

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS POLICY

Standards: Document 2 – Standards for Accreditation, Standard VIII.

Avocational institutions offering Intensive English Programs (IEP) recognize their obligation to ensure that enrolled students have the ability to successfully complete their program. Institutional procedures are clearly defined for determining a student's satisfactory progress based upon established criteria. The institution's criteria address the required elements outlined below.

Policy Requirements.

1. Institutions approved to issue Form I-20's adhere to all policies and guidelines of the Department of Homeland Security.
2. Satisfactory Progress policies and procedures are published in the institution's student handbook.
3. Satisfactory Progress policies are cumulative, include all periods of attendance at the institution, and are applied consistently to all students attending similar programs.
4. General Elements of Satisfactory Progress (SP) Policy.

A. Qualitative Standard

The policy includes a qualitative measure of the student's progress, such as a grade point average (GPA) or letter grade, work projects completed, or comparable factors that are measurable against generally accepted criteria.

The policy requires all students to have a minimum grade point average or equivalent by completion. If an institution uses a method of evaluation other than letter or numeric grades, the policy must define and include a rationale for the evaluation method.

B. Quantitative Standard

The policy includes a quantitative measure that defines the total length of the program in clock hours as well as the number of clock hours for each level and/or term.

C. Evaluation of Student Progress

The policy divides the program into evaluation periods based upon the published program length. For programs with terms of more than four weeks in length, a formal mid-term evaluation of student progress must occur by the end of the first half of each term.

D. Progression through Academic Proficiency Levels

Academic proficiency levels are defined in accordance with sound educational standards and practice for Intensive English Programs (e.g. beginner, intermediate, advanced) and nuances thereof (pre-intermediate, upper intermediate, etc.). Students must demonstrate normal progress through academic levels in a sequential manner (e.g. intermediate follows beginner, etc.). Levels may be repeated, based on a sound written and well-documented rationale established by the institution, provided that the student's maximum cumulative total length of the language training is no more than 36 months at the institution. A documented learning plan must be prepared by the institution and available for those learners who are required to repeat a level more than once.

E. Leave of Absence and Vacation Policies

In an immersion language program, leaves of absence and vacations may have an impact on student progress. Therefore, institutions are required to have a leave of absence/vacation policy in accordance with ACCET Document 36 – Leave of Absence Policy.

F. Administrative Withdrawal

In accordance with Document 31.ESOL – Cancellation and Refund Policy, an institution must automatically administratively withdraw a student after s/he has been absent for a maximum of 30 consecutive calendar days (excluding any scheduled breaks of the institution).

G. Consequences of Failure to Meet Satisfactory Progress Standards

1. Consequences: The policy states the consequences of failure to meet the satisfactory progress standards and how the student is notified.
2. Probation: If the policy includes a probationary period, it specifies the following:
 - a. the length of time;
 - b. the terms or conditions;
 - c. the student's visa status during the probation; and
 - d. the consequences for failure to meet the terms of probation.
3. Appeals: The policy includes specific procedures under which a student may appeal a determination that he or she is not meeting the Satisfactory Progress standards. The procedures must:
 - a. require written appeals;
 - b. require substantiating documentation, where appropriate;
 - c. provide a time frame for the student to make the appeal;
 - d. indicate which school official(s) is responsible for deciding the appeal; and
 - e. provide a time frame for the institution to decide the appeal and notify the student in writing.