



Online Programs Complaint Processes

Introduction:

The following policies are in place so that distance and online students at Wentworth Institute of Technology can experience an organized, timely and fair resolution to any issues they may experience. Please read through the following guidelines and procedures to address any concerns that may arise throughout your program as a student at Wentworth.

Student Reminders: Wentworth Institute of Technology strives towards creating positive, academic experiences for students, faculty, and staff. All complaints are considered equally, and therefore students are reminded that they are expected to both adhere and refer to Wentworth's Student Code of Conduct and the Leopard Oath.

[Academic Integrity](#)

For concerns about Academic Integrity, cheating and/or plagiarism.

[Acceptable Use Policy](#)

For concerns about acceptable use of information resources, online privacy and security.

[Student Privacy/FERPA](#)

For concerns about student records, identity, and privacy.

Student Identity Verification in Distance and Online Education:

Wentworth adheres to the Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education established by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC). To that end, Wentworth has in place effective procedures through which to ensure that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.

Academic Complaints:

Students may appeal their grade by following the process outlined in the course catalogue, as follows:

When a student disagrees with the decision of the faculty member concerning a grade/sanction assigned by a faculty member (e.g. project, homework, quiz, test, grading concerning academic dishonesty or misconduct, etc.), the following procedure applies:

1. **First Step: Review by the department chair (Director of Academic Operations - for CPCE cases).** The student may seek a review by the department chair (Director of Academic Operations-CPCE). The student submits the communication about the issue with the faculty member, any supporting evidence, and the decision of the faculty member to the department chair of the offering course (Director of Academic Operations-CPCE). The department chair (Director of Academic Operations-CPCE) will meet or speak with the student, the faculty member and any other persons he/she deems necessary. The department chair (Director of Academic Operations-CPCE) will provide the student with a decision within five business days (excluding breaks and holidays) after completing the review.

2. **Second Step: Review by Academic Review Committee (FINAL)** If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the department chair (Director of Academic Operations-CPCE), the student may seek review, in writing, within five business days of receipt of the department chair's decision (excluding breaks and holidays) to the Academic Review Committee ("ARC"). The student must submit all of the prior communications, supporting materials and decision of the faculty member and department chair to the Executive Assistant to the Provost.

See:

<https://wit.edu/policies/academic-grievance>

For further information please consult the Academic Catalogue:

<https://wit.edu/catalog/2018-2019>

Students with personal or health issues that may affect their academic performance may contact the [Center for Wellness](#) at 617-989-4390, or get more information through Accessibility Services [here](#).

For students with complaints regarding faculty, assignments, assessments/exam procedures, course materials/deadlines, course offerings, course requirements, or textbooks, please proceed to contact the following relevant personnel, in this order:

- Faculty Member
- Program Coordinator
- Department Chair
- College Dean

Administrative Complaints:

For students with complaints regarding registration, payment, university services (and facilities), or accessibility, please proceed to contact the relevant department or office:

For Online Students please first contact your [College of Professional and Continuing Education](#) academic advisor.

[Student Service Center](#)

For issues with tuition and fees, or financial aid.

[Disability Support Services](#)

For disability accommodations, contact the Center for Wellness and Disability Services.

[Technology Services Tech Spot](#)

For technical support related to Wentworth computing services, software, passwords, access, email, and Blackboard Learning Management System.



[Office of the Registrar](#)

For issues with general registration, wait list, account holds, withdrawals, add/drop, transcripts, etc.

General Information:

Filing Complaints with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Students must first try to resolve complaints directly with Wentworth, as outlined above. If a student still has a grievance, and all avenues of appeal have been exhausted, a complaint may be filed by contacting the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (DHE).

For Massachusetts Residents and Online Students in Non-SARA Member States and Territories

After you have exhausted the complaint procedures made available above, if your complaint has not been resolved, you may file a complaint with the DHE by using the [general complaint form](#). The DHE [general complaint form](#) should be used by students who are located in:

- Massachusetts
- Non-SARA Member States or Territories (e.g., California, Guam, etc.)

For Online Students Located in [SARA Member States and Territories](#)

After you have exhausted the complaint procedures above, if your complaint has not been resolved, you may file a complaint with the DHE by using the [SARA complaint form](#). The DHE [SARA complaint form](#) should be used by students who are located in [SARA member states and territories](#). This includes all students who are located in SARA member states and territories for the purposes of completing out-of-state learning placements, such as internships, practica, clinical experiences, etc. in SARA member states and territories outside Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, in its capacity as the SARA portal entity for Massachusetts, reviews and evaluates student complaints regarding distance learning programs offered by Massachusetts-based institutions that are members of SARA in accordance with 610 CMR 12.07. Complaints that should be filed as a SARA Complaint are those that pertain to distance (online) education provided by Massachusetts-based SARA institutions to students residing in other states pursuant to SARA only. Complaints about a SARA institution's operations or activities in Massachusetts can be filed [here](#) and will be resolved pursuant to 610 CMR 2.00 or otherwise in accordance with the institution's policies.



The SARA complaint process is as follows:

Students must first attempt to resolve their complaint using internal administrative procedures offered by the SARA institution. After all administrative remedies have been exhausted with the MA-SARA institution, the student may submit a SARA Complaint via the URL below.

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

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

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.

More information about the BHE's complaint process can be found [here](#).

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; 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.

New England Board of Higher Education Information

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) oversees regional efforts to ensure that all SARA entities meet the expectations that have been established for reciprocity and will also establish common operating procedures. The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA), creates interstate reciprocity in the regulation of postsecondary distance education. The initiative brings together the four regional higher education compacts – the Midwestern Higher Education Compact, [New England Board of Higher Education](#), Southern Regional Education Board, and Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education – to work to make distance education courses more accessible to students across state lines, as well as making it easier for states to regulate and institutions to participate in interstate distance education.

The New England Board of Higher Education approved the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for participation on June 7, 2018.