

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLIANCE

HIGHER EDUCATION • FINANCIAL AID MANAGEMENT AND STUDENT SERVICES (FAMSS)

From preventive strategies to corrective action support, our FAMSS team has the proven expertise and depth of knowledge to help your school achieve and maintain good compliance standing.

Our services include an independent, comprehensive assessment of your financial aid operations, assistance with resolving audit and program review findings, including file reconstructions, and policy and procedures development.

Operational Review

Our comprehensive assessment evaluates the people, processes, and technology that comprise your financial aid operations. Following our review, we provide schools with a customized action plan to reduce compliance risks, improve efficiencies, and streamline the flow of paper and electronic data.

Similar to a federal program review, our service starts with an on-campus visit during which we interview staff, and review institutional eligibility documents, policies and procedures, and student files. We also analyze the staffing level and expertise in the financial aid office, examine how operations are coordinated at the institution, and evaluate the general use of technology to support financial aid processing.

By conducting an inventory of existing policies and procedures, and reviewing how the policies and procedures are applied in a sampling of student files, we can help uncover any processing gaps or compliance shortfalls. We then provide detailed recommendations to help put you on the right track for meeting applicable regulatory requirements and best practices.

A preventive check-up before your next audit or program review can give you a jump on any needed corrective actions.

Our Financial Aid Management and Student Services (FAMSS) practice is built on 20 years of experience from The Evans Consulting Group, a nationally recognized team of financial aid experts who joined Attain in 2014.

FAMSS consultants are all former financial aid/student account administrators, many of them at the director or associate director level. We have deep knowledge that covers federal student aid regulations for all types of academic programs and calendars, including nonterm programs and competency-based education.

As a 100 percent remote-based workforce, FAMSS has the flexibility, mobility, and technology know-how to support schools nationwide, both on site and remotely.

CONDUCTING DEEP DIVES TO UNCOVER AND REVERSE COMPLIANCE RISK

Audit and Program Review Resolution

Responding to an audit or program review can be time consuming, particularly if your school is required to complete a file reconstruction or implement other corrective actions. With our hands-on campus experience and subject matter expertise covering regulatory and compliance issues, we can help resolve findings and reduce potential liabilities from an audit or program review. Beforehand, we help prepare the files and materials required by the auditing firm or program reviewer. During the site visit, we can provide on-campus support to answer questions from the auditor or federal officials. After the site visit we also assist with:

- Reviewing findings cited in the audit report or program review determination
- Researching regulatory issues
- Performing required file reconstructions
- Designing and implementing corrective actions
- Assisting with Heightened Cash Monitoring
- Preparing U.S. Department of Education responses, including appeals

Our audit and program review resolution service allows your financial aid staff to remain focused on the important tasks of administering financial aid for your students and helps minimize the extra pressure of periodic reviews.

Consumer Disclosure Assessment

Schools are required to disclose a broad range of information for students and families, updated annually, and report certain data to the U.S. Department of Education each year. We complete a thorough inventory and risk assessment of your school's current consumer disclosures and reporting practices.

The mandate to disclose consumer information and related data affects several different areas of a school, and failure to meet these requirements has been cited as a top audit/program review finding. We can design a customized matrix that can be updated annually to help track your school's ongoing compliance with consumer disclosure and reporting requirements.

Policies and Procedures Development

Maintaining current policies and procedures is not only a compliance requirement for the financial aid office, it is also an essential part of helping ensure that financial aid staff members process aid consistently. Even so, for many schools, finding time to document financial aid policies and procedures is an on-going challenge.

We can review and assess your policies and procedures to determine if all compliance areas are adequately addressed and whether your documentation meets minimum federal requirements. We also can assist with drafting school-specific policy statements as well as procedural documentation, including system documentation, and provide strategies for updating information annually.

ATTAIN: OPERATING AT THE INTERSECTION OF EXPERIENCE AND INNOVATION

Attain is a management, technology, and strategy consulting firm delivering market-leading results to customers in the defense, civilian, state and local government, and health markets, as well as the higher education, academic medical center and non-profit communities. Based in Vienna, Va., with a nationwide presence, Attain is an agile company with the experience to scale our solutions and services to meet your needs. Our professionals are innovative problem solvers, seasoned experts, and client-focused team members. We are more than just consultants — we're trusted advisors and partners dedicated to helping you execute your vision and mission with purpose to achieve remarkable results.