



# SPECIAL ALERT

STATE OF  
CALIFORNIA



## Update from the California Student Aid Commission

July 18, 2024

GSA 2024-49

TO: Financial Aid Administrators

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SUBJECT: **Cal Grant Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards**

This Special Alert from the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) provides an update to [GSA 2024-06](#) regarding the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards for Cal Grant participating institutions as a result of [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 789](#).

### **AB 789 amended CA Education Code [Section 69432.7\(l\)\(4\)](#):**

Starting in the 2024-25 academic year, Cal Grant participating institutions are required to develop and implement policies that define SAP in a manner consistent with the federal standards published in Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Students who are deemed as not meeting their institution's SAP standards during any two consecutive academic terms or one year of enrollment must have their Cal Grant and federal financial aid terminated unless they successfully appeal that determination.

### **Institutions must also comply with all the following requirements for Cal Grant eligibility:**

- Set the Grade Point Average (GPA) and pace of completion standards at the minimum federal standards determined by [Section 668.34\(a\) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) and evaluate based on cumulative measures.
- Provide students with information about the institution's SAP standards and financial aid appeals process during new student orientation. Include student-friendly language on the school's website and financial aid award letters about SAP and the appeals process. Request faculty to include student-friendly language in course syllabi about SAP and the appeals process.
- Notify students when they have not achieved SAP standards following each enrollment term, regardless of the frequency at which "satisfactory academic progress" is formally evaluated.

- Not require students to satisfy minimum GPA and pace of completion standards for each individual term.
- Exclude remedial coursework (if applicable) from maximum timeframe calculations.
- Allow students who fulfill the terms and conditions of the student's academic plan to remain on "financial aid probation" and continue to receive financial aid.
- Only include credits from other institutions that count towards the student's current program of study when calculating the max timeframe for transfer students.
- Accept both electronic and hard copy financial aid appeals for any student who is ineligible to receive financial aid due to not meeting SAP.

**Requires the following criteria for financial aid appeals when SAP is not met:**

- Allow students to appeal during any subsequent term following loss of financial aid eligibility. Institutions must not limit the total number of appeals throughout the duration of the student's enrollment.
  - Institutions may limit the number of appeals per term, but each appeal that is denied must be accompanied with a written notice to the student, detailing how to request a second review. Institutions must not impose an appeal submission deadline earlier than three weeks before the end of each term.
- Allow a student who previously disenrolled while being ineligible to receive financial aid to appeal the loss of financial aid upon reenrollment, and subsequently qualify for reinstatement upon the first term of reenrollment (if they qualify).
- Notify a student who is ineligible to receive financial aid with written notice of the financial aid appeals process, including the process for a student to file an appeal, information about the second review process for an appeal that is denied, and how to request a second review.
- Institutions may consider additional special circumstances pursuant to CA Education Code [Section 69432.7\(l\)\(4\)\(H\)\(iv\)](#).
- Review appeals and notify students of appeals decision within 45 days from submission of a completed appeal. Institutions are prohibited from disenrolling students for nonpayment or tuition/fees while their appeals are pending.

- Provide a second review process for an appeal that is denied if requested by the student. The second review must be conducted by a reviewer that did not participate in the first review.
- Waive any requirement for third-party written documentation of the special circumstances if documentation cannot be reasonably obtained by the student and the student signs a statement of attestation.

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