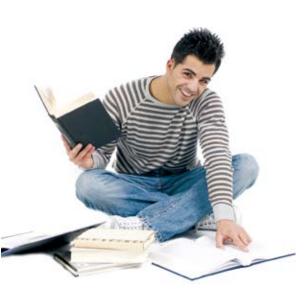# Applying for Cal Grants

Your ticket to success: Two forms, two steps

1 Submit the FAFSA as soon as possible starting January 1 and no later than the postmark (or electronically transmitted) deadline of March 2.

2 Submit your verified Cal Grant GPA (or GED, SAT or ACT score under some circumstances) by the March 2 deadline.

- **If you're a high school senior**, you must apply for a Cal Grant Entitlement Award between January 1 and March 2 of your senior year, or by March 2 of the year after you graduate or receive your GED.

- **If you plan to attend a California Community College in the fall**, you have a second deadline of September 2. However, you should still try to meet the March 2 deadline because there are a limited number of Cal Grant awards available for students who apply in the fall.

- **If you qualify for a Cal Grant Transfer Entitlement Award**, you must submit the FAFSA and your verified community college GPA between January 1 and March 2 of the year in which you plan to transfer to a four-year college.

- **Cal Grants provide tuition and fee assistance** and/or access cost assistance depending upon the type of Cal Grant (Entitlement, Competitive or Cal Grant C).

Your Verified Cal Grant GPA

You can submit your verified GPA before your FAFSA, beginning November 1. Some schools automatically submit GPAs electronically for their students—check with your school counselor. If your school does not electronically submit GPAs, you'll need to fill out the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form and give it to a school official for verification before mailing it to the California Student Aid Commission—it can't be submitted online. You'll find the form at **www.calgrants.org**. Give your school plenty of time to certify it before **March 2**.

If you'll be pursuing a technical or career education, you can be considered for a Cal Grant C Award even if you don't submit a verified GPA. You're still encouraged to submit your GPA because it can only help your chances of receiving an award.

Calculating Your Cal Grant GPA

High School Students

Your Cal Grant GPA will be calculated on a 0 to 4.00 scale (to two decimal places) and **extra weight will not be added for honors, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes**.

Your GPA must include:
- all grades from your sophomore year,
- the summer following your sophomore year,
- your junior year,
- the summer following your junior year, AND
- failing grades for classes you haven't repeated before your verified GPA is submitted.

If you apply after your senior year, your GPA must include:
- your senior-year grades.

Your GPA must not include:
- grades for physical education,
- Reserve Officers' Training Corps, OR
- remedial courses. (Remedial courses are those that aren't counted toward high school graduation.)

Keep in mind that your GPA for college admission will be calculated differently.

Don't have a 2.0 GPA?

If your GPA for your sophomore and junior years is below 2.0—and if you're not pursuing a technical or career education—you'll need to improve your grades in your senior year. You can apply for a Cal Grant by the September 2 deadline if you'll be attending a California Community College, or by March 2 the year after you've

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Apply early! If you need to correct or update your FAFSA information, and you wait until just before March 2, there may not be enough time to make corrections before your eligibility is determined for a Cal Grant award.

graduated, when your GPA will include your high school senior-year grades or you've had a chance to improve your GPA by taking community college courses.

Recent High School Graduates

You will need to go to your high school to request your Cal Grant GPA to apply for a Cal Grant by **March 2** of the year after you graduated.

College Students

Improve Your GPA for Cal Grant B

You can improve or "re-establish" your GPA for the Cal Grant B Competitive Award by taking courses at a California Community College. Your new GPA will be calculated if you have earned at least 16 but fewer than 24 degree-applicable semester units.

Your College GPA

If you've completed at least 24 degree-applicable semester units, 36 quarter units or the equivalent at any college or career school, your Cal Grant GPA will be calculated using the grades from college course work completed by the date your college certifies your GPA. (If you've completed fewer than 24 semester units, you'll need to work with your high school to submit a GPA calculated using your high school grades or your re-established GPA, which can be used only for the Cal Grant B Competitive Award.)

Other Options

If you were home-schooled, or you attended a school that doesn't provide grades, isn't fully accredited by a regional accrediting agency or doesn't have a course list approved by the University of California, you must submit your GED, SAT or ACT score. If you have a GPA that's more than five years old, you can submit a test score instead of your GPA. All test scores must be submitted using the paper Cal Grant GPA Verification Form available at **www.calgrants.org**.

Follow your Cal Grant 24/7 with WebGrants for Students

Get fast answers to questions about your Cal Grant application or award—or your California Chafee Grant—by going to **www.webgrants4students.org**. Just log on and set up your own secure account that you can then use any time during the financial aid application process, and for as long as you have a Cal Grant or a Chafee Grant. You can make sure your GPA and applications were received, print a copy of your California Aid Report, review any grant payments or report a change of address or college.

Cal Grant Renewal

Your Cal Grant will be renewed automatically if you continue to meet the requirements, maintain satisfactory academic progress (as determined by your college) and have financial need. You'll have to submit the FAFSA again but not your GPA. The campus you'll be attending will evaluate your eligibility, so be sure to list that college on your FAFSA.

Still have a question about your Cal Grant application?

There are student support representatives who can help. Simply call the California Student Aid Commission toll-free at 888.224.7268, Monday through Friday between 1 p.m. and 4:50 p.m., select from a menu of options and check on the status of your application. You can get an update on your FAFSA or verified Cal Grant GPA, learn whether you received an award, and if so, the amount.

Cash for College Workshops

Get help filling out your FAFSA and qualify for a $1,000 scholarship! Attend a Cash for College workshop in January or February. For dates and locations: **www.californiacashforcollege.org**.

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It takes two— you're responsible for making sure both your FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA are submitted by the Cal Grant application deadline.

Cal Grant award amounts are based on full-time attendance, so if you attend less than full time, your award may be reduced. To receive your Cal Grant, you must be enrolled at least half time—at least six semester units or the equivalent. However, an exception may be made in your final term of your four-year program if you only need a few units to graduate.