NASFAA Compliance Engine Manual: Policies & Procedures (P&P) Builder User Guide

NASFAA

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS

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What is the Compliance Engine?

The NASFAA Compliance Engine is an online tool built for financial aid administrators to effectively manage compliance administration in a centralized, shared online space.

There are two modules of the Compliance Engine: Self-Evaluation Checklists and the Policies & Procedures (P&P) Builder. The Compliance Engine's Self-Evaluation Checklists module includes checklists from the NASFAA Self-Evaluation Guide and is complimentary for all NASFAA members, included with your dues. The P&P Builder module guides you step-by-step through the creation of a centralized, accessible policies and procedures manual. Standard and Value members can request an invoice to add the P&P Builder subscription to their annual membership for $99/year, per institution. Each year, members will have the opportunity to keep or remove the P&P Builder from their renewal invoice. Value Plus members receive complimentary access to the P&P Builder as part of the Value Plus package.

Both modules of the Compliance Engine will also work on a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet, but content length may be challenging on a smaller device.

Feedback and Questions

NASFAA welcomes your Compliance Engine feedback, suggestions, and questions via the Compliance Engine Feedback Form.

Policies & Procedures Builder

NASFAA's Policies & Procedures (P&P) Builder allows schools to copy, paste, and format new and existing policies and procedures content in one centralized tool.

Getting Started

The P&P Builder Module of the Compliance Engine is accessible for members with the P&P annual subscription at http://compliance.nasfaa.org/PP. If your institution is a NASFAA member & has paid for the P&P annual subscription, you can use the P&P Builder. If you do not have a NASFAA.org username & password, please visit nasfaa.org/register. If you are not sure if your institution paid for the P&P annual subscription, please contact the Membership Team at nasfaa.org/membership_help or (202) 785-0453 ext. 1.

Accessing Manuals

Once you have logged in using your NASFAA credentials, you will be on the P&P Builder Module start page, shown below. From this page, you can either start a new manual or search through previously created manuals.

Starting a New Manual

Under "Start a New Manual", enter a custom name for your institution's P&P Manual. When naming your manual, we suggest including the academic year in your manual name, such as "University of School's 2019-20 Policies & Procedures." When you create a new manual, you automatically become the owner of it and you can make assignments to colleagues within the manual (more to come on assignments later in this guide).

You may limit access of your manual to owner and assignees, only. Other users in your organization will not be able to view this manual, but the title of the manual will still appear in your organization's list of manuals. Manual owners and organization Primary Contacts are able to transfer ownership of items with this setting selected.

-or-

You can allow anyone from your organization read-only access to this manual. Owner and assignees can make changes, and owners and Primary Contacts can transfer ownership.

Search Manuals

At the bottom of the "Start a New Manual" page, you can search for a manual by entering a keyword. Check the box "Include User-Entered Content" to browse through comments entered by yourself or your collaborators on previously created manuals or check the "Include Archived Content" to expand your search to previously created & archived manuals.

On the search results page, you can sort the manuals by name or date created. You can also perform a keyword sub-search of name and description to help narrow down results. Select the name of any of the manuals on the results page to begin your work.

Working in the P&P Builder

After you have created a new manual, you will be shown its table of contents with each of its sections.

Contents

Section 1: Manual Introduction

Section 2: Administrative Organization and Office Management

Section 3: Financial Aid Programs

Section 4: Institutional Requirements Relating to Educational Loans

Section 5: Student Consumer Information Requirements

Section 6: Applications and Forms

Section 7: File Review

Section 8: Student Budgets

Section 9: Awarding and Packaging Financial Aid

Section 10: Professional Judgment (PJ)

Section 11: Disbursements

Section 12: Satisfactory Academic Progress

Section 13: Return of Title IV Funds

Section 14: Institutional Refunds

Section 15: Title IV Fraud

Section 16: Audits

Section 17: Reserved for Institution

Section 18: Appendices

Sections Overview

Each section in the table of contents appears in the black navigation bar as an individual tab. NASFAA selected these sections because these are areas in which policies and procedures are either explicitly or implicitly required for participation in the Title IV programs. Select the green "Proceed" button in the bottom right corner to move to the first tab in the manual - which is the "Section 1: Manual Introduction" tab in our example shown above - or select any section from the table of contents shown on the page, or in the black navigation bar, to begin. You will be presented with comprehensive policies & procedures recommendations, as shown below.

The section you are working on - "Section 9: Award and Packaging Financial Aid" in the example above - will be highlighted in bright white font in the black navigation bar, so you can keep track of which section you are on. In the navigation bar, you can scroll through the sections to move to a new area within the manual.

Items

On this page, you will see several subsections listed under the "Item" column. This column includes all the areas you need to address, with a subsection at the end for institutional items, in this section to have a comprehensive P&P manual.

To the left of the "Item" column is the "Resources" column where you will find links to the corresponding Compiled Title IV Regulations on NASFAA.org, FSA Handbook, or ED announcement reference which will open in a separate browser window, so you do not lose your place in the manual you are working on.

For each "Item", you can select the "Add Comments" icon to the right of the title and type in any concerns for that item, as shown below. After you are done typing your comment, select the blue "Add Comment" button below it to save it to your manual. Comments can be seen by other users at your institution but will not be exported into the final P&P manual.
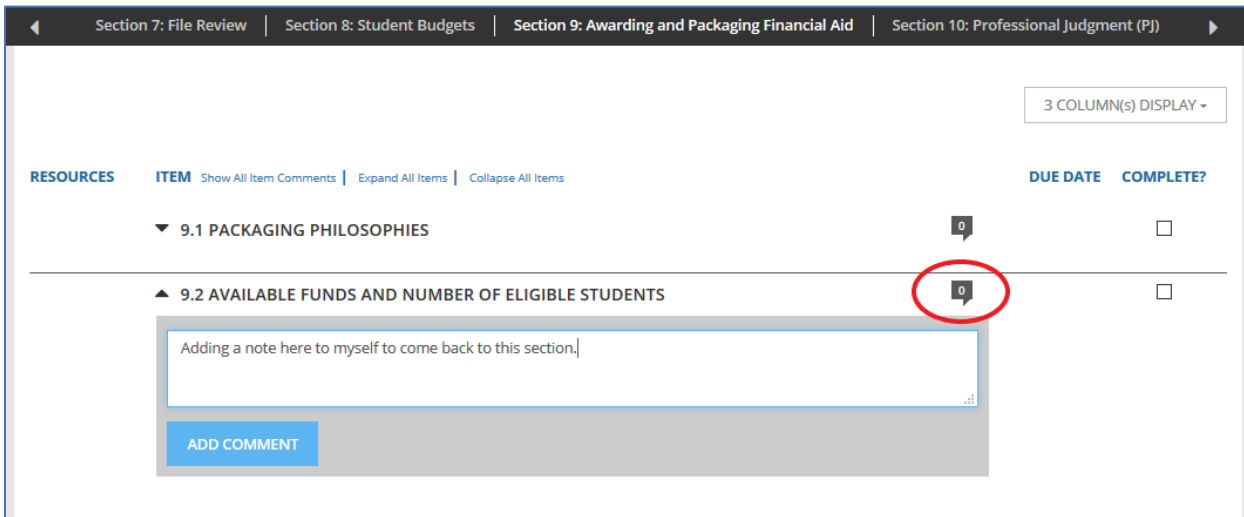
The blue "Assign P&P Items" button on the top right above the manual allows you to make assignments to anyone at your institution who is on your NASFAA membership roster. If you have assigned manuals or items to others on your staff, the due date for that assignment will appear in the "Due Date" column. Thorough details about assignments are in the "Assigning Manual Items" section of this manual.
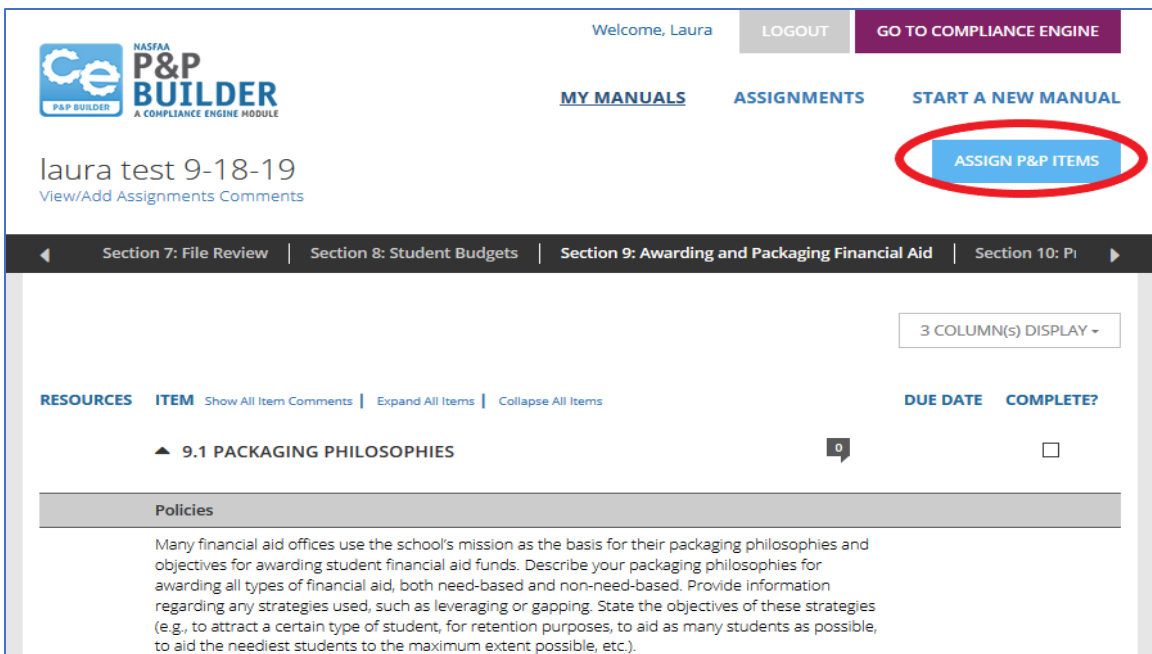
The Resources, Item, Due Date, and Complete? columns appear by default on every subsection and item in the P&P Builder module. You can customize your view by selecting the "3 Column(s) Display" button in the top right corner and selecting which columns you would like to display.

When information is entered into the section of the P&P Builder, the Complete? box will automatically be checked complete. If you want to leave it unchecked because you want to do some additional research on the question, you will need to manually uncheck the box.

After you have completed at least one item in the section you are working on, select the blue "Save" button on the lower right to save your changes and remain on the same section, or the green "Save and Proceed" button to save and jump to the next section of the manual, shown on the top black navigation bar.

Once you have saved a section, you can access your new manual by selecting "My Manuals" at the top of the page.

Filling in your Policies & Procedures

In each item of each section of your manual, you will see introductory text to assist you with deciding what to include in your policies and your procedures.

Policies Overview

Policies are broad statements that set forth an institution's goals with regard to an issue. This is the describes the "what" and the "why" of your institution's goals. The introductory text for each policy section provides some ideas about what your institution may want to include in this section.

Procedures Overview

Procedures describe the steps the institution must take to implement a policy. This is the "how" of your institution's goals are accomplished. The introductory text for each procedure section provides some examples of what may be included in this section.

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) is concerned with the "what," "why," and "how" an institution conducts themselves in writing to ensure the institution is in line with the letter and intent of statutes and regulations.

Adding Content

You can copy & paste content from your preexisting manuals or start from scratch using the content provided by NASFAA. If you need more help on formulation, implementing, and evaluating your organization's Policies & Procedures, please visit: https://www.nasfaa.org/uploads/documents/Formulating_Implementing_Evaluating.pdf

WYSIWYG

WYSIWYG stands for "What You See Is What You Get. It is a common term for a web-based text editor. Let's walk through each of the buttons on the P&P Builder WYSIWYG.

Paragraph

The Paragraph dropdown list gives you options to format your content as Headings. Simply highlight your text that you would like to make a heading then select which heading you'd like to use (1 for the largest, 6 for the smallest). If you want to make content "normal-sized", highlight your text then select Paragraph at the top.

Font Sizes
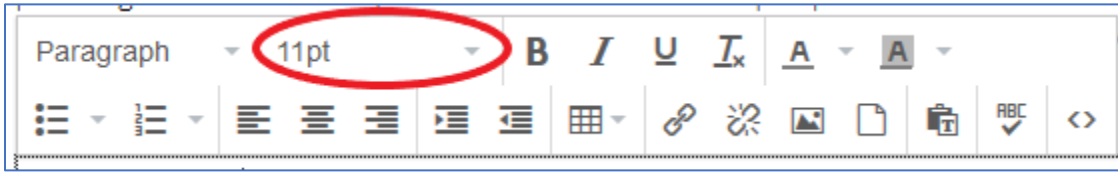
Font sizes for your content range from 8pt (smallest) to 36pt (largest). If you have added content to your manual and wish to make the text larger, this is where you would do it.
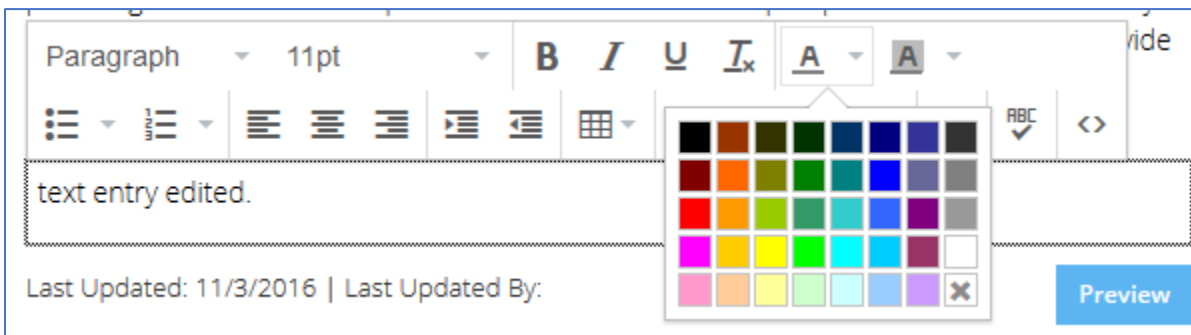
Bold, Italic, Underline
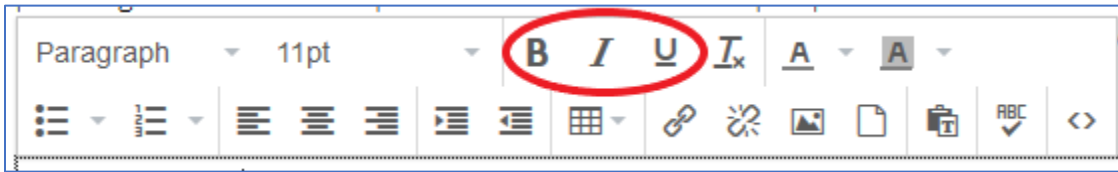
Highlight your text that you would like to make bold & select the "B" button. If you'd like to make it italics, select the "I" button. The "U" button will underline your text.

Clear Formatting

If you would like to reset the formatting on your text (remove bold, italics, colors, etc.) – highlight your content, then select the "*Tx*" button.

Text Color & Background Color

You can add color to your text or the background of your text (looks like highlighting) with the two "A" buttons.

Bullet Lists & Numbered Lists

Format your content into bullets or numbered lists by highlighting your text and selecting one of these buttons. There are several bullet and numbering options available in the dropdown list.
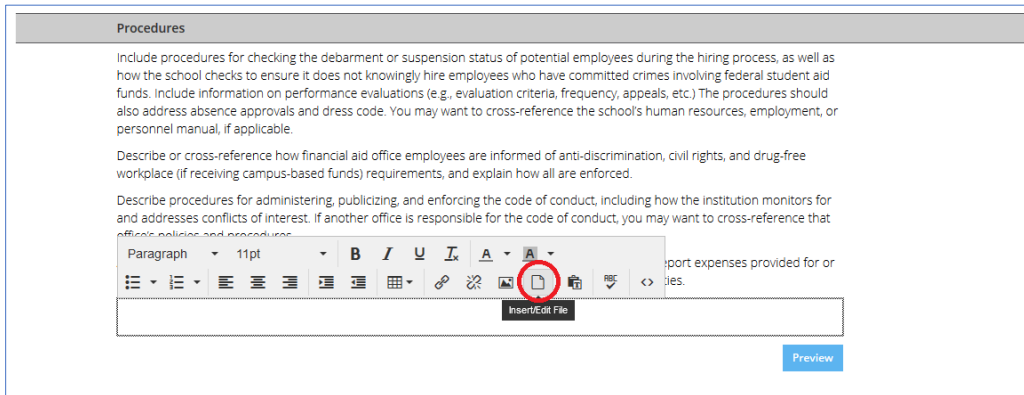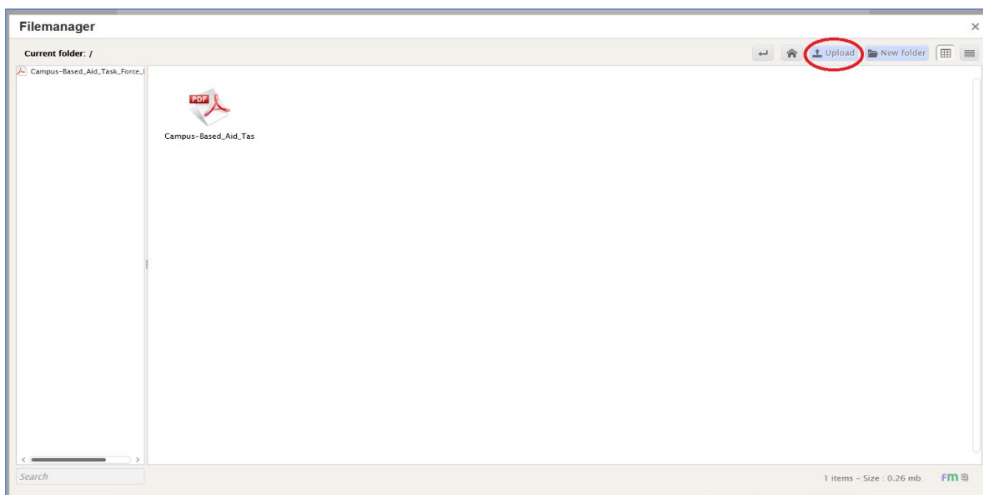
Alignments and Indents
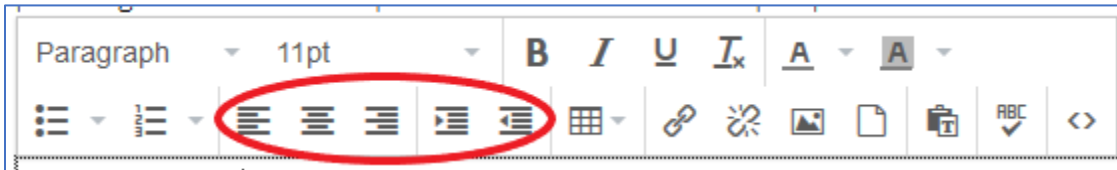
Use these buttons to left-justify, center-justify, or right-justify any of your text. You can also increase or decrease indentations from the left-side of the page.
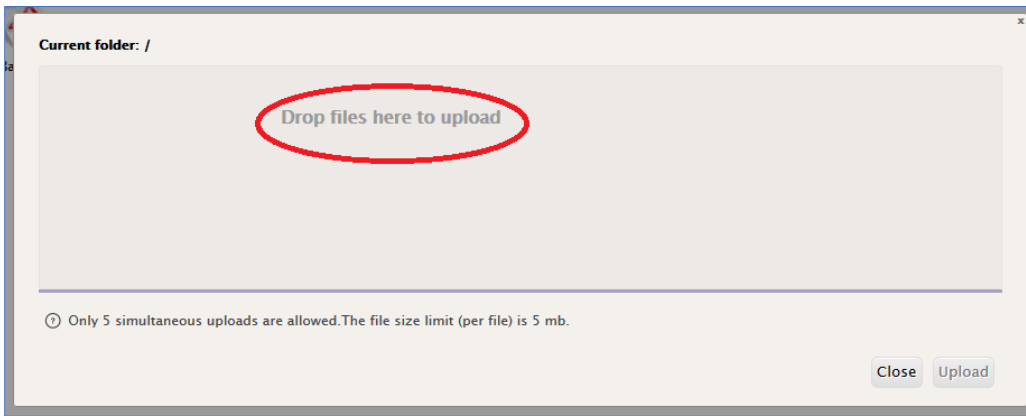
Inserting a File

In the WYSIWYG, select the Insert/Edit File button (it looks like a sheet of paper on the second row).
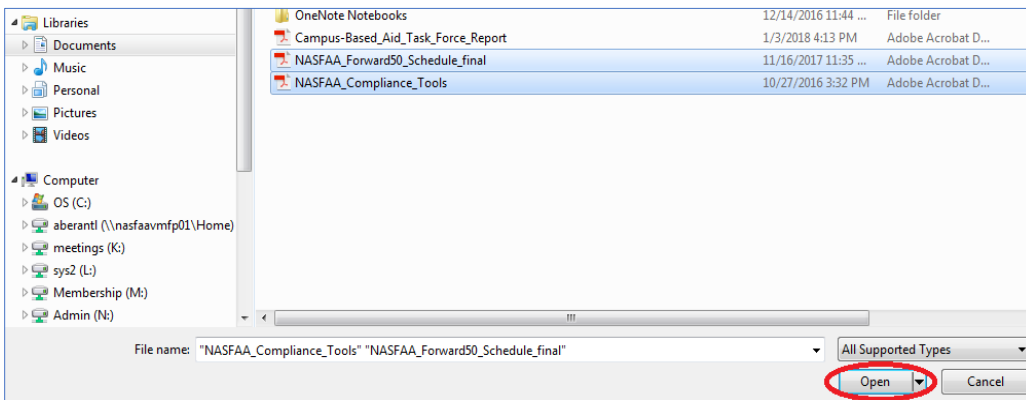

Then select the Upload button.
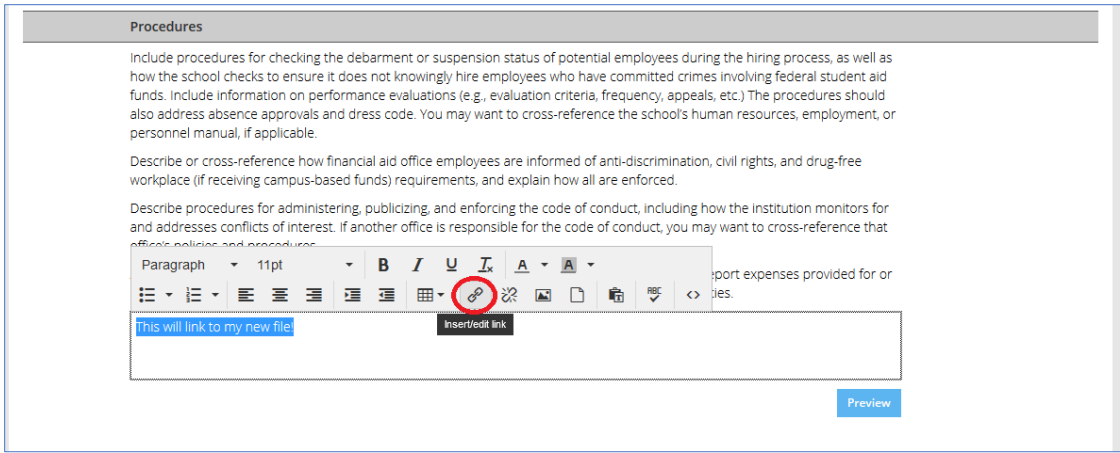
Select the Drop files here to upload.

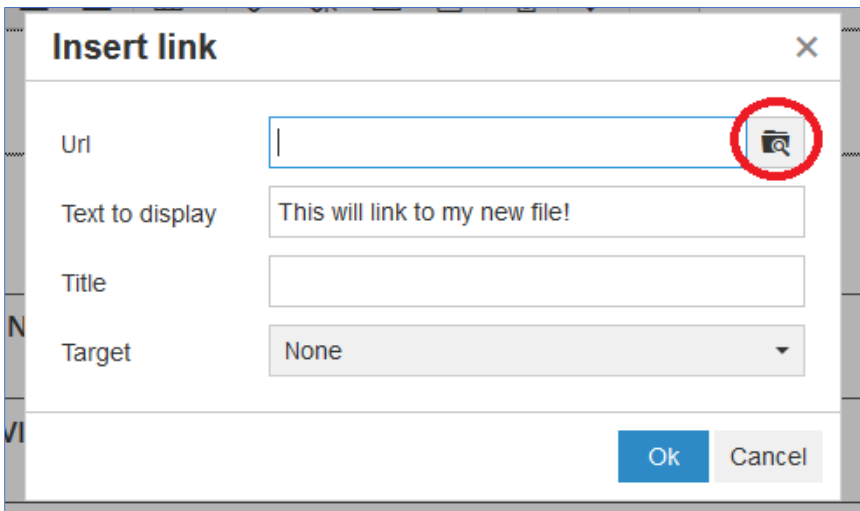Select the files from your computer that you want to upload, then select Open.
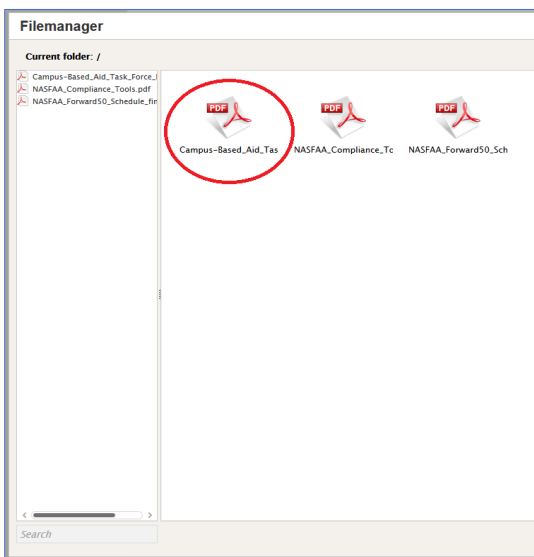

Then select Upload.

Exit the File Manager screen & go back to the WYSIWYG. Select the text you would like to link to your uploaded file & then select the Insert/Edit Link button.
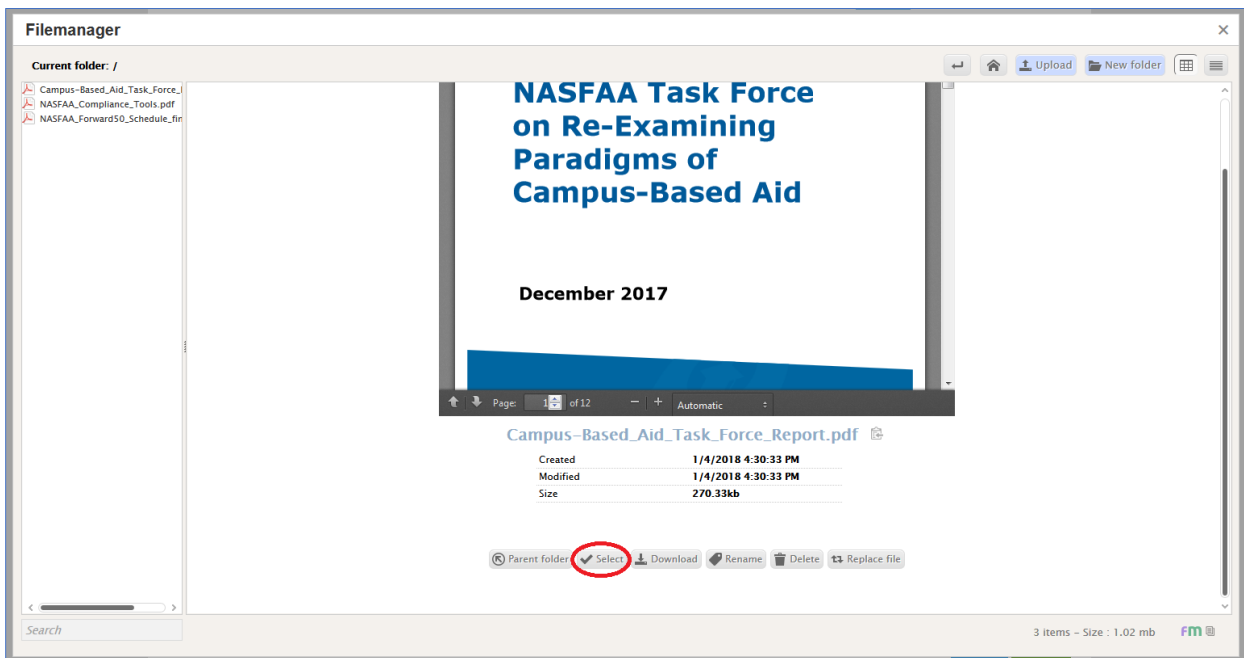

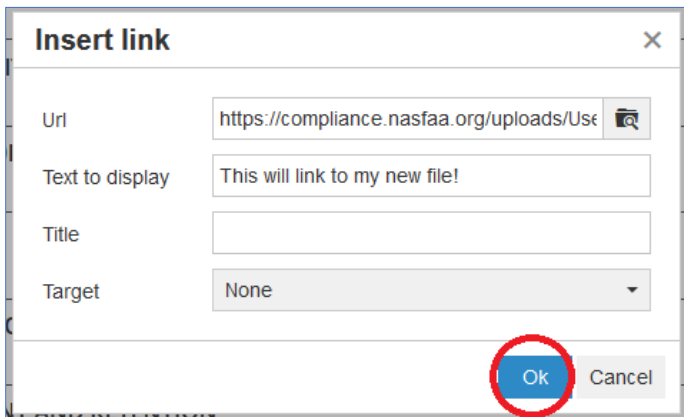Select the file button next to URL.

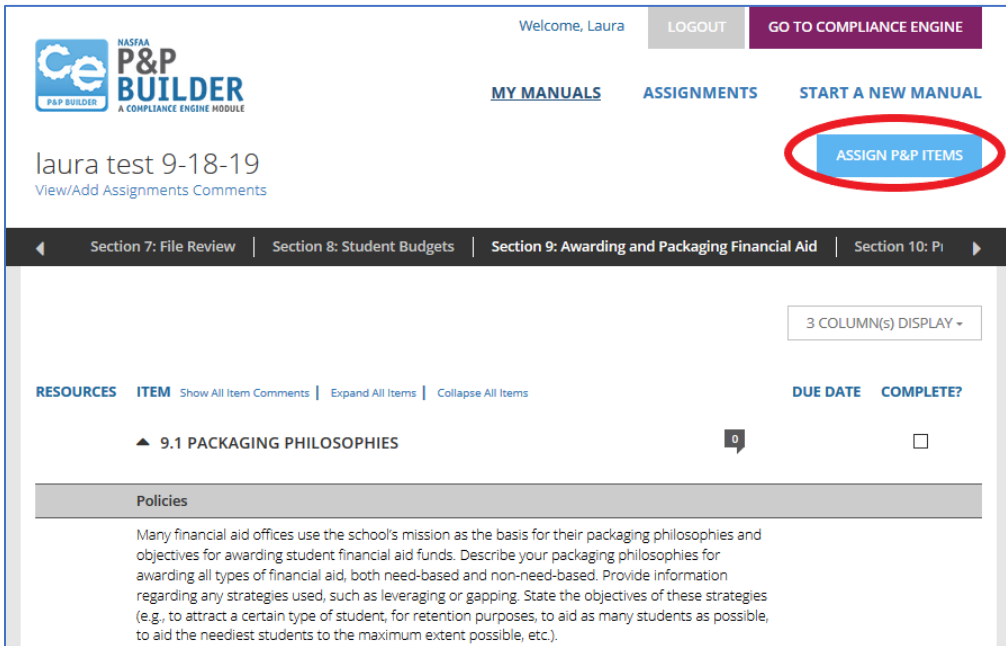Choose your file.

Then use the Select button.

Finally, select the Ok button to create the link.
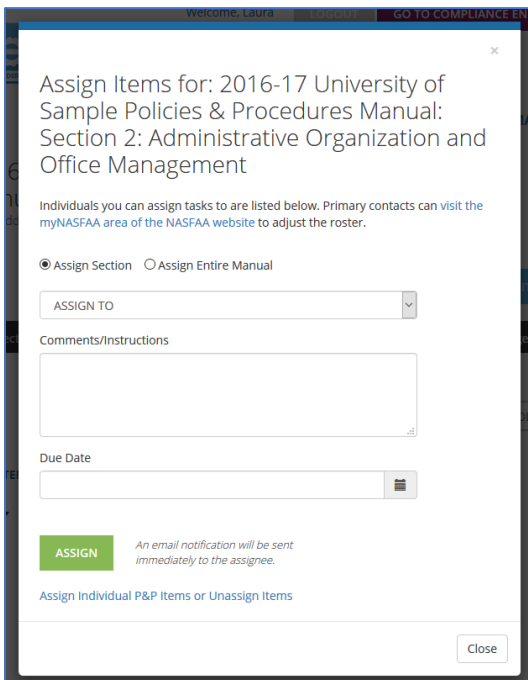
Assigning Manual Items

In addition to centralizing compliance and policies and procedures data in one online space, the Compliance Engine allows you to assign tasks to your staff or others at your institution.

As mentioned in a previous section of this user guide, the blue "Assign P&P Items" button on the top right above the manual allows you to make assignments to anyone at your institution who is on your NASFAA membership roster. Please note, you can only assign tasks for manuals you are the owner of.

After you select the button, a pop-up window will appear as shown below. You can assign whole manuals, sections, or individual items (e.g. a specific policy or procedure item) to your staff or across departments. Simply select the colleague's name from the pull-down menu, enter your instructions, and select a due date.

Everyone on your NASFAA membership roster will show in the pull-down menu. These can be added or removed by your institution's primary NASFAA contact. If you need help adding someone to your roster, please contact NASFAA's Membership Services for assistance by phone at 202-785-0453 ext. 1 or by email at membership@nasfaa.org. You can have as many individuals that work at your institution in the pull-down menu as you want.

Once you select Assign, the staff member or colleague will receive an email with their assignment. You can choose to send an email immediately or send summary assignment emails at the end of the day.

To see all the assignments you have made, select "Assignments" from the top of any screen in the P&P Builder Module.

On the "Assignments" dashboard, you can view and sort by assignees, due dates, and the last modified date. In the black navigation bar, you can toggle between "Items I've Assigned to Collaborators" and "Items Assigned to Me." If someone else started a manual, you may have items assigned to you.

You can also print a report of your assignments dashboard by selecting the "Print Assignments" tab in the black navigation bar, or by selecting the blue "Print Assignments" button at the bottom of the page.

My Manuals Dashboard

After you have started using the manuals in the P&P Builder Module, you can utilize your "My Manuals" dashboard to sort your manuals and scan assignments, as well as archive and reactivate items to keep your virtual workspace organized and efficient. Reporting options allow you to export the contents of your manuals and assignments to PDF format and email reports directly from the tool. From this page, you can also search saved manuals by keywords.

You can sort your manuals by the date you created or had been assigned them, manual name, or the last modified date to see the manuals that have been worked on most recently. Selecting the manual name will bring you to the table of contents for that manual, where you can then resume your work.

Below each manual is a list of assignments you have made and the name of the assignee. Select any of these assigned components to review the work completed or, if you do not wish to see this level of detail, select the arrow just to the left of "Components Assigned" to hide the assignment information for a more streamlined view.

Manuals Actions

Run Report

The "My Manuals" dashboard has a reporting feature that allows you to export the contents of the manual, and any work you and your assignees have completed, to PDF format. To generate a report, select "Actions" then "Run Report" in the far-right column.

This will take you to a new page, shown below, where you can choose the entire manual or select an individual section or sections within the manual you would like to be included in the report. Leave all options selected for the full report or deselect tabs or content you don't need to see in your report.
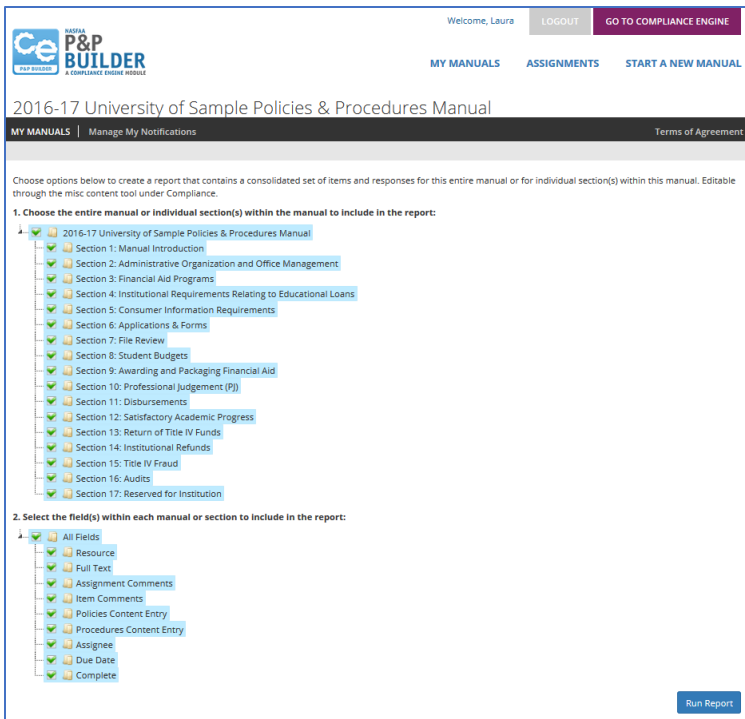
You can also elect to have the report emailed directly to your staff or associates. You can enter additional email addresses if needed and to include a customized message about the report. When done, select the blue "Run Report" button on the bottom right.

Print Manual

This function generates a printable PDF for this manual. Like the Run Report function noted above, you can select the entire manual or individual section(s) within the manual to export. You can additionally fine tune your manual by opting to include the NASFAA written Introductions/Instructions, Resources, or sections of your manual that are not yet complete.

Lastly, you can also upload your organization's logo to include on the front page of your manual. File formats for your logo can be either JPG, PNG, or GIF files.

Archive

No longer working on a manual? Choose "Archive" in the far-right column if you no longer need to maintain that item. Archived manuals will not be deleted and are available in the archive list at the bottom of the page.

Once a manual has been archived, any assignments you have made will no longer display for staff members, regardless of their status. Please note, you can archive or reactivate manuals you have created, but you cannot archive a manual you have been assigned. If you would like to make an archived manual active again, simply select "activate" to reinstate the item. Existing assignments will also be reinstated. The manual will once again display in your primary list.

Delete

Deleting a manual is another option available. The manual will be queued for deletion then removed from the system after 30 days. During this interim time, you can restore the item to your active checklists. If you would like to hide the item without deleting, you can instead choose the Archive option on the previous screen.

Important: Items deleted after the 30-day hold period cannot be recovered or restored.

If a manual has been assigned to other users, deleting an item will remove existing assignments from assignee dashboards without notification. Restoring the manual will restore their assignments.

Update Privacy Settings

This is where you can update your manual privacy settings. You can select between limited access, which allows only the owner and assignees to view the manual or read-only access for all members of your organization.

Manage Assignee Notifications

You can use this tool to send notifications to all assignees within a manual or to specific members on your NASFAA Roster. Notifications may include customized comments & instructions. You have the option to set notifications to go out one week prior to assignment due dates or you can send notifications immediately.

Transfer Ownership

If you are the owner of a manual, you can transfer the ownership to another member of your NASFAA roster by using this feature. You can leave a comment or instructions for the new owner of the manual & transfer ownership immediately.

If the original owner of a manual is no longer at your institution, please contact NASFAA for assistance via the [Compliance Engine Transfer Request Form](#).

Rollover Instructions

You did it! You made it through creating your own P&P Manual! Ready for the best news? It is incredibly easy to rollover all of your current manual to next year's manual. Then you only need to make updates on regulations and sections that have been updated. NASFAA will have icons and notes to tell you what has been updated since the previous year.

For step by step instructions, please visit:
https://www.nasfaa.org/uploads/documents/PP_Builder_Rollover_Instructions.pdf

The National Association
of Student Financial Aid
Administrators (NASFAA)
provides professional
development for financial
aid administrators; advocates
for public policies that increase
student access and success;
serves as a forum on student
financial aid issues; and is
committed to diversity
throughout all activities.