

## **SAMPLE EMAIL INQUIRY *TEMPLATE* (STATE HIGHER EDUCATION REGULATORY AGENCIES)**

Ms. Deanna Velletri  
Rhode Island Office of Higher Education  
Academic and Student Affairs  
401-456-6010  
[dvelletri@ribghe.org](mailto:dvelletri@ribghe.org)

Dear Ms. Velletri,

The Ohio State University is a public, land grant, degree granting, research university, accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, requesting confirmation/verification of state authorization requirements pursuant to offering distance education to the State of Rhode Island residents.

The University is currently considering offering residents of Rhode Island “purely online” programs and programs with on-the-ground instructional components (clinicals, practica, internships, externships, etc.). Some programs may require professional board licensure if applicable. Further, the University may actively engage in operational activities such as recruiting of and advertising to residents of Rhode Island.

It is our understanding that the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education (RIBGHE) would require the University to complete and submit an application for licensure approval of the institution before enrolling Rhode Island residents in distance education programs, if operating in Rhode Island pursuant to the Board’s definition of “operating” in the state as follows:

Operate or Operating: Operating an institution includes:

- 1) establishing or maintaining within the borders of the state of Rhode Island a facility or location where instruction, student services or educational program administration are provided or postsecondary educational credentials are granted to persons in the state or to persons outside of the state;
- 2) contracting with any person, group, or entity to operate such an institution; or
- 3) the activities of persons owning an interest in, employed by, or representing for remuneration a postsecondary educational institution in or outside the state who, by solicitation made in the state:
  - a) give counsel to, enroll or seek to enroll students for education offered by the institution;
  - b) offer to award educational credentials for remuneration, on behalf of the institution; or
  - c) who hold themselves out to persons in the state as representing a postsecondary educational institution for any purpose. (See full exemption for certain recruiting activities in Section VI: Exemptions.)

Additionally, per RIGL 16-40, only the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) fulfills Rhode Island’s accreditation requirement for degree-granting institutions. As the University may not meet the requirements relative to “operating” in the state and is currently accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education, this requirement may not be applicable.

Please confirm/verify the above requirements relative to seeking authorization approval and any other information as appropriate. Feel free to contact me directly (email and phone number below) should you have any questions or comments. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Best,

Linda

**Linda Wells-Rider**

Sr. Program Coordinator  
State Authorization Program

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