HCU Student Grievances and Complaints Information

The Department of Education requires Heritage Christian University to provide students with contact information for filing complaints. Resources for filing different types of complaints are provided below.

Heritage Christian University Resources

If a student has a grievance, he or she may observe the following procedure:

1. The student should first attempt to resolve conflict by going to the person(s) against whom he or she has a grievance.
2. If not satisfied, the student may then talk with the Dean of Men or Dean of Women.
3. If still not appeased, he or she may take the grievance in writing to the Dean of Students.
4. The student may next request to go before a Hearing Committee consisting of a member of the faculty or staff, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, a representative from the Student Government Association, and a representative from the DSA.
5. Finally, the student may take the grievance before the President of the university. The President's decision is final.

While the University hopes the above procedure will satisfactorily resolve the grievance, very occasionally this may not be the case; in this instance a grievant may appeal through the following process:

6. If, after exhausting all opportunities for resolution with the appropriate persons at Heritage Christian University, a student feels a complaint has still not been adequately addressed, the student may ask the complaint Division of Licensure of the Alabama Community College System to review their complaint and the way in which it has been handled by the University. Contact information for student complaints:

   Private School Licensure Division
   Alabama Community College system
   P. O. Box 302130
   Montgomery, Alabama 36104
   334-293-4651
   Annette.funderburk@accs.edu

Online Student Resources

As an NC-SARA member institution, online students **residing in any state other than California or Massachusetts** should direct unresolved complaints to:

Director of Operations and Fiscal Services
Alabama Commission on Higher Education
P.O. Box 302000
Montgomery, AL 36130

334.353.9153
tim.vick@ache.alabama.gov
State Website http://www.ache.alabama.gov/Content/SARA/AlaPortal.aspx

If an online student resides in California or Massachusetts, they should contact their local *state agency instead. Contact information is provided for all states should any student wish to inquire with their local agency. (*note that these are the remaining states that are non-SARA as of date and an update will be made if their status changes).

NC-SARA Institution Requirements

Every SARA institution is required to provide information on its institutional website explaining how students who attend the institution from another state via distance education can appeal a complaint that has exhausted the institutional complaint process. If after exhausting the institutional process a student feels a complaint has still not been adequately addressed, the student can file a complaint with the SARA State Portal Entity of the state in which the institution is located. The state portal entity is required to provide information on its portal entity website explaining how students located in other SARA states but attending SARA institutions in that state can escalate complaints to the state portal entity.

Frequently Asked Questions about the NC-SARA Complaint Process

If a student has a complaint about an institution operating under SARA, does the complaint go directly to SARA?

No, complaints go first through the institution's standard procedure for resolution of student grievances. If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the institutional process, the complaint may then be brought to the responsible state agency in the home state. Nothing precludes the state where the student is located from also working to help resolve the complaint. NCS 4(1).

Can students appeal grades or student conduct penalties through SARA?

No, grade appeals and conduct complaints are expressly excluded by SARA. NCS 4(1)(d).

If a student signs an arbitration clause with an institution requiring that the student resolve complaints solely through that method, does that prevent a student from bringing a complaint to SARA?

No. SARA is not a party to any arbitration requirements. A student may bring to SARA any issue that potentially involves a violation of SARA standards or policies.

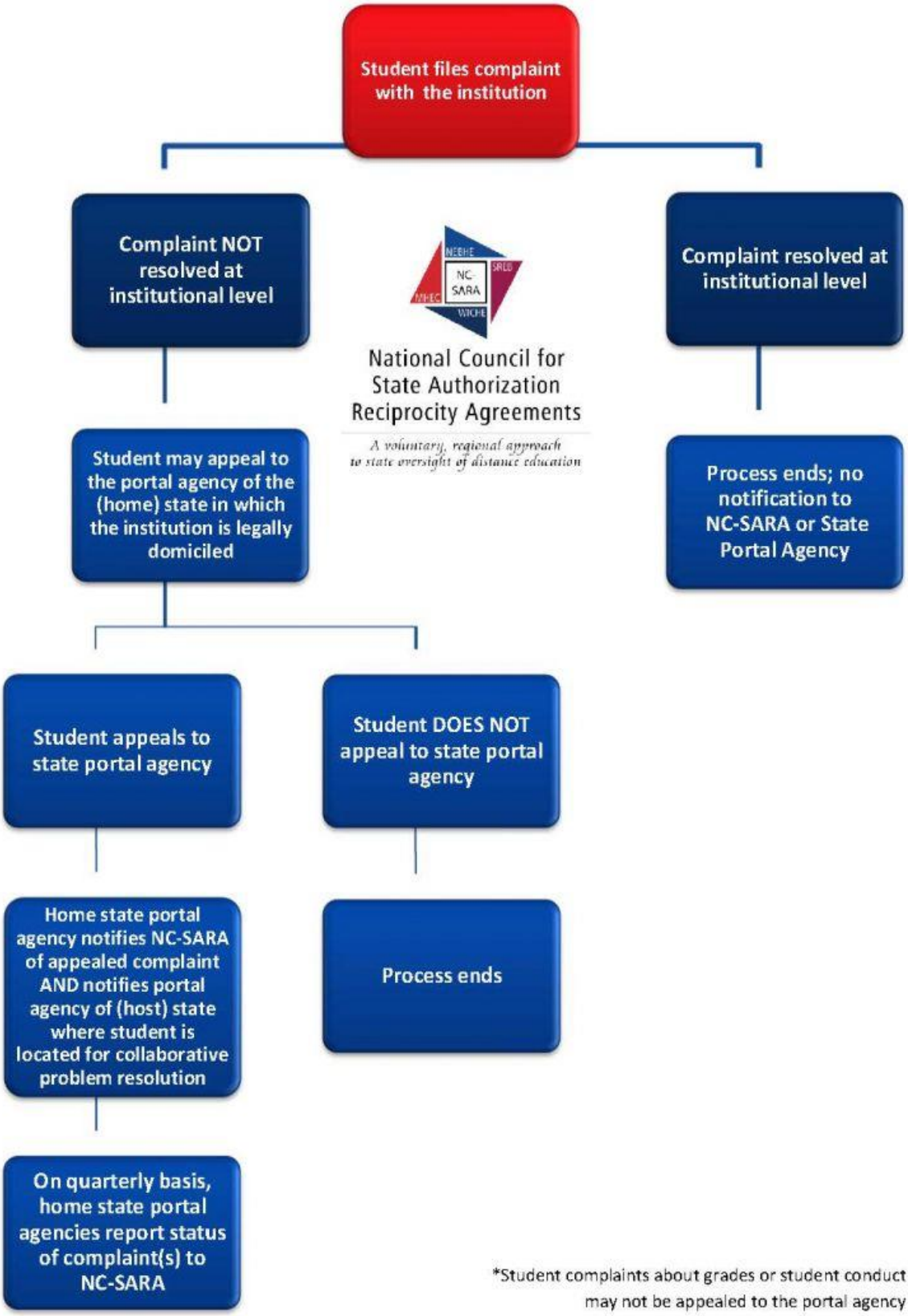
NOTE: Although students may choose to work through their own state's SARA office for complaint resolution, the SARA office of the state where the provider is located is responsible for staffing the investigation and complaint resolution as needed. Students may not use SARA to complain about distance education courses offered inside the home state, only those offered across state lines.

Accreditor Resources

The Commission on Accreditation of the Association for Biblical Higher Education accredits Heritage Christian University. Any formal comments or complaints should be directed to:

The Executive Director
Association for Biblical Higher Education
5850 TG Lee Blvd, Suite 130
Orlando, FL 32822
Telephone: 407-207-0808
Website: www.abhe.org

SARA Student Complaint Process



*Student complaints about grades or student conduct may not be appealed to the portal agency