

NUMBER: 751

SUBJECT: STUDENT ELIGIBILITY – ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS AND OTHER CRITERIA

APPROVAL DATE OF LAST REVISION: JUNE 17, 2019

REGULATORY CITATIONS: FSA HANDBOOK VOLUME 1, CHAPTERS 1-6; FSA ASSESSMENTS, ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES
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751.1 – ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

To receive Federal Student Aid (FSA) funds a student must be qualified at the postsecondary level. Qualifying students must:

- Have a high school diploma;
- Have a recognized equivalent of a high school diploma, such as a general educational development (GED) certificate or other state-sanctioned test or diploma-equivalency certification;
- Have completed homeschooling at the secondary level as defined by state law;
- Have completed secondary school education in a homeschool setting which qualifies for an exemption from compulsory attendance requirements under state law, if state law does not require homeschooled student to receive a credential for their education; OR
- Have completed one of the ability to benefit (ATB) alternatives; *The college does not admit students under ability to benefit criteria.*

751.2 – HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION STATUS

Students submitting application for FSA funds (also referred to as Pell Grant) will be asked their high school completion status. Students may be required to verify their status and submit documentation to support their status to the College's Financial Aid Office before FSA funds are awarded.

751.2.1 – HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

A student qualifies if he or she has a high school diploma. Verification may include a copy of the student's high school diploma or a copy of the student's final official high school transcript that shows the date when the diploma was awarded. This may be from a foreign school so long as it is equivalent to a US high school diploma. If a student who completed secondary education in a foreign country is unable to obtain a copy of his or her high school diploma or transcript, the student should submit a copy of his or her "secondary school leaving certificate."

In the state of Utah, a Certificate of Completion is not considered a valid high school diploma or recognized equivalent. An electronic high school diploma recognized by the Board of Education following determination by the student's resident school district that the student has completed high school graduation requirements set forth by the Board is acceptable. A high school diploma issued by high school education programs collaborating with local education agencies is also acceptable.

751.2.2 – RECOGNIZED EQUIVALENT OF A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

A student qualifies if he or she has a copy of his or her General Education Development (GED) certificate or GED transcript, a copy of a State certificate or transcript received after passing a State-authorized examination (such as the HiSET or TASC) that the State recognized as the equivalent of a high school diploma, or an academic transcript that indicates the student successfully completed at least a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree at any participating institution.

The state of Utah does not offer a state-sanctioned test that is recognized as an equivalent to a high school diploma. A copy of the GED certificate or transcript is acceptable.

751.2.3 – HOMESCHOOL

Homeschooled students qualify if the student is homeschooled and State law (in the state in which the student was homeschooled) requires a homeschool student to obtain a secondary school completion credential for homeschool (other than a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent) and has a copy of that credential.

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If the student is homeschooled and State law (in the state in which the student was homeschooled) does not require a homeschooled student to obtain a secondary school completion credential for homeschool (other than a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent) – having a copy of a transcript or the equivalent signed by the student’s parent or guardian, that lists the secondary school courses the student completed and documents the successful completion of a secondary school education in a homeschool setting, is acceptable.

The state of Utah law requires homeschooled students to qualify for exemption from compulsory attendance requirements. Under Utah law, “a local school board shall excuse a school-age minor from attendance, if the school-age minor’s parents file a signed and notarized affidavit with the school-age minor’s school district of residence.... that the school-age minor will attend a home school and the parent assumes sole responsibility for the education of the school-age minor....” A signed and notarized affidavit shall remain in effect as long as the school-age minor attends a home school; and the school district where the affidavit was filed remains the school-age minors district of residence.

The Financial Aid Office at the College will accept a copy of the signed and notarized affidavit from the parent as described as proof under existing federal and state law that the homeschooled student qualifies for the exemption and is eligible to accept FSA funds.

753.3 – OTHER CRITERIA

In addition to academic qualifications, in order to qualify for FSA program funds, a student must also meet other student eligibility criteria as defined. Students may be eligible to receive the Pell Grant if they meet the following:

753.3.1 – Students must be citizens of the United States or be an eligible non-citizen with documentation.

753.3.2 – Students must have a valid Social Security number.

753.3.3 – Students must be enrolled as a regular student in an eligible program. A regular student is defined as a person who enrolls for the purpose of obtaining a (degree or) certificate offered by the institution.

753.3.3(a) – Students with a Certificate Seeking enrollment objective at the College may qualify. Students whose enrollment objective is Basic Skills, Career Advancement, Continuing Education, Personal Interest, or Secondary do not qualify. Online enrollment does not qualify.

753.3.3(b) – Students may receive FSA funds (Pell Grant) up to the hours approved for each of two programs. Consecutive and concurrent program enrollment at the College, as well as withdrawing and reentering the College, may impact a student’s eligibility to receive funds. Should a student experience a break in enrollment between programs, or leave and return to the same program, the student’s two program limit will continue unless the break exceeds two calendar years.

753.3.4 – Students must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress.

753.3.5 – Students must not be in default on any FSA loan or owe an overpayment on any FSA grant. Or, students must have made satisfactory arrangements to repay a defaulted loan or grant overpayment.

753.3.6 – Male students aged 18-25 are required to register with the Selective Service and must certify that this has been done.

753.3.7 – Students must not have received a Bachelor’s Degree.

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753.3.8 – Students must fall within a Pell Lifetime Eligibility Unit (LEU) of 12 semesters or 600% of all scheduled Pell Grant awards received. Once a student reaches 600%, the student is no longer eligible to receive the Pell Grant.

753.3.9 – Students will not receive Pell Grant from more than one school for the same period of time. Financial aid history will be obtained and reviewed.

753.3.10 – Students with an unusual enrollment history must be able to demonstrate any assistance received was only used to meet educational costs and that fraud and abuse of FSA programs were not intended.

753.3.11 – Students with a federal or state drug conviction can be disqualified.

753.3.12 – Students incarcerated in federal and state penal institutions aren't eligible for FSA. Those incarcerated in local or county penal institutions or confined in a juvenile justice facility are potentially eligible for aid. The cost of attendance affecting a student's award may be adjusted.

Each of these criteria is addressed as part of the application and verification processes for Federal Student Aid/Pell Grant. All conflicts and/or concerns must be resolved before any financial aid will be awarded. Submission of supporting documentation may be required. More information about these criteria is available from the College's Financial Aid Office.