

Federal Student Aid - Frequently Asked Questions

(1) I am a Non-U.S. citizen, Can I receive Federal Student Aid?

Check with you college or career school financial aid office for more information. You are considered an "eligible non-citizen" if you fall into certain categories, such as the ones listed below:

(1) You are an:

U.S. National (Includes natives of American Samoa or Swains Island) or

U.S. Lawful Permanent Resident with a Form I-551, I-151, or I551-C (Permanent Resident Card, Resident Alien Card, or Alien Registration Receipt Card), also known as a "green card"

(2) You have an Arrival-Departure Record (Form I-94) from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) showing:

Refugee

Asylum Granted

Cuban-Haitian Entrant (Status Pending)

Conditional Entrant (Valid only if issued before April 1, 1980) or

Parolee (You must be paroled for at least one year, and you must be able to provide evidence from the USCIS that you are in the United States for other than a temporary purpose with the intention of becoming a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident.)

(3) You hold a T nonimmigrant status (T-Visa) (For victims of human trafficking) or your parents holds a T-1 nonimmigrant status. Your college or career school's financial aid office will ask to see your visa and/or certification letter from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

(4) You are recognized as a "battered immigrant-qualified alien" who is a victim of abuse by your citizen or lawful permanent resident spouse, or you are the child or a person designated as such under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

(5) You are a citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Republic of Palau. If this is the case, you may be eligible for only certain types of Federal student aid.

Citizens of the Republic of Palau are eligible for Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, and Federal Work-Study.

Citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands are eligible for Federal Pell Grants only.

(2) If I have been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), am I eligible for Federal student aid?

Undocumented students, including DACA recipients, are not eligible for Federal student aid, but you may still be eligible for State or college aid, in addition to private scholarships.

(3) If I have been granted DACA, should I still complete a FAFSA?

You should check with you High School counselor or financial aid office to see whether completing the FAFSA is the way to apply for State and college student aid. To begin your FAFSA, you must enter your Social Security Number. While completing the FAFSA, you must answer the "Are you a U.S. Citizen?" question as "No, I am not a citizen or eligible noncitizen." After submitting your FAFSA, you should check with you school's financial aid office to see what types of financial aid you may be eligible to receive.

(4) Does my parent's citizenship or immigration status affect my eligibility for aid?

No, your parent's citizenship or immigration status does not affect your eligibility for Federal student aid. In fact, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) doesn't even ask about your parents' status.

(5) What if I have other documentation that isn't listed above?

You are not an eligible noncitizen and cannot receive Federal student aid if:

You only have a "Notice of Approval to Apply for Permanent Residence (I-171 or I-464)

You are in the U.S. in F-1 or F-2 nonimmigrant student status, or in J-1 or J-2 nonimmigrant exchange visitor status

You hold a G series visa (pertaining to international organizations).

(6) If I'm not an eligible non-citizen, can I get any types of financial aid to study in the U.S.?

Yes, there may be some scholarships and other aid you can get. Check below:

Check with your country's embassy or a consulate here in the U.S. or with the appropriate government office back in your country to see what they offer.

Review the scholarships list on pages 38-43.

Try the U.S. Department of Labor's free online scholarship search.

Ask the college or career school you plan to attend whether they offer any aid for students like you.

Check out the Education USA Web site.

*(Information provided courtesy of the State of Oregon - Department of Education - "Guide to Supporting Undocumented Students")