
Introduction



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.

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 to let us know how to improve the Handbook so that it is always clear and informative.

CHANGES FOR 2016–2017

Throughout the volume we modified how URLs are presented so that they link properly to their destination. We also changed references to the “school participation teams” to “school participation divisions.”

On page 11 we amended the margin note on career pathway programs to refer to DCL GEN-16-09, which supersedes the guidance of GEN-15-09, for further information.

We added a margin note on page 13 about the Experimental Sites Initiative explaining the program and giving its website.

We updated the text on page 21 and generalized it so that it is more about certifying GE programs generally and less about the transitional certifications for those programs.

On page 31 we deleted the section “When a school must use clock hours for FSA purposes” and the pertinent reference in the margin to account for the October 30, 2015, *Federal Register* changes to 34 CFR 668.8(k).

On page 38 we added a margin note explaining that in cases where a student who was thought to be eligible received Title IV aid but really was ineligible, the student must return all the Title IV aid he received while ineligible, even if that occurred in a previous award year.

In the bullet on page 50 pertaining to the eCampus-Based System, we added two other required filings via eCB: the Work Colleges application and report, and the report of disbursements made to students with intellectual disabilities in approved Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) programs.

We added the second paragraph to the margin note on page 51 about two-factor authentication being implemented for the G5 payment system.

On page 83 we included the sanctions due to high default rates that are explained in 34 CFR 668.206 and DCL GEN-14-03.

On page 85 we substituted the margin note about the *NSLDS Gainful Employment User Guide* with one that includes that document and other GE publications.

On pages 86 and 87, we noted that the burden of proof for substantiating corrections or challenges to the student list or challenges to the draft rates, respectively, lies with the school.

At the bottom of page 88, under “Using a survey to get earnings data,” we removed these sentences: “Both the standards and the survey will be published in the Federal Register. Although a school is not required to use the RGEES, it must still adhere to the survey standards if it collects the data without the RGEES.” Pay attention to future relevant guidance as it becomes available on the IFAP website.

On page 103 we removed the margin note defining branch campus because it duplicated the margin note on page 11.

We added a sentence on page 104 under “Updating a program” referring back to page 21, where we explain renewing a gainful employment program’s certification after updating information for the program on the E-App.

In Chapter 6 we moved some of the margin notes to the body of the page: those for the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet and the net price calculator.

On page 113 we added bullets for information that a school must give to the public about its student activities and student body diversity.

On page 114 we added a paragraph to the net price calculator section explaining the disclaimer that must accompany net price estimates.

We added a paragraph at the bottom of page 116 about the new GE disclosure requirements of 34 CFR 668.412 that will take effect on 1/1/17.

On page 117 we added the sections on promotional materials and direct distribution to prospective students.

On page 118 we updated subparagraph 11 under the annual security report requirements from 34 CFR 668.46(b). That update applies to dating and domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault.

We updated the list of crimes that are reported to the Department and the campus community, and we moved it to the body of page 120. Also on that page, we added a section titled “Reported crimes must be recorded.”

We put the definitions related to crime reporting in a box on page 121.

We included under “Notice of penalties” in the margin of page 125 the requirement that when students lose Title IV eligibility due to drug convictions, their school must provide them a separate and clear notice of losing eligibility and how that can be regained.

On page 125 we noted that the timely notification of crimes must be done in a manner that keeps confidential the names and other identifying information of victims.

We added text to the margin note on page 128 about loan counseling disclosures indicating that there are additional Perkins disclosures given in DCL GEN-16-05 and the Perkins Loan Program Extension Act of 2015 that are not given in the Perkins regulations.

On page 141, in the section “Campus-Based disclosure,” we changed the frequency with which Standard Form LLL must be provided from quarterly to annually.

On page 155 we added to the first margin note a reference to DCL GEN-15-18, which discusses protecting student information. We also inserted a sentence in the second margin note about the need for schools to report to FSA when they have a security breach of student records or information.

We edited the section on unpaid commitments on page 166 to show that the rules there also apply if a program loses its eligibility.

