3.8.2 ACCOUNT BALANCE ATTESTATION

This Guide Memo section outlines the policy and responsibilities for attesting to account balances in the University’s general ledger and the Statement of Financial Position.

Authority:
Approved by the Senior Associate Vice President of Finance.

Applicability:
This policy applies to all Stanford departments and employees responsible for attesting to account balances in the University’s general ledger and the Statement of Financial Position.

See also sections 3.1, Funds Management [1] and 3.2.1.4c, Expenditures [2] of Restricted Funds – Quarterly Certification of Changes of the Stanford Administrative Guide. These sections cover accounting for University fund balances and reconciling and attesting to expenditure statements for sponsored projects, respectively.

1. Attestation Purpose

Account balance attestations serve as evidence that account balances in the general ledger and the Statement of Financial Position have been reconciled in a timely manner. Together the account balance reconciliations and account balance attestations are key internal controls that provide reasonable assurance around the following financial statement assertions:

- Accuracy: Transactions were accurately recorded at appropriate amounts.
- Completeness: All assets, liabilities and net asset balances that should have been recorded were correctly recorded on the Statement of Financial Position.
- Existence: All assets, liabilities and net asset balances that were recorded on the Statement of Financial Position existed at the end of the financial period.

2. Definitions

Account Balance Attestation:

Account balance attestations are forms that are signed by Attestation Owners, University finance officials and staff that have been designated by the University Controller's Office, to verify that all conditions on the Balance Sheet Reconciliation Review Attestation form have been met for account balances under their
3. Responsibility for Attestations

A. Attestation Preparation and Submission

Attestation Owners are responsible for attesting to all statements on the Balance Sheet Reconciliation Review Attestation form, including the statement that the account balances under their authority have been reconciled and reviewed at least quarterly.

Attestation Owners are responsible for ensuring that attestation forms are submitted to the University Controller’s Office on time. The University Controller’s Office determines and communicates the timing of attestation submissions.


B. Training

Account balance attestations should only be signed by individuals with reconciliation approval authority, knowledge of the account and an understanding of the reconciliation purpose.

University departments are responsible for communicating changes in attestation ownership to the Controller’s Office on a timely basis.

Information about how to communicate a change in attestation ownership is available in the Balance Sheet Account Reconciliations section of the Gateway to Financial Activities [3] website.

4. Attestation Procedures