

## FAQs on Probation Status

### 1. Does probation change Atlanta Metropolitan State College's accreditation status?

No. Atlanta Metropolitan State College (AMSC) remains fully accredited as a SACSCOC level II institution. While on probation status, AMSC will retain its accreditation privileges as granted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The recognition of AMSC's degrees, academic programs, and acceptance of course credits among institutions of higher education is unchanged. AMSC has been accredited by SACSCOC since 1976, with the most recent reaccreditation occurring in 2012. The institution is fully confident that it will swiftly resolve and remove its current probation status to return to full compliance with all SACSCOC standards.

### 2. Are AMSC students still eligible for financial aid?

Yes. Probation does not change the eligibility of AMSC's students to receive financial aid, neither does it impact the financial aid funding decisions in any way. AMSC students will follow the same process as always in applying for and receiving financial aid.

### 3. Will probation cause AMSC's programs and services to change?

No. Probation status will not cause AMSC's programs and services to change. AMSC will continue to offer its full range of academic programs and services.

### 4. What is the purpose of probation?

Probation is a public sanction to identify institutions who do not fully satisfy SACSCOC accreditation standards. By SACSCOC placing AMSC on probation, it will allow AMSC additional time (*a one-year period*) to demonstrate that it can meet the requirements and comply with SACSCOC Standard 13.6, explained further in the next question.

### 5. What exactly caused SACSCOC to place AMSC on the public sanction of probation?

AMSC was placed on probation because it did not fully meet SACSCOC requirements in its financial aid processes and reporting. Every 10 years, institutions, including AMSC, must demonstrate their compliance with approximately 73 SACSCOC standards. In its previous Fifth Year review, AMSC was able to demonstrate compliance with all standards except Standard 13.6 (below), and was subsequently placed on probation for that reason:

Standard 13.6: The institution (a) is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the most recent Higher Education Act as amended and (b) audits financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations. In reviewing the institution's compliance with these program responsibilities under Title IV, SACSCOC relies on documentation forwarded to it by the U.S. Department of Education. (Federal and state responsibilities)

**6. What measures has AMSC taken to remove probation status and bring itself into compliance with SACSCOC Standard 13.6?**

First, AMSC has identified the source of the problem that caused it to be placed on SACSCOC probation and has taken the following steps to remove its probation status: (1) AMSC has updated several of its Banner and related processes that are at the core of financial aid reporting and services. Specifically, the College is in the process of automating many of its Banner processes that will eliminate human errors, the source of several recent audit findings, (2) AMSC has added multiple layers of controls within its financial aid processes and reporting. These controls identify errors and mistakes early in the process, allowing the institution to correct those errors/changes before they develop into more serious problems, audit findings, and federal violations, (3) AMSC has hired additional staff support and training for AMSC's Financial Aid and Registrar's Offices to ensure appropriate resources to address the workload and expertise requirements to comply with Standard 13.6, (4) AMSC has instituted and scheduled a weekly "CheckPoint Monitoring Report" of all financial aid and related activities. This Report will be distributed and reviewed by multiple academic and administrative offices, campus-wide, to ensure that this matter has broad-based, coordinated support, (5) AMSC is monitoring, supporting, and holding staff accountable for their role and responsibilities, at all levels of the campus, to ensure the institution is successful in meeting and sustaining compliance with Standard 13.6, and (6) AMSC has engaged external consultants, auditors, and reviewers to ensure the institution has the appropriate training and expertise required to achieve the goals, strategies, and targets it has set forth to comply with Standard 13.6.

**7. How will AMSC ensure that it doesn't repeat actions that led it to being placed on probation for Standard 13.6?**

AMSC will ensure it does not repeat actions that led to its probationary SACSCOC status by faithfully executing the measures it has put in place in question #6. The institution will continue, unwavering, to execute these best practices until and beyond its removal from probationary status to ensure that it continually remains in compliance with Standard 13.6.

**8. Is there a long-term impact of AMSC being placed on probation status?**

No. Once AMSC has taken the necessary steps to realign itself and comply with Standard 13.6, SACSCOC will remove the institution's probationary status and restore it to its normal state of full compliance.

**9. How can the general public find more information and monitor AMSC's accreditation status in the future?**

- (a) AMSC has created a webpage for the general public to monitor its accreditation activities and status: <https://www.atlm.edu/accreditation>
- (b) The accreditation status of all SACSCOC accredited institutions, including AMSC, can be verified on the SACSCOC website: <https://sacscoc.org/institutions/>
- (c) Contact the AMSC Division of Development and External Affairs: [mmontgomery@atlm.edu](mailto:mmontgomery@atlm.edu) or 404-756-4666