

Quick Guide to Providing Financial Aid Records Data

There are 4 steps for providing student financial aid records for the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002). To complete them, log in to the secure ELS:2002 website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ELRecords>.

Log in using the username and password printed on the letter you received from RTI and select Financial Aid Records from the main menu.

NOTE: You will need your institution's username and password each time you, or other users at your institution, log in to the website. To ensure the security of your student data, it is important that you logout when you are going to be away from your computer and when you are finished with a data entry session.

1. Provide Record-Keeping Information

Before you begin providing specific student-level data, we need to collect some general information about your institution. On the Main Menu, click on *Financial Aid Records* to see the Financial Aid Records menu. Then click *Provide Record-Keeping Information*. Answer each question about the length of time your institution maintains the different types of records, then click *Finalize Record-Keeping Information* when you are done.

2. Provide Student Enrollment Information

From the Financial Aid Records menu, click *Provide Student Enrollment Information* and indicate which years during the specified years of interest each sampled student was enrolled at your institution. Once you have entered enrollment years (or indicated reason for non-enrollment during the specified years) for all students, click *Finalize Enrollment Information*. After clicking *Finalize Enrollment Information*, the information can be viewed, but not changed, because it is then used to customize the next step. The link changes to *View Finalized Student Enrollment Information* and the *Finalize Enrollment Information* button disappears.

3. Provide Student Record Information

We are requesting contact and demographic information for each sampled student. Then, for each of 3 years in the specified years of interest, we are requesting budget, enrollment, and financial aid information for each of the sampled students. You can find details on what data are needed from the *Forms/Instructions* link on the ELS:2002 website.

From the Financial Aid Records menu, click *Provide Student Record Information*. Data can be provided via the ELS:2002 Financial Aid Records system by either entering data online or preparing data offline and then uploading to the website. Specifically, there are two options to choose from, described below.

- **Entering Data Online (Web Mode)**

Enter data online for one student at a time. Click on *Web Mode*, then select a student from the Web Mode Grid and begin keying. You can move to another student at any time by selecting the student from the drop-down list at the top of the page. Validation (error checks) can be performed at any time by clicking *Finalize* within each section. This will highlight missing data and data values that are out of the expected range or type. Once you have completed entering all data for a student, click *Finalize (Student Name)* at the bottom of the page. After you have entered data for all students, return to the Web Mode Grid page and click *Finalize All Student Record Information*.

- **Entering Data Offline and then Uploading (Excel Mode)**

You may download an Excel template, key or cut and paste in the requested data, and then upload the file. Click on *Excel Mode*. To request the template, check the “I agree” box under Step 1 Download Excel Template. The Student Info worksheet allows you to enter contact and demographic information. There are also worksheets for each academic year allowing you to enter budget, enrollment and aid data for your students. The data will be checked for errors when you upload to the website. When keying is complete, click *Select Files* in Step 2 Upload Excel File on the FAR: Excel Mode page and select your saved file to upload.

When a file is uploaded, it is checked for errors such as values outside of expected ranges. When errors are detected, they are displayed onscreen. Please correct these errors before attempting to upload the file again.

4. Submit All Financial Aid Records Information

When you have provided all of the data for the ELS:2002 Financial Aid Records collection, please alert us by clicking the *Submit All Financial Aid Records Information* button on the Financial Aid Records menu.

Additional information is available on the ELS:2002 website. If you need assistance, please contact the Help Desk toll-free at 1-877-475-7016 or via e-mail at ELSrecords@rti.org.