

APPENDIX D
2002–2003 SAR AND SAR INFORMATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

For each transaction processed at the Central Processing System (CPS), a paper output document is sent to the applicant. This will be either a Student Aid Report (SAR) or a SAR Information Acknowledgement. The type of document that is sent is determined by the type of record that was submitted by the applicant as follows:

Record Submitted	Output
Paper/Renewal FAFSA or SAR	SAR
FAFSA Express	SAR*
FAFSA on the Web, Renewal FAFSA on the Web, or Correction on the Web	SAR Information Acknowledgement*
FAFSA on the Web, Renewal FAFSA on the Web, or Correction on the Web without signatures	SAR*
EExpress FAFSA or Correction	SAR Information Acknowledgement

* Students who meet the following criteria will receive the eSAR instead of the paper SAR:

1. E-mail address exists and is valid,
2. SSA match equals 4,
3. No signature rejects on the record, and
4. Transaction is not a result of a subsequent application.

The SAR has been designed to serve two basic purposes:

1. notify the student of application and eligibility status;
2. provide a means for correcting or verifying applicant data.

The SAR Information Acknowledgement is designed to notify the student of application and eligibility status. If corrections are needed, the student will use Corrections on the Web or submit them through the school using EExpress.

The eSAR is designed to notify the student of application and eligibility status more quickly than by either the paper SAR or the SAR Acknowledgement. It enables the student to view the SAR online and to print the online SAR document as often as needed. It also links the student directly to Corrections on the Web for correcting or verifying the applicant data.

SAR

All SARs will be eight-page documents. The first four pages are in a letter format and include the comment text, NSLDS information, and FAA information. The last four pages display the question responses reported by the student and provide space for making corrections. Each page of the SAR is described in detail below.

SAR—Page 1

The number appearing above the student's name and address is a tracking number for the FAFSA Processor and the CPS, and is not used for any institutional purpose.

To the right of the student's name and address is printed the date the record was processed at the CPS. Below the processed date is the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC printed on the front page of the SAR is either the primary or secondary EFC, calculated for a nine-month academic year (see page 12 of this guide for information on the primary and secondary EFC). An asterisk printed next to the EFC indicates that the student was selected for verification by the CPS. A "C" printed next to the EFC means the student has an eligibility problem that must be resolved before Title IV aid can be disbursed to the student. Under the EFC appears the student's four-digit Data Release Number (DRN). The DRN can be used by schools to access the student's electronic application record if they were not originally listed on the student's application or SAR. In addition, the student can use the DRN when making a telephone request through the Federal Student Aid Information Center by calling 800/4FED AID (800/433-3243)/TTY 800/730-8913 to make two types of changes: 1) to correct data entry errors made by the FAFSA Processor or 2) to request a change of address, telephone number, or a change of institution.

The body of the letter on page 1 of the SAR is designed to help the applicant understand where he or she is in the financial aid application process as well as what roles are played in the process by the student, the Department of Education, and the school. The page is graphically displayed in three sections as follows.

You (the Student)

This section describes the basic steps to be completed by the student in the application process. The text for step 1 will vary based on whether the record is an application or a correction. The text for step 2 will vary based on whether an EFC was calculated or the record was rejected. If an EFC was calculated, the text will read, "Now you should check your SAR information. If it is correct, you do not need to return it to us." If the record was rejected, the text will read, "Now you need to check your SAR information and make the necessary corrections."

The text for step 3 will vary depending on whether the record has been selected by the CPS for verification. If so, the text will read, "You will be asked by your school(s) to provide copies of certain financial documents." If the record is not selected, the text will read, "You will need to verify your information if asked to do so by your school."

U.S. Department of Education

In this section, the role of the Department is summarized and the results of processing the record are indicated. The text for each of the three steps will be the same on all SARs. However, the text printed under the steps will vary based on processing results. If an EFC has been calculated, the following text will be printed: “Based on the information you have submitted, we have used the standard formula to calculate your EFC, which is XXXXX. Your school will use this number to determine what types of aid and how much you are eligible for based on your educational costs.” The student’s calculated EFC number will be inserted into this text. If the record has been rejected, the following text will be printed: “You must give us more information before we can calculate your EFC.”

School(s)

The final section describes the actions taken by the school. The text printed for steps 1 and 3 will be the same on all SARs. The text for step 2 will vary depending on whether the record has been selected by the CPS for verification. If so, the text will read, “Your school(s) will ask you to verify your information.” If the record is not selected, the text will read, “Your school(s) may ask you to verify your information.”

On the SAR, two strings of numbers appear at the bottom of every page. The left-hand numbers are processing codes used by the FAFSA Processor and the CPS for tracking and quality-control purposes. The right-hand numbers are the student identifiers: the original Social Security Number (SSN) and first two letters of the student’s original last name, and the transaction number.

NOTE: If a student changes his or her SSN, or changes his or her name in the CPS, the original SSN and first two letters of the original last name will continue to be used as the student ID. The SAR fields that show the last name and the SSN—fields 1 and 8—will carry the corrected name and SSN. However, when used as an identifier—on correspondence or in requesting duplicates—the student should use the original SSN and name. If the student applies in the following award year using the correct name and SSN, the records for that year will carry the correct identifiers

SAR—Page 2

The top half of page 2 contains required information regarding the Paperwork Reduction Act, release of information to schools, and drug convictions affecting eligibility.

The FAA information section on the SAR appears on the bottom half of page 2. Descriptive labels are intended to help the FAA identify reject codes, match flags, intermediate values, and so forth. This data is similar to the FAA information provided on the ISIR, which is described in detail beginning on page 8 of this guide. Note that the comment codes listed on this part of the SAR are not all comments generated for this student. Only the comment codes that do not have a corresponding flag or other indicator already provided in the FAA information section are printed in this section.

SAR—Page 3

On page 3, the specific comments that have been set during processing of the record at the CPS will be printed. These identify problem areas, such as missing information or eligibility problems, as well as give the student more detailed information and directions for getting additional help if needed. Text will not print on the SAR for all of the comment codes that appear on the ISIR record. If the comment is designed to provide information to the FAA rather than the student, no text will print on the SAR (or ISIR), but the comment code number will be included on the ISIR record sent to the school.

SAR—Page 4

At the top of page 4, the codes for responding to Question 29, Type of Degree/Certificate, are provided.

The bottom half of the page will show financial aid history information for the student. This is a subset of the information received from NSLDS that is included on the ISIR record and described beginning on page 16 of this guide. The information printed on the SAR includes the Aggregate Loan information for FFELP, Direct, and Perkins loans, and detail loan information for up to 4 loans that are in a default status.

SAR—Pages 5–8

The remaining four pages of the SAR display the information that was reported by the applicant for each question on the FAFSA/SAR. The SAR is also a vehicle for corrections in the paper system and for students who file using FAFSA Express. A shortened version of each numbered item that corresponds to a question on the FAFSA is displayed, and has printed beneath it the student's response to that question. Below or to the right of each question response are boxes and ovals that resemble the answer fields on the FAFSA, and allow the student to indicate or write in a corrected answer, if necessary.

Items that are highlighted (printed in boldface type) require special attention. Highlighting means the CPS identified the responses as questionable or inconsistent with other answers. The CPS may assume answers to certain questions by comparing them with other information on the application. Answers might be assumed when the question was left blank, or a positive number might be assumed when the answer to an income question was given as a negative number.

When the CPS assumes an answer, both the value reported by the applicant and the assumed value are printed on the SAR. The word "ASSUMED" will appear in parentheses with the assumed value. Assumed values are used by the CPS in performing the calculation and should always be reviewed carefully. If the assumed values are correct, the student does not need to change them on the SAR.

The student can always correct other items, if necessary, whether or not they are highlighted.

When an applicant receives a reject, the resulting SAR will not have a calculated EFC. The SAR requires the student to correct information and return pages 5 through 8 of the SAR to the FAFSA processor for reprocessing.

When an item is questioned by the CPS, it too will be highlighted (printed in bold type) and an arrow will print in the column pointing to the response field for the questioned item. This indicates that the student must provide a new answer because the original response was blank or illegible, and the item is necessary to perform an EFC calculation. The student may also correct other items, if necessary, even if they are not highlighted.

At the top of page 5 are instructions to the student explaining the meaning of the arrows, and the proper way to verify an answer, fill in an oval, or to delete an answer. To verify a previously reported answer, the student must rewrite the same value in the answer fields and return the SAR.

Sometimes students are caught in a reject “loop” because they don’t respond to all of the highlighted and arrowed items to turn off the reject, or because they provide new information that the edit check still considers to be inconsistent or questionable.

Refer to Section III of this guide for more information on using the SAR to make corrections.

SAR Information Acknowledgement

The SAR Information Acknowledgement will continue to be a two-page document. The intent of this document is to allow a student to review processing results when the information was input electronically by the school or by the student using the Web. Because this type of SAR is a paper report to the student, but also an eligibility document like the correctable SAR and the ISIR, it contains information for both student and FAA.

SAR Information Acknowledgement—Page 1

Page 1 of the SAR Information Acknowledgment is in a letter format addressed to the applicant. The format of this page has been changed to look more like the SAR letterhead. The top left of the page prints the ED seal, followed by the U.S. Department of Education letterhead, which includes the Federal Student Aid Information Center telephone number and the FAFSA on the Web internet address. The box at the top right shows the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) form-clearance number and the expiration date.

Beneath the headings appear the student’s name and address and the date the CPS processed the transaction. The number appearing above the student’s name and address is a tracking number for the FAFSA Processor and the CPS, and is not used for any institutional purpose. Below the processed date is the student’s EFC. The student ID is at the bottom of the page.

The SAR Information Acknowledgement comments are fewer and less detailed, and generally refer the student to the FAA for assistance in making corrections or resolving problem issues.

SAR Information Acknowledgement—Page 2

The back of page one displays in condensed form every numbered question from the FAFSA and prints the answer the student gave to that question or the value the CPS assumed.

At the bottom of the page, a section headed “For Financial Aid Office Use Only” includes information and codes for FAAs. We have included here all the important match flags showing results of eligibility matches, as well as other information that an FAA would need when using the SAR Information Acknowledgement as an eligibility document. Note that all comment codes generated for the student’s ISIR are printed here regardless if an associated match flag or other indicator is also provided.

The comment text printed on the front page is a basic set of comments directed to the student, but the comment codes listed at the bottom of the section include all SAR/ISIR comments that were generated for this record.