

Title: Verification Policy and Procedures

Policy  
No.: ADM 3.31

Date: 4/15/2008  
Rev.:

Areas Affected: All BSMSO Faculty

Page 1 of 5

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to define the verification process required of applicants selected for verification by the Central Processing Center (CPS).

**SOURCE:**

**POLICY:**

**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.

**Selection of Applications to be Verified**

The OFA verifies those applicants identified by the Department of Education (DOE). In addition, the OFA may select a student for verification if there is a discrepancy or a condition, which is unusual and warrants investigation. The OFA reserves the right to verify any student it may see fit.

**Exclusions**

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

1. An applicant who died during the award year.
2. A resident of Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Palau).
3. A student who is incarcerated
4. Applicants whose parents do not live in the United States and cannot be contacted.
5. A student immigrant (however, the student must meet the citizenship requirement).
6. 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).
7. A student who does not receive need-based Title IV funds.

Reference Policy # \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Title Date

**Approval History:**

Committees and Dates:  
Office of Financial Aid  
Faculty Organization –  
Faculty Forum –

**Conflicting Information for Non-selected Applicants**

The OFA is required to resolve any discrepancies discovered in a student's file.

**Verification Time Frame**

Upon receipt of the FAFSA, a Tracking Letter listing missing items is sent to the student. This letter informs the student of any additional information which is required to complete his/her financial aid file. If the OFA has received DOE information identifying the student as being selected for verification, the tracking items letter requests the appropriate verification documents (i.e., verification form, student and parent tax returns). The student is notified that until the missing items are submitted to the OFA, additional processing of his/her file is not possible.

**—Failure to Comply**

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

**—Submission After Deadline**

Students who submit verification documents very late after the time they were requested will be awarded aid on an availability basis.

**Verification items**

The School of Nursing follows the verification guidelines as established in the Federal Student Aid Handbook, verifying those items required by the federal regulations. These items include: · Adjusted gross income · U.S. taxes paid · Certain untaxed income and benefits, including: · Deductible IRA/Keogh · Earned income credit · Tax-exempt interest · Untaxed portions of IRAs and Pensions, excluding rollovers · Foreign income exclusion · Child support · Social security benefits · W-2 forms (pertinent untaxed income items reported in box 12 and certain items in box 14 are verified). The School will also verify household size and the number enrolled at least half-time in college.

**Verification documents**

The following documents are acceptable: · Copy or reconstruction of the U.S. tax return, signed by the filer. If the tax return is not available, the School will accept any form from the IRS, which lists tax return information and provides the information needed for verification. Such forms must be signed by the tax filer unless signed or stamped by an IRS official · Signed statement(s) from the student and/or parent confirming the data on the federal aid application · Student are also required to provide a signed Verification Worksheet and a signed Worksheet ABC (these forms are available on Blackboard).

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 (i.e., a copy of a tax return in which the income numbers are not identifiable), appropriate (a tax return is requested and the student submits a W-2), or unidentifiable (student submits a copy of the step-parents' tax return and the last name does not match the student's and there is no student social security number), the documents will be returned and a request for additional documentation is requested.

**Interpretation of verification documents**

Information on official documents such as the tax return, W-2 form, verification worksheet, and worksheet ABC is considered final and correcting information. In the event that verification

documents differ from the amounts reported on the FAFSA the School will submit a correction to CPS.

### **Institutional Discretionary Items**

The OFA verifies those applicants identified by the Department of Education (DOE). The Director may select a student for verification if there is a discrepancy or a condition which is unusual and warrants investigation. If a student submits verification documentation (i.e., tax return), the OFA staff must verify the information on the document against the information in the student's file.

### **Tolerances**

When verifying a student's record, there is one instance when discrepant information does not have to be corrected and that is when the absolute value of the discrepancies does not exceed \$400.

### **Notification to Students**

Students are notified of the results of verification by receipt of an award letter and by receiving a corrected ISIR from CPS.

### **Interim Disbursements**

In some cases an interim disbursement may occur prior to the completion of verification and must be approved by the Director of the OFA. If an interim disbursement is approved, the students must complete the verification process before any additional aid may be disbursed. If verification is not completed by the end of the term in which the interim disbursement occurs the student is responsible for repaying the interim disbursement back to the Bon Secours Memorial School of Nursing and financial aid is canceled.

An interim disbursement may need to be adjusted once verification has been completed. The student is responsible for repaying any interim disbursement overpayments. A student whose awards change will be notified via a revised award letter.

In the case of Federal Work Study, students who do not complete verification within 90 days of the first day of classes will be terminated from the FWS program until verification has been completed.

### **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. The overpayments are reported on NSLDS in accordance with federal regulations.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Document Collection Procedures**

Required documentation items are identified and receipt date is maintained by date stamping all entered paperwork. When documents arrive, the Financial Aid Specialist enters a receipt date on the document. When all required documents are received, the student's file is considered complete and ready to be packaged. These files are routed to the Director for verification.

### **Verification Procedure**

The Director of Financial Aid will verify the student's file when all documents have been submitted.

**Verification of Data Elements**

Bon Secours Memorial School of Nursing systematically verifies only those data elements required by the federal government. However, the Director is free to ask for additional information if further investigation is needed to resolve a discrepancy.

**Adjusted Gross Income**

Adjusted Gross Income is verified by comparing a copy of the student, spouse, or parent income tax return or Verification Worksheet to federal data. Total discrepancies of all dollar amounts outside of tolerance level of \$400 must be corrected before further processing.

**U.S. Income Tax Paid**

U.S. Income Tax paid is verified by comparing a copy of the student, spouse, or parent income tax return to federal data. Total discrepancies of all dollar amounts outside of tolerance level of \$400 must be corrected before further processing.

**Worksheets A, B, and C**

FAFSA totals for Worksheets A, B, and C are verified by comparing the Institutional Worksheet A, B, and C to federal data. Discrepancies must be corrected before further processing. Total discrepancies of all dollar amounts outside of tolerance level of \$400 must be corrected before further processing.

**Household Size**

Household size is verified by comparing the Verification Worksheet to federal data. Discrepancies must be corrected before further processing. There is no tolerance for this data element.

**—Exclusions**

Although regulations allow situations when verification of household size is not required (See the DOE Verification Guide), the OFA does not have a systematic way to track these exclusions. Therefore, all students selected for verification must submit a response to the Household size question on the Verification Worksheet.

**Number in Postsecondary Institutions**

Number of family members enrolled at least half-time in postsecondary institutions is verified by comparing the Verification Worksheet to federal data. Discrepancies must be corrected before further processing. The dependent student's parent is not allowed to be used in this number, unless the OFA uses professional judgement.

**—Exclusions**

Although regulations allow situations when verification of number in college is not required (See the DOE Verification Guide), the OFA does not have a systematic way to track these exclusions. Therefore, all students selected for verification must submit a response to the Household size question on the Verification Worksheet.

**Required corrections resulting from verification**

If the errors are within tolerance, no changes will be made. If the verification results in errors above tolerance, the changes will be electronically submitted to the Central Processor by the School. Once the School is notified by the Central Processor that the corrections have been processed and the School confirms corrections have been processed accurately, the student's financial aid eligibility is calculated and the student is notified of his/her awards via an award letter. If a discrepancy exists in the data, the student's information is retransmitted to the Central Processor.

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