

UHWO Distance Education/NC-SARA Student Complaint Process

The University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu seeks to resolve student complaints in a fair and prompt manner. If a Distance Education student has a complaint about UH West O'ahu, the student must first follow the [Student Academic Grievance Procedure](#) or the [Student Code of Conduct Process](#) as written. Grade appeals and student conduct violations are governed entirely by UH West O'ahu policies and are not allowed under the terms of SARA.

Some Distance Education complaints that fall under NC-SARA include, but are not limited to the following examples: complaints regarding accuracy of (a) job placement data, (b) tuition or fee information, (c) accreditation, (d) accurate information about whether course or program work meets any relevant licensure requirements, or (e) course transfer information.

UH West O'ahu Distance Education students are encouraged to begin the process of filing a concern by completing the [UH West O'ahu Student Concern Form](#) through the Informal Resolution Process.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, the student may appeal through the Formal Complaint Appeal process to the UH West O'ahu Director of Compliance, or his or her designee.

UHWO students may file an institutional report using the UH West O'ahu Informal and Formal resolution processes listed below.

1. UH West O'ahu Informal Resolution Process

- a. The student must first report the issue to the UH West O'ahu Office of Distance Learning by completing an online report form. The report form may be found here: [UH West O'ahu DE Student Concern Form](#)
- b. All supporting documentation should be submitted with a detailed report to ensure an appropriate understanding of the issue reported.
- c. Within 14 business days, a representative from the Office of Distance Learning will appropriately respond in writing to the report regarding all distance education issues related to the concern. Correspondence with the student from the Office of Distance Learning will be through the student's official hawaii.edu email account. When appropriate, the Office of Distance Learning may direct the student to an alternate campus process that may address other issues the student may have.

- d. Once a response or determination has been provided to the student, the resolution will be deemed final.
- e. If the student believes that the response or determination is inaccurate, an appeal can be submitted through the Formal Resolution Process.

2. UH West O‘ahu Formal Resolution Process

- a. Once the student has completed the informal resolution process yet believes the resolution or response provided in the process was not sufficient, the student may file for a review under the Formal Review Process. The appeal form can be found here: [UH West O‘ahu DE Student Formal Complaint Appeal](#)
- b. The Director of Compliance (or his or her designee) reviews the request for Formal Resolution by the student and determines if the request is appropriate for further review. If the Director of Compliance (or his or her designee) determines that the request lacks a sufficient basis for further review, the request will be denied. The decision to deny further review will be final, and the original resolution or response will be deemed to be the final institutional response on the issue reported.
- c. Formal Review is appropriate only in the following circumstances:
 - i. When the resolution or response fails to appropriately address the issue as written; OR
 - ii. When the resolution or response fails to follow institutional or state policies or processes as written; OR
 - iii. When the institution has engaged in improper activities (for example: published inaccurate or incomplete program or course information).
- d. The Director of Compliance (or his or her designee) will respond in writing to the request within 5 business days of receiving the request.
- e. The resolution or decision by the Director of Compliance (or his or her designee), when made, is final.

3. NC-SARA Complaint:

- a. If a student is located in a SARA member state, a complaint, other than grade appeals or student conduct violations, may then be appealed and brought to the [Hawai‘i SARA Student Complaint Process](#). This appeal must be filed within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made. The SARA portal entity in the state where the student is located will then be notified that the complaint was received and may assist as needed. The resolution of the complaint by the Hawai‘i SARA portal entity is final.
- b. Additional NC-SARA Complaint Information can be found at nc-sara.org/content/sara-and-students.