



Policy and Procedures for the Consideration of Complaints against the New England Commission of Higher Education

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a mechanism by which individuals or entities may complain to the Commission about the Commission's lack of compliance with its own published policies and procedures related to accreditation. In order to be considered, the complaint must involve broader issues than a concern about a specific institutional action.*

Complaints against the Commission are considered only when made in writing and when the complainant is clearly identified and has signed the complaint. The written complaint must identify the policy or procedure in question, include substantial evidence to support the allegations being made, and specify the resolution the complainant is seeking from the Commission. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the Commission does not consider complaints if the concern alleged occurred more than three years prior to the filing of the complaint. The Commission, at its discretion, may choose not to act on a complaint where the matters are under judicial consideration.

If applicable, a complaint against the Commission must be received within 90 working days of the complainant receiving written notification from Commission staff about the disposition of a complaint against an affiliated institution.

The Commission President acknowledges all complaints within 14 working days of their receipt. (Complaints against the Commission President are referred to the Commission chair.) Should a complaint require Commission consideration and action, the Commission Chair will determine the timing of the review and the complainant is notified in writing. In the event a complainant revises or updates a complaint, the complaint must be resubmitted in its entirety. The Commission will consider the revised document as a new complaint and the Commission President will acknowledge the complaint within 14 working days. If applicable, the Commission Chair will determine the timing of the review of the revised complaint and the complainant is notified in writing.

The Commission President implements corrective action where appropriate or makes recommendations to the Commission to implement the corrections. The complainant is informed in writing of the disposition of the matter within 30 working days of any action taken. The Commission President compiles annually a list, available to the public on request, that summarizes complaints against the Commission and their dispositions. The chair shall be informed on a current basis of such dispositions. Upon advice of counsel, the Commission retains the right to withhold public disclosure of information if potential legal action is involved in the complaint.

The Commission's disposition of complaints under this policy is final. Complainants do not have a right to appeal that disposition.

* For appeal of institutional actions, please see *NECHE Policy and Procedures for Appeal of Adverse Action*. For complaints regarding individual institutions, refer to *Complaints Against Affiliated Institutions*.

March 1998
November 2012
Editorial changes March 2014
March 2020
July 2020