Frequently Asked Questions about Verification

What is verification and why do I have to do it?
Verification is one form of financial aid "quality control." The process enables Student Financial Services to *verify* the accuracy of the information that you provided on your application for financial assistance. The United States Department of Education (DoED) selects you to complete the verification process. Some students are selected every year and some are never selected at all. In some cases, the University of Redlands may institutionally select students to complete the process.

Do I really have to complete the verification process?
YES! Regardless of how or why you were selected, you must complete the verification process in full if you wish to receive any financial aid. Scholarships and grants will not be credited to your student account until verification is completed. In addition, loans will not be processed and you will not be allowed to begin a Federal Work Study job.

How long do I have to complete the verification process?
To expedite your financial aid package, you should respond as soon as possible. Your financial aid will not be finalized until the verification process is complete. It is your responsibility to ensure that your verification paperwork is returned to Student Financial Services in a timely manner.

PLEASE NOTE: *Students who do not complete verification before the start of classes will have the federal and state portions of the package temporarily placed on HOLD. Students will be responsible for financing the entire semester balance until the verification is completed. Once verification is complete and eligibility determined, the federal and state portions of financial aid will be reinstated or adjusted if applicable.*

What does my verification "group" mean?
The Department of Education has implemented verification groups V1, V4 and V5. Please refer to your verification letter for a list of the documents that you must provide for your verification group, as each group has distinct requirements. If you have further questions please contact Student Financial Services.

I filed a tax extension. What documents to I need to submit for the verification process?
If you filed an extension, please submit the following documents:
-A copy of IRS Form 4868, (Application for Automatic Extension of Time to File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return) that was filed with the IRS for tax year 2016; ***and***
-Verification of Non-filing letter (confirmation that the tax return has not been filed) from the IRS or other relevant tax authority that indicates a 2016 IRS Tax Return was not filed with the IRS or other relevant tax authority; ***and***
-A copy of the IRS's approval of an extension beyond the automatic six-month extension if the individual requested an additional extension of the filing time for tax year 2016; ***and***
-A copy of IRS Form W–2 for each source of employment income received for tax year 2016 and, if self-employed, a signed statement certifying the amount of the individual's Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and the U.S. income tax paid for tax year 2016.

Am I required to submit 2016 W-2 forms?
You are only required to submit W-2 forms if you did not file a 2016 tax return, or if you filed or will file a tax extension.

I did not file my 2016 taxes, do I need to provide proof of Non-filing?
Parents will need to provide a Verification of Non-filing letter from the IRS or other relevant tax authority that indicates a 2016 IRS Tax Return was not filed with the IRS. If you did not file a 2016 Tax Return or filed an extension, you can obtain a non-filing statement from the IRS website by clicking "Get a tax transcript ONLINE" at https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript or by completing the 4506T request form, which you can find at www.irs.gov/form4506t. Students and parents will need to complete a non-filing statement form. You can obtain the Student and Parent Non-Filer Statement Forms from our website at www.redlands.edu/faforms.

I filed an amended tax return. What documentation do I need to submit?
Please contact Student Financial Services as soon as possible if you have filed or plan on filing an amended return. If you filed an amended IRS Income Tax return for tax year 2016, provide both of the following:
-A copy of the original 2016 IRS Tax Return Transcript
-A signed copy of the 2016 IRS Form 1040X, "Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return," that was filed with the IRS.

Do I need to provide my Tax Return Transcript and use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool?
No. You are only required to submit one or the other.

How do I obtain a copy of my 2016 Tax Return Transcripts?
A 2016 IRS Tax Return Transcript may be obtained through the:
Online Request - Go to www.irs.gov/transcript, click "Get Transcript Online" or "Get Transcript by MAIL." Request the transcript by phone at 1-800-908-9946 or you can request the transcript with paper form 4506T-EZ or 4506-T by mailing in or faxing the request to the contact information listed on the form. (It is very important that your information matches exactly what the IRS has on file for you when completing this form.) Verify your name, address, social security number, and filing status before sending the form. Make sure to request the "IRS Tax Return Transcript" and ***NOT*** the "IRS Tax Account Transcript." *In most cases, for electronic tax return filers, the IRS DRT or the IRS Tax Return Transcript will become available to them within 2–3 weeks after their 2016 return has been accepted by the IRS. For paper filers, it will generally take 8 weeks after their 2016 return has been received by the IRS before the data retrieval tool or transcript become available.

How do I use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool?
Go to www.FAFSA.gov, log in to your student FAFSA record, select "Make FAFSA Corrections," and navigate to the Financial Information section of the form. From there, follow the instructions to determine if you are eligible to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to transfer 2016 IRS income tax information into the FAFSA. It takes 2-3 weeks for IRS income information to be available for the IRS Data Retrieval Tool for electronic IRS tax return filers, and up to 8 weeks for paper IRS tax return filers.

I am victim of identity theft. How do I complete the verification process?
If you are a victim of IRS tax-related identity theft you must provide:
-A Tax Return Data Base View (TRDBV) transcript obtained from the IRS or by calling (800) 908-4490, or a IRS tax transcript(s); ***and***
-A statement signed and dated by the tax filer indicating that he or she was a victim of IRS tax-related identity theft and that the IRS is aware of the tax-related identity theft

I filed a foreign tax return. What tax documents do I need to provide?
If you filed or will file a 2016 income tax return with the relevant taxing authority of a U.S. territory, commonwealth, or with a foreign central government must provide:
-A transcript obtained from a government of a U.S. territory or commonwealth, or a foreign central government that includes all of the tax filer's income and tax information required to be verified for tax year 2016; **or** -If a transcript cannot be obtained at no cost from the relevant taxing authority, a signed copy of the 2016 income tax return(s).