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2025–26

# **FAFSA® Specifications Guide**

## **Volume 9 – Testing and Web Demo System**

October 2024

**U.S. Department of Education's  
Federal Student Aid**



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# Acronyms

**Table 9-1: Acronyms**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
ED	U.S. Department of Education
FAA	Financial Aid Administrator
FAFSA®	<i>Free Application for Federal Student Aid</i>
FPS	FAFSA Processing System
FSA	Federal Student Aid (ED's office)
FTI	Federal Tax Information
ISIR	<i>Institutional Student Information Record</i>
PII	Personally identifiable information

# Change History Table

The change history table below is updated each time the “Testing and Web Demo System” volume of the *FAFSA Specifications* is updated providing you with a cumulative list of revisions made to the document.

The footer is updated to include the revision date.

**Table 9-2: Change History**

Date	Page(s)	Changes/Notes
10/24	All	Volume 9 is released

# Overview

## What's in Volume 9, Testing and Web Demo System?

This volume describes the FAFSA Processing System (FPS) testing and Web Demonstration (Demo) website options available to schools, third-party software vendors, state agencies, and any other Federal Student Aid (FSA) partners for a specific cycle.

For 2025–26, this volume provides guidance regarding test *Institutional Student Information Record* (ISIR) data files provided by FSA for use by the student aid community.

**Note:** This volume is also a resource for financial aid administrators (FAAs) and others who are interested in using the Web Demo system for training purposes. FSA is currently exploring Web Demo options for future processing cycles. There will not be a Web Demo system for 2025–26.

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# Testing and Web Demo System Options for 2025–26

For 2025–26, Federal Student Aid has provided a file with simulated ISIR data that you can download for testing with your student aid system. There will not be a 2025–26 Web Demo System. We recommend monitoring the Knowledge Center at FSA Partner Connect website for additional information as it becomes available.

Testing is optional; ED does not require it. The test ISIR data is provided for you to use to help ensure that your processing system is prepared for the ISIR data produced by the FPS.

## Test ISIR Data

In the [September 17, 2024 electronic announcement](#) posted to the Knowledge Center website, we announced the availability of a test 2025–26 ISIR file for download. If subsequent postings of test ISIR files are required due to ongoing system testing, the announcement will describe issues resolved or major changes made, if applicable.

# FPS Test ISIR Data

## Steps for Downloading and Using Test ISIR Data

### 1. Download Test ISIR Data from the Knowledge Center

The FPS Test ISIR Data File is available as an attachment to the [\*2025–26 FAFSA Specifications Guide\*](#) on the Knowledge Center website. To locate and download test ISIR data files available on the Knowledge Center website:

1. Go to [fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center](https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center).
2. Select **Library** on the menu near the top of the Knowledge Center home page (between the “What’s New” and “Library” links).
3. Select **Publications by Resource Type**.
4. Select **Handbooks, Manual, or Guides**.
5. Scroll to and select the most recent date-specific link associated with “**FAFSA Specifications Guide**”.
6. Scroll to the **Attachments** section at the end of the electronic announcement to locate *Volume 9 –Testing and Web Demo System*. Select the download link for the **2025–26 FPS Test ISIR Data File**. The IDSA26OP.DAT file is included in the zip file.

### 2. Download Volume 4A of the FAFSA Specifications Guide from the Knowledge Center

We recommend that you download the *2025–26 FAFSA Specifications Guide, Volume 4A – Record Layouts*, which contains the ISIR record layout. You can use this record layout as a reference to interpret the test data file contents, including valid field content. The *FAFSA Specifications Guide* is available in Adobe PDF format on the Knowledge Center website.

To download this document:

1. Go to [fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center](https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center).
2. Select **Library** on the menu near the top of the Knowledge Center home page (between the “What’s New” and “Library” links).
3. Select **Publications by Resource Type**.
4. Select **Handbooks, Manual, or Guides**.
5. Scroll to and select the most recent date-specific link associated with “**FAFSA Specifications Guide**”.
6. On the **Current** tab of the **System Technical References** page, scroll to and select the electronic announcement link for the most recent *2025–26 FAFSA Specifications, Volume 4A – Record Layouts* by date.

7. Scroll to the **Attachments** section at the end of the electronic announcement to locate the individual downloadable sections of the technical reference.
8. Select the link to each section. Use Adobe Acrobat Reader or a similar PDF-compatible program to view and print the document.

### **3. Use Test ISIR Data in Your School System**

Each school uses different systems and has varied reasons for testing. You can conduct testing at your convenience, and the results are for your use only.

FSA recommends using the test ISIR data file initially to verify your financial system can import the ISIR format correctly, then test more complex, advanced scenarios that take advantage of the variety of student records and data values in the test ISIR data file.

Be sure to remove all test ISIR data from your system at the conclusion of your testing process to ensure it is not mistaken for real student data when you begin 2025–26 processing.

#### **Match and FTI Data**

The match agency and Federal Tax Information (FTI) data on the test ISIRs is simulated data. It does not compromise any student's personally identifiable information (PII) protected by the Privacy Act.

#### **Getting Help**

If you need assistance with the test ISIR data posted to the Knowledge Center, contact the FPS Help Desk at **1-800-330-5947** or by email at [support@fps.ed.gov](mailto:support@fps.ed.gov).