

Dear Student,

Should the unfortunate circumstances arise whereby an out-of-state student¹ should have a complaint against the school which they feel has not be adequately addressed, said student will have recourse to appeal directly to the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education operating under the auspices of the SARA agreement.

Such complaints can be made our at this web address:

<https://www.mass.edu/foradmin/sara/complaints.asp>

Below you will find the MA Dept. of Higher Education policy as it relates to complaints made under the SARA agreement.

610 CMR 12.00: OPERATION OF MASSACHUSETTS DEGREE-GRANTING
INSTITUTIONS UNDER THE STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT
(SARA)

12.07: Complaints

(1) 610 CMR 12.07 applies only to complaints which pertain to distance education provided by institutions approved by the Board to operate under SARA to students residing in other states pursuant to SARA. Complaints about a SARA institution's in-state operations, including intrastate distance education, are to be resolved pursuant to 610 CMR 2.00: Degree-granting Regulations for Independent Institutions of Higher Education Standards, where applicable, or otherwise in accordance with the institution's policies.

(2) A student who receives SARA distance education from an institution approved by the Board to operate under SARA may, after exhausting the institution's procedures for resolution of grievances, file a written complaint regarding the institution with the Department. The Department shall make complaint forms available on its website: www.mass.edu.

(3) The Department shall review and attempt to resolve complaints which pertain to SARA distance education provided by institutions approved by the Board to operate under SARA as follows:

(a) The Department shall send a copy of the complaint to the institution that is the subject of the complaint;

¹That is, a student taking online courses who has their permanent place of residence/and or legal domicile outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

(b) Within 30 days of the date that the Department sends a copy of the complaint to the institution, the institution must provide a written response to the student and the Department;

(c) Within 30 days of the date the Department received the institution's response, or if the Department receives no response, the Commissioner or his or her designee shall issue a notice to the institution containing the Commissioner's findings regarding the complaint; any corrective actions that the institution shall take to comply with the requirements of this regulation; and that, should the institution fail to take those corrective actions, the complaint shall be referred to the Office of the Attorney General for review and, if the Office of the Attorney General deems it appropriate, enforcement action.

(d) The Department may review and consider an institution's history of complaints received under this section and under 610 CMR 2.00: Degree-granting Regulations for Independent Institutions of Higher Education to determine if an institution's application should be denied, if an institution's renewal application should be denied, if an institution should be moved to provisional status, or if an institution should be disapproved to operate under SARA.

(e) Nothing in 610 CMR 12.07 precludes the Commonwealth, including the Office of the Attorney General, from simultaneously enforcing its laws and regulations, including laws of consumer protection and fraud prevention, such as 940 CMR 31.00: For-profit and Occupational Schools, against an institution approved by the Department to operate under SARA.

In addition to this procedure, please see and be aware of Northpoint Bible College and Graduate School's student grievance policy.

Sincerely,
Dr. Daniel Howell
Chief Academic Officer