FAQ about Satisfactory Academic Progress

What if I do not pass enough courses or think I will not pass enough courses?
Report this to your Study Advisor or student’s general counsellor as soon as possible!
If you gain less than 30 ECTS in a full academic year, you are only allowed to keep your
residence permit if you have an excusable reason. It is therefore very important that you report
to your Study Advisor or Student’s General Counsellor as soon as possible in case you fall
behind in your studies. If you do not have an excusable reason for gaining less than 50% of your
ECTS you will not be allowed to continue your studies at VU University Amsterdam.

But what if my residence permit card is still valid for a few years?
Even if your residence permit card is valid for a few more years, VU University Amsterdam is
obliged by law to revoke your residence permit if your study results are below par (i.e. less than
50%).

What if I am following a pre-programme?
Keep in mind that if you started a pre-programme you will need to pass 100% in order to
continue on to the regular degree programme. 50% of your ECTS is not enough in that case. If
you did obtain 50% you can choose to leave the University or switch to another programme
(this cannot be another pre-programme).

What if I start in February?
If you are following a study programme that starts in February, by the end of August you have
been studying for one semester and you could have obtained a maximum of 30 ECTS.
Satisfactory Academic Progress than means that you should have obtained at least 50% of your
credits, which is equivalent to 15 ECTS.

What about excusing reasons?
It may be that you encounter exceptional circumstances during your studies, which have a
negative impact on your academic performance. These might include such circumstances1 as
pregnancy, special family circumstances, disability or impaired function, or official work for a
student body1, etc.
Exceptional circumstances should be reported to the Student’s General Counsellor within three
months of the time at which they first occurred. If you have a disability or impaired function,
report these as soon as possible after the start of the study programme. The Study Advisors and
Student General Counsellors can help you to find a solution.

For Bachelors: What about Binding Recommendation on Continuation of Studies (BSA)?
All bachelors’ students have to meet the requirements of the ‘Binding Recommendation on

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1 Personal circumstances are exclusively: illness, disability, pregnancy, exceptional family circumstances, board
membership activities. For detailed information, see article 2.1 of the implementation decree of the Higher
Education and Research Act (WHW).
Continuation of Studies’ during their first and second year. At VU University Amsterdam, these requirements vary per study programme, but they are always more strict than the rules of the IND. So, if you pass the BSA in the first year, you have gained enough credits to meet the requirements of the IND. But, if you do not gain at least 30 ECTS each year, you are not allowed to continue to study at VU University Amsterdam; it is not possible to switch to another study programme at VU University Amsterdam. Remember that BSA is only applicable on the first years of your study, but the IND rules apply for the entire study programme.

I am an exchange student, what does it mean for me?
The regulation Satisfactory Academic Progress is not applicable for exchange students because they cannot stay longer than a year at VU University Amsterdam.

Where can I get more information?

- **International Office**
  Website: [www.vu.nl/visa](http://www.vu.nl/visa)
  E-mail: studentimmigration@vu.nl

- **Student’s General Counsellor**
  Website: [Student General Counsellor](#)

- **Study Advisor**
  Website: [Study Advisor](#)

  Immigration authorities
  Website: [IND](#)