



Financial Aid  
Policies and Procedures Manual

Revised: April 2022

## **Introduction**

Great Lakes Institute of Technology is committed to utilizing financial aid programs that will ensure access and continuation of higher education. The financial aid programs at Great Lakes Institute of Technology have been established to service students who qualify for admission to the institution. Each student will be given careful consideration and the school will determine financial assistance based upon federal, state, institutional, and outside funding source guidelines. The school is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all persons regardless of physical ability, race, creed, color, age, sex, or national origin. It will apply the available resources accordingly and without prejudice.

Great Lakes Institute of Technology will operate a Financial Aid Office (FAO) that will comply with all federal and state guidelines. This policy and procedures manual will set forth the guidelines that will be followed to ensure compliance and fairness.

## **Institutional Philosophy and Policy Development Procedures**

### **Institutional Philosophy**

Great Lakes Institute of Technology's Financial Aid Office is established to assist students who are seeking monetary assistance to pursue higher education. It is the intent of the Financial Aid Office to provide students with the information that will allow them to be considered for financial assistance.

The federal and state government, along with institutional programs, has made assistance available to students in the form of grants, loans, and work programs. These programs have been established with guidelines to allow fairness in disbursing available funds to the students who have demonstrated financial need and have met all eligibility requirements.

### **Policy Development**

Taking into consideration the uniqueness of this institution, policies will be established to comply with federal regulations. All policies will receive final approval from Great Lake's Administration prior to implementation.

Federal Standards will apply to all policies unless state or institutional requirements are stricter. Policies will be reviewed at least annually and recommendations to change them will be submitted to the administration office for approval.

## **Disclosures**

### **FERPA**

Students are given an explanation of their rights under FERPA during the admissions process. All students must acknowledge that they have received, read, and understand their rights under FERPA before they begin training.

### **Campus Crime Report**

The campus crime report is included in the consumer information guide and is available/ distributed to all students before they enroll in the institution.

### **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

Great Lakes Institute of Technology adheres to a zero tolerance policy for drug and alcohol use. Students and parents can find consumer information at [http://www.glit.edu/consumer\\_info.php](http://www.glit.edu/consumer_info.php)

## **Student Financial Aid Programs**

### **Federal Student Aid**

#### **Eligibility Requirements for Federal Student Aid**

To be eligible for Federal Student Aid students must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In addition they must be a U.S. Citizen or an eligible noncitizen; have a valid Social Security Number; satisfy the Selective Service registration requirement; have a high school diploma or recognized equivalent; maintain satisfactory academic progress; not be in default or owe an overpayment on a federal student loan; not have loans that exceed the annual or aggregate maximum amounts; provide a statement of educational purpose, and, for Pell grants and FSEOG funds, not have a bachelor's degree. While income is taken into consideration, it does not prevent you from receiving federal student aid. If you are incarcerated, have a conviction for a drug offense, or are subject to an involuntary civil commitment after completing a period of incarceration for a sexual offense, your eligibility for federal student aid may be limited. More information regarding ineligibility can be found at: [studentaid.ed.gov/sa/eligibility/criminal-convictions](http://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/eligibility/criminal-convictions).

## **Federal Student Grant Programs**

The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) provides grant funds to participating schools to be awarded to eligible students. Grants, unlike loans, are sources of free money and do not have to be repaid\*. The Federal grant programs available to students attending Great Lakes Institute of Technology are briefly described below. More information can be found by visiting [StudentAid.gov/grants](http://StudentAid.gov/grants).

<b>Federal Grant Program</b>	<b>Program Details</b>	<b>Annual Award</b> (subject to change)
Federal Pell Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awarded to undergraduate students who have exceptional financial need, have not earned a bachelor's or graduate degree, and meet the general federal student aid requirements.</li> <li>• Eligibility depends on students' financial need, cost of attendance, enrollment status, and length of enrollment.</li> <li>• Federal Pell Grant eligibility is limited to 12 semesters or the equivalent.</li> </ul>	Up to \$6,495 for 2021-22. Up to \$6,895 for 2022-23. In certain situations, eligible students may receive up to 150% of their scheduled award for an award year.
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority is given to Federal Pell Grant recipients demonstrating exceptional need.</li> <li>• The school's annual fund amount is determined by the DOE.</li> <li>• Funds are budgeted to last the entire award year. However, once funds have been exhausted, no more awards can be made.</li> </ul>	\$100 or more per academic period.

\*Occasionally a student may have to pay back all or part of a grant if, for example, he/she withdraws from school before finishing an enrollment period.

## **Federal Student Loan Programs**

Federal Student Loans are low-interest loans available to eligible students enrolled at least half-time and their parents, to help cover the costs of post-secondary education. Student loans must be repaid with interest. Information regarding Federal Student Loan repayment plans and other available options can be found at [studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/understand/plans](http://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/understand/plans).

Federal Student Loans include the following types of loans:

- **Federal Direct Subsidized Loans** are available to undergraduate students with financial need. The school will determine the amount you can borrow, and the amount may not exceed your financial need. Additionally, if you are a first-time borrower on or after July 1, 2013, there is a limit on the maximum period of time you can receive Direct Subsidized Loans equaling 150% of your published program length. For Subsidized loans, the DOE pays the interest while you are in school at least half-time, during your 6 month grace period\*, and during periods of deferment.  
\*If you received a Direct Subsidized Loan that was first disbursed between July 1, 2012, and July 1, 2014, you will be responsible for paying any interest that accrues during your grace period. If you choose not to pay the interest that accrues during your grace period, the interest will be added to your principal balance.
- **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans** are available to undergraduate and graduate students. There is no need to demonstrate financial need. The school will determine the amount you can borrow based on your cost of attendance and other financial aid you receive. You are responsible for paying the interest on Direct Unsubsidized Loans during all periods. If you choose not to pay the interest while you are in school and during grace periods and periods of deferment or forbearance, your interest will accrue and be capitalized.
- **Federal Direct PLUS Loans** at Great Lakes Institute of Technology are available to parents (biological, adoptive, or in some cases, stepparents) of dependent undergraduate students enrolled at least half-time. Parent borrowers must not have an adverse credit history and must meet the general eligibility requirements for federal student aid. (Parents with adverse credit history may still receive a PLUS Loan by obtaining an endorser who does not have adverse credit or by documenting, to the satisfaction of the DOE, that there are extenuating circumstances relating to your adverse credit history.) The maximum PLUS loan amount you can borrow is the cost of attendance (determined by the school) minus any other financial assistance received.) More information regarding Direct PLUS Loans can be found by visiting [studentaid.ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov).
- **Federal Direct Consolidation Loans** allow all eligible federal student loans to be combined into a single loan with a single servicer.

### **Annual and Aggregate Limits for Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans:**

<b>Year in school</b>	<b>Dependent Students (except students whose parents are unable to obtain PLUS Loans)</b>	<b>Independent Students (and dependent undergraduates whose parents are unable to obtain PLUS Loans)</b>
First-Year Undergraduate Annual Loan Limit	\$5,500 – No more than \$3,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans	\$9,500 - No more than \$3,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans
Second-Year Undergraduate Annual Loan Limit	\$6,500 – No more than \$4,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans	\$10,500 – No more than \$4,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans
Third-Year and Beyond Undergraduate Annual Loan Limit	\$7,500 – No more than \$5,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans	\$12,500 – No more than \$5,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans
Subsidized and Unsubsidized Aggregate Loan Limit (for Undergraduates only)	\$31,000 – No more than \$23,000 of this amount may be in subsidized loans	\$57,500 – No more than \$23,000 of this amount may be in subsidized loans

### Interest Rates and Loan Fees for Federal Student Loans:

Loan Type	Interest Rates for loans disbursed after July 1, 2021 and before July 1, 2022	Loan Fees* for loans first disbursed after Oct 1, 2020 & before Oct 1, 2022
Subsidized and Unsubsidized Undergraduate Loans	3.73% Fixed	1.057%
PLUS Loans	6.28% Fixed	4.228%
Loan Type	Interest Rates for loans disbursed after July 1, 2022 and before July 1, 2023	Loan Fees* for loans first disbursed after Oct 1, 2020 & before Oct 1, 2022
Subsidized and Unsubsidized Undergraduate Loans	4.99% Fixed	1.057%
PLUS Loans	7.54% Fixed	4.228%

\*The loan fee is a percentage of the loan amount and is proportionately deducted from each loan disbursement.

### Pennsylvania State Grant

PHEAA State Grant is a grant that has additional requirements beyond financial need. To be considered for a Pennsylvania State Grant, applicants must demonstrate financial need and meet requirements as listed:

- Be a high school graduate as stipulated in the Pennsylvania State Grant law.
- Attend a postsecondary school approved by PHEAA for Pennsylvania State Grant purposes
- Be enrolled at least half-time (at least six semester credits but less than 12 semester credits per semester, or the equivalent)
- Be unconditionally admitted and enrolled in an approved program of study of at least 2 academic years in length.
- Make satisfactory academic progress (as defined by PHEAA)
- Not have already earned a bachelor's degree or its equivalent
- Be a Pennsylvania resident, as stipulated in the Pennsylvania State Grant law.
- Be of satisfactory character (for example, not be incarcerated)
- Not have received the maximum number of Pennsylvania State Grants permitted
- Not be in default or pending default on an educational loan. This also applies to any program where the award has been converted to a loan and the loan is in a default status.
- File and complete the application process by the appropriate deadlines ([aessuccess.org](https://aessuccess.org))

### Pennsylvania Targeted Industry Program (PA-TIP)

PA-TIP is funded and administered by PHEAA and provides awards to student enrolled in specific programs of study, as determined by PHEAA. PA-TIP provides need based awards up to the equivalent of the maximum State Grant Award, or 75% of the student's total direct education costs after gift and employers aid, whichever is less. Awards can be used to cover tuition, books, fees, supplies, and specific living expenses. To qualify for PA-TIP at Great Lakes Institute of Technology students must:

- Be a U.S. Citizen, or eligible noncitizen as described on the FAFSA.
- Be a domiciliary (resident) of Pennsylvania.
- Have received a high school diploma, GED or recognized homeschool certificate.
- File a FAFSA.
- Complete and return to [PHEAA the PA-TIP student application](#).
- Be enrolled at an institution approved by PHEAA.
- Be enrolled in an approved program of study that is at least 10 weeks but less than 2 academic years in length.
- Be enrolled on a full-time basis. Full-time is defined as at least 12 credits per term or at least 24 clock hours of continuous enrollment per week.
- Have financial need as determined by the program guidelines and certified by the school.
- Not be in default or pending default on an education loan or owe a State Grant refund.
- Not be receiving a Pennsylvania State Grant for the PA-TIP program of study.
- Not be considered an incarcerated student, which is consistent with the guidelines associated with the Pennsylvania State Grant Program.
- Supply a copy of the DD214 Form if the applicant is a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, and was honorably discharged.

Other Educational Aid Programs Available through the PA Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA):

- Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant Program
- Aid for Military and Pennsylvania National Guard
- PATH Program
- Fostering Independence Tuition Waiver Program

Institutional Point of Contact: Erin Poulliott, Dir. of Financial Aid, 814.864.6666, [erinp@glit.edu](mailto:erinp@glit.edu)

## Institutional Aid

**Great Lakes Education Assistance (GLEA) Grant** is an Institutional Grant ranging from \$100 to \$2,500 per student per academic period. It is available to students who demonstrate unmet financial need, meet all eligibility requirements, and fall into at least one of the required criteria categories. Application is available from the financial aid department.

### **Eligibility Requirements:**

- Be a US Citizen, national or permanent resident, or other eligible non-citizen
- Have a high school diploma, GED, or recognized equivalent,
- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress as defined by the institution's catalog
- Not be in default on a Federal Loan or owe a refund on Federal Grant funds
- Not have borrowed in excess of any loan limit
- Be registered with Selective Service if male of 18 years of age
- Have completed a GLEA grant application
- Be denied at least one alternative source of funding, besides Title IV.

### **Required Criteria Categories (must meet at least one):**

- Have exhausted federal and state grants, student loans, parent loans, and alternative loans and still have unmet need.
- Dependent student whose parent is denied a Parent loan or are denied alternative loans and still have unmet need.
- Independent student who has exhausted federal grants, state grants, and student loans and have been denied alternative loans and still have unmet need.

**Institutional Senior Scholarship** is applicable by high school seniors or recent high school graduates who will be starting class within one year of graduating from high school. Applications are available through the admissions department.

- Deadline to apply is May 1<sup>st</sup> of the scholarship award year.
- Scholarship amount is \$1,000.
- Must meet program entrance requirements.
- Evaluated based on submitted application and personal essay.

## Alternative Loan programs

Private Education Loans, also known as Alternative Education Loans, help bridge the gap between the actual cost of your education and the limited amount the government allows you to borrow in its programs. Private loans are offered by private lenders and there are no federal forms to complete. Eligibility for private student loans often depends on your credit score.

## Verification Procedure

Verification is a process in which the Department of Education or the school requires certain financial documentation, including tax information, from an applicant or parent in order to verify the information on the students FAFSA application is accurate and complete. If a student is selected for verification by the DOE or the school, Title IV aid is not disbursed until the verification requirements have been met. If the student is selected for verification the following will take place:

**Current students-** an e-mail is sent to the student with the appropriate verification worksheet attached. A read-receipt is attached to the e-mail. The e-mail will include all required documents, a deadline to return the documents (typically 2 weeks from notification), student correction procedures, the procedure for notification of any award changes due to verification, and the consequences of not returning verification documents (no aid disbursed). If the read-receipt has not been returned within a week, a phone call is made to the student. If the student cannot be contacted by telephone, a letter will be sent to the address on file detailing the same information.

**Prospective students-** a phone call will be placed to the student informing them of the information required. If the student cannot be reached by telephone, a letter will be sent to the address on file detailing the same information as the current student letter.

Once verification is complete, students will be notified of all award changes by receiving a new award letter noted as "adjusted for verification". These notifications will be sent within ten days of receiving a clean ISIR. If information is determined to be in error that a student must correct, (ex. inaccurate Soc. Security #) the student will be directed to use FOWT or their student aid report to correct the information.

If verification is not able to be completed, the student is not eligible for Title IV funding. He/she will be required to make alternative payment arrangements, otherwise, they will not be able to enroll (or continue attending, for current students).

Should the institution have any credible evidence that an applicant for Title IV, HEA program assistance may have engaged in fraud or criminal misconduct in connection with his/her application, the Financial Aid office will forward the information to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/hotline.html>. Anyone who suspects fraud or misuse may make a confidential report by contacting the OIG.

### **Code of Conduct for Educational Loans**

The following is the school's code of conduct that prohibits any conflicts of interest in regards to the institution and educational loan providers. Great Lakes Institute of Technology (hereinafter called The Institute) is committed to providing students and their families with the best information and processing alternatives available regarding student borrowing. In support of this and in an effort to rule out any perceived or actual conflict of interest between The Institute's officers, employees or agents and education loan lenders, The Institute has adopted the following:

- The Institute does not participate in any revenue-sharing arrangements with any lender.
- The Institute does not permit any officer, employee or agent of the school who is employed in the financial aid office or is otherwise involved in the administration of education loans to accept any gifts of greater than a nominal value from any lender, guarantor or servicer.
- The Institute does not permit any officer, employee or agent of the school who is employed in the financial aid office or is otherwise involved in the administration of education loans to accept any fee, payment or other financial benefit (including a stock purchase option) from a lender or affiliate of a lender as compensation for any type of consulting arrangement or contract to provide services to a lender or on behalf of a lender relating to education loans.
- The Institute does not permit any officer, employee or agent of the school who is employed in the financial aid office or is otherwise involved in the administration of education loans to accept anything of value from a lender, guarantor, or group of lenders and/or guarantors in exchange for service on an advisory board, commission or other group established by such a lender, guarantor group of lenders and/or guarantors. The Institute does allow for the reasonable reimbursement of expenses associated with participation in such boards, commissions or groups by lenders, guarantors, or groups of lenders and/or guarantors.
- The Institute does not assign a lender to any first-time borrower through financial aid packaging or any other means.
- The Institute recognizes that a borrower has the right to choose any lender from which to borrow to finance his/her education. The Institute will not refuse to certify or otherwise deny or delay certification of a loan based on the borrower's selection of a lender and/or guarantor.
- The Institute will not request or accept any offer of funds to be used for private education loans to students from any lender in exchange for providing the lender with a specified number or volume of Title IV loans, or a preferred lender arrangement for Title IV loans.
- The Institute will not request or accept any assistance with call center or financial aid office staffing.

### **How and When Aid Will Be Distributed**

Once a student has completed the required applications and met all eligibility criteria aid is disbursed to the students tuition account. All aid is disbursed by EFT (electronic funds transfer). Aid is disbursed by term or payment period.

- For standard-term credit hour students this is typically once per term.
- For Clock Hour students, aid is disbursed once per payment period based on program hours.

Aid is first used to cover tuition and fees that have been billed to the students account. Any additional aid received can then be disbursed to the student. Credit balances from Title IV aid are disbursed to the student within 14 days of receipt of funds.

### **Credit Balances**

Great Lakes requests students to complete a waiver which states that they agree to allow Great Lakes hold credit balances if it is in the student's interest in completing financial agreements. If the credit balance is not needed to fulfill the financial obligations within the academic year in which it falls, then it will be issued to the student in the form of a paper check. The student can choose to use these funds for indirect costs related to their education or return the check to the Institution. Those funds will then be returned to the lender on the student's behalf.

### **Rights and Responsibilities of Receiving Financial Aid**

Students who receive financial aid have a right and responsibility to understand the following:

- Financial aid awarded is for one academic year only, that future academic years will be packaged as students progress through school and that they must reapply annually by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) along with other required applications.

- Eligibility requirements mandated by the institution and government must be met, including maintaining Satisfactory Progress as defined by Great Lakes Institute of Technology.\*
- Their financial aid package may be adjusted due to changes in funding or other events.
- Students are responsible for regularly checking their GLIT student portal account for important messages and alerts.
- They should notify the Financial Aid Administrator in writing of any changes in my or my family's financial situation as well as any aid that is received from outside resources (other than those shown on the award letter), which may result in an adjustment to the financial aid awarded.
- They are entitled to an explanation of the award process, which includes but is not limited to; the financial aid budget, expected family contribution, and award packaging. Questions regarding any aspect of financial aid should be addressed to the Financial Aid Administrator.

### **Right to Cancel Federal Student Loans**

As a student or parent borrower, you have the right to cancel all or a portion of your federal student loan within 14 days of the notification of receipt. To request cancellation, students must contact the financial aid office by calling (814) 864-6666. More information regarding the Right to Cancel can be found in the school's Consumer Information Guide at: [https://glit.edu/linked\\_docs/Consumer\\_Disclosures.pdf](https://glit.edu/linked_docs/Consumer_Disclosures.pdf).

### **Cost of Attendance**

Great Lakes Institute of Technology uses a realistic expense budget for students who are attending the school. It currently reflects the actual and projected expenses under differing circumstances. The budget reports the actual charges for tuition and fees by the term and in the aggregate, depending upon whether a student is enrolled for one, two, or three terms in an academic year. Also, there are budgets that are standard for the student who is dependent and living at home as well as one for the dependent off campus or independent student. Great Lakes does not have on campus housing.

Updates may be made to the standard institutional budget for an academic year, or for a specific term depending upon the circumstances for a particular student, or the enrollment status for the student. For example, a student may have additional expenses which have not been considered, such as extensive travel or child care costs. Upon receipt of documentation, the budget for the student can be increased to permit the eligibility for additional financial aid to meet these additional expenses.

The Institutional Student Budget is updated annually and is normally created before the beginning of the next award year. Institutional budgets are also prepared for the Pell Grant program and the PHEAA State Grant Program. Each program has specific allowances that are to be used for their budgets and must be submitted early in a calendar year.

### **Institutional Refund Policy**

In the case of withdrawal, the school will calculate an institutional refund of charges on a prorated basis. For clock hour programs, charges are calculated by dividing the number of clock hours scheduled in the payment period by the total number of hours in the payment period. For credit hour programs, charges are calculated by dividing the number of days of the term completed by the total number of days in the term. Charges are calculated based on the student's last date of attendance in the term or payment period. The following proration is applied to the tuition charges for the term or payment period from which the student withdrew:

00.0-10% completion	=	90% refund
10.1-20% completion	=	80% refund
20.1-30% completion	=	70% refund
30.1-40% completion	=	60% refund
40.1-50% completion	=	50% refund
50.1-60% completion	=	40% refund
Over 60% completion	=	No refund

When a student withdraws from school, the amount of Title IV assistance earned by the student must also be determined. Students are entitled to retain or receive only that portion of federal student aid they earned based on the time in attendance. In the event that earned Title IV assistance does not cover all unpaid institutional charges, the student may be responsible for those costs. If the amount of Federal Student Aid disbursed to the student is greater than the amount earned, all unearned funds will be returned by the school, according to the Return of Title IV policy.

If it is determined that the student has Federal Pell Grant or FSEOG that has been earned but not yet received, the school will disburse the earned amount. Federal Loan funds that are earned but not received require borrower acceptance before a post-withdrawal disbursement (PWD) can be made. PWD eligibility notification will be mailed to the student and/or parent offering them the option to accept or decline any/all of their earned loan funds. The student and/or parent must return the PWD form to the school within 14 days of the date of notification. If no response is received within this time frame, no loan disbursements will be made.

### **Return of Title IV Policy**

The Return of Title IV formula provides a return of unearned Title IV aid if the student withdraws before completing 60% of the term or payment period from which the student withdrew. For clock hour programs, earned Title IV aid is calculated by dividing the number of clock hours scheduled in the payment period by the total number of hours in the payment period. For credit hour programs, earned Title IV aid is calculated by dividing the number of days of the term completed by the total number of days in the term. Calculations are based on the student's last day of recorded attendance in the term or payment period. If a student fails to inform the school that he/she wishes to withdraw, the date of determination will be 14 calendar days after the student's last date of recorded attendance. All unearned Title IV funds will be returned by the school within 45 days from the date of determination.

Refunds or unearned Title IV aid will be made by the school in the following order:

1. Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans
2. Federal Direct Subsidized Loans
3. Federal Direct PLUS Loans
4. Federal Pell Grant
5. Federal SEOG Grant

### **Cancellation Policy**

All monies paid by an applicant who has not attended any classes will be refunded if a request is received within 14 days after making an initial payment or signing an enrollment agreement. An applicant requesting cancellation after attending class is entitled to a refund of any monies paid, if the request is made within 7 calendar days from the scheduled starting date of class. Students who cancel during this period will be financially responsible for any supplies or equipment issued.

Applicants who have not visited the school prior to signing an enrollment agreement can request cancellation without penalty within 3 business days following the regularly scheduled orientation procedures or following a tour of the school and inspection of training equipment. Refunds for cancellations will be made within 30 days of the date of the request. Applicants denied admission to the school are entitled to a full refund of all monies paid.

If the program starting date must be cancelled or postponed for any reason, immediate alternate plans will be instituted, or if impractical, a full refund of all monies paid will be issued. In the event of a permanent school closure, all enrolled students shall be entitled to a full refund of all monies paid.

### **Leave of Absence Policy**

When it is deemed necessary, a student may be granted a temporary leave of absence. Direct Loans may not be received by Great Lakes when a student is on LOA. If funds are received, they will be returned to the proper agency and re-issued upon the student's return from LOA and after the evaluation of the student's enrollment status and class schedule. The student will be required to complete Exit Counseling. The student may be responsible for any balance due while on leave. Students taking an unofficial leave will be subject to the institutions Title IV refund policy and Return to Title IV refunds policy.

### **Academic Award Year**

Great Lakes Institute of Technology offers clock-hour and quarter credit-hour programs. A clock-hour academic year consists of at least 900 hours and 26 weeks of instruction. An academic year for credit-hour programs consists of three, 12-week, quarter terms.

### **Awarding Financial Aid**

The primary goal in awarding financial aid is to help meet the financial need of students to enable them to secure their post-secondary education, to ensure equity and consistency in packaging and equal educational opportunity, while following federal and state regulations. Students and their families are expected to assume primary responsibility for paying for educational costs.

#### **Steps in Packaging:**

- Obtain a valid Student Aid Report (SAR) – this may require completion of verification as described in “[The Verification Guide](#)” provided by the Department of Education. Verification must be complete before the student is considered eligible for any federal financial aid, as well as resolution of any conflict codes and obtaining the required documentation to clear a “C” code or reject. The “[Guide to SAR's and ISIR's](#)” provided by the US DOE explains the documentation requirements.
- Review eligibility requirements as described below for each student



- Determine the enrollment period to be awarded and the student's expected graduation date.
- Determine student's Cost of Attendance (COA) Budget for the award period.
- Calculate student's financial need by subtracting the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) from the COA, being sure to use the EFC for the correct time period.
- Use the monthly EFC and the Federal PELL Grant Program Payment Schedule to determine the student's annual Federal PELL Grant eligibility for his or her enrollment status.
  - For students starting or enrolled in a standard-term, credit-hour program, Pell Formula 1 will be used. The annual Pell award will be divided amongst the 3 terms within the academic year. When packaging for a single term, the student may not receive more than 1/3 of the annual award.
  - For students starting or enrolled in a clock-hour program, Pell formula 4 will be used, which takes the annual award and multiplies it with number of hours in the payment period divided by the total number of hours in the academic year. (In some cases, it may be necessary to prorate clock-hour Pell awards using weeks, rather than hours)
  - Crossover term policy is as follows:
    - Choosing an award year will be on a student-by-student basis. The award year used for a crossover term is usually the award year that offers to benefit that student most, at the time of initial packaging for that academic period. All other factors of eligibility must also be taken into consideration when determining award amount.
- Mid-year Transfer students must have NSLDS reviewed in order to determine remaining eligibility for the award year.
- Package SEOG if the student meets the requirements set in place for eligibility.
- Check PHEAA for State Grant and/or Special Programs eligibility.
- Review student file for Great Lakes or outside scholarships and agency funding such as OVR, WIA, or TAA.
- Certify Direct Loan eligibility, both subsidized and unsubsidized funds, if the student has completed the MPN.
- Certify PLUS Loan eligibility, if the student's parent has completed the PLUS MPN.

#### **Notification to Students**

- Once the student is registered and packaged, the FAO will produce an offer letter.
- Included in the Estimated Financial Aid Offer Letter is:
  - Award amounts
  - Payment of Financial Aid – notice of expected disbursement times and payment periods
  - Revisions
  - Acceptance
  - Conditions of Award
  - Information regarding continued eligibility for Campus Based Aid

#### **Professional Judgment**

- The Financial Aid Administrator may use professional judgment (PJ) to adjust the income used to calculate the EFC in the case of an income reduction, depending on the family's circumstances. Professional judgments are performed at the discretion of the FAD upon review of the student's and/or family's unique circumstances. A student will submit a letter of request which indicates the reason that they feel a PJ is warranted. Specific documents will then be gathered, reviewed and used in order to obtain financial information to document that student's situation. These adjustments are considered by the Financial Aid Administrator on a case-by-case basis without prejudice.
- The Financial Aid Administrator may use PJ for dependency overrides in certain situations. The student will be required to provide a written request for dependency override explaining the reason he should be considered independent. The only instances in which a student would be considered for a dependency override is when the student is in a situation of abuse or abandonment. There must be documentation supporting the situation from outside the student's family preferably from a court of law. Further, the student must provide documentation that he has the financial ability to support himself.
- The Financial Aid Administrator will also use PJ when determining additional unsubsidized loan eligibility. In the cases of students whose families only source of income is Social Security or Cash Assistance, it is likely that with proper documentation a dependent student will become eligible for the additional unsubsidized loans without the parent being required to complete a PLUS Pre-approval application or the process itself.

#### **General Policies Governing Campus Based Financial Aid Programs**

- An applicant for financial aid must submit the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA)
- Awards may be adjusted throughout the year based on changes in eligibility, enrollment status, receipt of additional resources, and the availability of state and federal funds.

- Awards are usually made for one academic year and are divided equally among the terms.
- Students who are selected for verification will be notified by the Financial Aid Office. The student will be mailed a letter explaining the process and required documents, including a verification worksheet.

### **Forms Distribution**

- The FAFSA is available to students after October 1 preceding the award year, online at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa> or in the Guidance Office of the traditional student's high school.

### **Deadlines**

- Notices are put up around Great Lakes facility as well as in the break areas regarding filing deadlines for financial aid. Continuing students are advised to complete their FAFSA by April 15<sup>th</sup> each year so that funding in future terms will not be interrupted.
- First time students and PA State Grant recipients are required to complete the FAFSA by August 1<sup>st</sup> and returning PA State Grant recipients are required to complete the FAFSA by May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- New students are given financial aid checklists and contacted by their admissions representative. All students who file the FAFSA are considered for campus-based aid.

### **Appeals**

- Students may request, in writing, a review of their financial aid package. The student will be notified in writing of the outcome of this review.
- If a reduction in income has occurred, the students should notify the school in writing.
  - A Special Condition form will be sent to collect necessary current estimated income information. All information provided must be verifiable and may require additional supporting evidence to document the change in income information.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Great Lakes Institute of Technology has established standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) that apply consistently to all full-time and part-time students. These standards are used to evaluate academic progress for all periods of all students' enrollment, even those periods in which the student may not have received federal student aid. Under extenuating circumstances, the School Director or Director of Education may waive interim satisfactory standards for mitigating circumstances outside the control of the student. These circumstances must be documented. No waivers will be permitted for graduation requirements, maximum time frame requirements, or Leave of Absences policies. Students will be evaluated for SAP at the conclusion of each evaluation period. The evaluation period for students enrolled in full time programs is 10 weeks. The evaluation period for students enrolled in part time evenings is 14 weeks. In order to be considering making Satisfactory Academic Progress, the student must meet all three standards.

1. **Cumulative Grade Average.** At the time of evaluation, the student must have a cumulative grade average of 70% (2.0) minimally.
2. **Pace of Completion.** The pace of completion will be evaluated cumulatively. Satisfactory progress for clock hour programs will be measured by comparing the number of clock hours scheduled with the number of clock hours the student has attended. At the time of evaluation, the student must have attended 67% of the cumulative hours scheduled. The pace of completion for credit hour programs will be measured by comparing the number of credit hours attempted with the number of credit hours earned. At the time of evaluation, the student must have earned at least 67% of all credit hours attempted.
3. **Maximum Time Frame.** A student will be expected to complete his or her program within 150% of the normally established time. For all Clock Hour programs, the maximum time is 150% of the published length of the program, expressed in weeks. For all credit hour programs, the maximum timeframe is 150% of the published length of the program, measured in credit hours. A student failing to complete his or her program within 150% of the established time will be terminated. If at any point the school determines that a student cannot finish the program within the maximum time allowed, the student will be terminated from the program. A grade awarded as Incomplete (I) or Withdraw (W) will have those credits/hours counted as attempted for purposes of determining maximum time frame and the pace of completion. Credits/hours transferred from another institution will be counted both as attempted and completed hours/credits when measuring the pace of completion. For students who

transfer or restart in another program at the school, only those credits/hours that apply to the new program will be counted when determining Satisfactory Academic Progress.

### Financial Aid Status

Students who have met all the requirements of SAP will be considered in Good Standing with financial aid. Students who fail to meet SAP at the end of an evaluation period will automatically be given a Financial Aid Warning (FAW) status for the following evaluation period. The FAW status cannot be appealed. Students may only be placed on FAW for a single consecutive period and will continue to be eligible for financial aid throughout that period. Students who meet SAP after one period of FAW will be returned to Good Standing in financial aid, but will be monitored for progress.

Students who fail to regain SAP after one evaluation period of FAW will be placed on Suspension for the following period. During the Suspension, students are not eligible for financial aid, may not attend classes, and will be treated as withdrawn students for financial aid purposes. The determination of Suspension may be appealed following the formal Financial Aid Appeal process defined in this catalog.

Students who wish to appeal the determination of Suspension must do so in writing, by completing the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form. The form can be obtained from the main office at the school. The reasons for the appeal must be the result of mitigating circumstances and documentation must be included which support the claim.

Appeals must be made to the School Director or the Director of Education within 1 week of the last day of the evaluation period. An appeal decision will be made within 3 business days of receiving the appeal and the student will be notified accordingly. A copy of the appeal, documentation, and final determination will be kept in the student's academic record. If the appeal is granted, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation (FAP) for one evaluation period and aid will be reinstated. Appeal approvals may require the student to sign a written Academic Plan, indicating what will be required to attain SAP by the next evaluation point. Failure to meet the stated terms of the Academic Plan by the next evaluation period will result in permanent dismissal.

If the appeal is denied, the student will remain in Suspension for that evaluation period. Students who are on Suspension can request reinstatement after the period of Suspension by following the published Re-Entry Policies as indicated in this catalog. If the appeal for reinstatement/re-entry is denied a second time, the student will be permanently dismissed from the school. Students on suspension will be treated as withdrawn for purposes of Title IV. Students may not appeal a dismissal for violating the 150% maximum time frame rule.

Students who are reinstated after a period of suspension will be given an Academic Plan which indicates what steps must be taken to achieve and/or maintain financial aid eligibility. Academic Plans are created on an individual basis and could include weekly academic performance requirements, specific attendance requirements beyond what is stated in the catalog, mandatory tutoring sessions, or regularly scheduled meetings with an academic advisor, program director, financial aid advisor, or student services advisor.

Great Lakes Institute of Technology does not offer non-credit, remedial courses. However, students who are in need of remedial assistance may arrange for additional academic assistance or tutoring through their instructor or Program Director. No grades or credit will be issued for the additional assistance, nor will the time spent on academic assistance or tutoring be counted in the maximum timeframe.

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SAP for State Grant requires a student to complete 12 credits for each term that the student is awarded the PA State Grant.

### Direct Loan Quality Assurance System

- **Disbursements** of Title IV are processed weekly by end of business Wednesday. DFA batches, approves, and exports disbursement records to COD. The DFA then runs an "Action Queue" report on COD to ensure that the Active disbursements on COD match the disbursement batch in Nexus. DFA communicates to DOF amount approved for that week for each fund source. DOF is then responsible for the drawdown of funds from G5. After the money is drawn down and posted, the reports showing the G5 drawdown and the posted batch are printed and reviewed by the Director of Finance and Financial Aid Assistant to ensure all data is consistent before being filed.
- For **refunds** of Title IV, checks are cut and deposited into the corresponding bank account by the Director of Finance. Bank deposit records, refund check stubs, and G5 adjustment records are given to the DFA. The DFA checks that the sum of the checks matches the bank deposit and G5 adjustment amounts and also that all funds correspond to the correct fund source type and award year. Any discrepancies are immediately reviewed with DOF to correct. Once the Refund of Cash shows on COD, the disbursement adjustment records are processed. The bank, check, and G5 records are then forwarded on to the FA Assistant who again checks to make sure that all amounts are equal and the award year and fund sources

match. The FA Assist then logs into COD to ensure that each adjustment processed correctly on the corresponding student's award records.

- Additionally, the DFA checks all fund accounts on COD at least twice a week to be sure Cash > Net Accepted & Posted disbursements = 0. If not, the DFA reviews recently processed batches on COD and Nexus to find which disbursement or adjustment didn't process and corrects or re-processes them.

### **NSLDS Enrollment Reporting**

Enrollment reporting must be completed every two months by all schools participating in Title IV Aid. Great Lakes chooses to complete Enrollment reporting to on a monthly basis. Information reported includes current enrollment status and educational program of study for all currently enrolled students, as well as any other students that may be included in the roster provided by NSLDS. Enrollment reporting is completed via Batch using the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) to transmit enrollment files electronically. If there are any errors within the submitted the batch, an error roster is received from NSLDS and reviewed by an FAO. Any necessary corrections for students on the error roster are submitted through Batch process or through NSLDS online.

### **Default Management Plan**

Please refer to detailed Default Prevention Plan.