



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Who should apply for financial aid?**

Any student who feels s/he needs financial assistance to attend college should apply for aid.

### **Do I need to be admitted to a school before I receive financial aid?**

The awarding process varies between institutions. Many schools do not award financial aid to students who are not officially admitted. To apply for admission, visit the office of admissions at the school in which you are interested.

### **How do I apply for federal financial aid?**

Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The U.S. Department of Education recommends that you file online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov), but paper applications are also available. If applying online, you will need to request a PIN.

### **What is a PIN?**

The U.S. Department of Education can assign students and parents a Personal Identification Number (PIN) that may be used to:

- Electronically sign the FAFSA ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov))
- Electronically sign promissory notes (<http://dlenote.ed.gov>) and
- View loan history ([www.nsls.ed.gov](http://www.nsls.ed.gov))

### **How do I apply for a PIN?**

You may apply for a PIN online at [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov). Your PIN will be emailed to you within 1 to 3 days. If you do not provide an email address, your PIN will be mailed to your permanent mailing address within 7 to 10 days. Your PIN is confidential and should not be shared with anyone. Parents of dependent students should also request a PIN.

### **What information will I need in order to fill out the FAFSA?**

- Social Security Number
- Driver's License Number, if you have one
- Alien registration number, if you are not a U.S. citizen
- W-2 Forms
- Federal income tax return
- Current bank statements and records of stocks, bonds, and other investments
- Records of untaxed income received
- Business and/or farm records, if applicable
- Dependent students will also need parent(s):
  - Social Security number(s)
  - Income and financial records (as listed above)

**Do I have to reapply for financial aid every year?**

Yes. After your first year, you may fill out a renewal FAFSA at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). The renewal application contains pre-populated information from the previous year's FAFSA. Note that your eligibility for financial aid may change significantly from year to year.

**When should I fill out my FAFSA for the upcoming academic year?**

You may apply anytime after January 1st, preferably after you receive your W-2 forms and/or complete your Federal income tax return for the past year.

**Why do schools have a priority date?**

Schools receive a limited amount of certain types of grant, work-study, and loan funding to award students each academic year. Establishing a priority date allows the financial aid office to consider the students with the highest need for the most funding from these limited programs. Everyone who applies by the priority date is considered for these funds, based on financial need.

*Find out what the priority date is at school(s) in which you are interested.*

**How do I send my information to the school(s) in which I am interested?**

The federal processor sends your information to the schools you specify on the FAFSA. Each school has a unique school code specific to that institution.

**How do I make corrections to my Student Aid Report (SAR)?**

You may make corrections online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) or make written corrections on your paper SAR. For questions about the correction process, please call the FAFSA processor at 1-800-433-3243. The correction process can take 4 - 6 weeks by mail. However, processing is much quicker if corrections are made online, using your PIN as your electronic signature.

**How do I know if my financial aid application is complete?**

Your financial aid application is complete once all of the necessary information has been received and processed by the financial aid office. If additional information is required, you should be notified. It is very important that you submit requested documentation in a timely manner.

**My question is not addressed here. Where can I get additional information?**

Contact the financial aid office at the school(s) in which you are interested or contact the federal processor at 1-800-433-3243. You may also find many answers to your questions online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).