

# Financial Aid Checklist

The Financial Aid Checklist details actions you are required to take, including those required for disbursement of financial aid funds to your student bill, and actions that we strongly recommend you take once financial aid has been awarded.

*Please note that when you print forms, you should print them on white paper with black ink using the best print quality possible (resolution of 600 dots per inch minimum).*

\*To view and print some of the following documents [pdf], you will need to use Adobe Acrobat Reader.

- Read the Quick Start Guide [pdf]\* (required).** Read this guide, which includes instructions for when you should complete a Change Form and other important financial aid information.
- Review Financial Aid Program Awards [pdf]\* (required).** Initial financial aid awards are based on full-time enrollment for both the fall and spring semesters (12 or more credit hours per semester for undergraduates, 9 or more credit hours per semester for graduates and professionals). Awards are subject to change if 1) your eligibility information changes, 2) changes to federal or state regulations are made, 3) or if fund reductions are imposed upon VCU. Review the eligibility requirements for the aid that you have been awarded, including Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements.
- Complete and submit a Change Form [pdf]\* (required if you have changes or other information to report).** We will assume that you will accept all of the awards that have been offered unless you submit a Change Form indicating the awards to be reduced or declined. You also must submit a Change Form if you have any of the following to report: 1) changes to the eligibility factors listed on your Financial Aid Award Notification (FAAN), 2) financial aid awards not listed on your FAAN, including scholarships awarded by other VCU departments, 3) enrollment at another college or university while attending VCU, or 4) December graduation plans. If any changes to your financial aid awards are required, we will send you a revised FAAN.
- Complete and submit an Authorization to Use Federal Title IV Funds [pdf]\* form (required if you have not already done so).** If you received financial aid funds through VCU last year, your authorization may already be on file with the Office of Financial Aid; you will be notified if you are required to complete an Authorization to Use Federal Title IV Funds form.
- Obtain your official VCU email account (required if you have not already done so).** Students new to VCU may obtain their email account anytime after registering for classes and receiving their VCUCard but must obtain their account no later than one week after the beginning of their first semester of enrollment; continuing students may obtain their account after receiving their VCUCard. Information on how to obtain an account is available online. Email is an official method for communication at VCU because it delivers information in a convenient, timely, cost effective, and environmentally aware manner. Students are responsible for reading in a timely manner University-related communications sent to their official VCU student email account. The Office of Financial Aid uses email to provide financial aid information, to request documentation to support financial aid application data, and to provide financial aid application status and award information.
- Electronically sign the Master Promissory Note (required if you are accepting a Federal Direct Loan).** If you were awarded and accepted a Federal Direct Subsidized or Unsubsidized Loan, you may be required to complete an electronic Master Promissory Note online. If you received Federal Direct Loan (subsidized or unsubsidized) funds previously through VCU, your promissory note may already be on file with the Direct Loan Origination Center; if you are required to complete a Master Promissory Note, you will be notified.
- Complete a Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request [pdf]\* form (optional).** If you are a dependent student (see your Financial Aid Award Notification) needing additional funds, your parent may request a Federal Direct PLUS Loan.
- Sign up for direct deposit (strongly recommended).** When financial aid funds exceed university charges, you will receive a refund to assist you with the purchases of books, supplies, and other educational or living expenses. Direct deposit of a refund is faster, easier, and more secure than mail delivery of a paper check. Please sign up for direct deposit to have any refund deposited directly to your bank account (note that if you had direct deposit with VCU during the previous year, you do not need to complete another form for the current year unless you have changed your bank account). Direct deposit applications are available online.
- Review the Budget Planning Worksheet [pdf]\* (strongly recommended).** The Student Budget Planning Worksheet is designed to assist with your financial budget planning for the academic year.
- Review the Financial Aid Calendar [pdf]\* (strongly recommended).** Review this calendar for events occurring throughout the year.
- Review planning information for summer sessions (strongly recommended if you plan to attend summer school).** If you anticipate enrolling for the summer session, you need to think about your summer budget now.