Financial Aid Interface Configuration Guide

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Financial Aid Interface Configuration Guide

Overview

Setting Up the FA Interface Module

These items allow you to define and customize the features of the module to your organization's needs. Each of the items listed below will most likely be used when initially setting up the module, and then as necessary when policies or other items change at your organization, such as terms, Funds etc.

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Configuring the FA Interface Module

This feature allows you to define the configuration settings for the Financial Aid Interface module.

This is done using the **Financial Aid Interface Configuration** window. For instructions on how to do this see, **How to Configure the FA Interface Module**.

The information is stored on the PowerFAIDS Interface Configuration table.

Defining the Periods of Education (POE)

A Period of Education (referred to as POE) in the PowerFAIDS software describes an academic term which, combined with other POEs, makes up your organization's academic year. You should define a POE in the system for each POE in PowerFAIDS. You should have a POE for any academic period in which students might register and receive financial aid and in which disbursements might occur. This option is normally used at the time you initially set up the Financial Aid Interface module. After that, use it when you define within PowerFAIDS, new POEs for terms at your organization.

These are defined using the **POE Definition** window. The information is stored on the POE Definition table. For instructions on how to do this, see **How to Define the Periods of Education (POE)**.

Example:

POE Name (in PowerFAIDS)	POE ID (in PowerFAIDS)	POE ID (in the system)	Description
Fall - 01	5	5	Fall - 01
Spring - 01	6	6	Spring - 01

This example shows two POEs as they are defined in PowerFAIDS, and how they use the same POE ID and similar descriptions in the system.

After you have created new POEs, you should then cross-reference or link them to existing terms defined in the system's modules. For more information on this, see **Linking POEs to Terms in System Modules**.

Linking POEs to Terms in EX Modules

After POEs are created in PowerFAIDS, you must link or cross-reference them to an existing year and term in other system modules. You will most likely cross-reference each POE to a year and term in the Registration and Accounts Receivable modules. Use the **POE Cross Reference** window to link the POEs to the system. For instructions on how to do this, see **How to Link POEs to Terms in System Modules**.

This option is normally used at the time you initially set up the Financial Aid Interface module. After that, use it when you have just defined a new POE at your organization in PowerFAIDS, which then must be cross-referenced.

This information is used to ensure that financial aid awards are appropriated to the correct year and term in the system's modules. It also helps select the proper courses for getting a total credit hour load for a certain POE.

Example:

POE ID	Description	Module	Year	Term
5	Fall - 00	RE	2000	10
6	Spring - 01	RE	2001	30
5	Fall - 00	AR	2000	FL
5	Fall - 00	PF	2000	P1

This example shows POE 5 (Fall - 00) cross-referenced to one Registration term, one Business Office term, and one Financial Aid Interface (PF) term for PHEAA term 1 (P1). POE 6 is also cross-referenced to a Registration term.

The information is stored on the POE Cross Reference table.

Defining the Fund Master

Funds are used in PowerFAIDS to identify financial aid awards. Each fund in the Financial Aid Interface module is assigned a General Ledger Account number so that disbursements and adjustments can be applied to the proper accounts. Each fund may also have a priority assigned to it so that the financial aid awards are applied to charges in a certain order. This priority order is only useful if your organization employs the "Open Items" method of accounting in the Accounts Receivable module.

Normally this option is used when you are initially setting up the Financial Aid Interface module. After that, use it whenever you create a new Fund that will be transferred into the system.

Define Funds using the **Fund Master** window. For instructions on how to do this see, **How to Define the Fund Master**.

⇨ Example:

Fund Name (in PowerFAIDS)	Fund ID (in PowerFAIDS)	Fund ID (in the system)	Description
Board of Trustees Scholarship	2	2	Board Scholarship

This example shows Fund 2, (Board of trustees scholarship) as defined in PowerFAIDS and how it uses the same Fund ID and similar description in the system.

Interface Configuration for Work Study Transfer

Prior to running the **Update Work Study Employees** process in the **Payroll** module, you need to create a POE Cross Reference row for PA in the Cross Reference table, the work study year and term on the **Payroll Control** window, and work study departments setup and assigned account numbers and percentages on the **Work Study Department Control** window of the **Financial Aid Interface** module.

Step-by-Step

How to Configure the FA Interface Module

1. **Select Task, Administration, Financial Aid Interface Configuration. The Financial Aid Interface Configuration window appears.**
2. **Specify the POE to be used as a default value when running several options in the Financial Aid Interface module.**
3. **Indicate whether you will allow names to be added to the system if they do not already exist when they are transferred from an external financial aid application (such as PowerFAIDS or PHEAA).**
4. **Select the radio button to transfer either the latest test scores or the highest test scores to PowerFAIDS when the Create Student Update for Financial Aid process is run.**
5. **Select the radio button to determine whether student data will be transferred to a data (.dat) file or directly to the PowerFAIDS database when the Create Student Update process is run.**
6. **If the To File radio button was selected in step 5, enter the path to the directory that will store the data file when the Create Student update process is run. The path entered in this column will default to the Directory column on the File Transfer tab of the Create Student Update for Financial Aid window.**
7. **If the To Database radio button was selected in step 5, click on the PowerFAIDS Database Connection button. See the PowerFAIDS Database Connection Parameters window for information on how to configure this window.**
8. **Save.**

How to Define the Periods of Education (POE)

1. **Select Task, Administration, POE Definition. The POE Definition window appears.**
2. **To add a new POE, choose Options, Add Row.**
3. **Indicate the POE ID, its description and beginning and ending dates.**
4. **Assign a Financial Aid Period code to the POE by selecting from the drop down list box. The Financial Aid Period Code column does not appear unless your organization uses Open Items.**
5. **Save.**

How to Link POEs to Terms in System Modules

1. **Select Task, Administration, POE Cross Reference. The POE Cross Reference window appears.**
2. **To add a new cross-reference, choose Options, Add Row.**
3. **Indicate the POE you are cross-referencing.**
4. **Specify the module, year, and term to which you are cross-referencing the POE.**
5. **Save.**

How to Define the Fund Master

1. Select Task, Administration, Fund Master. The Fund Master window appears.
2. To add a new fund, choose Options, Add Row.
3. Indicate the new fund you are defining by typing in the Fund code. This should be the same code as used in PowerFAIDS.
4. Specify the fund description, payment type, account numbers and other information as necessary.
5. Save.

How to Define Work Study Department Controls

1. Select Task, Administration, Work Study Department Control. The Work Study Department Control window appears.
2. Right-click to add a row.
3. Enter a Work Study Department code, a description, an account number, and a work study percent.
4. Continue to add rows or save entered data by clicking the Save icon.

Windows

Financial Aid Interface Configuration Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | Financial Aid Interface Configuration

This window is used to configure how the Financial Aid Interface module operates at your organization.

Default Period of Education (POE)	Add Names to EX from Financial Aid Database	
Transfer Test Scores to Financial Aid	GPA Choice	Calculate Awarded Hours or Wages
Student Data Transfer		
Automatic Student Data Export		
PowerFAIDS Database Connection		

POE Definition Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | POE Definition

This window is used to define your organization's POE (Periods of Education). The POE ID codes should be identical to those assigned in PowerFAIDS. If you are not using PowerFAIDS, you can use your own codes.

⇨ For example:

POE ID	Description	Start Date	End Date
5	Fall - 00	8/25/00	12/18/00
6	Spring - 01	1/6/001	4/30/01

POE ID **Description** **Start Date** **End Date** **Financial Aid Period Code**

POE Cross Reference Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | POE Cross Reference

This window is used to link a POE to one or more year/terms that are defined in system modules.

Module **POE** **Year** **Term**

Fund Master Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | Fund Master

This window is used to define funds that will be used in the Financial Aid Interface module and also how they will interface to the Business Office application. Use the following columns to define funds that will be used in the Financial Aid Interface:

NOTE: The **AP Subsidiary** column is not available if **Acct/Check** is not equal to **C**.

Fund Code **Description** **Payment Type** **Credit Account** **Debit Account** **Subsidiary Code**

Award Priority **Acct Check** **AP Subsidiary** **Percent Deducted** **1098-T Eligibility** **Report Category**

TIP: If your organization is using PowerFAIDS, the Fund ID codes should be identical to the Funds defined in PowerFAIDS. If you use PHEAA, you can define your own codes since they are cross-referenced to Aid Elements.

Work Study Department Control Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | Work Study Department Control

The **Work Study Department Control** window allows you to enter your organization's work study departments in order to track and transfer information to and from the Payroll module. Right-click options include access to the **Account Number List**.

Work Study Department	**Work Study Description**	**Work Study Account Code**	**Work Study Project Code**	**Work Study Percent**

Financial Aid Period Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | Financial Aid Period

NOTE: This menu option only appears if your organization is using **Open Items**.

The **Financial Aid Period** window allows a user to create Financial Aid Periods for their organization. Your Business Office will link POE's to Financial Aid Periods for aid distribution. Each POE will be assigned to one Financial Aid Period. When aid is distributed, the Business Office determines which charges for the student get applied by the transaction date and cross-reference it to the Financial Aid Period. Begin and End dates for one Financial Aid Period cannot crossover to another, they must remain unique. The priority assigned to a Financial Aid Period must also remain unique.

⇒ For example:

Financial Aid Period Code	Description	Begin Date	End Date	Priority
FALL03	Fall 2003	08/01/2003	12/15/2003	1

Configuring Items for PowerFAIDS

Defining Credit Hour Boundaries

When the Drop/Add Report is run, you may choose from sets of Credit Hour Boundaries that will be used to determine whether a student should appear on the report. The boundary sets you may select are defined using the **Credit Hours Boundary** window. For instructions on how to do this, see **How to Define Credit Hour Boundaries**.

Your organization may have multiple sets of credit hour boundaries. Within each set, you can define up to 21 boundaries. If a student is registered for a certain number of credit hours and then drops or adds courses causing their total number of hours to cross one of the boundaries, then the student will appear on the report. This notifies you that the student's financial aid package may need to be reviewed because of the change in their course load.

⇨ For example, you may want to have a set for undergraduate students, and another for graduate students.

To see how the hours boundaries work, see the Drop/Add and Hours Boundaries examples.

This option is normally used when setting up the Financial Aid Interface module for your organization. After that use it to change the hours boundaries as necessary.

⇨ For example, if your organization's definition of a full-time load changes, then you would need to update the boundary.

The information is stored on the Credit Hours Boundary table.

Configure Optional Student Data Elements for Transfer

There are certain pieces of student information (data elements) that will always be transferred from the system to PowerFAIDS when you run the Create Student Update for PowerFAIDS option. This is information that the PowerFAIDS software requires. The Student Data Element Map File shows you which information will default into the transfer file.

However, you may choose additional data elements that you would like to be transferred into the "Local" columns within PowerFAIDS. This option is used to identify what those additional pieces are. The information is stored in the **External Update Column Selection** table.

Normally this option is used when you initially set up the Financial Aid Interface module. After that, use it if you need to add or remove a data element to/from those that get transferred.

⇨ For example, you may want to select the student's Dorm Room Type, Meal Plan, Resident/Commuter status, or other data that may be used to determine how much financial aid they will receive.

Select these additional or optional data elements to be transferred using the **Configure Optional Student Data Elements for Transfer** window.

For instructions on how to do this see **How to Configure Optional Student Data Elements for Transfer**.

Defining Admission Status Cross-Reference Codes

NOTE: It is possible to add or modify existing ADMSTAT codes via the PowerFAIDS Administration module. See your PowerFAIDS documentation for more information about changing field codes. If you do add or modify the ADMSTAT codes, remember to cross-reference the new or modified codes on the **Admission Status Cross Reference** window.

This feature allows you to cross-reference the system's **Admissions Stage** code to the PowerFAIDS **Admissions Status** code. The Create Student Update for Financial Aid process will use this cross-reference information when transferring data from the system to PowerFAIDS.

When you run the Create Student Update for Financial Aid process, the system first looks at the **EX Admissions Stage** value for each student in the InfoMaker selection query and then looks at the Admissions Status Cross-Reference table and inserts the PowerFAIDS **Admissions Status** code that is cross-referenced to that particular **Admissions Stage** code. When the data is transferred to PowerFAIDS, the **Admissions Status** code will populate the ADMSTAT field (called columns in the system) in the PowerFAIDS database. This field is located on the **Academic** sheet of the **Student Award Year Profile** window.

⇨ For example:

Stage (EX)	Stage Desc	Stage Level	Stage Order	Status (PF)
12	Admitted	ACCEPT	12	A
10	Denied	PSTACC	10	N

Using the values listed in the table above, a student with a system **Admissions Stage** code of **12** (Admitted) would receive a value of **A** (Accepted) in the

ADMSTAT field when the data was transferred to PowerFAIDS. A student with a stage code of **10** (Denied) would receive a value of **N** (Not Admitted).

Defining Priority Lists

When an organization uses the A/R Open Items method of tracking charges, at the time a student makes a payment, it must be assigned to one or more Fee Codes. (Fee Codes are used in Accounts Receivable to identify charges.) The same is true of any Financial Aid awards that the student receives. Each Fund must be assigned a **Priority List**. The Priority List contains the Fee Codes, listed in priority order, to which a fund's award is applied.

TIP: This is necessary **only if** your organization uses the "Open Items" feature of the Accounts Receivable module.

Once this is done, aid can be applied to the Fee Codes in the defined order starting with the lowest number and proceeding to the highest. Priority lists are defined using the **Priority List Definition** window. For instructions on defining them, see **How to Define a Priority List**.

The priority lists can contain all of your fee codes and your organization can have up to 999 priority fee lists. The information is stored on the Priority Fee Definition table. Click here to see examples of Priority Lists: **Example 1** **Example 2**

Step-by-Step

How to Define Credit Hour Boundaries

1. Select Task, Administration, Credit Hours Boundary. The Credit Hours Boundary window appears.

2. To add a new set of boundaries, choose Options, Add Row.

3. Type in the new Hours Boundary Code.

4. Indicate the number of credit hours that will serve as thresholds or boundaries for the Drop/Add Report. Begin with the lowest numbered boundary in Hours Boundary 1 and ascend from there.

5. Save.

How to Configure Optional Student Data Elements for Transfer

1. Select Task, Transfer Students, Configure Optional Student Data Elements For Transfer. The Configure Optional Student Data Elements For Transfer window appears.

2. Type in or select the information for rows you want to change.

3. Indicate data elements to be transferred by selecting the Select check box. Clear the check box and the data element will not be transferred.

4. Save.

How to Define Admissions Status Cross-Reference Codes

1. Select Task, Transfer Students, Admissions Status Cross Reference. The Admissions Status Cross-Reference window appears.

2. Right-click to add a row.

3. Select an Admissions Stage code from the drop-down box. The Description, Level, and Order will automatically display after a Stage value is entered.

4. Enter a corresponding PowerFAIDS Admissions Status code.

5. Continue to add rows until all Admissions stages have been cross-referenced.

6. Save.

How to Define a Priority List

1. **Select Task, Administration, Priority List Definition. The Priority List Definition window appears.**
2. **To add a Fee Code choose Options, Add Row, or right-click and choose Add Row.**
3. **Type in the Priority List code containing the Fee Code.**
4. **Type in or select the Fee Code and assign the Priority Order.**
5. **Save.**
6. **Repeat to add additional Fee Codes in the Priority List as necessary.**

Windows

Credit Hours Boundary Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | Credit Hours Boundary

This window is used to define boundaries that determine when student's course loads appear on the Drop/Add report. When a student's number of registered credit hours changes and crosses one of the boundaries, their name will appear on the Drop/Add report. You may define several sets of boundaries, each containing up to 21 credit hour boundaries. Fill in the following information in order to define a boundary.

Hours Boundary Code

Hours Boundary 1 - 21

Configure Optional Student Data Elements For Transfer Window

FA Interface | Task | Transfer Students |

Configure Optional Student Data Elements For Transfer

This window is used to view and define which information (data elements), in addition to the standard required set, is transferred to PowerFAIDS when the Create Student Update for Financial Aid option is run.

ID Number and SSN are required data elements. All other data elements can be selected or cleared.

Field Type

Field Count

Field Description

Field ID

Select

Table Name

Column Name

Admissions Status Cross Reference Window

FA Interface | Task | Transfer Students | Admissions Status Cross Reference

NOTE: **Stage Description**, **Stage Level,** and **Stage Order** values will default in when you select a value in the **Stage** column.

This window allows you to cross-reference the system's **Admissions Stage** code to the PowerFAIDS **Admissions Status** code. The Create Student Update for Financial Aid process will use this cross-reference information when transferring data from the system to PowerFAIDS.

Stage	Description	Level	Order	Status

Financial Aid Period Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | Financial Aid Period

NOTE: This menu option only appears if your organization is using **Open Items**.

The **Financial Aid Period** window allows a user to create Financial Aid Periods for their organization. Your Business Office will link POE's to Financial Aid Periods for aid distribution. Each POE will be assigned to one Financial Aid Period. When aid is distributed, the Business Office determines which charges for the student get applied by the transaction date and cross-reference it to the Financial Aid Period. Begin and End dates for one Financial Aid Period cannot crossover to another, they must remain unique. The priority assigned to a Financial Aid Period must also remain unique.

⇒ For example:

Financial Aid Period Code	Description	Begin Date	End Date	Priority
FALL03	Fall 2003	08/01/2003	12/15/2003	1

Priority List Definition Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | Priority List Definition

NOTE: When defining these lists, it is recommended to create the priority order in increments of 10 in order to easily insert additional fees at a later time.

This window is used to define one or more lists containing the order in which financial aid is applied to Fee Codes. These lists must then be assigned to Funds in the system. Funds with a Priority List assigned to them will have their disbursements applied in the order specified in the list. You will have a row for each Fee Code that is contained in the list.

Priority List	**Fee Code**	**Priority Order**

Assign the Priority List to a Fund using the Subsidiary code on the **Fund Master** window.

Configuring Items for PHEAA

Defining PHEAA Awards as Actual or Estimated

Aid imported from PHEAA is assigned one of several statuses. Each status can be defined as either Actual or Estimated within the Financial Aid Interface module. Actual aid is aid that is ready to transfer to the Business Office application, and Estimated is aid that is still pending, and will be counted as unapplied aid.

The **Actual/Estimated Definition** window is used to define whether aid from PHEAA is Actual or Estimated. For instructions on doing this, see **How to Code PHEAA Aid as Actual or Estimated**.

⇨ For example:

PHEAA Code (Function Type)	**Actual or Estimated**	**Description**
A	Actual	Actual Aid
C	Estimated	Calculated by computer
F	Actual	State Grant Five Year Program
(blank)	Estimated	Estimated

Defining Aid Elements (PHEAA)

Aid Elements are the codes that the Financial Aid Interface module uses to identify PHEAA Aid Fund IDs. The Aid Element codes should match the PHEAA codes identifying the aid.

Aid Elements are defined on the **Aid Element Definition** window. For instructions on doing this, see **How to Define Aid Elements**.

⇨ For example, if the PHEAA Aid Fund ID for the Pell grant is **0001**, you must identify the Aid Element as **0001** (and enter a description). Or if the PHEAA Grant is **0002**, then the Aid Element must also be **0002**.

After the Aid Element codes are defined, you must cross reference them to a Fund Master code so that the awards can be transferred into the Business Office application. See **Linking PHEAA Aid Elements to Funds**.

TIP: PHEAA's terminology for aid elements is Aid Fund ID Number.

Linking PHEAA Aid Elements to Funds

Aid Elements identify the PHEAA awards that are imported. Fund codes identify aid in the system and contain the account numbers and other information necessary to transfer the awards into the Business Office application. Aid Elements must be linked or cross-referenced to the Funds in order for PHEAA awards to be transferred into the system.

TIP: Both the Aid Elements and the Funds must be defined before you can link them.

Aid Elements are linked to Funds using the **Fund Cross Reference** window. For instructions on doing this, see **How to Link PHEAA Aid Elements to Funds**. The information is stored on the Fund Cross Reference table.

⇨ For example, if the Pell Grant is identified as Aid Element 0001 and Fund 0025, they must be linked on the Fund Cross Reference table as shown:

Fund code	Description	Aid Element	Description
0025	Pell Grant	0001	Pell Grant

Step-by-Step

How to Code PHEAA Aid as Actual or Estimated

1. **Select Task, Administration, Actual/Estimated Definition. The Actual/Estimated Definition window appears.**
2. **To add a PHEAA code, right-click and select Add Row.**
3. **Type in the PHEAA code in the Function Type column; select whether it is actual or estimated and type in a description.**
4. **Save.**

How to Define Aid Elements (PHEAA)

1. **Select Task, Administration, Aid Element Definition. The Aid Element Definition window appears.**
2. **To create a new Aid Element, right-click and select Add Row.**
3. **Type in the Aid Element code as it exists in the PHEAA system, and give it a description.**
4. **Save.**

How to Link PHEAA Aid Elements to Funds

Before you do this, both Fund and Aid Element codes must be defined.

1. **Select Task, Administration, Fund Cross Reference. The Fund Cross Reference window appears.**
2. **To create a new link or cross-reference, right-click and select Add Row.**
3. **Type in or select from the drop-down list the Fund code.**
4. **Type in or select from the drop-down list the Aid Element you are linking the Fund.**
5. **Save.**

Windows

Aid Element Definition Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | Aid Element Definition

NOTE: This window and option appears only if you are using the PHEAA software.

This window is used to define Aid Elements in the system that will be imported from the PHEAA software. The Aid Element codes must match the PHEAA Aid Fund IDs.

Aid Element	Description

Fund Cross Reference Window

FA Interface | Task | Administration | Fund Cross Reference

NOTE: This window and option appears only if you are using the PHEAA software.

This window is used to link Aid Element codes to a Fund in the Financial Aid Interface module so that aid imported from PHEAA can be transferred to the Business Office application. Create a row for each pair as necessary.

Fund Code	Aid Element