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# Introduction to Volume 2

*This volume of the Federal Student Aid Handbook comprises topics pertaining to colleges' general obligations in administering the Title IV student aid programs: institutional and program eligibility, administrative requirements, audits, record keeping, program reviews, and providing information to the public are all explained.*

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Throughout the Handbook we use “college,” “school,” and “institution” interchangeably unless some more specific use is given. Similarly, “student,” “applicant,” and “aid recipient” are synonyms. “Parents” in this volume refers to the parents of dependent students, and “you” refers to the primary audience of the Handbook: financial aid administrators at colleges. “We” indicates the United States Department of Education (Department, ED), and “federal student aid” and “Title IV aid” are synonymous terms for the financial aid offered by the Department.

We appreciate any comments that you have regarding the Federal Student Aid Handbook. We revise and clarify the text in response to questions and feedback from the financial aid community, so please contact us at [fsaschoolspubs@ed.gov](mailto:fsaschoolspubs@ed.gov) to let us know how to improve the Handbook so that it is always clear and informative.

Here, we provide a summary of the changes and clarifications presented in greater detail in the chapters that follow. **Alone the text herein does not provide schools with the guidance needed to satisfactorily administer the Title IV HEA programs.** For more complete guidance, you should refer to the text in the chapters cited, the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and the Higher Education Act (HEA) as amended.

## Notes on Active Links

At the top of each page you will find links to the Federal Student Aid Glossary and Appendices, the Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), and Dear Colleague Letters (DCL).

[Glossary](#) [CFR](#) [DCL](#)

## Noteworthy Changes

We added a short paragraph at the bottom of page 8 about state authorization when a school offers distance education to students in a state where the school is not physically located.

On page 9 we added the second paragraph under “State complaint process” addressing the requirement as it applies to complaints by students against out-of-state schools that are providing them distance education.

We moved the note on checking the validity of high school completion from the margin of page 11 to the body of page 12 and added the second paragraph to account for the recent pertinent announcement.

In the middle of page 40, we added a paragraph about when a school’s GE program is not subject to the clock-hour to credit-hour conversion but the state has a minimum number of clock hours for such training.

We rewrote the guidance on the bottom of page 64 to reflect FSA system access changes for professional users.

We added a second paragraph to the section “Single Audit Act not applicable” to account for guidance in more recent announcements, and we moved the section from the margin to the body of page 76.

At the bottom of page 87, we added the section about foreign school submissions of their annual compliance audit reports and audited financial statements.

On page 92 we reintroduced the section “Compliance thresholds for timely return of funds,” which was removed in the 2018–2019 Handbook.

On page 108 we added the section about the rescission of the Department’s gainful employment (GE) regulations (2014 Rule).

On pages 110 and 111 we added the paragraph that refers readers to the information in a recent announcement about the Department sending schools their final GE completers lists and which states that since the memorandum of understanding under which the Social Security Administration shared earnings data with the Department has expired, the Department is unable to calculate D/E rates in 2019.

In *Chapter 5* we replaced the existing guidance pertaining to pre-acquisition reviews prior to a change in school ownership with a lengthier explanation, which includes the two types of pre-acquisition review that the Department offers schools and prospective owners. See pages 125–127.

On page 130 we combined a couple sections under the title “Adding a program and determining eligibility” and reorganized the text for clarity.

We revised the section on page 146 about the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet by noting that it has been renamed the College Financing Plan and linking to the announcement for the 2019–2020 plan.

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On page 147 we added a paragraph listing eight recommendations that the Department issued about what schools should avoid in their financial aid offers.

On page 149 we referenced the announcements pertaining to the 2019 GE Disclosure Template and guidance supplementing it. Also on that page we made minor edits to the information about the template, and we summarized the contents of GE announcement #120. We also deleted the margin note about CIP and SOC codes since those are not used in the 2019 template.

We rewrote the guidance on page 165 after the first paragraph to try to clarify the flexibilities schools have in providing extra content and requirements as part of their entrance counseling policy.

We mentioned on page 170 the availability of a report by the Financial Literacy and Education Commission, *Best Practices for Financial Literacy and Education at Institutions of Higher Education*, that schools may find useful as they counsel students.

On pages 179–180 we added a section listing the consumer information requirements that do not apply to foreign schools.

We added the last paragraph on page 198, which summarizes the contents of a Department announcement about a phishing campaign that tried to gain access to students' college accounts.

