

# Arizona SARA Council

## Complaint Review Policy

1. The Arizona SARA Council (“Council”) is the portal entity for the Arizona State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (“Arizona SARA”) and has the authority and responsibility to resolve SARA-related complaints.
2. Institutions that apply for participation in Arizona SARA agree to establish, publish and enforce policies related to redress of complaints and grievances, and to follow this process for the resolution of complaints for any and all students residing in SARA states. Complaints covered by this process include any violation of the [SARA Policies and Standards](#).
3. An individual who files a complaint (“complainant”) against an Arizona SARA member institution must first exhaust the institution’s own procedures for resolution of grievances. The specific process at each institution must be clearly identified and publicly available to individuals via the institution’s website and/or catalog.
4. Complaints regarding student grades or student conduct violations are governed entirely by institutional policy and the laws of the State of Arizona.
5. If complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the institutional complaint process, the decision (with the exception of complaints about grades or student conduct violations) may be appealed, within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made, to the Council. The Council refers complaints for appellate review as follows:
  - a. All complaints originating from Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University or the University of Arizona will be referred to the Arizona Board of Regents for review, according to their designated process.
  - b. All complaints originating from an Arizona Community College will be referred to the Arizona Community College Coordinating Council (AC4), according to their designated process.
  - c. All complaints originating from a private, postsecondary institution will be referred to the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education, according to their designated process.
6. The decision by the appellate body regarding a complaint will be considered to be final in all cases related to evidence presented to, and substantive findings of, the appellate body.
7. If a complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the appellate body, the complainant may submit the complaint for review to the Council. The Council will review the appellate decision to determine if the complaint was reviewed according to the designated processes, including timeliness and lack of conflicts of interest by reviewers. In the event that the Council determines that an appellate decision review process was procedurally deficient, it will be referred back to the appellate body to follow the established process.

Additionally, the Council will determine if the basis for the complaint demonstrates a material lack of compliance by a member institution where a SARA requirement was violated, applied improperly or failed to be applied. If such a finding is made, the Council may recommend specific corrective actions, and may consider such findings and the member institution's response when reviewing an institution's application for renewal of membership in Arizona SARA.

8. The resolution of a SARA complaint by the Council will be considered to be final in all cases, including those for which the Council served as the appellate body. Nothing in this complaint process shall preclude an individual, institution or board from pursuing additional or supplemental action against any person, institution or entity that violates the law.
9. In the event that an institution fails to comply with this complaint process as determined by the findings from the appropriate referral board or the decision of the Council, or fails to address a material lack of compliance with SARA requirements, its participation in Arizona SARA may be withdrawn by the Council and the institution may not be considered for re-application to Arizona SARA until outstanding complaints are resolved and material changes in the institution's review process are demonstrated.