

Federal Student Aid Writing Style Guide

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Updated July 2013

This style guide is intended as a reference to some of the style issues that are unique to Federal Student Aid (FSA) publications, websites, videos, infographics, social media, and other written communications. For the most part, we use the style guidelines set forth in the *Guide to Publishing at the U.S. Department of Education*, which requires adherence to the latest editions of the following style guides (in this order): *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*; *the Associated Press Stylebook*; and the *Chicago Manual of Style*. We have repeated material from the *AP Stylebook* only if it is particularly relevant to FSA communications or if there are variations that would be more appropriate in addressing FSA's diverse audiences.

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Program Names

DIRECT LOANS

William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program: Use this, the complete program name, at first mention and in each new section of a publication or website. A new section is a separate chapter of a publication or page of a website.

Direct Loan Program: Use this, the short version, after first mention. That is, in the rest of the publication or website section (subsequent use).

Direct Loans: Name to encompass all loans from this program.

The following are the four loans in this program. On the left is the complete program name; on the right is the loan name.

Program	Loan
Federal Direct Stafford/Ford Loan Program	Direct Subsidized Loan
Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford/Ford Loan Program	Direct Unsubsidized Loan When referring to both sub and unsub, use “and” (do not use a slash), and use initial caps in Unsubsidized and Subsidized Direct Subsidized Loans and Direct Unsubsidized Loans
Federal Direct PLUS Loan Program	Direct PLUS Loan [optional: it’s okay to say “PLUS loans” without “Direct” but note lowercase l]
Federal Direct Consolidation Loan Program	Direct Consolidation Loan When referring to Special Direct Consolidation Loans (available 1/17/2012 – 6/30/2012), use “Special Direct Consolidation Loan,” “Special Direct Consolidation Loans,” “Special Direct Consolidation Loan opportunity,” or “Special Direct Consolidation Loan initiative” (do not use “Program” or “program”) When referring to traditional Direct Consolidation Loans and Special Direct Consolidation Loans in the same statement or document, use “traditional Direct Consolidation Loan” and “Special Direct Consolidation Loan” or their plural forms

FFEL PROGRAM LOANS

Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program: Use this, the complete program name, at first mention and in each new section of a publication or website. A new section is a separate chapter of a publication or page of a website.

FFEL Program: Use this, the short version, after first mention. That is, in the rest of the publication chapter or website page (subsequent use).

FFEL Program loans: Name to encompass all loans from this program [note the lowercase L in “FFEL Program loans”].

The following are the four loans in this program. On the left is the complete program name; on the right is the loan name.

Program	Loan (note that acronyms should never be used without spelling out on first mention)
Federal Stafford Loan Program	Subsidized Federal Stafford Loan Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan
Federal Consolidation Loan Program	FFEL Consolidation Loan
Federal PLUS Loan Program	FFEL PLUS Loan

WHEN WRITING ABOUT DIRECT AND FFEL TOGETHER

At first mention	Subsequent use
	There is no official short loan name when referring to both Direct and FFEL together. Therefore, this shorter version must be in lowercase because it's not the name of a specific loan program. Note: it's best to avoid going this route. Name loans when possible.
Direct Subsidized Loans and Subsidized Federal Stafford Loans	subsidized loans
Direct Unsubsidized Loans and Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans	unsubsidized loans
Direct Subsidized Loans, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Subsidized Federal Stafford Loans, or [or "and"] Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans or [or "and"] Subsidized and Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans	subsidized and unsubsidized loans
Direct Consolidation Loans and FFEL Consolidation Loans [note: if you haven't spelled out "FFEL" yet, you'll need to find a way to do so; e.g., "consolidation loans from the Federal Family Education Loan Program"]	consolidation loans
When talking about all federal student loans: Direct Loans and FFEL Program loans [do not say "Direct and FFEL loans" because that sounds like "Direct and FFEL" is a single program from which the loans come]	
When talking about multiple types of PLUS, refer to "PLUS loans" [note lowercase l in loans]	

DIRECT PLUS LOANS FOR PARENTS AND GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

<p style="text-align: center;">Correct</p> <p>The most commonly used option appears first</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Incorrect</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Why is it incorrect?</p>
<p>Direct PLUS Loans for parents or Direct PLUS Loans received by parents [Note: it's also correct to refer to a "parent PLUS borrower" or "Direct PLUS Loans for parent borrowers"]</p>	<p>Parent PLUS Direct PLUS Loans borrowed by parents</p>	<p>Name does not exist You can receive, apply for, or get a loan; but not borrow a loan</p>
<p>Direct PLUS Loans for graduate or professional students or Direct PLUS Loans received by graduate or professional students [Note: it's also correct to refer to a "student PLUS borrower" or "Direct PLUS Loans for student borrowers"]</p>	<p>Grad PLUS loans Direct PLUS Loans borrowed by graduate or professional students Direct PLUS Loans for graduate/professional students</p>	<p>Name does not exist You can receive, apply, or get a loan; but not borrow a loan When we want to indicate an alternative, we use "or," not slash</p>

OTHER FEDERAL STUDENT AID PROGRAMS

Use the full program name at first mention and the acronym or short grant name thereafter.

Program Name	Grant/Loan/Aid Name (note that acronyms should never be used without spelling out on first mention)
Federal Pell Grant Program	Federal Pell Grant or, on subsequent mention, Pell Grant [Note: OPE would prefer if we could use “Federal” as part of the name as much as possible]
Federal Perkins Loan Program	Federal Perkins Loan or Perkins Loan
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) Program	FSEOG
Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program	Federal Work-Study or FWS
Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program	TEACH Grant
Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant Program	Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant
Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) Program	ACG
Grants for Access and Persistence Program (GAP Program) Note: This was going to replace SLEAP, but it never got off the ground	GAP
Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Program (LEAP)	LEAP
National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant Program (National SMART Grant)	National SMART Grant
Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Program (SLEAP)	SLEAP

Punctuation and Formatting

Addresses.

In most cases, the addresses for FSA and ED offices are preceded by “U.S. Department of Education”:

U.S. Department of Education
FSA Integrated Partner Management
830 First St. N.E.
Washington, DC 20202-5402

U.S. Department of Education
IPEDS Universe Coordinator
Rm. 8122
1990 K St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

However, some FSA services for the public are simpler:

Federal Student Aid Information Center
P.O. Box 84
Washington, DC 20044-0084

(Note punctuation of “P.O. Box” in these examples.)

Ampersands.

Following the *AP Stylebook*, the ampersand (&) should not be used in body text except when it is part of a company’s formal name or of a title. For instance, do not use “FERPA & Privacy Act” or “grants, work-study, & loans” in body text. However, for publications, ampersands can be used in titles and subheadings for copy-fitting and for visual impact. For instance: “Policy Q&As,” “Statute & Regulations.”

Dashes.

- **Hyphen.** The hyphen is used to separate numbers that are not inclusive, such as Social Security numbers, and in compound modifiers (e.g., “half-time student,” “less than half-time,” “ability-to-benefit,” “four-year program”).
- **En-dash.** The en-dash is longer than a hyphen (produced by a keyboard combination of the Alt/Option key and the hyphen on a Mac, or CTRL and the hyphen on the number pad on a PC). It is used to connect a range of dates, times, or numbers, such as “2007–08 award year” or “pages 49–55.” For automated indexing purposes, the en-dash must be used for complex page numbers, such as “2–25,” where “2” denotes the chapter or volume and “25” denotes the page number.
- **Em-dash.** The em-dash is twice as long as the en-dash (produced by a keyboard combination of the shift key, Alt/Option key, and the hyphen on a Mac, or CTRL plus ALT

plus the hyphen key on the number pad on a PC). It is typically used to indicate a pause or abrupt change in thought (e.g., “There’s money available—but you need to apply.” or “They will tell you how much—and what sorts of—aid you qualify for.”)

Lists.

You might come across Federal Register style in your research. Federal Register style uses semicolons in most lists, but ED does not use Federal Register style. All choices for lists shown in the *Chicago Manual of Style* (6.127 ff) are acceptable. The most important standard for lists is consistency of construction. Some examples of lists from FSA publications are below.

An introductory partial sentence followed by a list that completes it. Bulleted items end with commas because they have no internal punctuation. (In other words, if this sentence were written without bullets, it would have commas between these items.)

You can help raise awareness of financial aid scams and the availability of free advice by

- mentioning the issue at financial aid information sessions,
- telling students and parents about the *Looking for Student Aid* website,
- distributing the *Save Your Money* brochure, and
- distributing the “Don’t Get Scammed” fact sheet from Appendix E of this handbook.

An introductory partial sentence followed by a list that completes it. Bulleted items end with semicolons because of internal punctuation. (Again, if this were a sentence presented without bullets, those items would end with semicolons.)

The employee

- works on a full-time, part-time, or temporary basis;
- is paid directly by the school;
- is not employed by or associated with a third-party servicer; and
- is not a third-party servicer for any other school.

Complete sentence followed by list. Complete sentence ends with a colon; bulleted items take no final punctuation because they do not consist of complete sentences.

The U.S. Department of Education offers these grants:

- Pell Grants
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants
- Academic Competitiveness Grants
- National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grants

Complete sentence followed by list. Complete sentence ends with a colon; bulleted items take final punctuation because they consist of complete sentences.

We have updated the handbook in the following ways:

- We included information about the new *FAFSA4caster*, a tool to provide an early estimate of aid eligibility (see pages 11–12).

- We added a description of a video you can use to introduce students and parents to the federal aid programs and application process (see page 41 for ordering information).
- We updated information about the Federal Student Aid PIN to reflect the improved PIN application process (see page 13).
- We described several user-friendly changes to *FAFSA on the Web* (see Part 2), including the increase in school code fields from six to 10 (see page 20).
- We pointed out that an applicant who submits a Spanish FAFSA[®] will receive a response in Spanish (see page 17).

Numbered lists should be used sparingly and limited to the circumstances below.

When focusing on a specific number of items. (Numbers appropriate, but not required.)

There are three main types of federal student aid:

1. Grants
2. Loans
3. Work-study

When prioritizing.

In order of expediency, the options for completing a FAFSA are:

1. Online submission via *FAFSA on the Web*
2. Electronic submission by postsecondary school
3. Paper submission via printed PDF
4. Paper submission via preprinted FAFSA

When listing steps in a process.

Here is how to apply for federal student aid:

1. Get free information and help from your school counselor, the financial aid office at the college or career school you plan to attend, or the U.S. Department of Education at www.fafsa.gov or 1-800-4-FED-AID.
2. Get a Federal Student Aid PIN, a personal identification number. A PIN lets you “sign” your online *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA[®]), make corrections to your application information, and more—all online. Go to www.pin.ed.gov.
3. Collect the documents needed to apply (etc.)

Numbers.

The *AP Stylebook* uses the general rule of spelling out numbers below 10 and using numerals for numbers 10 and above, even when numbers in these two groupings are in the same sentence. Because many student aid requirements are expressed in terms of comparisons, it may be more helpful to the reader if numerals were used in instances when a sentence contains both single-digit and multiple-digit numbers and is comparing “like with like.” For example: “12-month EFC vs. a 9-month EFC,” but note the difference in “the loan may be deferred for up to three years; the 10-year repayment period will be extended by the period of the deferment.”

Percentages.

Interest rates and default rates should be indicated by the percentage sign rather than by the word “percent.” (e.g., 8.25%). Otherwise, spell out the word “percent.”

Serial commas.

For clarity in technical discussions, we prefer to use the final serial comma, as recommended by the *Chicago Manual of Style*. For instance: “*Maximum percentages of correspondence courses, students admitted without high school diploma or equivalent, and incarcerated students*” rather than “*Maximum percentages of correspondence courses, students admitted without high school diploma or equivalent and incarcerated students.*”

Slash.

May be used in “and/or” when necessary, but in general, avoid using slashes.

Telephone numbers.

Use hyphens, not parentheses, to separate the principal parts of the numbers, as follows below. Toll-free numbers retain the 1; others do not.

1-800-433-3243
1-800-4-FED-AID
202-377-3202
319-337-5665

Titles.

Refer to *AP*’s section on “composition titles.”

However, a Federal Student Aid–specific clarification: If we are referring to the title of a volume of the *Federal Student Aid Handbook*, that title should be italicized. For instance, “the *Student Eligibility* volume of the *Federal Student Aid Handbook*.”

Web Addresses.

Do not include http:// or https:// unless it is necessary in order to reach the site.

Our style is to include the www unless the site officially advertises itself without the www. Example: StudentAid.gov does not use www, either in mentioning the name of the site or in stating what the URL is. Same thing with StudentLoans.gov; but www.pin.ed.gov uses www.

Year spans. Our style is to use an en-dash between the years and to shorten the second year to two digits unless it is in a different century from the first year. Examples: 2014–15; 1999–2000

Spelling, Capitalization, and Usage

9/11: refer to “the events of 9/11” or “the attacks of 9/11” (AP style is just to say 9/11, but we don’t want to confuse people into thinking we mean September 2011)

ability-to-benefit (ATB) test

acronyms: note that acronyms should never be used without spelling out on first mention

adjusted gross income (AGI) [do not capitalize unless you’re quoting what it says on the line on the tax form]

aid offer [whether via letter, e-mail, or carrier pigeon, this is the notification of the financial aid award]

Alien Registration number

American Opportunity tax credit [note: was due to expire at end of 2012 but has been extended through December 2017]

AmeriCorps

and/or [only when necessary; as a rule, try to avoid]

applying for federal student aid [You apply for aid; you do not apply for the FAFSA[®].

Correct:

- Apply for financial aid
- Use the FAFSA[®] to apply for aid

Incorrect:

- Apply for FAFSA
- Apply for the FAFSA]

armed forces

award letter [okay to use, but OPE is leaning more toward “aid offer” these days]

borrowing money [you borrow money or you borrow student loan funds; you do not “borrow a loan”—a student or parent may “receive a loan,” “get a loan,” or “obtain a loan”]

career school (as opposed to trade school or vocational school)

cost of attendance (COA)

course work [two words]

default prevention [not default aversion]

ED [see U.S. Department of Education below]

e-mail [AP recommends “email” but Merriam-Webster is our preferred reference for spelling and has “e-mail”]

Expected Family Contribution (EFC) [note: EFCs are written without commas and without dollar signs]

*FAFSA on the Phone*SM

*FAFSA4caster*SM

*FAFSA on the Web*SM

federal [and “federal government”]

Federal Student Aid [the organization]

federal student aid [the funds]

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)

Federal Student Aid Information for Counselors [our counselor website; note: scheduled to change to Financial Aid Toolkit by approximately November 2013]

first come, first served [no hyphens]

General Educational Development (GED) certificate

Home schooling:

(v) They homeschool their children.

(n) ...have a secondary school completion credential for home schools as provided for under state law

Home schooling does not make a student ineligible for federal aid

Homeschoolers may be eligible to receive aid

(adj)

...have completed a secondary school education in a home-school setting

homeschooled students may be eligible to receive aid

Hope tax credit [note: no longer exists; refer to it only when needed in historical context]

Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR)

life cycle [two words]

Lifetime Learning tax credit

loan servicer [or federal loan servicer]

Master Promissory Note (MPN)

online

promissory note

Selective Service System

Social Security number (SSN)

Student Aid Report (SAR)

StudentAid.gov [official name *and* URL of our student site]

Title IV regulations [not Federal Student Aid regulations or FSA regulations; and by the way, re “Title IV”—in communications to students, including StudentAid.gov and our pubs, we don’t use the term “Title IV” because it’s too technical/takes too long to explain; we say “federal student aid” instead of “Title IV aid”]

U.S. Department of Education (ED) [note that we use ED and not “the Department” and never DOE, which is the Department of Energy]

veterans education benefits

website

www.fafsa.gov [we are no longer using www.fafsa.ed.gov]

www.FSAPubs.gov [note caps]

Plain Language Checklist

Writing for Websites, Social Media, and Print

Use principles of plain language as defined at www.plainlanguage.gov; we have developed a checklist based on that site and the PLAIN training class:

Plain Language Recommendation	Done?
write for your audience	
address separate audiences separately	
organize to meet your readers' needs	
address one person, not a group	
use lots of useful headings	
write short sections	
use active voice	
use the simplest form of a verb	
avoid hidden verbs	
use "must" to indicate requirements (not "shall")	
use contractions when appropriate	
don't turn verbs into nouns	
use pronouns to speak directly to readers	
minimize abbreviations	
use short, simple words	
omit unnecessary words	
when possible, define an unfamiliar word where you use it	
use the same term consistently for a specific thought or object	
avoid legal, foreign, and technical jargon	
don't use slashes (note: "and/or" is acceptable in FSA style when absolutely necessary)	
write short sentences	
keep subject, verb, and object close together	
avoid double negatives and exceptions to exceptions	
place the main idea before exceptions and conditions	
place words carefully	
have a topic sentence for your paragraph	
use transition words	
write short paragraphs	
cover only one topic per paragraph	
use examples	
use lists	
use tables to make complex material easier to understand	
consider using illustrations	
use emphasis to highlight important concepts	
minimize cross-references	
design your document (or Web page) for easy reading	
for Web, identify your users and their top tasks	
avoid PDF overload (i.e., don't rely solely on PDFs to convey your Web content; people don't like to read them)	
write effective hyperlinks (never ever say "click here"—see below for more information)	

Use links that will be found by search engines when someone is looking for financial aid information.

Good examples:

- [Grants](#) are student aid funds that do not have to be repaid.
- Use our free search tool to [find scholarships](#).
- Fill out the [FAFSA](#)[®] now.

Bad examples:

- [Click here](#) to learn more. (NEVER use “click here” as a hyperlink)
- Fill out the [application](#) now. (What application?)

If it is necessary to include detailed technical information about a federal student aid program, put the basic information on the main page for that program and then link to another page with the details. (This guidance is primarily relevant to student- and parent-facing sites; sites for financial aid administrators are expected to provide detailed technical information.)

Use question-and-answer format wherever it makes sense to do so.

Internal Guidelines for Use of Trademarks in U.S. Department of Education Publications Updated May 2014

Trademarks are important and valuable assets to the U.S. Department of Education (ED or Department). The Department's distinguishing marks enable it to build public goodwill in its services as well as create and provide a certain standard of responsibility to the customer. This is known as "brand recognition" and "brand reputation." It is for these reasons that the Department's trademarks must be protected and properly used.

I Generally:

A. Usage of ED Trademarks¹

The Department, predominately through Federal Student Aid (FSA), has many registered and common law marks designating the Department's goods and/or services. Since trademarks are frequently utilized in Department brochures, websites, training materials and so on, the sections below provide guidance on how to reference such marks in publications. If there are any questions with respect to these guidelines, or if a particular scenario is not referenced, please consult the Office of the General Counsel (OGC).

B. Usage of Others Trademarks

How external trademarks are used in ED publications depends on varying factors, including, but not limited to: whether an agreement governing the usage of trademarks exists between ED and the outside entity and whether the marks are being used for informational purposes. In some situations, there may even be a need to contact the owner to request permission to use the mark.

If you have questions surrounding the proper use of an external mark, please consult with the appropriate contract coordinator and/or OGC.

C. Disclaimers

When using the marks of others, please be conscious of endorsement issues. Clearly delineate that Department does not own these marks and that reference to them does not imply an endorsement of the product or service they represent. Therefore, a disclaimer such as the one below should be included in the publication:

¹ A trademark is any word, name, symbol, or devise or any combination thereof, used or intended to be used, in commerce to identify and distinguish the goods of one entity from another and indicate the source of the goods. (Lanham Act 15 USC § 1051) A service mark does the same for services provided by an entity. (15 USC § 1053) The Department's marks are primarily "service marks" since it predominantly provides services. However, since the term "trademark" may be used to refer to both "trademarks" and "service marks" only the term trademark is used throughout these guidelines.

This document contains information about private organizations for the reader's convenience. The inclusion of website names or addresses for particular services does not constitute an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any views expressed, or products or services offered.

D. Notice of Trademark Rights

i. Notice of a Registered Trademark:

There are three ways to provide the public with notice that a trademark is registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO):

1. Use of the symbol, "®"
2. Use the legend, "Registered, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office", or
3. Use the legend abbreviation, "Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off."

Failure to employ one of these notices when using a federally registered mark may create obstacles to effective enforcement of a trademark infringement action. It would open the door to allow an alleged infringer to claim "innocent infringement" as a defense. When proper notice is not given, an infringer may claim ignorance of trademark rights and the damages available to the trademark owner may be limited. Section II of this guidance discusses the use of the preferred symbols on ED documents.

ii Notice of Unregistered Trademark

Technically, providing notice of rights in unregistered trademarks is optional; however, FSA/ED's practice is to employ such notice as it enhances a trademark's source-identifying function. Notice of rights in an unregistered mark is provided by using one of the following notations:

1. (TM) for an unregistered trademark (in parenthetical or superscript form); and,
2. (SM) or (TM) for an unregistered service mark (in parenthetical or superscript form).

E. Use of Trademarks as Adjectives

Trademarks are proper adjectives, and should be used only as such. **Marks never should be used as nouns or verbs.** Non-adjectival uses of marks, over time, can result in generic-ness, or a finding of unintentional abandonment. This can occur even when the use emanates from the public, rather than a trademark owner. This is why the owners of marks such as *Kleenex*[®] and *FedEx*[®] expend considerable efforts to educate the public concerning the proper use of marks.

One way to ensure that a mark is used in proper adjectival context, is to follow each use with the generic noun for the product identified. For example, generic terms for the trademarked products and services mentioned in the paragraph above are: "*Kleenex*[®] facial tissues," and "*FedEx*[®] overnight courier service." Using terms after the actual trademark helps to makes them adjectives, rather than nouns.

II Using Symbols Throughout ED Documents

FSA prefers registered and unregistered trademarks be identified through the use of superscripts such as TM, SM, or [®]. These symbols do not need to be included with every use of a trademark. However, they must be used:

- Upon the first use of the mark in the text of each document or in any other materials or media, and
- In all prominent uses of the mark (e.g. title pages, headings, headlines, banners etc.). Thereafter, repetition of the symbol throughout the publication is unnecessary. However, if there is any doubt, it is best to err on the side of including the abovementioned superscripts.

III Trademarks Should Not Be Translated Into Another Language

Whenever the Department's mark is displayed or used overseas via the Internet etc. or when translating text/documents into a foreign language, trademarks should not be translated into the foreign language.

Correct: Proud Sponsor of the American Mind[®]

Incorrect: Orgulloso Patrocinador de la Mente Americana[®]

IV Use of Designation for Legislative Purposes Should Be Distinguished From Use As a Mark

If and when a designation is used to refer to the act/legislation, as opposed to the service, it can be used as a noun or in the possessive form. Therefore, the designation need not be highlighted in any particular way, nor must mark designations, TM, SM, or [®] be used.

V Distinguish Trademarks from Surrounding Text

Preferably, whenever marks are used, they should be highlighted in some way, so that they stand out from the text. However, there are situations where a decision has been made not to highlight the mark in text i.e. FAFSA. If there are marks that will be used so frequently that emphasis would prove distracting to the reader, prepare a list of those marks outlining the manner of reference.

VI Placement of the Symbol

The symbol should be placed consistently, in the chosen location (which is usually directly after the trademark) in superscript, in the same font as the mark, and in a size smaller than the mark itself. If you are unable to use the symbols (i.e. TM, SM, or [®]) due to software incapability, you should use parenthetical versions as follows: (R), (tm), or (sm).

VII Service Mark & Trademark Legends

Depending upon the medium and type of work, it may be advisable to include a trademark legend on the work e.g. in the cover page of a booklet. The legend should identify the marks as originating from U.S. Department of Education/Federal Student Aid by including a brief statement attributing

ownership of these marks to ED/FSA. Do not reference ED trademarks in the same legend as the trademarks of others. Usually, mouse print is used; however, style and font may depend upon the publication type.

Examples: FOTW[®] and FAFSA[®] are registered service marks of Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education in the U.S. and in other countries.

Coca-Cola is a registered trademark of The Coca-Cola Company.

Scholastic is a registered trademark of Scholastic, Inc.

VIII First Usage of Trademark in Text

The first use of an ED trademark in text should be as a proper adjective using a generic term in association with each ED service mark. If the mark is an acronym, it should be spelled out first then followed by the abbreviation.

Examples: The *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA[®]) ... or

FAFSA on the Web (FOTW[®]) is an Internet-based...

IX Maintain Trademark Purity

- a. Do not pluralize ED/FSA trademarks.
- b. Do not abbreviate or combine trademarks, unless they are meant to be combined.

Correct: NSLDS[®] / FOTW[®] ...

Incorrect: NSLDS/FOTW[®]

- c. Do not hyphenate ED trademarks and do not allow them to break across a page line when used in text.
- d. Do not make ED/FSA trademarks possessive through the use of apostrophes.

Example: The purpose of FOTW[®] is...not FOTW's purpose is...

- e. Avoid confusion by clearly separating and identifying ED/FSA trademarks from other company's names and/or trademarks.
- f. Use marks consistently in its stylized format.

Correct: FAFSA[®]

Incorrect: Fafsa[®] ...

- g. Do not use the service mark as a verb.

Correct: I searched the Google[™] website for...

Incorrect: I Googled...

X. List of Federal Student Aid Terms

Terms Officially Registered with the USPTO:

- FAFSA®
- Proud Sponsor of the American Mind®
- FOTW®
- NSLDS®
- Federal Student Aid logo (single line version)

FEDERAL STUDENT AID  START HERE. GO FURTHER.®

- Federal Student Aid logo



- Arrow symbol



- College.gov logo



- I'm Going®

Note: While FSA is not actively using the 'Start here. Go Further.' logos, the College.gov logo, or I'm Going®, these marks remain registered trademarks of FSA.