

Frequently Asked Verification Questions

If you are sending additional documents (IRS Tax Return Transcript & W-2 statements) with the Verification Worksheet, write the student's name and ID# or SSN at the top of each document.

What Is The Purpose Of Verification?

The U.S. Department of Education may select student's nationally for verification. It is a process for confirming the accuracy of the information provided on the FAFSA. WCU may choose to select as well under federal law.

How Do I Know If I Was Selected For Verification?

If a student has been selected for verification, an email communication will be sent to the student's WCU email address and/or the student's email address indicated on the FAFSA.

Also, there will be a comment on your Student Aid Report (SAR) if your application is federally selected for verification.

Where Do I Obtain the Verification Form?

The email communication sent to the student's WCU email address will contain the direct link to the WCU Verification Worksheet or visit the FA forms page at the URL below:

www.wcupa.edu/services/fin_aid/forms.aspx

What If I Have Not Filed My Federal Tax Return Yet?

Wait until you have completed your Federal Tax Return to submit the Verification Worksheet & the requested documents (IRS Tax Return Transcript, W-2's, & 1099's).

What Documents Should I Send With The Verification Worksheet?

Dependent students should send the following documents:

- **Dependent Verification Worksheet**
- **Parent's IRS Tax Return Transcript (include all pages)**
- **If parent is Married Filing Separate, Spouse's IRS Tax Return Transcript (including all pages)**
- **Parent's W-2 Statement(s)**
- **Student's IRS Tax Return Transcript (include all pages)**
- **Student's W-2 & 1099 Statement(s)**

Independent students should send the following documents:

- **Independent Verification Worksheet**
- **Student's IRS Tax Return Transcript (include all pages)**
- **Student's W-2 & 1099 Statement(s)**

If married also send the following documents:

- **Spouse's W-2 & 1099 Statement(s)**
- **If Married Filing Separate, Spouse's IRS Tax Return Transcript (including all pages)**

What If I Wasn't Required To Complete A Federal Tax Return?

If you were not required to file a Federal Tax Return indicate this on the Verification Worksheet by checking the appropriate box in the section(s) indicated below:

Dependent Students Worksheet

- Student did not file-Section C
- Parent(s) did not file-Section E

Independent Students Worksheet

- Section D

Where Should I Send The Requested Information?

The requested information should be sent to the WCU Financial Aid Office via

- Mail
- In-person.
- Fax

To the following address:

West Chester University
Schock Financial Aid Office
030 Kershner Student Service Center
25 University Avenue
West Chester, PA 19383
Fax: (610) 436-2574

What If I E-Filed My Federal Tax Return?

If you e-filed your Federal Tax Return, you may still need to submit a copy of the IRS Tax Return Transcript.

However, we would encourage you to wait two weeks until after you e-file your taxes and then return to the FAFSA to correct your estimated tax data by using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool

Must I use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to complete my FAFSA?

NO, but it is strongly encouraged as it will decrease the likelihood of mistakes, and in some instances exempt the parent or student from having to obtain an IRS Tax Return Transcript if selected for federal verification.

What If I Lost/Misplaced My IRS Tax Return Transcript and/or My W-2

If you have lost or misplaced your IRS Tax Return Transcript and/or W-2 Statements, you can:

- Contact the IRS
- Contact your tax preparer or your employer (for W-2's)

When contacting the IRS request a **Tax Return Transcript with Wage & income Transcript**. The phone number to the IRS is:

1-800-908-9946

The Website URL is

www.irs.gov/Individuals/Get-Transcript

Make sure to include the student ID# on all Tax Return Transcripts

What IF I Had More Than One Job?

If you had more than one job, you will be required to send a W-2 statement for each employer.

Failure to send all W-2 statements will result in a **delay** in processing your verification.

How Will I Know If Corrections Were Made To My FAFSA?

If corrections were needed, we will update your FAFSA. An email communication will be sent to you from FAFSA once the corrections have been processed.

To determine what corrections were made, compare the previous FAFSA transaction with the corrected FAFSA transaction.

How Will I Know If Additional Information Is Required?

An email communication will be sent to the student's WCU email address when/if additional information is required.

How Long Will Verification Take?

There is no specific time frame. It depends on many factors. However, the sooner you send the requested information to our office, the sooner the verification process can be completed. We will notify the student via their WCU email address once it has been completed.

Do I Have The Right To Discontinue The Verification Process?

YES. Obtain a "Notice to Cancel Federal Verification Form" from the WCU FA Office. Complete and send the form to the WCU Financial Aid Office:

All previously awarded federal need based financial aid will be cancelled and the WCU Bursars Office will be notified to remove the anticipated (estimated) credit. Federal law states that the college may not disburse any federal aid including federal student loans until verification is completed.

What Happens If My FAFSA Answers Do Not Match My Tax Documents?

We will electronically correct the data on the FAFSA to match the tax documents or other source documents.

Your anticipated awards will be adjusted if required and a revised Financial Aid Award Notification will be emailed to you.

NOTE: The good faith best estimate of your award will only be as good as the data provided on the FAFSA. Any corrections may cause your financial aid award to be adjusted upon revision.

Will My Anticipated Federal Awards Change As A Result Of Verification?

If corrections were needed & your EFC changed, your anticipated awards are subject to change based on the changes to your EFC.

A revised Financial Aid Award Notification will be emailed to you if changes to your aid are required.

How Do I Know What Federal Aid Changed As A Result Of Verification?

Compare your previous Financial Aid Award Notification with the revised Financial Aid Award Notification emailed to you.

How Will I Know If The Verification Process Is Complete?

An email communication will be sent to the student's WCU email address when the process is complete.

Is The College Allowed To Ask Me For My Private Tax & Financial Documents?

YES. Federal statute authorizes and requires the Financial Aid Office to request documents it deems necessary to perform verification.

What Happens If Conflicting Information Is Given During Verification?

The law requires the college to resolve the conflict before we are *allowed* to disburse any federal financial aid.

What Happens If I Purposely Give False or Misleading Information?

According to statute, the penalty for fraud may be a fine of up to \$20,000, prison time, or both.

What Happens If The Semester Ends, Enrollment Is Discontinued & Verification Has Not Been Completed?

According to federal law you may *forfeit* part or all of your federal financial aid. You should contact the WCU Financial Aid Office at 610-436-2627 if you are planning to leave the University for any reason.

Will Verification Delay My Award Letter?

NO. It is WCU's policy that we will not delay the processing of a good faith best estimate of the student's eligibility for financial aid. We will use the data provided on an un-verified FAFSA to make an estimate of eligibility.

Will Verification Delay The Disbursement Of My Federal Funds?

YES. All federal funds including the following are contingent upon the verification process:

- Pell Grants
- FSEOG
- Federal Work-Study
- Direct Subsidized Loans
- Direct Unsubsidized Loans(combo)

Funds for the federal awards listed above will not be disbursed until the verification process has been completed.

Is Validation The Same Process As Verification?

Validation is the state of Pennsylvania's version of verification for a PA State Grant awardee. If selected for validation you must return the requested documents to PHEAA.

PA State Grant/PHEAA
1-800-692-7392
www.pheaa.org

It is possible that you may be selected for both federal verification and state validation. These processes are independent of each other. The results of PHEAA's review may be different than the federal review performed by the college.