DOCUMENTATION FOR THE GENERIC CLEARANCE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE SATISFACTION COLLECTIONS

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: **Customer Satisfaction Survey for Quality Assurance Program**

[X] SURVEY   [ ] FOCUS GROUP   [ ] SOFTWARE USABILITY TESTING

BACKGROUND

The Quality Assurance Program was authorized under Section 487A of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended in 1998. The vision of the Quality Assurance Program, with 151 institutions currently participating, is to provide tools that help all institutions of higher education participating in the Federal Student Aid Programs to promote better service to students, compliance with title IV requirements, and continuous improvement in program delivery. The Quality Assurance Program encourages participating institutions to develop and implement their own comprehensive system to verify student financial aid application data, and continually assess compliance with Federal requirements.

The Secretary is authorized to waive for any institution participating in the Quality Assurance Program any regulations dealing with reporting or verification requirements, thus providing participating institutions with regulatory flexibility for the verification of student data, and encouraging alternative approaches that improve award accuracy. Institutions measure performance and test the effectiveness of their verification program by using the Department's Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) Analysis Tool. The ISIR Analysis Tool is a web-based software product that provides financial aid administrators with an in-depth analysis of their applicant population. It allows them to see not only which elements on the student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) changed when verified, but also what impact these changes have upon the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and aid eligibility. This analysis helps financial aid administrators develop a targeted institutional verification program, with the goal of minimizing the burden for students applying and institutions in processing financial aid, while ensuring accountability and integrity.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

To determine the effectiveness of institutional verification at participating Quality Assurance institutions and the ability of the ISIR Analysis Tool to provide meaningful analysis to its users, the Department has a need to survey participating QA Program schools. To solicit customer feedback and to gather data regarding the individual verification criteria and the data elements used at participating Quality Assurance Program schools, an electronic template will be used as an instrument to collect survey responses. The Department will collect the survey responses through an electronic repository that will reside on the Quality Assurance Program web site (http://www.ifap.ed.gov/qahome/Default.html) Completion of the customer satisfaction survey is voluntary, however, it is expected that approximately two-thirds of QA Program schools will comply. One week prior to the survey windowing closing, we will send an email reminding schools that have not completed the survey about this opportunity to provide the department feedback.

Because each participating Quality Assurance Program school has the statutory flexibility to design and implement their own verification system, the verification systems will vary in simplicity as well as complexity. The customer satisfaction survey instrument will allow for schools to accurately report the verification criteria and data elements they used when selecting students for verification. The number of questions presented to a respondent will vary with the degree of complexity of the verification criteria employed by each institution.

Description of Survey Instrument

Schools will be asked to complete a survey instrument on the Quality Assurance Program website. As part of the survey schools will also be asked to identify which specific ISIR Fields they use in selecting students for verification and for a description of how they use each particular field they employ. The web "survey" will include an Excel spreadsheet that lists roughly 40 ISIR data elements plus 5 "other" data fields to the school respondent. Schools check off all the fields they use for selecting dependent and independent students for verification. Schools would enter text to identify what if any "other" data fields they used. For all the fields selected in the first step, the survey would present schools additional, follow-up questions about how they used that particular field. A mock-up of the web-based data collection instrument is embedded in this template.

Web-based survey instrument:

Verification_Survey

Planned Use of the Data

We will use the data collected in this effort to develop qualitative descriptions of the verification strategies employed by schools participating in the QA Program. We will address: how many different criteria schools use; which ISIR fields are most commonly used; and how schools typically use the information to select records for verification. We will create groups of participating institutions that share a particular strategy (e.g., using a certain ISIR field). After coupling this information with ISIR data that schools upload into the ISIR Analysis Tool, we will compare the efficiency of schools using a specific strategy to those that do not. We will contrast groups with and without a given strategy by how well they prevent potential improper payments in the Pell Grant program and also how well they minimize the number of records selected for verification without any subsequent change to their aid eligibility.

We will incorporate the results of this analysis in a written report shared both internally within the Department and externally with the schools via the Quality Assurance Program website. This report will highlight the most effective institutional school verification strategies. We also plan to discuss these findings with Quality Assurance Program participants during the 2009 Fall Conference.

The proposed date for collection is March 2 – 31, 2009. No focus groups are planned. No payments, stipends, or incentives are proposed

BURDEN HOUR COMPUTATION *(Number of responses (X) estimated response or participation time in minutes (/60) = annual burden hours):*

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
Financial Aid Office Staff	100	30 minutes	50 hours
Totals	**100**	30 minutes	**50 hours**

BURDEN COST COMPUTATION

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Hourly Rate	Response Time	Total
Financial Aid Office Staff	100	$30.00	30 minutes	$1,500
Totals	**100**	$30.00	**30 minutes**	**$1,500**

We anticipate that 100 of the current 151 QA participants will complete the survey.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION
No Statistical methods will be used

REQUESTED APPROVAL DATE: **February 4, 2009**

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