

NC SARA: STATE AUTHORIZATION & DISTANCE EDUCATION

Welcome to Manhattan University's webpage on State Authorization and Distance Education Disclosures.

State authorization refers to the requirement that institutions of higher education obtain authorization for their distance education offerings from individual states, in accordance with each state's laws and regulations.

The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) is a voluntary agreement amongst member states, territories, and districts of the United States that establishes one set of national standards and rules for distance education offerings.

Manhattan University has been approved under the terms and provisions of SARA to operate its distance education programs in SARA-approved locations.

Complaint Resolution

Only those complaints resulting from distance education programs and courses offered by Manhattan University to students in states other than New York are covered by this process. Such complaints may concern, among other things, allegations of dishonest or fraudulent activity, and the provision of false or misleading information. For more information about the process for filing a consumer-protection-oriented complaint, please refer to the Distance Education section on our Policies & Disclosures page (<https://www.manhattan.edu/policies-disclosures.php#distance-education>).

The initial responsibility for the investigation and resolution of complaints resides with the University. Any further consideration and resolution, if necessary, is the responsibility of the New York State Department of Education (NYSED a/k/a the SARA portal entity). NYSED is responsible for staffing the investigation and resolution of complaints that are not resolved by the University (<https://www.nysed.gov/college-university-evaluation/filing-complaint-about-college-or-university/>). Visit the NC-SARA website for information on the NC-SARA complaint process (<https://www.nc-sara.org/sara-student-complaints-0/>).

Complaints against the University, which is operating under the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), go first through the University's own procedures for resolution of grievances as outlined in the University Catalog, the Manhattan University Community Standards and Student Code of Conduct (<https://inside.manhattan.edu/student-life/dean-of-students/code-conduct.php#complaint>), or other program guidelines or course syllabi. Complaints regarding student grades or student conduct violations are governed entirely by University policy and the laws of New York State.

If a person bringing a complaint is not satisfied with the outcome of the University process for handling complaints, the complaint (except for complaints about grades or student conduct violations) may be appealed, within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made, to the New York State Department of Education (NYSED). The

resolution of the complaint by NYSED, through its SARA complaint resolution process, will generally be final (see exceptions below).

While final resolution of complaints resides in certain cases with the University (i.e. complaints about grades or student conduct violations), or more generally with NYSED (for all other complaints), the New England Board of Higher Education (the regional compact(s) administering SARA) may consider a disputed complaint as a “case file” if concerns are raised against a participating state with regard to whether that state is abiding by SARA Policies and Standards. Similarly, a complaint “case file” may also be reviewed by NC-SARA in considering whether a regional compact is ensuring that its member states are abiding by the SARA standards required for their participation in the agreement.

Additionally, while subject to the above, the final resolution of the complaint rests with NYSED, the portal entity in the complainant’s location state may assist as needed. The final disposition of a complaint resolved by NYSED shall be communicated to the portal entity in the state where the student lived at the time of the incident leading to the complaint, if known to NYSED.

Questions concerning this process may be addressed to the Office of the Provost.