



Middle States Commission on Higher Education

3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680

Phone: 267-284-5000 Fax: 215-662-5501 www.msche.org

How to File a Complaint with the Commission

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is obligated by federal regulations to review complaints it receives regarding member and candidate institutions. However, the Commission's complaints policy prevents the Commission from intervening in disputes between individuals and institutions, whether these disputes involve students, faculty, administrators, or members of other groups. Before filing a complaint, it is strongly recommended that you read the [Commission's complaints policy](#).

The Commission will address concerns that are clearly related to an accreditation action taken by the Commission, or that are related to the quality of an institution or its academic programs. All such complaints will be judged against the Commission's seven standards of accreditation. *Please note that the Commission accredits **institutions** according to the seven standards, within the context of each institution's unique mission. The Commission does not accredit schools or colleges within a university, nor does the Commission accredit individual programs or courses. The Commission does, however, approve degree levels.*

The Commission will not accept complaints from third parties who are complaining on behalf of someone else. For example, the Commission will not accept complaints from the parent or spouse of a complainant.

If you feel your complaint falls within the parameters of what the Commission can review, please follow these steps:

1. **Do not call the Commission offices.** We cannot accept complaints that are not in writing, nor can we discuss complaints over the telephone.
2. **Submit your complaint using the Commission's official Complaint Form.** *Complaints submitted without this form will not be reviewed.* The form is available by [clicking here](#).

Send the completed form and any accompanying documents via the U.S. Postal Service or an express carrier (FedEx, UPS, etc.). Be certain to **sign your complaint**. The Commission cannot accept complaints that are unsigned, or that are submitted via e-mail. Address all complaints to Complaints, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Second Floor West, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680. Also, please note:

- The Complaint Form and any accompanying documents must be **typewritten or printed from a computer**. Handwritten complaints will not be accepted.

- Complete the Complaint Form in its entirety. The Commission must have a return mailing address so it can contact you if it needs to obtain additional information.
 - **Identify yourself.** Anonymous complaints or requests for anonymity will not be accepted.
3. **All complaints and supporting evidence must be submitted in English.** The Commission does not provide translation services.
4. **Answer all questions on the Complaint Form.**
- Indicate to the Commission that you are granting permission for the Commission to share your complaint with the institution. The Commission will only do so if it determines that its analysis of your complaint requires a response from the institution.
 - Indicate whether your complaint is currently in litigation or is under review by another entity. If litigation has been completed, include with your letter of complaint documentation of the outcome of the litigation.
 - Identify which MSCHE accreditation standard or standards are relevant to your complaint and why you feel the institution is out of compliance. **Provide evidence.** The accreditation standards can be found in the Commission's publication, *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation*, available for free download by [clicking here](#).
 - Include with your complaint **compelling evidence that supports your case.** Do not just tell the Commission what allegedly happened. **Provide written evidence.**
 - Provide evidence that, before filing a complaint with the Commission, you have pursued your complaint through the institution's official grievance procedures for students or employees.

Please note that the Middle States Commission on Higher Education is not an investigative agency, nor is it a judicial or quasi-judicial body or a law enforcement agency. As noted in its complaints policy, the Commission cannot settle disputes related to grades, financial matters, employment, admission, or many other matters. If, as the result of analyzing a complaint, the Commission finds an institution to be out of compliance with one or more accreditation standards, the Commission may take steps to work with the institution to bring it back into compliance. However, **the Commission will not seek remuneration or redress of any type on behalf of an individual.** For example, the Commission cannot order an institution or any other entity to forgive loan debt or issue a refund of tuition and/or fees, nor can the Commission order an institution to admit, re-admit, or graduate a student. For non-students, the Commission has no authority regarding institutional decisions pertaining to hiring/firing, salary, or job assignment.