



PA State Grant and Special Programs
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Memo

To: Financial Aid Administrators
From: Elizabeth K. McCloud 
Vice President,
PA State Grant and Special Programs
Date: April 10, 2020
Subject: Changes to the 2019-20 Act 101 Annual Report Instructions due to COVID-19

This document includes changes and additional guidance related to the *2019-20 Academic Year Act 101 Program Annual Report Guidelines*. The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) made these changes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The outlined changes and guidance are enumerated based on each section of the guidelines.

PHEAA understands that there may be additional scenarios that you encounter, which are not addressed in this document. Please email Act101@pheaa.org if you have any questions related to reporting data for the 2019-20 Act 101 Annual Report or need additional clarification. Based on questions received from Act 101 institutions, PHEAA will follow up with a Q&A document addressing those issues.

I. Overview

- **The reporting deadline to submit your institution's annual report is still June 1, 2020.** Extensions past June 1, 2020 will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please email Act101@pheaa.org if you require an extension beyond June 1, 2020 and provide the reason for this request.

II. Program Summary

- **Program length:** Report the length of the program (9 or 12 months) that you had expected it to last before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Number of full-time and part-time students served:** For this section, PHEAA asks that you report budgeted and actual headcount. The budgeted headcount should still reflect the number you had budgeted for at the beginning of the academic year to meet the minimum of 40 and maximum of 300 participants. For the actual headcount, you should report all students served by the program throughout the academic year – even if services were interrupted by COVID-19. If your institution has students who were unable to sign their yearly agreement/renewal, these students should be included in this count if the school has documentation that they did not sign due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Advisory Board:** If you were unable to hold all of your Advisory Board meetings for the academic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, report the number you did hold along with the activities and accomplishments. Please note that meetings held remotely (via video conferencing, conference call, email, etc.) should be counted among the meetings you were able to hold to meet this requirement.

III. Student Information

- **General Information (1st Tab)**
 - **Actual Students Served Headcount:** For G-2, which is the actual full-time and part-time students served headcount, report all students served by the program throughout the academic year – even if services were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. If your institution has students who were unable to sign their yearly agreement/renewal, these students should be included in this count if the school has documentation that they did not sign due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Academic Performance (2nd Tab)**

- Generally speaking, PHEAA is trying to capture the collective outcomes of Act 101 students based on what your institution will reflect in each student's academic transcript for 2019-20. It is with that lens that we are asking Act 101 institutions to report academic performance data.
- **Courses Attempted:** For remedial and college-level courses attempted for Act 101 students and all Pennsylvania-resident, credential-seeking undergraduates, report the headcount and number of courses only for those courses that could actually be completed at your institution in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and for which students will receive a grade or pass/fail mark on their transcript.
- **Courses Completed:** For remedial and college-level courses completed for Act 101 students and all Pennsylvania-resident, credential-seeking undergraduates, report the headcount and number of courses only for those courses that could actually be completed at your institution in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and for which students will receive a grade or pass/fail mark on their transcript.
- **GPA Reporting:** The overall GPAs for students taking remedial and college-level courses should be based on those students who were awarded grades on a four-point scale to two decimal places. If your institution changed to a pass/fail system due to the COVID-19 pandemic for part of the year, please do not include a surrogate figure for these students in the calculations you provide for GPA. However, please note that the number of pass/fail courses attempted and completed should be included in your courses attempted and completed counts.

- **Student Retention (3rd Tab)**

- There are no changes or additional guidance related to the Student Retention tab instructions.

- **Academic Year Credential Completion (4th Tab)**

- There are no changes to the Credential Completion tab instructions. However, PHEAA is requesting that Act 101 institutions report completions for each cohort on the tab in accordance with how your institution is conferring degrees due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you need an extension to submit the annual report due to this tab in particular, again please submit a request for an extension to PHEAA. It is PHEAA's preference to process your report a little later as opposed to your reporting -999 (minus 999), which is allowed when information for a value in the reporting template is missing or not available.

- **Financial Aid for the 2019-20 Academic Year (5th Tab)**

- There are no changes to the Financial Aid tab instructions. However, Act 101 institutions should report headcounts and dollar values for federal student aid programs based on the guidance and flexibility that the federal government has afforded due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

IV. **2019-20 Budget & Finances (6th Tab)**

- There are no changes to the Budget & Finances tab instructions.
 - However, PHEAA will not require Act 101 institutions to return unused 2019-20 funds that are below the final per capita if the funds are unused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A justification describing how the unused funds are related to COVID-19 and how the institution had planned to spend them should be sent along with your completed annual report template.
 - With all this said, PHEAA is asking institutions to report actual expenditures for each budget category listed on this tab per the existing instructions.

V. 2019-20 Act 101 Program Student Roster (7th Tab)

- There are no changes to the Student Roster tab instructions. However, please remember to include information for all students who are included in G-2 on the General Information tab.

VI. Certification Statement

- There are no changes related to the Certification Statement instructions. However, PHEAA is permitting the use of electronic signatures of Act 101 Directors on the Certification Statement in light of the COVID-19 pandemic as long as the form is received from an institutional email address.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact PHEAA staff via email at Act101@pheaa.org or via telephone at 1-800-443-0646, option 3, option 2, a private number reserved for the use of postsecondary schools.

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