

13.6 Federal and state responsibilities

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.

Compliance Judgment: In Compliance

Rationale

Compliance with Program Responsibilities. As demonstrated through the [Letter of Eligibility](#) ^[1] issued from the United States Department of Education, the Secretary of Education has determined that the University of South Carolina Aiken is eligible to participate in federal student financial aid programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. The [Eligibility Certification Approval Report](#) ^[2] indicates that USC Aiken is fully certified to participate in Titles I through XV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended for educational programs at the baccalaureate and graduate levels until June 30, 2023. The institution has not been required to obtain a letter of credit in favor of the U.S. Department of Education. As indicated on the [Program Participation Agreement](#) ^[3] from the United States Department of Education, the University is eligible to participate in the following Title IV, HEA programs:

- Federal Pell Grant Program
- Federal Family Education Loan Program
- Federal Direct Student Loan Program
- Federal Perkins Loan Program
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program
- Federal Work-Study Program

- Academic Competitiveness Grant and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant Programs
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant Program
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant

The University also disburses funds from the state scholarship and grants programs. These programs include Palmetto Fellows Scholarships, LIFE scholarships, HOPE scholarships, and Need-Based grants. .

Audits of Financial Aid Programs. All financial aid programs in the University of South Carolina system are audited annually by Elliott Davis Decosimo, LLC. USC Aiken's financial aid audits demonstrate compliance with the standards of the Single Audit Act of 1984 as amended in 1996. The Single Audit Reports for the University of South Carolina System are provided for fiscal years [2017](#) ^[4], [2018](#) ^[5], and [2019](#).^[6] Audits over the past three years have revealed only two reportable conditions for USC Aiken, both of which have been corrected.

In fiscal year 2017, the Fiscal Operations Report Application to Participate (FISAP) was submitted with the improper exclusion of South Carolina National Guard and Teaching Fellows resulting in the understating of expenditures by \$183,750. The FISAP was submitted during a time when the USC Aiken Office of Financial Aid did not have a Director. In 2018, a new Director of Financial Aid was hired and a correction was submitted to initiate the 2018 fiscal year. Since then, the annual FISAP has been submitted in a timely manner with accurate data.

In 2019, an audit found that per 34 CFR 86.100 and Section 120 of the Higher Education Act, USC Aiken had completed a required [biennial report](#) ^[7] of its Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program; however, the report did not contain information regarding the number of drug and alcohol-related fatalities nor the number and type of sanctions that were imposed by the school as a result of drug and alcohol-related violations. USC Aiken had been collecting information on alcohol and drug-related fatalities and sanctions in accordance with the Higher Education Act but had not

published the information online. The required information is now available online at the [non-academic code of conduct webpage](#).^[8] All consumer information reports required under the Higher Education Act (e.g., [Annual Security and Fire Safety Report](#)^[9]) are available from a single, publically-accessible [web portal](#)^[10] that is maintained by the USC Aiken Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Compliance.

Supporting Documentation

1. [Letter of Eligibility](#)
2. [Eligibility Certification Approval Report](#)
3. [Program Participation Agreement](#)
4. [Single Audit Report 2017](#)
5. [Single Audit Report 2018](#)
6. [Single Audit Report 2019](#)
7. [Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program Biennial Report](#)
8. [Non-academic code of conduct webpage](#)
9. [Annual Security and Fire Safety Report](#)
10. [HEOA Compliance Report Web Portal](#)