

Appeal Resource Guide

For Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
eligibility for Financial Aid



LYNN
UNIVERSITY

Appeals Overview



This guide has been created as a resource for students who have fallen short of Academic Eligibility to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards for financial aid. The appeal for continuation process encourages self-reflection and intentional action that allows students to work toward restoring academic and/or financial aid eligibility. In this process, you will be asked to provide for review:

- Explanation of current academic situation and extenuating circumstances
- Third party feedback if applicable
- Supporting documentation

You are **not alone**

Each year, about 200 students at Lynn University have significant academic difficulties that impact their academic eligibility standing. In addition to academic difficulty, students often share that they are facing other challenges that impact their academic success. Such challenges include, but may not be limited to:

- Mental health challenges
- Death or major illness of loved one
- Personal illness, injury, or other trauma/crisis
- Financial challenges and unmet basic needs

In the 2021-22 academic year

214

*Different students fell short of
good standing*

We are **here to help**

No matter the circumstance that led you to this point, please know that we care deeply about your success. We encourage you to meet one-on-one with an academic advisor to set goals for restoring your academic eligibility, and explore opportunities to connect with helpful resources

How to prepare your appeal



1. Get ready

- Review Academic Eligibility and Financial Aid SAP Standards
- Check your academic eligibility and SAP status in your Lynn email
- Familiarize yourself with the appeal requirements in myLynn
- Initiate communication about third party feedback with appropriate contacts (advisor, instructor, physician, etc.)



2. Note important dates

- Know your appeal deadline and decision date
- Also note key course enrollment and drop dates from the university's academic calendar



3. Be thoughtful

- Review appeal tips and resources
- Note any questions you have about the process and consult with your academic advisor
- Gather any supporting documents that you may need for your appeal



4. Tell your story

- Briefly describe any extenuating circumstances and the impact of these situations on your academic performance
- Reflect and share how you responded to the situation
 - › What resources did you seek?
 - › What action did you take in response to the challenges you faced?



5. Plan for success

- What new study habits will you incorporate into your routine?
- How have you navigated the challenges you faced?
- What is necessary to restore good standing?
- What courses might facilitate your success?



6. Have a backup plan

- In the event that your appeal is denied, research the readmission process and contact your advisor with any questions.
- You may register for the upcoming term and pay out of pocket or pursue a private educational loan (may require a co-signer)
- If you choose to take the term off, consider the following opportunities:
 - › Employment and volunteer service
 - › Successful completion of courses at other institutions
 - › Treatment for any health, mental health, or substance use issues



7. Keep calm, patient and organized

- Take time to proofread your appeal and all documentation before you submit.
- Keep a copy of appeal materials for your records.
- Be patient with the process as each appeal must be considered individually

Tips for making your appeal

Be honest and factual

We want to know what you understand of the circumstances that led to this point. How did you get here? What have you learned?

Use brevity

It is better to write a good, short appeal than a long, drawn out narrative. Write concisely.

Proofread your appeal

An error-free appeal makes a better impression. If you are comfortable doing so, ask a trusted friend, teacher, or advisor to read over your appeal before submitting.

Be clear and specific

Do not share details that are not related to your appeal request or your main message.

Reflect on your self and situation

Clearly explain how your situation has improved. How have you demonstrated resilience and persistence? In what areas might you need additional support?



Draft your appeal in a separate word document in case of technical difficulties, then save a copy of your appeal for your personal records.



Be sure to submit your appeal by the posted deadlines.

S.M.A.R.T Goals

Specific

Being specific is about being direct and avoiding extraneous details. What is it that you want to accomplish? Who exactly will be involved in this process? Be sure to root your appeal in details and steer clear of ambiguity, generalizations, and vague language.

Measurable

It's difficult to set a goal if you don't give yourself a metric to evaluate your progress. Being measurable is about quantifying your desired results. What data will you use to measure your goal? How much of something needs to happen or change to be considered a success? Include this information to give yourself a clear end point, or even benchmarks along the way.

Actionable

Remember to take action. You have to act to enact change. Instead of thinking about the finish line, think about the steps you need to take along the way. What needs to be done? What skills or resources do you need to work toward those things?

Realistic

You don't want to set yourself up for failure by setting a goal you can't achieve. Being realistic is about being honest with yourself. What can you do with the time, energy, resources, and skills you have available? It's okay to acknowledge limits and work within a set of boundaries.

Time-based

Setting goals that are time-based is important because you won't have an indefinite amount of time to work on them. What are your deadlines? When do smaller steps need to get done so you don't get overwhelmed with too much work later on? Think about your timeline.

Supporting Documentation



Appeal submissions may include supporting documentation that confirms information in the appeal. Below are examples of acceptable forms of supporting documentation relevant to various situations. If you include documents with your appeal, be sure to redact sensitive information (social security number, medical record number, etc.).

Academic

- Letter of support from instructor, teaching assistant, or tutor who can attest to your use of office hours or academic resources
- Communication on plans to resolve temporary grades

Financial & employment obligations

- Copy of work schedule that includes hours worked
- Letter or support from employer
- Deployment information (military affiliated students)
- Apartment and leasing contracts
- Relevant financial statement(s)

Physical & mental health

- Letter from health or mental health provider confirming support for continued enrollment at Lynn University
- Appointment history and/or relevant medical records
- Copy of psycho-educational evaluation results (ex. ADHD, test anxiety, etc.)

Personal or family emergency

- Copy of obituary if you experienced loss of loved one
- Photos of any damage or accident reports in instances of car accident, natural disaster, etc.
- Police report or court documents

Evaluation guide for continuation appeal

The Appeals Committee evaluates both the content of the Appeal (your explanation of the circumstances leading to your academic deficiency, what changes will lead to your academic success, third party feedback, academic history, and supporting documentation) as well as the quality of the information presented. The appeal content should accurately explain the extenuating circumstances that have led to your current academic standing. The Committee uses the following guidelines about extenuating circumstances in making our decisions:

- Previous appeals and outcomes.
- Demonstrated resolution of issues related to current academic standing.
- Use of time while away from the University, if appropriate.
- Demonstrated academic improvement.
- Engagement with resources and support.
- Specific and realistic plan of action.

In addition, we have developed an evaluation guide for you related to how to prepare your appeal for committee review. This rubric provides guidance related to the Financial Aid Appeal Committee's standards and expectations during its review of appeals. We encourage you to use the guide to clarify and strengthen your written appeal. We also strongly encourage you to consult with an academic advisor as you prepare your appeal

Criteria	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Self Reflection, Preparation & Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding and/or resolution of challenges that led to current academic standing • Connects challenges to identified solution(s), resource(s), and/or action steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal demonstrates little understanding of challenges that led to current academic standing; no resolution of challenges as outlined • Appeal does not connect challenges to possible solution(s), resource(s), and/or action steps
Clarity of Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content and language is mostly clear and direct • Information is presented neatly and is easy to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal does not use direct and clear language • Information presented in the appeal is confusing and difficult to follow (ex: rambling)
Supporting Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes supporting documentation that confirms information shared in the appeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal mentions the existence of supporting documentation that is not included, or speaks to situations in which documentation should be available but not included • Supporting documentation not included; appeal could be strengthened by support
Third Party Feedback (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes positive feedback from an appropriate source that is familiar with the student and the challenges the student faces impacting their academic situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsupportive
Academic Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For students with less than a 2.0 GPA, the appeal provides a plan for returning to good standing. • Appeal includes plan for resolving any incomplete grades, and includes supporting evidence • Appeal includes plan for success in repeated courses in chosen major 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal does not acknowledge incomplete grades reflected on academic record; does not include plan for resolving any incomplete coursework • Appeals does not include plan for success in repeated courses in chosen major • Does not include a plan to return to good standing