

Student Financial Aid Programs

Overview

Participation is voluntary for institutions and open to all postsecondary institutions (for-profit and non-for-profit private and public) that are accredited by an association recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education. Participation in SARA allows institutions to offer distance education courses and programs to students in other SARA participating states without seeking state authorization.

For more information on SARA, including an up-to-date list of SARA States and Institutions, visit NC-SARA.org.

Initial Application Process

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Coordinating Board) is the state portal agency for SARA. Any accredited, postsecondary institution with its principal campus or central administrative unit domiciled in Texas is eligible to apply.

Initial Applications must be submitted through the Coordinating Board [SARA portal](#). A CPass account is required to access the SARA portal. If an institution's principal SARA contact has an existing CPass account, he or she can use their existing username and password to login to their [CPass Account](#) and request access to the SARA portal. To request access to the SARA portal, create an account by clicking on CPass Registration .

Once access to the SARA portal has been granted, the primary SARA contact can complete the application. Please note, the application requires three items of documentation. For question one, attach either the Texas Education Code pertaining to the institution or a letter of authorization from the Coordinating Board. For question two, attach the most recent accreditation reaffirmation letter. For private institutions, question three requires the most recent financial index score from the Department of Education demonstrating a score that is 1.5 or above. For public institutions, question three requires the submission of a statement acknowledging the institution is exempt from this requirement.

After the institution's principal SARA contact completes the application, it will be sent electronically to the institution's signatory officer. The signatory officer will need to have a CBPass and request access to the SARA portal in order to sign and submit the application.

When the application is received by the Coordinating Board, the institution's principal SARA contacts will receive email notification. The Coordinating Board will then review the application. This process takes 1-4 weeks.

If the application is approved, the institution's SARA contacts will receive two invoices for SARA fees. The first is a SARA fee paid to the National Council for SARA (NC-SARA). The second is a SARA fee paid to the Coordinating Board. Upon receipt of payment, the institution will be officially recognized as a SARA participating institution and listed on the NC-SARA website.

Similar to the NC-SARA fee, the Texas SARA fee is based on the institution's total full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment and is assessed as follows:

Enrolled FTE	Annual Fee
Under 2,500	\$425
2,500-9,999	\$525
10,000 or more	\$625

Renewal Process

SARA participating institutions must submit a [renewal application](#) and pay all SARA fees annually. The completed application and supporting documentation should be emailed to Jessica Acton at Jessica.Acton@THECB.state.tx.us. Once the renewal application is approved, the institution's SARA contacts will receive invoices for NC-SARA and Coordinating Board fees.

Student Complaint Process

Complaints against a SARA participating institution must first go through the institution's own grievance procedures. All complaints regarding student grades or conduct violations are governed by the institution and the laws of the institution's home state. If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the institutional grievance process, the student may appeal, within two years of the incident, to the SARA portal agency of the institution's home state.

For all complaints regarding Texas degree-granting postsecondary institutions participating in SARA, complete the Student Complaint and Release Form and email the form to Student.Complaints@thecb.state.tx.us.

For questions regarding SARA policies and procedures, please contact Jessica Acton at Jessica.Acton@thecb.state.tx.us.