

Verification Explanation

Verification is a federal requirement whereby schools must verify the information students and their parents provide on the FAFSA to ensure its accuracy. If you are selected for verification, you may be wondering why and what you should do.

Why is your file being verified?

There are several possibilities for being selected for verification. Keep in mind that more possibilities exist, but the following are the main reasons for being selected:

- You did not use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool when completing the FAFSA.
- You used the IRS Data Retrieval Tool but changed some of the data on the FAFSA.
- You were selected randomly by the Federal Government.
- The submitted FAFSA application has estimated, incomplete or contradictory data.
- In some rare cases, Ottawa University will select a student for verification.

What needs to be done after the selection?

Now that you have been selected for verification, we require you to provide certain documentation as soon as possible. Amongst other things, you may be asked to provide a **Federal Tax Transcript from the IRS (IF you DID NOT or COULD NOT use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool when completing the FAFSA)** and/or to complete a verification worksheet (included with this explanation form). Ottawa University may also request additional documentation (e.g. W-2's, retirement account rollover documents, etc.)

What happens if there are discrepancies in the application?

After you turn in all required documents, the Financial Aid Office will compare the information with your FAFSA data and corrections will be made if errors are found.

Because verification must be completed before your federal financial aid can be disbursed, it is vital to send accurate and complete information as quickly as possible.

Above all else, don't be upset because you were selected for verification. This process is required by the federal government. In some instances, the Financial Aid Office could identify errors in your data that results in an increase to your eligibility for federal aid.

How To Obtain A Tax Transcript From The IRS

Federal regulations require us to use a Tax Return Transcript instead of a copy of your actual tax return if you do not use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) when completing the FAFSA. If you are eligible to use the DRT, we strongly encourage you to do so by logging back in to your FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov. You may not be eligible to use this tool (e.g. if you are married and filed separate returns). There are a couple of ways to obtain a copy of your Federal Tax Return Transcript from the IRS, but there may be significant delays involved so please plan ahead:

1. Online Request :

- Go to: <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Get-Transcript>, select "Get Transcript Online" (**recommended method**).
 - There are several steps the first time you do this so the IRS can verify your identity. You will create a username and password; be sure to record these for future use.
 - You must be able to receive a text message from the IRS as part of the validation process.
 - It may be helpful to have a copy of your tax return with you when beginning this process.
- Be sure the street address you enter matches the one in the IRS database (from your **2016** return).
- Select **RETURN TRANSCRIPT** for the type and 2016 for the year.
- The transcript will be available to be downloaded.
- Be sure to save a copy for your records and submit the Tax Return Transcript to Ottawa University.

2. Telephone request for a mailed copy:

- Call the IRS automated attendant at 1-800-908-9946 and follow the prompts.
 - Be sure to request a TAX RETURN TRANSCRIPT and be sure to request a copy of your **2016** return.
 - There should be NO CHARGE for using this system.
- Tax filers can expect a paper IRS Tax Return Transcript to be mailed within 5-10 days.

2018-2019 Federal Student Aid Verification Worksheet

A. Student Information

Last Name	First Name	M.I.	Social Security Number
Date of birth	Cell phone number	Home phone number	

B. Family Information

Independent Students: List the people in your household; include (a) yourself, your spouse if married; (b) your children, if you provide more than half of their support from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019; and (c) any other people if they now live with you, and you provided more than half of their support and will continue to provide more than half of their support from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

Dependent Students: List the people in your household. Include (a) yourself; (b) parent(s) you live with (including stepparents); (c) other children who live in this household; and (d) any other people if they now live with your parents, and your parents provide more than half of their support and will continue to provide more than half of their support from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. You may also include children who do not live within this household, providing that (1) the parents listed below will provide more than half of their support from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, or (2) if the parents would be required to give parental information when applying for Federal student aid;

WRITE IN THE NAMES OF ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS. Also write in the name of the college for any family member who will be attending college at least half-time between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019, and will be enrolled in a degree or certificate program. If you need more space, attach a separate page.

Full Name	Age	Relationship	2018-19 College
Example: John Doe	48	Father	If parent will be in college, call FA Office
		Self	Ottawa University

C. Non-Taxed Income Information

Independent students and parents of dependent students who DID NOT file a 2016 Federal Tax Return MUST submit an IRS Non-Tax Filer statement. Please go to www.irs.gov to request this documentation via the Get Transcript options.

Dependent students who DID NOT work OR who had 2016 income from work, but DID NOT file **AND** were NOT REQUIRED to file a 2016 Federal Tax Return should complete the box below and submit all W-2 forms or other earning statements. Contact the Financial Aid department if W-2's are required but not available.

Non-Tax Filer	Name of Non-tax Filer?	Did Not Work?	Number of Employers?	Total 2016 Income	Number of W-2's Attached
Student				\$	

Student's Signature

Date

Parent's Signature (Dependent Students Only)

Date