

Questions from the Cal Grant GPA Submission Training

Completing the Access Forms

Question: How do I get the System Administrator's Access Request forms to sign up for WebGrants?

Answer: To access the forms, go to this page on our website:

<http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1191> Download the Request for System Administrator Access Form and the Request for Security Agreement Form. Please have these completed and mail to our CSAC Technology Help Desk. If you have any questions, please call the help desk at (888) 294-0148 or e-mail to csachelpdesk@csac.ca.gov

Question: Does the System Administrator's Access Request form need to be filled out each year?

Answer: Once a school gains access, WebGrants is set up so that an SA at each high school can assign access for users at that school. You won't have to fill-out the forms if the SA hasn't changed. Check with our helpdesk at (888) 294-0148 if you have any questions.

Question: I submitted the HS System Admin Access Request form and Info Security & Confidentiality Agreement forms a month ago but I have not received any response. How may I check on the status? These are normally processed in about one week. You will receive a confirmation e-mail when they are processed.

Answer: Please call the CSAC Technology Help Desk at (888) 294-0148 to check on the status of your access forms.

Question: If we already know our username and password, do we still need to submit the security access form from our Principal?

Answer: No. Your current ID and password will work. Check with our helpdesk at (888) 294-0148 if you need a new password.

Getting GPA Submission Information from Other Sources

Question: Where can I get a copy of the PowerPoint presentation?

Answer: The PowerPoint presentation can be found on the CSAC website in the same location as registration for this training. Go to <http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=981> and click on "20FGElectronic GPA Submission Training."

Question: It was mentioned that Cal Grant GPA videos are on-line. Where can I access them?

Answer: To access our GPA Submission videos on Teacher Tube, go to www.teachertube.com and hit the "Videos" tab. In the "search videos" search field enter "CaStudentAid" Please note the search function is case sensitive.

Question: Where are the written instructions for calculating the Cal Grant GPA?

Answer: Instructions on how to calculate a Cal Grant GPA can be found at www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1177 Look for the Cal Grant GPA Calculation Instructions.

Question: Where can I see the actual state law on how a Cal Grant GPA is to be calculated?

Answer: That section of the California Education Code can be found on-line by going to <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html> Click on the box next to Education Code and hit the search button. Then, click on the section of the code labeled "69430-69433.9" The high school GPA requirement is in section 69432.7 (h).

Calculating a Cal Grant GPA

Question: If I'm calculating GPA for a student who has already graduated from our HS and is now in college, am I supposed to include their senior year course work too?

Answer: Yes, always include senior year coursework in the GPA for high school graduates. The GPA calculation instructions on line here: <http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1177>

Question: Can you please clarify that I can submit a GPA for a student who already graduated high school?

Answer: Yes, you can. When submitted a high school GPA for high school graduates, please calculate a GPA based on coursework earned in the sophomore through senior years.

Question: How do I handle weighted grades? Can I include in a Cal Grant GPA?

Answer: State law requires that all Cal Grant GPAs be calculated on a 4.00 maximum scale. This means that the grades from any coursework graded on a scale other than a 4.00 maximum must be converted to a 4.00 maximum prior to be included in the Cal Grant GPA. This requirement means that weighted grades can be used, but only after they are converted to a 4.00 maximum.

Question: I work at a high school. How do we handle coursework taken at a college prior to high school graduation?

Answer: A high school GPA should include any coursework that is used for high school graduation purposes.

Example 1: A high school student took a math course at a local community college prior to high school graduation and the high school is using that to meet their math graduation requirement. This grade could be used in the high school GPA.

Example2: A high school student took a course at a local community college prior to high school graduation but it is not used by the high school for graduation purposes. This grade would not be used in the high school GPA.

Question: If a student attended a non-accredited high school sometime during 10 or 11th grade, do we calculate those grades in the Cal Grant GPA?

Answer: This is the same idea as the question above. State law allows CSAC to accept a Cal Grant GPA only from an accredited school and a high school GPA should include any coursework that is used for high school graduation purposes. Therefore, if a school is accepting non-accredited coursework towards graduation at their accredited school, they can include those grades to calculate a Cal Grant GPA.

Question: Can you post a file of how to calculate GPA on the help screen (WebGrants)?

Answer: The GPA Calculation Instructions are posted online here:
<http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1177>

The GPA and other Required Data

Question: What is the USED ID code? Or, maybe our counselor's should already know this?

Answer: The USED Code or OPE ID code is the code CSAC uses to identify colleges for Cal Grant submission purposes. This is the same code a student would select when submitting their FAFSA. High schools will enter their CEEB number. This is the same number used by the College Board when requesting SAT scores to sent to a high school. This number usually begins with "05". A list of these high school codes can be found on the College Board website at http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_code/codeSearchHighschool.jsp

Question: Does a student have to sign something in order for us to release their GPA online?

Answer: That depends on the school's policy. CSAC does not dictate whether or not schools can share that information with our agency. For those schools that require a release, many schools require a specific release form prior to sending GPAs to CSAC. Others use a general consent document that is signed at the beginning of the senior year.

Question: On the GPA Upload page in WebGrants, there is a checkbox for the GPA type that asks whether the GPAs are being submitted are "September submission? GPAs." What is this?

Answer: That box would only be checked for GPAs submitted after March 2 for the September Competitive Cal Grant award cycle. Ignore that box for pre-March 2 submissions.

Question: For the high school GPA, you said to include grades earned during the summer terms following sophomore and junior years. What about the summer term following the freshman year?

Answer: Do not include any grades earned in the summer term after the freshman year. This is currently how the state law is worded.

Submitting Test Scores in lieu of a GPA

Question: What do I do if...

I have a student who does not have a GPA.

I have a student who graduated more than 5 years ago and does not want to use their high school GPA.

I have a student who was graded on a non-4.00 maximum scale that cannot be converted to a 4.00 equivalent.

I have a student who completed course work at a foreign institution who does not have a GPA.

Answer: Students in the above situations may submit an acceptable test score to receive Cal Grant award consideration.

Question: What test scores may be submitted if the student does not have a GPA?

Answer: The results from the General Educational Development Test (GED), the American College Test (ACT) or the SAT Reasoning Test (SAT I) may be considered for a Cal Grant award.

Question: How are test results to be sent to CSAC?

Answer: To submit a test score in lieu of a GPA, the applicant should complete the student portion of the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form and attach a photocopy of the test results.

These are to be mailed to the address on the form. That address is:

California Student Aid Commission
Cal Grant Operations
P.O. Box 419077
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9077

Excel Questions

Question: In the PowerPoint presentation, you show a homeroom column in the Excel Spreadsheet. Is this required information?

Answer: No. We included the "Student Name" and "Homeroom Teacher" information on the beginning spreadsheet to illustrate that a school might be starting with information in their Excel Spreadsheet that they use to assist in gathering the GPAs prior to when the information is uploaded to CSAC. These fields must be deleted prior to submission with only the six columns we require included.

Question: On the Excel spreadsheet displayed in the on-line PowerPoint presentation, the Excel file showed a fixed width file, but the GPA File layout you showed requires a blank space between data columns. It looked like you saved your spreadsheet without doing any special delimiting to add that space in. How do we do this?

Answer: When saving an Excel file as text, select to save it either as "Tab Delimited Text" or as "MS DOS Text." Either way, a space is inserted between the data columns when the text file is saved. Either way is fine.

Question: The Excel file the tech department sends me has decimals. Is there a trick to get rid of the decimals, besides doing each on my hand and having to round?

Answer: You can either do a "Find and Replace" in Excel or remove them by hand. To do a "Find and Replace," click on the "Edit" tab and then enter a period in the "find" field. Click on the "Replace Tab" and leave it blank. Hit the "Replace" button and all periods and decimals (they are treated the same) will be removed.

Question: When saving the Excel file as text, can we save as Text (Mcintosh)?

Answer: No. Please save test as Text (MS-DOS).

Question: Must I use Excel to create the GPA upload file?

Answer: No. We used Excel because it is on most people's desktops. The text file to be uploaded can also be created by school or district IT staff if they have all the data. A school might also use Microsoft Word, and save the Word file as text. As long as the uploaded file is converted to text before submission, this is acceptable.

Questions on the GPA and Uploading

Question: Our system rounds a 2.667 GPA to 2.67. Is this correct?

Answer: That is acceptable. Do not round your GPAs any differently than you would for other purposes that require only a three digit GPA. Consistency in rounding would be recommended.

Question: If the student is an early high school grad, then we might leave the spring school code blank because they no longer attend our high school... correct?

Answer: If there is no school of attendance for spring, or if this information is not supplied by the student, then you may leave this filed blank.

Question: Since we can only submit up to a 4.0 GPA, does this mean that we can not weight or can we weight but only submit up to the 4.0 GPA?

Answer: All GPAs must include three digits. Therefore, to be clear, a 4.0 GPA would be submitted as 400, with no decimal point. For coursework that is weighted, and therefore not on a 4.00 maximum scale, please do not weight the courses when calculating the GPA.

Question: Why do you need a Social Security Number (SSN)? We do not store that information in any of our records?

Answer: CSAC ultimately receives millions of GPAs which in order to receive Cal Grant consideration must be compared against the millions of FAFSA records we receive from the US Department of Education. For maximum efficiency, this can only be done by using a unique identifier that is also part of the FAFSA record. The SSN fits this requirement. CSAC knows this is not stored by most high schools but we could not commit sufficient resources to manage a match of the records otherwise.

Question: The training suggested that we enter individual GPAs 10 at a time and then go back in for the next 10. Why?

Answer: WebGrants has a security feature that automatically logs out a user if no activity is sensed on the computer for 15 minutes. If it takes longer than 15 minutes to key in and then submit your individual GPAs, the system may log you out and you will lose all the non-submitted GPAs you have keyed. To avoid this, we suggest that you enter 10 at a time and submit those 10 before submitting the next 10. You never know when you will not be able finish a batch of GPAs due to office interruptions, a fire drill, the principal walks in to talk, etc.

Question: I hand-keyed my GPAs last year. Now I can submit all seniors' GPAs in a text file in just one-time submission, right?

Answer: That is correct, but depending on how easy it is for you to create the text file, it might be easier to submit individually if the total submission is 100 students or less. As long as we get the data, use what is easiest for you.

Question: If we will be submitting less than 100 GPAs, say 75, must we submit them individually?

Answer: CSAC has no restriction on how a school submits GPAs. We suggest you use what is easiest for you. If you have less than 100 to submit, it might be easier to simply key them in one-by-one but this is up to you.

Question: How many units does a student need before their college GPA is used?

Answer: Generally, 24 college semester units (or 36 quarter units) must be completed before a college GPA can be submitted. However, state law allows students taking coursework at a community college (CC) to submit a “reestablished” GPA calculated on at least 16 but less than 24 CC units to compete for a Cal Grant B only.

Question: Who can I call to get my GPA submission questions answered?

Answer: If you have any questions on the GPA submission process, you may submit them by e-mail to schjoolsupprot@csac.ca.gov or by phone to (888) 294-0153.

Using WebGrants

The “Add GPA” page:

Add GPA Records

- Click on **GO** or **Enter**
- Enter information
- Print this page before submitting the GPA records to CSAC
- Click **Submit GPAs to CSAC** (GPAs will only be updated at CSAC when this step is completed)

USED = Academic Year =

Please Enter the Number of New Records to Add

Override All

Row #	SSN	GPA	School Code	HS GPA Flag	Grad Date (mmyyyy)	SP School Code	RE	C2	CC	Override
1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					

Column 1 SSN: Enter the 9 digit Social Security number

Column 2 GPA: Enter the GPA, three digits only, no decimal points

Column 3 School code: The school submitting the GPA must enter their six digit school code. High schools use their College Board CEEB number. This is the same number used by student to have their SAT test results sent to the college by the College Board. Colleges use their six digit OPE ID Number. This is the same number used on the FAFSA to submit the FAFSA data to that school.

Column 4 GS GPA Flag: Enter Y if the GPA is a high school GPA. Enter N if the GPA is based on post high school coursework.

Column 5 Grad Date: Enter the student's high school graduation date or expected high school graduation date. If this information is not known, it may be left blank. However, without this information, CSAC will not be able to consider the student for an Entitlement Cal Grant.

Column 6 SP School Code: Enter the school code the student will be attending for the Spring semester or quarter. If this is not know, it may be left blank.

Column 7 RE: Check this box if the GPA is a reestablished GPA. A reestablished GPA is a GPA calculated on at least 16 but less than 24 community college units.

Column 8 C2: Check this box if the GPA is being submitted for the September 2 deadline Cal Grant award cycle.

Column 9 CC: Check this box if the GPA is based all on community college units.

Column 10 Override: Check this box only if instructed by CSAC staff.