

Financial Aid Checklist for Incoming Graduate/Professional Students

✔ **Use** Use this checklist as a guide to help you apply for aid, review your awards, and pay your fees. We hope you find this list helpful, but it is intentionally brief and not meant to be all inclusive and provide you with every bit of information you may need to know. We encourage you to read our entire web site to gain a fuller understanding of the entire financial aid process.

Apply For Aid	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Complete the Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This application is required for most types of financial aid including student loans and is done on the web.</p> <p>When completing the FAFSA you will need a PIN. You obtain PINs at http://www.pin.ed.gov.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>USC Columbia's School Code is 003448.</i> • <i>Remember that it could take 1 to 2 weeks for the USC Financial Aid Office to receive the results of your application from the Federal Processor.</i> • <i>If you already have a FAFSA on file with another school for the same school year, be sure to add the USC-Columbia school code to the school list on the FAFSA. You can do this by going to www.fafsa.ed.gov and follow the directions in Step 3 to "Add or Delete a School Code."</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Check the status of your financial aid application on VIP for any needed information.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If you are interested in a Federal Stafford Loan, be sure to select a Stafford loan lender through VIP. Log onto VIP, choose "Financial," then choose "Show Me My Stafford Loan Lender."</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If you need additional loan assistance, first consider, a Graduate PLUS Loan.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Only as a last resort, you may wish to consider a Private Educational Loan.</p>
Review and Finalize Your Awards	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Check your awards on VIP. If you wish to make any changes to your awards or assumed hour of enrollment, print your award letter from VIP, make the desired changes and send the updated award letter to our office with your signature.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Complete all required Stafford Loan entrance counseling, Grad PLUS entrance counseling or Perkins Loan entrance counseling.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Complete your Stafford Loan Master Promissory Note, and Grad PLUS Master Promissory Note.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>If you have been awarded Federal Work Study, you can search for jobs at http://web.csd.sc.edu/cgi-bin/finaid/job_show.cgi. If you have not been awarded Federal Work Study and you wish to be considered for it, please contact us.</p>



<input type="checkbox"/>	Read all Award Terms and Conditions for detailed information about your awards and how to use them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make sure any non-institutional scholarship checks are sent to our office. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>You may need to endorse a check if it is made co-payable to you and the University.</i>
Use Your Aid to Pay Your Fees	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pay Your Fees using VIP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>You must authorize the use of your available financial aid towards the payment of your fees by using VIP. Failure to do this will result in the cancellation of your scheduled classes. Aid does not disburse automatically. You must authorize through VIP.</i><i>Note that once the fees are paid, your bill will no longer be available through VIP. If you wish to keep a copy for your records, print the bill before you pay.</i><i>You may also want to print a copy of the confirmation page for your records.</i>

Helpful Terms

FAFSA: FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This application is required for most types of financial aid including student loans.

VIP: <https://vip.sc.edu/> is the University's student's web connection to most academic and financial information, including Financial Aid. You must be an admitted (www.sc.edu/admissions) student to gain access to the site.

Entrance Counseling: Required for your first Stafford loan. Entrance counseling must be completed before funds can disburse.