Verification: What is it?

“Verification” is a review process, mandated by the federal government, to check the accuracy of information reported on financial aid documents submitted by students and their families. The verification process was established to ensure that limited financial aid dollars are awarded to eligible students in an equitable and consistent manner. Nationwide, the federal government selects more than 30 percent of student financial aid applications for verification; at the University of Florida (UF), less than 30 percent are chosen for verification.

UF participates in the federal Department of Education’s “Quality Assurance Program,” a program that allows us to establish our own verification criteria and determine which student files must be verified. UF students are selected for verification based on error-prone areas determined through Quality Assurance. Some students’ Federal Student Aid Reports may indicate that they have been selected for federal verification. Please ignore this notification. If your application is selected for verification by UF, you will receive official notification from us. Do not submit any documents unless we request that you do so. See “How Are Students Notified If They Are Selected” below.

Who Must Be Verified?

1. In general, students who appear likely to have made errors in completing their applications are selected for verification.

2. This institution verifies applicants:
   - whose application data fails to successfully complete a mandatory federal data match.
   - who file as independent but do not appear to meet the criteria for age, being a foster child, orphan, having children or other dependents, marital status, active duty military status, veteran status, being graduate/professional students, having a legal guardian, being an emancipated minor, being an unaccompanied youth or having dependency status overrides.

3. In addition, UF will select applicants for verification when:
   - conflicting information exists within the student’s file. UF will resolve discrepancies in application information if a discrepant item was used to determine eligibility and an update of the item could cause the applicant’s eligibility to change.
   - we have reason to believe that the information provided to establish eligibility for aid is inaccurate.

4. An exemption:
   - Students who have had “professional judgment” changes made to their financial aid awards and who, as a result of those changes, meet any of the criteria listed below in the section “Specific Items that Will Be Verified” are exempt from selection for verification.

How Are Students Notified If They Are Selected?

Selection is initiated after we receive the student’s processed electronic Federal Student Aid Report (SAR) from the federal servicer. Please see “Verification: Who Must Be Verified?” for more information on selection. UF notifies students they have been selected for verification by emailing each selected applicant regarding required documentation.
Specific Items that Will Be Verified

**Dependent Students**

- Dependent applicants are selected for institutional verification if the results of their FAFSA need analyses indicate any of the criteria listed below. Federal regulations mandate that schools must collect **IRS tax return transcripts** as documentation. **W2s** are also required by SFA. Verification will recognize all files using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to import valid tax data to the application as meeting the requirement for tax return transcripts. In all cases, the student's gross financial need must be greater than or equal to $200.

Any applicant selected for verification who answered yes to receiving food stamps will also receive a request for certification of food stamp eligibility. Any applicant selected for verification reporting the parent or student paid child support will also receive a request for an Additional Financial Information document (excluded income) and a household size/number in college document. Additionally, students who have been selected for verification by UF and also selected for verification of Identity and Educational Purpose by the Dept. of Education are required to provide an Identity and Educational Purpose statement. **BOTH** the parent’s(s’) and student’s **2014 IRS tax return transcripts** or non-tax filer’s statements will be requested if any one of the following situations exist.

1. The parent(s’) filed or will file a 2014 Tax Return. The Effective Family Contribution (EFC) is less than or equal to $6,000. The sum of the parent(s’) adjusted gross income (AGI) is greater than or equal to $25,000 and less than $140,000 and number in college is equal to or less than one or **PAGI** is greater than or equal to $70,000 and number in college is greater than or equal to two, and taxed plus untaxed income reported is greater than the parent’s(s’') Income Protection Allowance, and the amount of reported income tax paid is greater than the parent’s(s’) income tax liability, 18 percent for PAGI less than or equal to $45,000 or 20 percent for PAGI greater than $45,000. (**D1**)  

2. The parent(s) filed or will file a 2014 Tax Return. The sum of the parent’s(s’) AGI and untaxed income, minus reported income tax paid, is greater than the parent’s(s’) Income Protection Allowance, and the parent’s(s’) adjusted gross income is greater than or equal to $25,000 and less than $140,000 **AND** the parent’s(s’) reported Additional Financial Information (income exclusion) is greater than 15% of the parent’s(s’') AGI. We also will request verification of parent’s(s’) **Additional Financial Information** (excluded income). (**D5**)  

3. The student filed or will file a 2014 Tax Return. The student’s reported AGI is greater than the dependent student’s Income Protection Allowance, and the student’s reported Additional Financial Information is greater than 30% of his/her AGI and **EFC** < 10,000 and the parent’s(s’) adjusted gross income is greater than or equal to $25,000 and less than $140,000. The type analysis is not a zero EFC bypass. We also will request verification of student’s **Additional Financial Information**. (**D7**)  

4. The parent(s) filed or will file a 2014 Tax Return. Parent’s(s’) Additional Financial Information is greater than zero. Parent(s) reported adjusted gross income (AGI) is equal to parent’s(s’) Additional Financial Information (PXCL) or parent’s(s’) tax paid (PTAX) is equal to parent’s(s’) Additional Financial Information or parent’s(s’) untaxed income (PNTAX) is equal to parent’s(s’) Additional Financial Information (PXCL) and any two that are equal are > 0. We also will request verification of parent’s(s’) **Additional Financial Information**. (**D8**)  

5. The parent(s) reported estimated income information on the FAFSA, and the student has an **EFC** (expected family contribution) that is less than or equal to $5198 and parent’s(s’') reported adjusted gross income (AGI) is equal to or greater than $25,000 and less than $140,000 and number in college is equal to or less than one **OR** **PAGI** is greater than or equal to $70,000 and less than $140,000 and number in college is greater than or equal to two **AND** Class is less than 6 and College is **not equal** to LW, MC, MD, VM, DN, PA PT, CD, ND or (PD with Track type = GBC). (**D9**)
Independent Students

1. The student and/or spouse filed or will file a 2014 Tax Return. The sum of the student’s AGI and untaxed income reported is greater than the student’s Income Protection Allowance, and the student’s adjusted gross income (AGI) is equal to or greater than $8,500 and less than $30,000 and the amount of reported income tax paid is greater than 15% of the student’s reported AGI. (I1)

2. The student’s “marital status” is married, the “student’s household size” equals two, the “number in college” equals one, and the student’s adjusted gross income (AGI) is equal to or greater than $8,500 and less than $30,000 and the spouse’s wages are reported as blank or zero. (I4)

3. The student or spouse filed or will file a 2014 Tax Return. The student’s AGI, minus reported income tax paid, is greater than the student’s Income Protection Allowance and the student’s adjusted gross income (AGI) is equal to or greater than $8,500 and less than $30,000 and the student’s reported Additional Financial Information is greater than 30% of the student’s AGI, and is greater than zero. We will also request verification of student’s Additional Financial Information. (I5)

4. The undergraduate student (and spouse, if applicable) reported estimated income information on the FAFSA, the student has an EFC (expected family contribution) that is less than or equal to $5198 (Pell-eligible), and the student’s AGI is equal to or greater than $8,500 and less than $30,000, and Class is < 6 and College = LW, MC, MD, VM, DN, PA, PT, CD, ND or (PD with Track Type = GBC). (I6)

For dependent students, we will request a Verification of Household Size & College Enrollment form if:

- EFC is < $10,000 and the parent’s(s’) “total contribution” as shown on the FAFSA need analysis is greater than $5198, and the number of family members in college is greater than one, and the gross need from the FAFSA need analysis is greater than $10,295 (50% of the on-campus budget for a Florida resident). (D1)
5. The reported 2014 student adjusted gross income equals or is greater than $8,500 and less than $30,000 and equal to the prior year (2013) adjusted gross income and SAGI is not equal to zero or blank. (I8)

• For independent students, we’ll request a Verification of Household Size & College Enrollment form if:

1. The student’s “total contribution” is greater than $5,198, and the “number of family members in college” reported is greater than one, and her or his “gross need” is greater than or equal to $200 and the student’s class is less than 6 and college is **not equal** to LW, MC, MD, VM, DN, PA, PT, CD, ND or (PD with Track type = GBC). (I1)

2. The student’s “marital status” is listed as “married,” and the “household size” listed is greater than the number of dependent children plus the student and spouse OR the student is “unmarried” and the “household size” listed is greater than the number of dependent children plus the student. (I2)

• For All students. Students required to submit citizenship or eligible noncitizenship documents must present original documentation to be viewed by SFA staff. If unable to present the original documentation the student can, at their own risk, overnight the original documentation to SFA to be viewed and copied. SFA will overnight the original back.

**2014-2015 Deadlines for Submission of Documents** - Per federal regulation, to be eligible, students must have a valid Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in-house while the student is in attendance.

1. Federal Perkins Loan, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), and Federal Work-Study (FWS) applicants must submit all documents needed to complete the verification process by the last day of the term for which they are currently enrolled. Unpaid Perkins, SEOG, and FWS are canceled on a term-by-term basis.

2. Eligible Federal Pell Grant applicants selected for verification must submit ALL documentation needed to complete the verification process within 120 days after their last day of enrollment for the 2015-16 academic year, or by September 26, 2016, whichever comes first.

Applicants who withdraw from school during a term for which they are being verified will be given a 120-day extension from the date of their withdrawal to submit all requested documents. For applicants whose last term is fall 2015, the deadline for submission of documents is April 19, 2016. Applicants with spring 2016 as a last term must submit all documents by August 30, 2016. The Summer A/B/C applicants' deadline is September 26, 2016.

**Consequences of Missed Deadlines**

1. Applicants who miss the deadlines listed above will be ineligible for 2015-16 financial assistance and will:
   - Not be disbursed any additional Perkins, SEOG, or Pell Grant funds and will be subject to repayment of any funds previously received for the 2015-16 academic year.
   - Not be eligible to continue working through the FWS employment program.
   - Not be eligible for Federal Direct Stafford Loan certification.

2. Federal Direct Stafford Loan checks of any applicants selected for verification after their loan application has been “certified” will not be disbursed until verification has been completed.
Notification of Completion of Verification

1. For Pell Grant and campus-based aid awardees: disbursement of the student’s Pell Grant and/or campus-based aid funds constitutes notification that the verification process is completed.

2. For Federal Direct Stafford Loan awardees: disbursement of the student’s Federal Direct Stafford checks or delivery of loan promissory notes constitutes notification that the verification process has been completed.