

High School Completion Validity Policy

Shenandoah University requires that all students who are admitted to the institution provide a final, official high school transcript, proof of high school graduation (or recognized equivalent), or proof of homeschooling at the secondary level as defined by state law. This documentation must be submitted to the Undergraduate Admissions Office no later than the midpoint of the student's first semester of enrollment

In accordance with regulations from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), if Shenandoah University suspects that a student's high school diploma is invalid or was not obtained from an accredited institution that provides secondary school education, Shenandoah University will follow a two-step process to validate the student's high school completion.

Requirements and Procedures:

1. **Submission of Documentation:**

All incoming students must submit the following documents by the midpoint of their first semester of enrollment:

- Final, official high school transcript.
- Copy of high school diploma or recognized equivalent, or proof of homeschooling (if applicable), in accordance with state law.

2. **Evaluation of Validity (if suspicion arises):**

If Shenandoah University, or the U.S. Department of Education, suspects that a student's high school diploma is not valid or was not obtained from a legitimate secondary school provider, the following steps will be taken to evaluate the student's high school completion:

a. **Contact the High School:**

Shenandoah University will reach out to the high school directly to verify the validity of the student's diploma.

b. **Verify with the State Department or Agency:**

Shenandoah University will contact the relevant state department or agency that oversees secondary education to confirm that the high school in question is recognized as a legitimate provider of secondary school education in that state.

Note: These two steps are the minimum required approach for validating high school completion, as outlined by the U.S. Department of Education. Other methods may also be used if they effectively confirm the validity of the student's high school completion.

3. **FAFSA Information Verification:**

Students must also provide the name, city, and state of the high school they graduated from when completing their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). This information will be used to cross-check against the submitted high school transcript and diploma to ensure consistency and validity.

4. **Failure to Provide Valid Documentation:**

If a student fails to provide valid documentation or if Shenandoah University is unable to confirm the validity of the student's high school diploma after completing the above

steps, the student may be ineligible for federal financial aid. In such cases, the student will be informed of the next steps, including the possibility of submitting additional documentation or appealing the decision.

Compliance Monitoring:

Shenandoah University will monitor compliance with this policy through:

- Regular checks and audits of the documentation submitted by students.
- Review of student records to ensure that no Title IV federal financial aid is disbursed to students who have not provided the necessary documentation.
- Regular training for staff involved in the admissions and financial aid process to ensure they understand the requirements related to high school transcript and diploma validation.

Corrective Actions for Noncompliance:

If it is found that a student has not provided valid high school documentation:

- The student will be informed promptly and given a reasonable timeframe to submit the required documentation.
- If the student fails to submit the required documentation by the end of the specified timeframe, the student will not be eligible for Title IV financial aid until the issue is resolved.
- Further corrective actions may include the student being withdrawn from the institution, or other appropriate measures as determined by the Admissions and Financial Aid offices.

Conclusion:

Shenandoah University is committed to maintaining compliance with federal regulations and ensuring the integrity of its admissions process. This policy ensures that students admitted to the University have valid high school completion credentials and are eligible to receive Title IV federal financial aid, as required by the U.S. Department of Education.

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure ongoing compliance with federal regulations and institutional best practices.