

## **Verification**

### **1 Introduction**

Verification is the process of confirming the accuracy of student reported data on financial aid applications. Only a portion of the student population is selected for verification.

### **2 Selection of Applications to be verified**

The Office of Financial Aid (OFA) verifies those applicants identified by the Department of Education (DOE).

#### **2.1 Exclusions**

Listed below are certain circumstances where students do not have to complete verification. The financial aid administrator must identify and document in the aid folder why the student is not required to complete verification.

- a. An applicant who died during the award year.
- b. A student who is incarcerated
- c. Applicants whose parents do not live in the United States and cannot be contacted.
- d. A dependent student whose parents cannot comply because of specified reasons (i.e., parents are deceased, are physically or mentally incapacitated, or the student does not know where the parents reside).
- e. A student who does not receive Title IV funds.

### **3 Verification Time Frame**

If the OFA has received DOE information identifying the student as being selected for verification the verification form, and IRS Data Retrieval tool or tax return transcripts are requested to the student.

### **4 Document Collection Procedures**

Required documentation items are identified and a copy of the tracking letter is kept in the pending file. When all required documents are received, the student is considered complete and the student file is passed on to the financial aid packaging and awarding specialist for award letter processing.

#### **4.1 Documentation**

Documentation submitted to the OFA must be legible, appropriate, and have the student's social security number for identification purposes. If the student submits a document which is not legible the documents will be returned and a request for additional documentation is requested.

#### **4.2 Processing Time Period**

Students are notified that until the missing items are submitted to the OFA, additional processing of their file is not possible.

#### **4.3 Failure to Comply**

Students who fail to submit verification documents never become complete; therefore, aid is not awarded for these students.

#### **4.4 Notification of Verification to Applicants**

The OFA mails a Verification Letter and the Verification Worksheet for students that were selected for verification.

### **5 Verification of Data Elements**

SU verifies only those data elements required by the federal government. However, Aid Administrators are free to ask for additional information if further investigation is needed to resolve a discrepancy.

For each award year, the Secretary of Education publishes in the Federal Register a notice announcing the FAFSA information that an institution and an applicant may be required to verify. The notice also specifies what documentation is acceptable for verifying FAFSA information. The Federal Register lists these items for the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 award years. The individual verification items that an applicant must

verify are based upon the Verification Tracking Group to which the applicant is assigned as listed in the chart below:

**VERIFICATION 2013-2014**

Verification Tracking Flag	Verification Tracking Group	FAFSA Information Required to be Verified
V1	Standard Verification Group	<p>Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusted Gross Income</li> <li>• U.S. Income Tax Paid</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of IRA Distributions</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of Pensions</li> <li>• IRA Deductions and Payments</li> <li>• Tax Exempt Interest Income</li> <li>• Education Credits</li> <li>• Number of Household Members</li> <li>• Number in College</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid</li> </ul> <p>Non Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income Earned from Work</li> <li>• Number of Household Members</li> <li>• Number in College</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid</li> </ul>
V2	SNAP Verification Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> </ul>
V3	Child Support Paid Verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Support Paid by the student (or spouse), the student's parent, or both</li> </ul>
V4 A	Custom Verification Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School Completion Status</li> <li>• Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance</li> </ul>

		<p>Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Support Paid</li> </ul>
V4 B	Custom Verification Group for students unable to appear in person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School Completion Status</li> <li>• Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose Notary's Certificate of Acknowledgment for student's unable to appear in person</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid</li> </ul>
V5	Aggregate Verification Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School Completion Status</li> <li>• Identity/ Statement of Educational Purpose</li> </ul> <p>Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusted Gross Income</li> <li>• U.S. Income Tax Paid</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of IRA Distributions</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of Pensions</li> <li>• IRA Deductions and Payments</li> <li>• Tax Exempt Interest Income</li> <li>• Education Credits</li> <li>• Number of Household Members</li> <li>• Number in College</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid</li> </ul> <p>Non-Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income earned from work</li> <li>• Number of Household Members</li> <li>• Number in College</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid</li> </ul>

### Acceptable Documentation

The documentation required for verification varies according to the specific FAFSA information being verified. A student selected for verification will need to submit the following acceptable documentation to the University to complete the verification process. If a student is unable to submit any of the required documents, he/she should contact the Financial Aid Office to discuss possible alternative acceptable documentation.

#### VERIFICATION 2013-2014

<b><i>FAFSA Information</i></b>	<b><i>Acceptable Documentation</i></b>
Household Size	Verification Worksheet (2013-14)
Number in College	Verification Worksheet (2013-14)
SNAP Benefits	Agency Documentation confirming receipt of benefits
Child Support Paid	Child Support Statement (2013-14)
AGI & U.S. Tax Paid	IRS DRT* or IRS Tax Return Transcript**
Untaxed Income	IRS DRT* or IRS Tax Return Transcript**
Non-Filer Work Income	Verification Worksheet & 2012 IRS W-2 Forms
High School Completion	High School Diploma or transcript; GED certificate or transcript; homeschooled credential or transcript; or academic transcript showing two-year program completion
Identity/Statement of Education Purpose	Original government-issued photo identification (ID) such as a passport or a driver's license and 2013-14 Identity and Statement of Educational Purpose Verification Worksheet (2013-2014)
Other Information	Other documentation as specified by the University

\*IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT): The IRS DRT is the fastest, easiest and most secure method of meeting verification requirements. To verify tax data, the U.S. Department of Education and the University encourage students and parents to use the IRS DRT to import data from their tax return directly to the FAFSA, either at the initial FAFSA filing or through the FAFSA correction process. For the retrieved data to be acceptable documentation of tax data, it is necessary that neither the student nor the parents change the data after it is transferred from the IRS.

**VERIFICATION 2014-2015**

Verification Flag	Tracking	Verification Group	Tracking	FAFSA Information Required to be Verified
V1		Standard Verification Group		<p>Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusted Gross Income</li> <li>• U.S. Income Tax Paid</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of IRA Distributions</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of Pensions</li> <li>• IRA Deductions and Payments</li> <li>• Tax Exempt Interest Income</li> <li>• Education Credits</li> <li>• Number of Household Members</li> <li>• Number in College</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid</li> </ul> <p>Non Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income Earned from Work</li> <li>• Number of Household Members</li> <li>• Number in College</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid</li> </ul>
V2		Reserved for FSA Use Only		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>
V3		Child Support Paid Verification		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Support Paid by the student (or spouse), the student's parent, or both</li> </ul>
V4 A		Custom Verification Group		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School Completion Status</li> <li>• Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Support Paid, if included on the ISIR</li> </ul>
V4 B	Custom Verification Group for students unable to appear in person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School Completion Status</li> <li>• Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose Notary's Certificate of Acknowledgment for student's unable to appear in person</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid, if included on the ISIR</li> </ul>
V5	Aggregate Verification Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School Completion Status</li> <li>• Identity/ Statement of Educational Purpose</li> </ul> <p>Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusted Gross Income</li> <li>• U.S. Income Tax Paid</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of IRA Distributions</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of Pensions</li> <li>• IRA Deductions and Payments</li> <li>• Tax Exempt Interest Income</li> <li>• Education Credits</li> <li>• Number of Household Members</li> <li>• Number in College</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid</li> </ul> <p>Non-Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income earned from work</li> <li>• Number of Household Members</li> <li>• Number in College</li> <li>• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- Food Stamps)</li> <li>• Child Support Paid, if included on the ISIR</li> </ul>
V6	Household Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusted Gross</li> </ul>

	Verification Group	Income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U.S. Income Tax Paid</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of IRA Distributions</li> <li>• Untaxed Portions of Pensions</li> <li>• IRA Deductions and Payments</li> <li>• Tax Exempt Interest Income</li> <li>• Other Untaxed Income on the 2014-2015 FAFSA</li> </ul> Payments to tax-deferred pensions and savings (Questions 45a and 94a)
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NOTE: Federal regulations stipulate that an institution may require an applicant to verify any FAFSA information that it specifies. On occasion, the University may therefore require a student to verify any FAFSA information and to provide any reasonable documentation.

**Acceptable Documentation**

The documentation required for verification varies according to the specific FAFSA information being verified. A student selected for verification will need to submit the following acceptable documentation to the University to complete the verification process. If a student is unable to submit any of the required documents, he/she should contact the Financial Aid Office to discuss possible alternative acceptable documentation.

**VERIFICATION 2014-2015**

<b><i>FAFSA Information</i></b>	<b><i>Acceptable Documentation</i></b>
Household Size	Verification Worksheet (2014-2015)
Number in College	Verification Worksheet (2014-2015)
SNAP Benefits	Agency Documentation confirming receipt of benefits
Child Support Paid	Child Support Statement (2014-2015)
AGI & U.S. Tax Paid	IRS DRT* or IRS Tax Return Transcript**
Untaxed Income	IRS DRT* or IRS Tax Return Transcript**
Non-Filer Work Income	Verification Worksheet & 2013 IRS W-2 Forms
High School Completion	High School Diploma or transcript; GED certificate or transcript; homeschooled credential or transcript; or academic transcript showing two-year program completion
Identity/Statement of Education Purpose	Original government-issued photo identification (ID) such as a passport or a driver's license and 2014-2015 Identity and Statement of Educational

	Purpose Verification Worksheet (2014-2015)
Other Information	Other documentation as specified by the University

\*IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT): The IRS DRT is the fastest, easiest and most secure method of meeting verification requirements. To verify tax data, the U.S. Department of Education and the University encourage students and parents to use the IRS DRT to import data from their tax return directly to the FAFSA, either at the initial FAFSA filing or through the FAFSA correction process. For the retrieved data to be acceptable documentation of tax data, it is necessary that neither the student nor the parents change the data after it is transferred from the IRS.

## 6 No Tolerances

All discrepant information must be corrected when verifying a student's record.

## 7 Notification to Students

Students are notified of the results of verification in the form of an award letter.

### 7.1 Overpayments

OFA policies and procedures are designed to eliminate the possibility of an overpayment from any fund. If however, an overpayment does occur, the student is placed on hold until the overpayments can be corrected. Students are not allowed to register for subsequent terms and academic transcripts are withheld until the account has been cleared.

## 8 Updating Requirements and Procedures

There are three situations whereby an Aid Administrator may update student information. When students notify the aid office of an allowable update, the student is required to make a correction so that the Aid Administrator may recalculate the student's EFC and the new figure may be used to award financial aid. Updates may occur for:

- 1) Dependency status except through marriage.
- 2) Family size.
- 3) Number of family members enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

## 9 Interim Disbursements

Because the OFA is liable for disbursements made prior to verification, the OFA policy does not allow interim disbursements. Students must complete the verification process before aid is awarded or disbursed. Exceptions must include extenuating circumstances, be documented in the student's folder, and be monitored by an Aid Director.





Financial Aid Office  
1414 Geronimo Dr.  
El Paso, TX 79925

**2013-2014 Aid Year**

Dear Student,

In order to complete your 2013-2014 financial aid award package, you must provide the Financial Aid Office with the attached worksheet, requested documents marked below, and supporting documentation as soon as possible so that your financial aid will not be delayed.

Deadline for submitting complete verification: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Complete and sign the enclosed 2013-2014 Verification Worksheet.

\_\_\_\_ Attach student's and spouse's IRS Tax Return Transcripts for year 2012, or retrieve 2012 IRS income information to student's FAFSA by submitting a correction.

\_\_\_\_ Attach student's parents IRS Tax Return Transcripts for year 2012, or retrieve 2012 IRS income information to student's FAFSA by submitting a correction.

\_\_\_\_ Attach documentation of the receipt of SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) benefits during 2011 and/or 2012.

\_\_\_\_ Attach documentation that indicate the student's high school completion status when the student will begin college in 2013-2014.

\_\_\_\_ Please appear in person and present a valid government-issued photo ID at Southwest University's Financial Aid Office.

\_\_\_\_ Attach documentation of the receipt or payment of Child Support for 2011 or 2012.

After initial review of the requested documents school may require additional documentation, and your student's EFC maybe adjusted. Any changes will be reflected in the student's award letter which will be mailed out to you within 10 business day from the date verification is completed. Failure to complete this document will result in student's ineligibility to receive federal student aid for the aid year. If you have recently submitted the requested documentation to our office, please disregard this notice. Should you no longer wish to receive federal financial aid at Southwest University please notify us.

**Transcripts maybe requested in person at:**

Visit the Local IRS office  
700 E. San Antonio  
El Paso, TX 79901  
Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm

Thank You,  
Fallon Dela Riva  
Southwest University at El Paso  
Financial Aid Office  
(915)613-0459



Financial Aid Office  
1414 Geronimo Dr.  
El Paso, TX 79925

### 2014-2015 Aid Year

Dear Student,

In order to complete your 2014-2015 financial aid award package, you must provide the Financial Aid Office with the attached worksheet, requested documents marked below, and supporting documentation as soon as possible so that your financial aid will not be delayed.

Deadline for submitting complete verification: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Complete and sign the enclosed 2014-2015 Verification Worksheet.

\_\_\_\_ Attach student's and spouse's IRS Tax Return Transcripts for year 2013, or retrieve 2013 IRS income information to student's FAFSA by submitting a correction.

\_\_\_\_ Attach student's parents IRS Tax Return Transcripts for year 2013, or retrieve 2013 IRS income information to student's FAFSA by submitting a correction.

\_\_\_\_ Attach documentation of the receipt of SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) benefits during 2012 and/or 2013.

\_\_\_\_ Attach documentation that indicate the student's high school completion status when the student will begin college in 2014-2015.

\_\_\_\_ Please appear in person and present a valid government-issued photo ID at Southwest University's Financial Aid Office.

\_\_\_\_ Attach documentation of the receipt or payment of Child Support for 2012 or 2013.

\_\_\_\_ Other untaxed documentation:

\_\_\_\_ Student's and/or Parent's Tax Deferred Pensions/Savings

\_\_\_\_ Student's and/or Parent's Military or Clergy Allowances

\_\_\_\_ Student's and/or Parent's Veterans' Non-educational benefits documentation

\_\_\_\_ Student's and/or Parent's other untaxed income

\_\_\_\_ Student's and/or Parent's Money received/paid on your behalf

After initial review of the requested documents school may require additional documentation, and your student's EFC maybe adjusted. Any changes will be reflected in the student's award letter which will be mailed out to you within 10 business day from the date verification is completed. Failure to complete this document will result in student's ineligibility to receive federal student aid for the aid year. If you have recently submitted the requested documentation to our office, please disregard this notice. Should you no longer wish to receive federal financial aid at Southwest University please notify us.

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