Verification Policy

What Is Verification?

Verification is a process used by the Department of Education and colleges to ensure that information reported on a student's FAFSA is accurate. Because students sometimes make errors on their application, there is a process for verifying applications and making corrections. Institutions that participate in Federal Title IV aid programs are **REQUIRED** by federal regulations ([CFR Title 34, Part 668, Subpart E](#)) to perform verifications on selected students.

Students can be randomly selected for verification by the U.S. Department of Education's Central Processing System (CPS). Other students may be selected by the school, if conflicting information or discrepancies are present on his/her FAFSA.

How Will I Know If I Have Been Selected For Verification?

- CPS will notify the student on his/her [Student Aid Report (SAR)](#).
- Averett [Financial Aid Office](#) will send weekly email notification to the student's email address provided on his/her FAFSA application.

What Is The Verification Process?

Students selected for verification will be required to submit certain documents and forms to the [Financial Aid Office](#) before financial aid eligibility can be determined. For timely processing, requested documents MUST be received by the established priority deadline posted on the financial aid website and in the email notifications.

1. Documents received by the [Financial Aid Office](#) will be processed and updated into the College's system within 2-3 business days. Please do not send multiple submissions of your documents if you don't see an update to your [Net Partner](#) account within this timeframe.
2. Once documents submitted are updated into the system, your assigned [Financial Aid Counselor](#) will review all documents received against FAFSA information reported to ensure accuracy and completeness. File review may result in the following two options:
    1. If updates are required, the [Financial Aid Counselor](#) will submit an updated FAFSA with corrections to the Department of Education Central Processing System (CPS) for processing. It may take up to 3-5 business days to receive a corrected FAFSA response from the Central Processing System.
    OR
    2. If conflicting information is detected during the review, additional documentation from the student will be required to resolve the discrepancies. Notifications will be sent via e-mail and/or phone call. Another review will be performed when additional documentation is received from the student.
3. When all corrections, updates, and conflicting information have been resolved, an award package is generated (if student is eligible) and notification is sent to student via e-mail. Award Offer can be accessed via your student [Net Partner](#) account.

PLEASE ALLOW 2-3 WEEKS FOR PROCESSING. IF ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION IS NEEDED TO RESOLVE DISCREPANT AND CONFLICTING INFORMATION, PROCESSING TIME CAN INCREASE TO 4-6 WEEKS.

What Types Of Documents Are Required For Verification?

1. Refer to the email notification that you received from AU's Office of Financial Aid Office.

Verification may include, but is not limited to, review of the following data:

- Tax Filers (From IRS Data Retrieval or Federal Tax Documents/Income Statements from 2020)
    o Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)
    o Taxes Paid
    o Specific untaxed income items from tax return
    o Untaxed IRA distributions
    o Untaxed pensions
    o Education credits
    o IRA deductions
    o Tax exempt Interest
- Nontax Filers
    o Income earned from work (W-2)
    o Confirmation on Non-filing
- All Applicants
    o Number in Household
    o Number in College
- Custom Verification
    o High School Completion Status
    o Identity/Educational Purpose Statement

**Upon review of verification documents, additional documentation may be required.

When Should I Submit My Documents?

In order to retain federal aid (Federal Direct Loans and Federal Pell Grant) as part of an award package, **the verification process must be completed by <u>whichever is sooner</u>**:

- within 120 days of the student's last date of enrollment
- by September 1, 2023

Students selected for verification after financial aid is disbursed will have future aid placed on hold and will have State, Federal and Need-base Institutional Aid charged back if the verification process is not complete. The following deadlines apply:

- Students selected for verification in Fall Term after aid has disbursed will have a hold placed on Spring Term aid. Verification must be completed by May 3rd, 2023.

- Students selected for verification in Spring Semester after aid has disbursed will have a hold placed on Summer Term aid (if applicable). Verification must be completed by May 3rd, 2023.
- Students selected for verification after the last day of Spring Term will have a hold placed on Summer Term aid (if applicable). Verification must be completed by September 1, 2023.

Note: If the date listed above falls on a weekend or holiday, the documentation is due on the next business day.

Please keep in mind that due to heavy volume in the summer and early fall, there may be a delay in the review of verification materials submitted.

If your financial aid eligibility has not been determined or your documentation has not been submitted by the dates listed above, you will be responsible for payment of your tuition, fees, and charges. Please visit the Student Accounts Website for payment dates. Please regularly check your AU email and email address that you provided on your FAFSA for updates about your financial aid eligibility.

What Happens If The School Suspects Fraud?

Individuals who have purposely misreported information or altered documentation to fraudulently obtain financial aid funds will be reported to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General.