

Ability to Benefit

Effective for students who first enroll in a program of study on or after July 1, 2012, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-74) eliminated the provisions under §484(d) (1), (2), and (4) of the HEA. Under those provisions, a student who did not have a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent could establish eligibility for Title IV Student Financial Assistance by passing an independently administered test approved by the U.S. Department of Education (an “approved Ability-To-Benefit test”) or by successfully completing six college degree units.

Students who do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent and are beyond the age of compulsory education (18 years of age in California) are not eligible to receive financial aid.

Therefore, students who enroll after July 1, 2012 and who are not high school graduates must have one of the following to be eligible for Title IV student aid:

- High school diploma
- GED
- A state certificate issued to a student who passed a state-authorized exam recognized by the State as an equivalent to a high school diploma (in CA, we have California HS Proficiency Exam)
- Completion of a home-school education