to receive US Federal Loans with the qualitative standard, a student must maintain the academic standing necessary to remain enrolled. The evaluation process will consider the student's progress as per the requirements stipulated in GSA's academic regulations. Students must achieve a cumulative minimum of 40% (D pass) [equivalent to US GPA 2.0 or Grade C] for their programme and a 40% (D pass) each course module over the academic year, in order to successfully complete the year/semester and to continue to make Satisfactory Academic Progress.

This minimum standard must be met prior to a payment period and disbursement. Academic progress checks are made in-year for students in receipt of US Federal Aid prior to disbursements two and (for postgraduate students) three, with Programme Leaders required to confirm in writing that students continue to make satisfactory academic progress according to the programme requirements and the Title IV Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements.

Students must enrol at the start of the academic year and for semester 2 and 3 students must provide completed Progress Review/Attendance Forms, signed by their Academic Department confirming the student has made satisfactory academic progress in line with the GSA Code of Assessment and the Title IV Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements. These Progress Review/Attendance Forms will be crossed referenced with the GSA Academic Records system for each official Satisfactory Academic Progress evaluation.

To ensure prompt payment to the student, the Progress Review/Attendance Form should be returned to USLoans@gsa.ac.uk no later than 3 weeks before the start of each semester. This will allow payments to be made within 2 weeks of the start of each semester.

In general, no academic extensions beyond the notified submission deadline are allowed and students who submit work late will be deemed to have failed that particular assessment unless they complete a Good Cause (extenuating circumstances) Form and follow the procedures outlined in GSAs Code of Assessment.

For programs greater than two academic years, the Satisfactory Academic Progress qualitative measure will be assessed at the end of each academic year as well as in-year.

At the end of the academic year, students may be withdrawn from their programmes if they have not passed each of their semesters due to failed assignments throughout the year. Depending on circumstances, students may be offered the chance to re-submit work or they may be allowed to repeat the year.

Please note, that while a student may maintain their eligibility for US Federal Aid, institutional academic progress rules and student visa restrictions may impact your ability to continue with the programme. Conversely, a student may lose eligibility for US Federal Aid and still meet the institutional requirements for continue enrolment.

Impact of Transfers, Withdrawals, Failures, Interruptions and Reassessments on Satisfactory Academic Progress

Accepted transfer credits are counted as both attempted and completed credits for purposes of calculating quantitative Satisfactory Academic Progress. Only those credits which count toward

the award being sought will be considered for the purposes of Satisfactory Academic Progress and will impact on qualitative considerations.

Students considering withdrawing from their programme are encouraged to seek advice from the Student Welfare Service and consider the effect withdrawal can have on loans eligibility and repayment options. Withdrawal from a programme will impact on both quantitative and qualitative Satisfactory Academic Progress. Withdrawal from individual modules is not normally permitted at GSA and would impact on both quantitative and qualitative Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Students who cease attendance without formally notifying GSA may be treated as unofficial withdrawals for Title IV purposes. In such circumstances GSA will determine the withdrawal date based upon the last date of academically related activity.

There is no 'incomplete' status at GSA, rather the student will be given a Fail status or Credit Refused (depending on the proportion of assessment which has been completed, as defined by the Code of Assessment) for not meeting required threshold and will count toward the maximum timeframe.

If you fail an assessment you may be provided an opportunity to re-take that assessment later in the same academic year. This is permissible within this Satisfactory Academic Progress policy. You must have passed or be predicted to pass the retake by the SAP evaluation at the end of the academic year, in addition to any other assessments that may normally be due. Retaking assessments the same academic year will not have any immediate effect on the quantitative measure of progress but may be taken into consideration for the final assessments in the relevant academic year.

If you fail a full academic year (e.g. through failing several course components) you may be provided with an opportunity to repeat the following academic year, at the discretion of the relevant academic department/Registry. This is permissible within this Satisfactory Academic Progress policy. You will be placed on a Financial Aid Warning Status based on your original academic progress, which will be lifted assuming you make Satisfactory Academic Progress by the following evaluation.

Re-assessments must be completed within the maximum timeframe permitted for the programme. Grades points from reassessment will be capped at minimum pass mark. Re-assessments will impact on qualitative considerations of Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Re-assessment examinations-only students (re-sit without attendance) are not eligible for any Title IV loans for the duration of the examinations-only enrolment period (usually one full academic year) and the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy will therefore not apply.

Failure to Make Satisfactory Academic Progress

SAP is formally evaluated at the end of each payment period. If a student fails to make satisfactory academic progress they will receive a Financial Aid Warning. This warning will last for one payment period (i.e. until the next disbursement), during which time the student can still receive financial aid. Student Welfare will notify in writing any student being given a Financial Aid Warning.

If you have been placed on Financial Aid Warning you will have your SAP evaluated at the next evaluation point. If at the next evaluation point, the student regains satisfactory academic progress the next disbursement will be released and the student will be removed from the Financial Aid Warning status. If the student fails to regain Satisfactory Academic Progress by the next disbursement due date, they will no longer be eligible for Financial Aid (unless the student successfully appeals) and funds will not be disbursed. Students will be notified in writing prior to the expected disbursement date.

GSA does not have the right to waive the satisfactory academic progress requirement for any student. However, an appeal may be submitted. A student can appeal the decision within 14 days of being notified that their aid has been suspended, by submitting a letter to the Student Support Services Manager explaining why they did not meet SAP (e.g. injury, illness, family reasons, bereavement or other special circumstances) and the circumstances that have changed to enable them to now meet the requirements. The Student Support Services Manager will discuss this with the appropriate Programme Leader/ Head of School and a decision and response will be sent to the student within 14 days.

If the appeal is unsuccessful, the student is no longer eligible for federal financial aid with immediate effect. If the appeal is successful the student is placed on Financial Aid Probation. They will be given an “academic plan”: specific requirements to meet e.g. resitting and passing exams/submitting dissertations/making up lost module time, regular tutorial meetings etc. Students will remain on Financial Aid Probation for 1 payment period, or longer if required by the academic plan. SAP will be evaluated at each payment period. Eligibility for financial aid will continue while on Financial Aid Probation and following an academic plan. An Academic Plan is a documented set of requirements developed by GSA Student Support, Programme Leader and the student that, if followed, will ensure the student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time.

If the above specific appeal requirements are not met then the student will again become ineligible for financial aid and will be notified in writing.

Copies of all SAP evaluations, warning notices, probation decisions, appeals and academic plans will be retained on the student's Title IV file in accordance with federal record retention requirements.

Re-establishing Title IV Funds

Where a student has failed to achieve the required standard of academic progress and subsequently becomes ineligible to receive US Federal Aid, they may once again become eligible providing they have met the required standard of academic progress for the subsequent period of payment. The student will remain eligible providing the required standard of academic progress is maintained. Should the student fail to achieve the required standard of academic progress in future payment periods, they will be subject to the Financial Aid Warning process as described above.