Guidelines:

For the Specialized Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments

July 2012

4. Student Interview (see Appendix B, Form F)

4.1 Purpose
The student interview is intended to provide an opportunity for the student to articulate how he/she views himself or herself as a student by:

- Describing his/her understanding of his/her visual impairment and how the impairment impacts day-to-day academic and non-academic activities;
- Expressing any comments, questions, or concerns about his/her visual impairment and educational experiences in general;
- Reflecting on any special interests, abilities, goals, frustrations, barriers, and/or feelings that may impact future planning.

4.2 Interview Guide Description
The student interview guide provides questions to promote dialogue with students in a non-threatening and meaningful way, in order, to gain information and encourage a trusting and open relationship. Some questions may be answered with short and simple responses, while others may involve longer explanations that require careful listening for relevant details and accuracy. While some questions include possible responses and examples to help frame the interview, it is appropriate to add anecdotal comments that the student may offer beyond the original scope of the question.

Depending on the age and functional level of the student, the interviewer may need to rephrase or explain some of the terminology to meet the student’s level of comprehension. Some students may be reluctant to express themselves at first, because:

- they deny that they experience any vision issues;
- they are embarrassed or resentful to have been taken out of class;
- they do not have the cognitive or social maturity to express themselves;
- their vision, or lack of it, may never have been explained to them.
4.3 Completing the Assessment

A qualified individual, such as a licensed Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments, should complete this interview as a recommended assessment under the “Assessment in All Areas Related to Suspected Disability(ies)” section of the Evaluation Consent Form (N1A).

**Note:** Interviews with younger students or students with multiple disabilities may rely more on structured observations than on verbal responses to specific questions.