

Student Employment



Policies and Procedures

Updated: Spring 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS	
Student employment overview	2
Job Search and Student Employment Responsibilities	2
Student Requirements	3
Student Employment Process	4
Returning Students	5
Student Employment Eligibility	5
Graduation Policy	6
Academic Eligibility for Student Employment	6
Reasons for Ineligibility	6
Hours per week	7
Employment During Non-Enrollment Periods	8
Special Summer Procedures	9
Pay rate	9
Tax Withholding and Payroll Requirements	10
Payroll Schedule	10
Student Employment Documentation and Payroll Procedures	11
Dress Code	11
Performance/Termination	12
Evaluations	13
Grant Funded employment	13
Community Service/America Reads	14
Pay Advancements	15
Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer	15
Financial Aid Terminology	15
Student employment contact information	16

Student Employment Program Overview

The **Student Employment Program** at **Western Kentucky University** offers part-time employment opportunities for students who need to earn income while pursuing their academic studies. This program is designed not only to support students in meeting their financial needs but also to assist University departments in achieving their objectives through the use of qualified student employees.

Job Search and Student Employment Responsibilities

1. **Job Search:**

Students are encouraged to **periodically visit** [Handshake](#) to explore new job vacancies.

2. **Student Employment Request:**

Once a student secures a job, the **employing department** must submit a **Student Employment Request** form, available on **TopNet** under *Employee Services*. The department must also be set up as an **approver** or **Proxy** for **Web Time Entry** to complete the request.

3. **Balance Between Work and Academics:**

While all eligible students are encouraged to participate in student employment, it is important to remember that a student's **first priority** is their **academic success**. Employment should be viewed as an opportunity to complement their education and contribute to their personal development, not as the primary focus of their experience at WKU.

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

(For students that are not U.S. citizens, see "**International Student Requirement**".)

U.S. CITIZEN REQUIREMENTS:

- ◆ Once a student obtains a job, they have to complete the necessary paperwork to be placed on payroll.
- ◆ The student must have on file with the Student Financial Assistance Office a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). *A new FAFSA must be filed for each academic year online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.*
- ◆ Students must have a completed background check (if have not been employed within the last 24 months by WKU). Students are not to work for the university until the completed background check is reviewed and approved by the University.
- ◆ If the student has not worked for student employment within the last 12 months, the student may be required to complete the necessary tax forms (K-4, W-4, WSOT), I-9 Form, and provide proper documentation to establish identity (see "**Withholding Taxes & I-9 Form**").
- ◆ Must be enrolled at least half time during the fall and spring semesters (6 hours undergraduate, 4.5 hours graduate).
- ◆ Student must maintain at least a 2.0 gpa for employment to continue

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT REQUIREMENT:

Once a student, who is not a U.S. citizen, obtains a job, they have to complete the necessary paperwork to be placed on payroll.

- ◆ International Students must first secure a job within a department. If they have not received a Social Security card, a letter will be created in the Student Employment Office requesting they be issued a card. This letter is generated once the Student Employment Request Form has been received by the Student Employment Office.
- ◆ When the student receives the Social Security card, the student must notify the Student Employment Office (preferably by email to fa.employment@wku.edu) and a background check will be issued.
- ◆ The student must complete the background check which will be sent to the student's top email account from noreply@sterling.app
- ◆ When the background check is received by WKU, the student will receive a second email from noreply@sterling.app for the electronic I-9. The student will be notified by the Human Resource Office to make an appointment and will take legal documents to them and complete the remaining paperwork (tax withholding forms) at that time.

- ◆ Must be enrolled as a full-time student and making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree. International students must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (2.0 Grad and UG GPA) be enrolled full-time (9 hrs Grad, 12 hrs UG) in order to be eligible for student employment.

Student Employment Process

- **Job Posting:** When a department has a job opening, it must be posted on Handshake. For more information about Handshake, contact **Careerhelp@wku.edu** or Wayne Simpson at **Wayne.Simpson@wku.edu**. All new hires must apply through Handshake. A job reference number will be assigned to the job posting and must be included when completing the Student Employment Request form. Once a student position has been filled and the job posting is closed, faculty and staff should notify all applicants **via Handshake** that the position is no longer available. Communicating that the posting has closed helps students understand their application status, provides a professional and transparent hiring experience, and reduces follow-up inquiries to the Career Development Center.
- **Reminder:** Handshake allows employers to easily message all applicants at once and update the job status to “Filled” or “Closed,” ensuring timely and consistent communication.
- **Student Employment Request Form:** Once a student is selected for hire, the department must complete the Student Employment Request Form for the relevant term, available under the Employee Services tab in TopNet. If access is needed, contact payroll. The background check will be initiated once the form is received. Note: For students already hired during the Fall semester, a new request form is not needed for the Spring semester. However, a new form is required for the Summer session (see "Returning Students").
- **Paperwork Completion:** If the Student Employment Request Form is submitted for a student with complete paperwork (financial aid package and all required tax forms and background checks on file), Student Employment will add the student to the payroll, and the student’s name will appear on Web Time Entry (WTE).

- **Incomplete Paperwork:** If a form is submitted for a student with incomplete paperwork, the form will be held until all necessary documentation is provided. The student will be notified by the Student Employment office with details about missing items (e.g., FAFSA, tax withholding forms). Once cleared, the Request Form will be processed.

Important Reminder: A department is not allowed to work a student until all required paperwork is complete.

RETURNING STUDENTS

A student is considered a **returning student** if they previously worked in a department during one award period and are returning to the *same department and position* in the following award period. These positions **do not need to be posted on Handshake**. To be eligible for rehire, the student must have a **complete financial aid package**, as outlined under *Student Procedures*.

The hiring department should:

- Complete a **Student Employment Request Form** for the appropriate term.
- Follow the standard steps outlined in *Departmental Procedures*.

Please note:

- A **separate Request Form** is required for each academic year and for each summer session in which the student will be employed.
- This is necessary because student eligibility is tied to each **specific award period**, and financial aid status may change.
- **Exception:** If the student is employed during both the **Fall and Spring semesters of the same academic year**, only **one Request Form** is needed for the entire academic year.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY

During the academic year, students must be enrolled at least half-time to remain eligible for student employment:

- **Undergraduate students:** minimum of 6 credit hours
- **Graduate students:** minimum of 4.5 credit hours

If a student's enrollment falls below half-time, their employment must be terminated.

International students are required to maintain **full-time enrollment** to be eligible for on-campus employment during the academic year:

- **Undergraduate students:** minimum of 12 credit hours
- **Graduate students:** minimum of 9 credit hours

For enrollment requirements during terms other than fall and spring, please refer to the “Hours per Week” section.

Note: Students enrolled in fewer than half-time credits are not eligible for employment under any circumstances. If a student falls below the 2.0 GPA they are no longer eligible for employment.

Graduation Policy:

Students are no longer eligible for student employment after their official graduation date, regardless of the payroll cycle or term end date, unless they are enrolled in graduate-level courses for the upcoming term.

Academic Eligibility for Student Employment

To be eligible for student employment, all students must be making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree.

(See *Financial Aid Terminology: Academic Requirements* for details.)

If a student is requested for employment but found to be academically ineligible, the Student Employment Office will notify the hiring department. Some academically ineligible students may qualify to submit an appeal. In such cases:

- The student must submit an academic appeal to the **Appeals Committee** through the **Department of Student Financial Assistance**.
- If the appeal is approved, the student may resume employment.
- It is the **student’s responsibility** to notify the Student Employment Office once the appeal is approved.
- If the appeal is denied, the student remains ineligible for employment.

If a student who was previously cleared to work becomes academically ineligible during their employment (e.g., due to enrollment changes or poor academic performance), the Student Employment Office will notify the department. The department must then:

1. Cease the student’s employment immediately.

2. Complete the **Student Employee Termination Form** (available in TopNet under *Employee Services*, in the same location as the Student Employment Request Form).
3. Submit the completed form to the Student Employment Office.

REASONS FOR INELIGIBILITY

A student may apply to work on-campus and be considered ineligible for many reasons as indicated below:

- ◆ The student's cumulative grade point average may be below that required to receive financial assistance (work on-campus is considered financial assistance).
- ◆ The student's academic progress (hours earned) may be below that required to receive financial assistance.
- ◆ The student may not be degree seeking and would therefore not be eligible to receive financial assistance.
- ◆ If the student was already employed in another department for 20 hours per week and was not leaving or reducing the number of hours worked in the first department, the student would not be eligible for any additional hours per week in a second department.
- ◆ If the student is an athlete and is receiving aid up to the maximum amount allowable as determined by federal regulations and NCAA rules, the student would not be eligible to work.
- ◆ The student's background check may cause a denial for employment.
- ◆ Student has an enrollment issue, see "**Enrollment Requirements**"

HOURS PER WEEK

Students participating in the Federal Work-Study program are not permitted to work during their scheduled class times. Supervisors are responsible for reviewing each student's class schedule to ensure compliance with federal guidelines. If a class is unexpectedly canceled and the student works during that time, the supervisor must document the cancellation and corresponding work shift on the student's timesheet.

The number of hours per week a student is authorized to work is determined by both the employing department's request and the student's eligibility.

If a change in the number of weekly work hours is needed after the original Student Employment Request Form has been processed, the department must:

- Submit an email to fa.employment@wku.edu detailing:
 - The new number of hours per week
 - The effective date of the change

The Student Employment Office will review the request based on the student's eligibility.

If the student is not eligible for the requested change, the department will be notified.

ACADEMIC YEAR:

- Students are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week during the academic year. (Refer to *Reasons for Ineligibility* for more information.)
- If a student is employed by multiple departments, the combined total hours worked across all positions may not exceed 20 hours per week.
- If the university closes due to weather, students scheduled to work on those days should report their hours as if they had worked their scheduled shifts.

Work Hours During Periods of Non-Enrollment (Winter Term):

Students may work up to 40 hours per week during periods of non-enrollment.

With the implementation of the Winter Term, the following guidelines apply:

- Students NOT enrolled in Winter Term but returning at least half-time for the Spring semester may work up to 40 hours per week during the Winter break.
- Students enrolled in Winter Term are limited to their regular academic year work schedule, with a maximum of 20 hours per week.

Working during this period will not impact the student's financial aid package.

Department Responsibilities: Prior to the Christmas Break, an Interim Work List will be sent to all departments. Departments must:

1. Identify the students who will be working during the Winter break.
2. Indicate the number of hours per week each student is expected to work.

Student Employment will use this information to adjust each student's work award to accommodate the additional hours.

Summer Employment Eligibility and Work Hour Limits:

Student eligibility for summer employment and weekly work hours is based on both summer enrollment and fall semester plans:

1. Students Returning at Least Half-Time for the Fall Semester

- If not enrolled in any summer session:
 - Eligible to work up to 40 hours per week during the period of non-enrollment.

- If enrolled in any summer session:
→ Eligible to work up to 30 hours per week during the session(s) of enrollment.
- 2. Students Graduating in August (Not Returning in the Fall)
 - Eligible to work only during their period of summer enrollment.
Example: If enrolled in Session A only, the student may work only through the end of Session A.
 - If not enrolled in summer classes:
→ Not eligible to work during the summer.
- 3. Students Not Enrolling in Summer or Fall
 - If a student is not enrolled for any summer session and is not enrolling at least part-time for the upcoming fall semester:
→ The student is not eligible for summer employment under student employment guidelines.

EMPLOYMENT DURING NON-ENROLLMENT PERIODS

Fall Break:

Is considered a **period of enrollment**. During this time, students must **adhere to their regular weekly work hour limits**, as defined by their current enrollment status.

Spring Break:

Spring Break is **not considered a period of enrollment**, and students may work **up to 40 hours** during this week.

Since the student's work award does not account for earnings during Spring Break, the award must be adjusted to reflect the additional hours worked. Prior to Spring Break, an **Interim List** will be sent to all departments. The department should:

1. Identify the students who will be working during Spring Break.
2. Indicate the number of hours per week each student is expected to work.

Student Employment will adjust the work award accordingly to accommodate the additional hours.

SPECIAL SUMMER PROCEDURES

- **FAFSA on File for Current Academic Year:**
A student must have a **valid FAFSA** on file for the **current academic year** to be eligible for student employment.

Example: If applying for **Summer 2026**, the student must have a **2025-2026 FAFSA** on file.

- **FAFSA Requirement for Incoming Freshmen:**

If a student is applying for the **summer term** prior to becoming a **beginning freshman** in the following fall semester, they must have a **FAFSA for the upcoming academic year** on file.

Example: A student applying for **Summer 2026** must have a **2026-2027 FAFSA** on file, as they will be a freshman in Fall 2026.

- **Missed FAFSA Deadline (June 30th):**

If a student misses the FAFSA deadline for the current aid year (June 30th), they may still be employed for the **Summer term only**, up until the **start of the Fall semester**, provided: The student is **enrolled** for either the **Summer or Fall term**, and a **FAFSA** for the upcoming aid year is on file.

Student Employee Pay Rate

The current **standard hourly pay rate** for student employees is **\$7.25**.

If a department wishes to offer a **higher hourly rate**, a **pay rate justification** must be provided in the **Student Employment Request Form**. This justification should clearly explain the reason for the increased rate (e.g., specialized skills, advanced responsibilities, prior experience, etc.).

Tax Withholding and Payroll Requirements

During each pay period, appropriate taxes will be withheld from a student's paycheck. In order to be placed on payroll and determine the correct amount of taxes to be withheld, the student must complete the following forms: **These forms should never be emailed unless utilizing the wku secure link.**

K-4	Kentucky Withholding
W-4	Federal Withholding
WSOT	Warren County School Occupational Tax
I-9	Employment Eligibility Verification *

Background Check, I-9, and Employment Eligibility Documentation

The **background check** and **I-9 form** are now completed electronically through FirstAdvantage. In addition, proper documentation must be provided to establish **identity** and **employment eligibility**.

Acceptable documents can be found online at [USCIS I-9 Central](#). The most commonly used documents are:

- **List A** (one document needed):
 - **Passport** (commonly used document)
- If a document from **List A** is not available, provide:
 - **One document from List B** (e.g., **Driver's License** or **WKU ID Card**)
 - **One document from List C** (e.g., **Social Security Card** or **Birth Certificate**)

Payroll and Payment Schedule

Once a student is placed on payroll, they will be paid on a **bi-weekly** schedule. The following process must be followed

1. The student's name must first appear on **Web Time Entry (WTE)** for the relevant pay period.
2. After the name appears on WTE, the student must submit their **worked hours** via **TopNet** for the pay period.
3. The department must **approve** the submitted hours.
4. The student will receive payment **two weeks** after the last Friday of the pay period.

Payment Method:

Students are paid according to the payroll preference they selected through **BankMobile**.

- Instructions for setting up BankMobile are sent to students' **Topper email accounts** from **refund@wku.edu**.
- Students need to **set up an account** with BankMobile and can **update** their deposit information to a bank of their choice at any time. Students need to set up refund and payroll preferences.
- All payments must be routed through **BankMobile** first.

Student Employment Documentation and Payroll Procedures

Before a student will appear on a department's **Web Time Entry (WTE)**, the following must be completed: The student cannot work until cleared by student employment.

1. The student's **Request Form** must be **approved**.
2. All **withholding forms**, the **background check**, and the **I-9 form** must be on file.
 - The **I-9 form** must be completed, and all supporting documentation must be submitted to the **Student Employment Office** for verification on or before the **first day of employment**.

Student Timesheets and Payment:

- **Timesheets** can be found under the **"Employee Services"** tab in **TopNet**.

- Student employees are paid only for the **hours worked** and reported on the timesheet.
- **Student employees are not eligible** for vacation or sick pay.
 - Pay for time off due to **inclement weather** is determined by **University Officials** on a case-by-case basis, not by **Student Employment**.
- Students must be paid for **all hours worked**. Any conflicts or issues regarding hours should be **addressed immediately** by the supervisor with the student.
- **Payments must be made promptly** once the student appears on the WTE.
 - Payments should **not be unfairly withheld** without the student's knowledge.
 - If hours are held, the department must have a **signed explanation** from the student regarding payment procedures.

DRESS CODE

The **dress code** for student employees is determined at the discretion of each individual department. If the department provides services to students, the public, or other external parties, the dress code may be more **restrictive** compared to departments with **limited public contact**.

Student Employee Performance and Termination Procedures

□ **Verbal Reprimand:**

If a problem arises with a student employee that could affect their continued employment, the supervisor should:

- Provide a **verbal reprimand** outlining the nature of the issue.
- Specify the actions needed for the student to correct their behavior or performance.
- Document the incident, including **date** and **details of the discussion**.
- Advise the student that a **written record** is being maintained.
- Inform the student that **future similar behavior** may lead to **termination**.

□ **Termination of Employment (By Supervisor):**

If the supervisor decides to terminate the student's employment, the following steps should be taken:

- Notify the student of the **termination decision**.
- Complete the **Student Employee Evaluation and Termination Form** in **TopNet**.
- The student's employment will end **effective** on the date specified in the form.

□ **Voluntary Termination (By Student):**

If the student decides to leave the position, they are expected to provide **appropriate notice** to their supervisor, typically **2 weeks**.

- The department must still complete the **Student Employee Evaluation and Termination Form** in **TopNet**.
- The student's employment will end on the date specified in the form.

□ **Transfer Between Departments:**

If a student is leaving one department and transferring to another:

- The **former department** must complete the **Student Employee Evaluation and Termination Form**.
- The **new department** must submit *a Student Employment Request Form* to *place the student on payroll*.

Student Employee Evaluation

Evaluations can be accessed under the **Employee Services** tab in **TopNet**. Supervisors are required to complete a **Student Evaluation Form** for each student employee **annually** and review the evaluation with the student.

Purpose of Evaluation:

- The evaluation provides an opportunity to:
 - Reinforce **significant strengths**.
 - Have a **constructive discussion** about areas that require improvement.

- One copy of the evaluation should remain **on file** in the employing department, and another copy should be added to the student's file in the **Department of Student Financial Assistance** (with a **5-year retention**).

Since this may be the student's **first job experience**, supervisors are encouraged to dedicate time to help the student learn and apply the **basic principles of good work practices**.

Grant-Funded Student Employment

Any student employed and paid through **grant funds** must be classified as **Institutional Work**, regardless of their eligibility for the **Federal College Work-Study Program**.

However, both the student and the department must still follow the same procedures outlined under "**Student Requirements**" and "**Departmental Procedures**".

Upon receiving the **Student Employment Request Form**, **Student Employment** will review the associated **account number**. If the account number corresponds to a **grant**, the student will automatically be classified under the **Institutional Work** program.

Community Service and Federal College Work Study

As a federal requirement, **7%** of the **Federal College Work Study (FCWS)** funds must be allocated to positions that meet the "**Community Service**" definition. These positions are available through the **FCWS program** with **off-campus agencies**.

Eligibility for Community Service Positions:

- Students must follow the same procedures as outlined previously.
- To be eligible for community service positions, students must qualify for **Federal College Work Study funding**.
- If a student does not qualify for federal funding but is eligible for **institutional funds**, they are **not eligible** for community service positions.

America Reads Program and Federal College Work Study

Through the use of **Federal College Work Study (FCWS)** funds, **Western Kentucky University** employs student workers in **America Reads** positions.

Eligibility for America Reads:

- Students must follow the same procedures as outlined previously.
- To be eligible to work through the **America Reads program**, students must qualify for **Federal College Work Study funding**.
- If a student does not qualify for federal funding and is only eligible for **institutional funds**, they are **not eligible** for the America Reads program.

Participating Agencies:

- BG/WC Community Education
- City County Planning Commission
- Kids on the Block
- SKYCTC
- Warren County Parks and Recreation
- Boys and Girls Club (Scottsville, Bowling Green, Franklin, Barren Co)
- BG/WC Housing Authority

*Vacancies with these agencies are posted on **Handshake**.

PAYCHECK ADVANCEMENT

Paycheck advancements do not exist for student employees. Supervisors should refrain from informing students that paycheck advancements or emergency loans will be available, as this is not guaranteed.

In rare cases, students may apply for an **emergency loan**, but approval is at the discretion of the **Student Employment Office**. Since the student is responsible for repaying the loan (and it is not automatically deducted from their paycheck), granting an emergency loan carries potential risks for the university.

It is the student's responsibility to **submit their hours** for payment. Failure to do so will result in the student having to wait until **back pay hours** can be processed and paid out.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Western Kentucky University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability, and provides, on request, reasonable accommodations including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in all services, programs, and activities.

FINANCIAL AID TERMINOLOGY

Familiarity with key financial aid terminology is essential when reviewing a student's financial aid package and eligibility for campus employment. The following list provides a useful reference for assessing a student's eligibility to work on campus:

Academic Appeal - If a student is academically denied, they may need to complete an academic appeal with the Department of Student Financial Assistance. In this appeal, the student must provide details about any significant factors that may have contributed to their insufficient academic progress. The appeal allows the student to explain circumstances that may have impacted their performance and request reconsideration for financial aid eligibility..

Academic Probation - If a student has been academically denied and subsequently has an academic appeal approved, the student will be placed on **academic probation** for the following semester. During this probationary period, the student must meet satisfactory academic progress to be eligible for additional financial aid in subsequent semesters.

Academic Requirements Federal regulations mandate that students receiving financial aid must meet satisfactory academic progress, which is monitored in three key areas:

1. **ICAP / Degree Program:**
Students must be enrolled in a degree-seeking program, and their courses must count toward their ICAP (Individualized Career and Academic Plan) or degree requirements.
2. **Qualitative Progress (GPA):**
 - Undergraduate Students: First-year students and transfer/readmit students must be admitted to the university in good standing and maintain a 2.0 semester and cumulative GPA.
 - Graduate Students: Must be admitted or readmitted in good standing and maintain a 3.0 semester and cumulative GPA.
3. **Quantitative Progress:**
Students must complete the minimum number of credit hours each academic year for which they received financial aid.

Academically Denied - A student is considered academically denied if they have not met the required academic standards. As a result, the student will be ineligible for financial assistance, including on-campus employment.

Budget - A student's **budget** represents the anticipated cost of education for each individual student. It includes factors such as **tuition, books, room and board, travel, child care, and personal expenses**. Additional considerations in determining the budget include the student's **dependent or independent status, residency (in-**

state or out-of-state), **undergraduate or graduate status**, and whether the student is living **on-campus or off-campus**. Generally, a student's total **financial aid package** cannot exceed their budget.

Dependent Student - A **dependent student** is one who does not meet the criteria to be classified as an **independent student**. As a dependent student, both the **student's** and the **parent(s)**' financial information must be provided on the financial aid form. This information is used to calculate the student's eligibility for financial assistance.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC) - The **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)** is the dollar amount determined by the financial aid form, indicating how much the family can contribute toward the student's education costs.

- For **dependent students**, the EFC represents the combined expected contribution of both the **student and their parents**.
- For **independent students**, the EFC reflects the **student's** expected contribution only.

Federal College Work Study - A student qualifies for Federal College Work Study if they meet federal regulations for receiving federal funding. As a work-study student, 75% of the student's wages are covered by federal funds, and the remaining 25% is paid by university funds. To qualify, the student must demonstrate financial need, as determined by the information provided on their FAFSA.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) - The **FAFSA** is the financial aid application required for any student seeking **federal aid**, including **grants, loans, and on-campus employment**. The student's eligibility for various financial aid programs is determined based on the information provided on the FAFSA.

Independent Student - A student is classified as **Independent** if they meet any of the following criteria. As an independent student, they are required to provide only their own financial information on the **FAFSA** (excluding parent information). However, if the student is married, they must also include their spouse's financial details. The student's financial aid eligibility is determined based on the information provided by the student and their spouse (if applicable).

Institutional Work - A student is classified as Institutional Work if they do not qualify for federal funding as determined by the financial aid application. In this case, 100% of the student's pay is funded by university funds. Additionally, any student paid from grant funds must automatically be classified as an Institutional Work student, regardless of their eligibility for federal financial aid.

Invalid FAFSA - occurs when the financial aid form has been submitted to the central processing center, but the information provided is incorrect or incomplete. As a result, the FAFSA cannot be processed until corrections are made. The student must update the application with accurate information before further processing can occur.

Financial Need- is calculated by subtracting a student's **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)**—as determined by the FAFSA—from the **Cost of Attendance (COA)** or budget for the academic year. If the result is greater than zero, the student is considered to have financial need and may be eligible to receive **need-based financial aid**, such as the **Federal College Work Study Program** and other similar aid programs.

Overaward - An **Overaward** occurs when a student receives **financial aid that exceeds their calculated financial need** or the allowable cost of attendance. When this happens, the **Department of Student Financial Assistance** must review the aid package and determine whether any **adjustments or reductions** to the student's financial aid are required to remain in compliance with federal regulations.

Overearned - A student is considered to have **overearned** if they earn **more than the approved work award amount** for a given award period. If the earnings exceed the **allowable tolerance level**, it may result in an **audit finding** and could pose a **financial liability to the university**. Departments should closely monitor student earnings to ensure compliance with the student's authorized award limit.

Pell Eligible - A student is considered **Pell Eligible** if they demonstrate sufficient financial need, as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and qualify to receive a **Federal Pell Grant**. The **Pell Grant** is a form of **need-based financial aid** awarded to undergraduate students and **does not have to be repaid**, except under certain conditions (e.g., withdrawal from all courses).

Residual Refund-is the amount of **financial aid remaining** after a student's **tuition, housing, and other university charges** have been paid. This refund is issued to the student when grants, scholarships, or loans **exceed the total amount owed** to the university. The remaining balance is disbursed to the student to use for other educational expenses.

Student Aid Report (SAR) - is a summary of the information submitted on the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. It is sent to the student after the FAFSA has been processed. The SAR indicates the student's **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)** (or **Student Aid Index (SAI)** for newer forms), any **required corrections**, and whether the student has been **selected for verification**.

Unmet Need refers to the portion of a student's **financial need** that remains **after all awarded financial aid** (such as grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study) has been applied. It represents the **gap** between the student's financial resources and the total cost of attendance.

Subsidized Loan - is a **need-based** federal Direct Student Loan. The **federal government pays the interest** on this loan **while the student is enrolled at least half-time**, during the **grace period** (typically six months after graduation or dropping below half-time enrollment), and during **authorized deferment periods**. This means interest **does not begin to accrue** until repayment begins.

Unsubsidized Loan - An **Unsubsidized Loan** is a **non-need-based** federal Direct Student Loan. Interest on this loan **begins accruing immediately** after the loan is disbursed, regardless of the student's enrollment status.

Repayment typically begins **six months after** the student graduates, withdraws, or drops below half-time enrollment.

Verification: A process where additional documentation is required to confirm that the information submitted on the FAFSA is accurate.

- **Dependent Students:**

Must complete a Verification Worksheet and provide a copy of both their own federal tax return transcript and their parents' federal tax return transcript.

- **Independent Students:**

Must complete a Verification Worksheet and provide a copy of their own federal tax return transcript.

Verification is processed through Inceptia. Students can log in to [WKU Verification Gateway](https://wku.verifcationgateway.org) (<https://wku.verifcationgateway.org>) to create an account and complete the verification paperwork.

Note: A student cannot be awarded financial aid until the verification process is complete.

- **For verification-related questions: 1-833-932-1877**
- **For account setup questions: 1-888-374-8427**



Student Financial Assistance
Student Employment
Phone: (270) 745-2755
Email: fa.employment@wku.edu