

# Western Oklahoma State College

## Office of Financial Aid

### Verification Policies

**Definition of Verification:**

Verification is a process to confirm the information provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

**Applications Selected for Verification:**

Western verifies all applications that are selected for verification by the Central Processing System (CPS). In addition, students who submit conflicting or incomplete information may be selected for verification by a Financial Aid Counselor. Students who are selected for verification will be asked to provide supporting documentation of income, household size, number in college, untaxed income and benefits, etc. to verify the data provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

**Items to be Verified/Acceptable Documentation:**

The Financial Aid Office requires appropriate documentation based on the guidelines published in the federal government's Application and Verification Guide. Students who are selected for verification will be placed in one of the following groups. The group determines which FAFSA information must be verified for the student.

**Verification Flag Group Codes**

Tracking Flag	Track Group Name	Information to be Verified	Forms to Send
V-1	Standard Verification Group	Tax Filers Adjusted Gross Income US Income Tax Paid Untaxed Portions of IRA Untaxed Portions of Pensions IRA Deductions & Payment Tax-Exempt Interest Income Education Credits Number in Household Number in College  Non-Tax Filers Income Earned from Work Number in Household Number in College	SDF IVF  Request Tax Return Transcript
V-2	Not currently used		

V-3	Not currently used		
V-4	Custom Verification Group No Tax Return Required	High School Completion Status Identity/Statement of Ed Purpose	SDF ID/ED statement form
V-5	Aggregate Verification Group	High School Completion Status Identity/Statement of Ed Purpose Tax Filers Adjusted Gross Income US Income Tax Paid Untaxed Portions of IRA Untaxed Portions of Pensions IRA Deductions & Payment Tax-Exempt Interest Income Education Credits Number in Household Number in College  Non-Tax Filers Income Earned from Work Number in Household Number in College	SDF IVF  Request Tax Return Transcript  ID/ED statement form

**Special Circumstances**

Recalculation Request - Students requesting that unusual circumstances be considered (professional judgment) must complete verification, before any type of professional judgment will be considered. Students who were not selected by CPS will be selected by Western before a recalculation will be considered. Forms for recalculation are available from the financial aid office.

**IRS Data Retrieval Tool:**

- Available when completing the FAFSA at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Eligible parents and students may use this tool to transfer tax data from the IRS to the FAFSA (will need to have a FSA ID created for the parent).
- Applicants who use the IRS Data Retrieval tool must not change the data transferred from the IRS.

**IRS Data Retrieval Tool may not be available if:**

- Marital status has changed since filing the return.
- If the parents or student is married but filed tax returns separately (i.e. “married filing separately” or “head of household”).
- If an amended tax return was filed.
- If the student or parent has been a victim of identity theft.

- If the home address on the FAFSA does not match the address on the tax return.
- It's been less than 3 weeks since filing electronically or 11 weeks of mailing the return.

### **Federal Tax Return Transcripts:**

#### **2019-2020**

- If your file is selected for verification in the 2019-2020 award year, the Financial Aid Office can use either a signed copy of your 2017 Federal Tax Return and W-2s or the Federal Tax Return Transcript.
- Applicants unable to use the IRS Data Retrieval tool or who change the data transferred may obtain an IRS Tax Return Transcript at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or by calling the IRS at 1-800-908-9946.
- If your marital status has changed after filing the tax return, you filed an amended tax return, filed for extension, or are unable to obtain an IRS Tax Return Transcript due to identity theft, contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.
- Independent students or parents of dependent students who did not file a tax return must provide a verification letter from the IRS saying they did not file for the tax year requested.

#### **2020-2021**

- If your file is selected for verification in the 2020-2021 award year, the Financial Aid Office can use either a signed copy of your 2018 Federal Tax Return and W-2s or the Federal Tax Return Transcript.
- Applicants unable to use the IRS Data Retrieval tool or who change the data transferred may obtain an IRS Tax Return Transcript at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or by calling the IRS at 1-800-908-9946.
- If your marital status has changed after filing the tax return, you filed an amended tax return, filed for extension, or are unable to obtain an IRS Tax Return Transcript due to identity theft, contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.
- Independent students or parents of dependent students who did not file a tax return must provide a verification letter from the IRS saying they did not file for the tax year requested.

### **Financial Aid Office processes:**

1. Beginning in approximately December before each new award year, Western will draw down FAFSA data from the federal government several times a week.
2. Normally, The Financial Aid Office sends an Information Request Letter to all applicants within 2 to 3 days of receiving ISIR information confirming we have received their FAFSA and requesting initial documents needed to complete the file.
3. The federal government has customized the verification process and different documents will be required for different verification categories.
4. Forms are mailed to the student or may be downloaded from Western's financial aid webpage (<https://www.wosc.edu/index.php?page=Financial-Assistance>).
5. Applicants should submit all requested documents as soon as possible after receiving the Information Request Letter to avoid delays in processing their aid. All documents must be returned before the students last day of enrollment.

6. When the applicant has submitted all requested documents, the Financial Aid Counselor will complete the verification process. At that time, the Counselor may request additional documentation to clear up any conflicting or inconsistent information. The review process usually occurs within two to three weeks of receipt of the final documentation.
7. Corrections are required if the information indicated on the submitted documents does not match the FAFSA data. The Financial Aid Counselor will submit corrections on the student's behalf by sending them electronically to the U. S. Department of Education system. Generally, the corrected data is processed within 72 hours after the corrected data is submitted. After receiving the corrections electronically, if all documentation has been submitted and all eligibility criteria have been met, the Financial Aid Counselor will forward the file to the Director or Assistant Director of Financial Aid for packaging.
8. The Director or Assistant Director will package the student's aid and an award letter will be mailed. Students may also view their aid via Campus Connect by logging in with their student id and password.
9. Should a student's EFC change and/or their Title IV aid amounts change, a new award letter will be sent to notify the student.

**Deadlines:**

Students selected for verification must submit required paperwork as quickly as possible to avoid delays in processing aid.

**2019-2020 Deadlines**

- **Federal Deadline** - The 2019-2020 FAFSA is still available and online applications must be submitted by midnight Central Time, June 30, 2020.  
Any corrections or updates must be submitted by midnight Central Time, September 19, 2020.
- Western must receive a valid FAFSA (ISIR) from the government's processor while the student is still enrolled and eligible for payment, but not later than September 19, 2020 for the 2019-2020 award year.
- Students selected for verification by the federal government or by the school must have verification documents and a valid FAFSA (ISIR) no later than 120 days after the last day of enrollment or September 19, 2020, whichever is earlier.
- Student loans may not be certified after the last date of the loan period.
- If a student is selected for verification after aid has been awarded and disbursed, the student must complete the verification process within the same timeframe in order to remain eligible. Failure to complete verification or if the verification does not justify aid already disbursed, the student is responsible for repaying all aid he/she is not eligible for.
- Western does not package aid or mail award letters until all verification has been completed.
- **State Deadline** – Oklahoma (OTAG) - As soon as possible after October 1, 2018. Awards made until funds are depleted.
- **College Deadline** – WOSC Scholarships for 2019-2020 are due March 1, 2019.

## 2020-2021 Deadlines

- **Federal Deadline** - The 2020-2021 FAFSA became available October 1, 2019 and the federal government's processor must receive the 2020-2021 FAFSA by June 30, 2021. Any corrections or updates must be submitted by midnight Central Time, September 14, 2021.
- Western must receive a valid FAFSA (ISIR) from the government's processor while the student is still enrolled and eligible for payment, but not later than September 14, 2021 for the 2020-2021 award year.
- Students selected for verification by the federal government or by the school must have verification documents and a valid FAFSA (ISIR) no later than 120 days after the last day of enrollment or September 14, 2021, whichever is earlier.
- Student loans may not be certified after the last date of the loan period.
- If a student is selected for verification after aid has been awarded and disbursed, the student must complete the verification process within the same timeframe in order to remain eligible. Failure to complete verification or if the verification does not justify aid already disbursed, the student is responsible for repaying all aid he/she is not eligible for.
- Western does not package aid or mail award letters until all verification has been completed.
- **State Deadline** – Oklahoma (OTAG) - As soon as possible after October 1, 2017 Awards made until funds are depleted.
- **College Deadline** – WOSC Scholarships for 2020-2021 are due March 2, 2020.

## Consequences for failing to submit documents in time:

- The application cannot be processed and federal aid will not be awarded.
- The student will be responsible for paying his/her tuition, fees, and other institutional charges out of pocket.
- The semester and/or academic year ending with the student having an outstanding balance with the college. This would prevent the student from enrolling in future semesters, receiving grades, obtaining a transcript, etc.

## Inspector General Notification:

Western refers to the Office of Inspector General for investigation cases as follows:

- After conducting the review of an application, the college has credible information indicating that an applicant may have engaged in fraud or other criminal misconduct in connection with the aid application. The type of information that an institution must refer is that which is relevant to the eligibility of the applicant for Title IV, HEA program assistance, or the amount of the assistance. Examples of this type of information are:
  - False claims of independent student status;
  - False claims of citizenship;
  - Use of false identities;
  - Forgery of signatures or certifications; and
  - False statements of income
- Any credible information indicating that any employee, third-party servicer, or other agent of the college that acts in a capacity that involves the administration of the Title IV, HEA programs, or the receipt of funds under those programs, may have engaged in fraud,

misrepresentation, conversion or breach of fiduciary responsibility, or other illegal conduct involving the Title IV, HEA programs. The type of information that an institution must refer is that which is relevant to the eligibility and funding of the college and its students through the Title IV, HEA Programs.