



## **Student Complaint and Grievance Policy**

A grievance is a complaint by a student involving the interpretation, application, or alleged violation of the University's policies and procedures. A grievance procedure is used for issues other than student conduct code or Title IX policy violations. Please refer to the Conduct Code and Title IX Policy for those concerns. All grievances must be filed within 10 days of the incident.

If a student has an issue that is classroom related, they must first go to their instructor. If the instructor cannot resolve the issue, the student must contact the Program Director. If the issue cannot be resolved by the Program Director, the student must contact the program Dean. Issues that cannot be resolved by the Dean will be brought to the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs.

This policy and procedure are internal to Beal. If, after using the university procedure, a student does not feel that the University has adequately addressed a complaint or concern, the student may consider contacting external agencies:

### SARA State Student Complaint Process

Beal University is a member of NC-SARA, the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements. NC-SARA oversees reciprocity agreements which facilitate Beal student's participation in distance education.

SARA consumer protection provisions require colleges and universities to investigate and resolve allegations of dishonest or fraudulent activity by a provider, including the provision of false or misleading information. Examples of types of student complaints that may be brought to a SARA portal entity include, but are not limited to, complaints regarding the accuracy of job placement data, tuition or fee information, accreditation, whether a program meets professional licensing requirements, or course transfer information. Grade appeals and student conduct appeals are not allowed under SARA.

After following Beal University's complaint policies, students participating in a distance education experience may seek further action through the following Maine Department of Education process:

State of Maine Complaint Form. This form should be used by any current student or former student enrolled in a distance education degree program or participating in an on-site experience outside the State of Maine (internships, externships, practicums, field experiences, and clinical experiences), who seek to file a complaint against a degree-granting institution approved to operate under the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

1. Students should exhaust the formal complaint process of the host institution.
2. Students should file a complaint through SARA that includes documentation that the student has exhausted the formal complaint process at the host post-secondary institution.
3. The Maine DOE reviews the complaint and supporting documents. The Maine DOE may request further documentation from the participating SARA institution mentioned in the complaint.
4. Maine DOE determines if the resolution of the host institution is acceptable. If so, the complaint process is concluded and the previous resolution is sustained. If the previous resolution is found not acceptable by the Maine DOE, then the complaint will be further investigated until resolved.
5. Students receive a final disposition letter from the Maine DOE.

In addition, schools accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges must have a



procedure and operational plan for handling student complaints. If a student does not feel that the school has adequately addressed a complaint or concern, the student may consider contacting the Accrediting Commission. All complaints reviewed by the Commission must be in written form and should grant permission for the Commission to forward a copy of the complaint to the school for a response. This can be accomplished by filing the ACCSC Complaint Form. The complainant(s) will be kept informed as to the status of the complaint as well as the final resolution by the Commission. Please direct all inquiries to:

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools & Colleges  
2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 302  
Arlington, VA 22201  
(703) 247-4212  
[www.accsc.org.complaints@accsc.org](http://www.accsc.org.complaints@accsc.org)

A copy of the ACCSC Complaint Form is available at the school and may be obtained by contacting [complaints@accsc.org](mailto:complaints@accsc.org) or at <https://www.accsc.org/Student-Corner/Complaints.aspx>. You may also obtain by contacting the Chief Operating Officer.

Nursing students enrolled in the PN, ASN or BSN only may file a complaint with: Maine State Board of Nursing 161 Capitol St. 158 State House Station Augusta, Maine, 04333-0158 Phone: (207) 287-1133.  
<https://www.maine.gov/boardofnursing/>.

Some of the agencies that provide funding for students may have separate Grievance procedures. Students receiving Veterans Benefits or Military Personnel Benefits may visit <https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/Feedback.asp>.

Other interested individuals or agencies with a concern or grievance should contact Beal University administration with any questions or concerns.

## **Appeals Policy**

This policy applies to all grievances and appeals which are not based on request for accommodations or academic adjustments due to a disability which are processed pursuant to the ADA and Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act Grievance Procedure set forth in the Accommodations Services Handbook.

Occasionally, a problem may arise between a student and another party, or with some aspect of the University. Students are encouraged to verbally communicate their concerns to the appropriate person. The following are the steps the student should take to resolve concerns:

**Step 1:** If academically related, communicate with the appropriate instructor, and Program Director. Faculty member will meet with the student to discuss the issue. If complaint is non-academic related, communicate with Student Services department. The student can also fill out an "Incident Report" which can be obtained online at <https://beal.edu/incident/>. If student feels the issue remains unresolved proceed to Step 2.

**Step 2:** Communicate with the Program Dean. The Program Dean will meet with the student to discuss the issue. The Program Dean may also meet with the other party(ies) to attempt to resolve the issue. Program Dean will communicate the University's final decision.

**Step 3:** If student wishes to appeal decision, the student must complete an [Appeal Form](#). The form can be obtained from the Student Services department. The student must submit the complaint form to the Appeals



Committee as required on the form.

**Step 4:** If the appeal is grade related, the student has ten (10) calendar days from the end of the MOD for which the grade was earned, to submit the appeal form.

**Step 5:** The Registrar will communicate with the complainant the date the Appeals Committee will meet.

The following steps must be followed:

- a. The complainant must complete an [Appeal Form](#) in its entirety.
- b. The complainant must submit a detailed appeal letter through one of two methods:
  - i. Via upload in the [Appeal Form](#). (word, pdf, image accepted)
  - ii. Via email to [registrar@beal.edu](mailto:registrar@beal.edu) (word, pdf, image accepted)
- c. All documentation must be received with the completed [Appeal Form](#).

**Step 6:** The Appeals Committee will review the appeal and supporting documentation. If the Appeals Committee deems necessary, the complainant will be requested to attend the meeting. The Appeals Committee has the responsibility for communicating the final decision, within ten (10) calendar days, to the student with consideration of the best interests of the student and University.

**Step 7:** The Registrar will communicate, in writing, to the complainant the Appeals Committee's final decision.

Other interested individuals or agencies with a concern or grievance should contact Beal University administration with any questions or concerns.