

# Australian College of Theology

## Grievance Resolution Policy – Students

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### Overview

ACT has a policy and a process for dealing with student grievances (also called ‘complaints’) – the policy is also known as a Dispute Resolution policy. This policy only covers student grievances. Staff grievances are considered under ACT’s *Staff Grievance Resolution Policy*. The Grievance Resolution Policy – Students ensures that students have access to fair and just avenues to deal with any grievances, and that they can follow those avenues without fear of reprisal. The policy applies to all colleges affiliated to the ACT, and all students.

Where possible, grievances are handled by the college involved, as well as by the ACT office if necessary. If a grievance is not resolved in this way, it is referred to Independent Higher Education Australia for independent external resolution.

The policy and its accompanying process (that is, the actions to be taken for reporting and resolving a grievance) are set out below in five sections, plus an appendix containing a diagram of the process.

Part 1: The policy

Part 2: The process: Reporting and resolving a grievance

Part 3: Regulatory bodies

Part 4: Administration and Contact details

Part 5: Principles of natural justice

Appendix: Diagram of the process

### Part 1: The policy

The Australian College of Theology (the ACT) is committed to ensuring that students who have a concern about any aspect of our higher education operations have ready access to fair, just and effective grievance processes. Specifically, this means:

- A student may report a grievance about any aspect of the ACT’s higher education operations, including operations provided on its behalf by its affiliated colleges and other entities.
- The student may do this without fear of reprisal.
- The grievance may be about an academic or a non-academic matter.
- There is a comprehensive process for handling and resolving grievances, which includes review by an independent third party if the process cannot resolve the dispute.

If an affiliated college or other entity acting on behalf of the ACT does not comply with this policy, the Board of Directors of the ACT (‘the ACT Board’) will take disciplinary action as it sees fit, with the maximum penalty being dis-affiliation and exclusion from the ACT.

Our policy and its accompanying process are based on the following principles:

### Principles underpinning the policy

1. All students have a right to lodge a grievance, and do so either in English or in the language of delivery of their course.
2. Actions will be undertaken promptly, and deadlines for responses will be specified at each stage of the process.
3. The process will be as simple as possible and easily accessible to students.
4. The process will not victimise or discriminate against any student or respondent.
5. Reasons and explanations will be given for decisions and actions taken.
6. Records of the handling of a grievance will be kept for at least 5 years and treated as confidential, with access available to involved parties as appropriate.
7. Components of the process will be at no cost to the student, apart from travelling expenses. A fee may apply when a review is formally requested in relation to a 'passed' grade of either an assessment or a unit. See <https://actheology.edu.au/fees/> for fee values.
8. All staff involved in a grievance or appeal have a duty to observe the principles of natural justice <sup>1</sup>.
9. ACT must maintain the student's enrolment throughout the internal appeals process for all types of complaints or appeals. However, this does not require ACT or its colleges to continue to offer learning opportunities throughout the complaints or appeals process. ACT will determine whether it will continue to offer learning opportunities throughout any appeals process on a case by case basis. For example, ACT may decide to exclude a student from attending classes, but continue to provide work to complete outside of the classroom environment. In making this decision, ACT will consider that to deny students learning opportunities throughout the appeals process may disadvantage the students in their subsequent studies should the appeals process find in their favour.
10. Students may seek resolution of a grievance under this policy regardless of where the college involved is located, where the student lives, and the mode in which the student studies.
11. The student reporting the grievance may withdraw it at any stage in the process. If the grievance is withdrawn, the matter will be considered closed.
12. If the appeal results in a decision that supports the student, the ACT will immediately implement that decision and take any corrective and preventative action required, and will advise the student of the outcome.
13. Each party may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.

This policy does not take away the right of any student to pursue other legal remedies, or take action under Australia's consumer protection laws in the case of financial dispute.

### Definitions

**Student:** All students of the ACT. They may be prospective, enrolled or former students.

**Grievance:** A statement of concern made by a student which the student has reported to an affiliate college or to the ACT office, and which requires action or a response under this policy. A grievance can also be called a 'complaint', or a 'dispute'.

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<sup>1</sup> These are listed in Part 5.

**What is *not* a grievance?:** General feedback and comment about administration, academic programs and services is not treated as a grievance unless action or a response is required under this policy.

**Academic matter:** An action, inaction or decision by a member of the academic staff that affects the student’s academic assessment or progress.

**Non-academic matter:** Administrative or other matters (for example, matters related to fees, withdrawals, expulsion, allegations of bullying or harassment, etc) and other action, inaction or decisions that students may consider are interfering with the progress of their studies or with the granting of an award.

**Natural justice:** A term used in government and administrative decision-making, meaning the duty to act fairly in a dispute – that is, to act without bias and to ensure a fair hearing for all parties. It can also be called ‘procedural fairness’. The underlying assumption is that some legal principles are self-evident, or ‘natural’.

## Distribution and awareness of the policy

**Access to the policy:** The ACT is required to make this policy clearly accessible to all current and prospective students on the ACT website and in student handbooks. Affiliated colleges are required to make this policy accessible to all current and prospective students.

**Distribution of the policy:** Affiliated colleges must provide students with access to this policy prior to acceptance of an offer in a course. In addition, continuing students must be reminded of this policy at the beginning of each subsequent year of their enrolment.

**Student awareness:** Students must make themselves aware of this policy prior to acceptance of an offer in a course.

## Record-keeping and reporting

Affiliated colleges and the ACT office must:

- keep written records of all formal grievances, as well as the steps taken and decisions reached
- report all formal grievances and decisions reached in their annual report to the ACT Board of Directors.

# Part 2: The process: Reporting and resolving a grievance

The process to follow for reporting and resolving a grievance consists of several steps. The grievance may be resolved at Step 1; if not, it is escalated to Step 2, and so on. Each step provides a fair and just avenue to deal with the grievance, and students are free to take as many of the steps as they believe appropriate, with no fear of reprisal.

This section is set out in three parts:

1. Grievances about academic matters
  - 1.1 Concerns about a final grade awarded in a unit or project
  - 1.2 Concerns about other academic matters
2. Grievances about non-academic matters
3. External dispute resolution

The process is also illustrated graphically at the end of this document.

In accordance with the Principles Underpinning the Policy, students who are studying their course in a language other than English are permitted to lodge a grievance and interact at all stages of the resolution process in their choice of English or the language of delivery of their course. Students who choose to lodge a grievance in a language other than English will be additionally supported in the grievance resolution process. If the student wishes to receive this support, a member of an ACT affiliated college other than the student's own college, or an ACT employee, will be appointed by ACT to act as an interpreter and support person for the student, while a grievance is under consideration.

## 1. Grievances about academic matters

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In this policy, an 'academic matter' means the action, inaction, or a decision of a member of the academic staff that affects the student's academic assessment or progress.

Examples of academic matters are final grades for units; matters concerning student admission or progression; curriculum and awards; marks for intra-semester assessment tasks (eg. essays).

Students may lodge grievances without fear of reprisal, and the appeals process provides for review by an appropriate independent third party if internal processes do not resolve a grievance.

### 1.1 Concerns about a unit grade or project

If a student wishes to complain about the grade awarded in an enrolled unit (including projects), they must take the following steps. Students are encouraged to commence at stage 1.1.1 (informal resolution), but may choose to bypass this step and move to formal grievance resolution at stage 1.1.2.

See 1.1.3 for externally marked projects of 12,000 words or more – students appealing the mark awarded for these projects do not go through stages 1.1.1 or 1.1.2.

#### 1.1.1 Informal resolution with the Affiliated College Registrar (or Overseas Student Liaison Officer in the case of Overseas Students, or another staff member of a student's college appointed to resolve grievances for students other than overseas students)

##### Student's action

- Within 25 days of the results being released, discuss the issue informally with the Registrar of your college of enrolment (or Overseas Student Liaison Officer in the case of Overseas Students, or another staff member of a student's college appointed to resolve grievances for students other than overseas students).

##### Registrar's action

- Respond to the issue promptly, giving a full explanation of the reasons the grade was awarded.
- If the student's concerns are not resolved, explain the next step, as set out below.
- Give the student access to this policy and instruct them to read it.

##### Advice to students

If your concerns are not resolved by the Registrar (or Overseas Student Liaison Officer in the case of Overseas Students, or another staff member of a student's college appointed to resolve grievances for students other than overseas students), or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may contact the Academic Dean of your college of enrolment. This may be done on an informal or a formal basis.

**Note 1:** If you choose to approach the Academic Dean informally, this does not prevent you making a formal appeal later if necessary.

**Note 2:** A fee may be charged for an appeal where you have been awarded a passing grade in the unit. See <https://actheology.edu.au/fees/> for fee values.

### 1.1.2: Appeal to the Academic Dean

#### INFORMAL COMPLAINT

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##### Student's action

- Contact the Academic Dean to discuss your concern in person.
- You must do this within 15 days of the outcome of your discussion with the Registrar (or Overseas Student Liaison Officer in the case of Overseas Students, or another staff member of a student's college appointed to resolve grievances for students other than overseas students).

##### Academic Dean's action

- Respond to the student's concern promptly, giving a full explanation of the reasons for the academic decision, action or inaction.

#### FORMAL COMPLAINT

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##### Student's action

- Put your grievance in writing, explaining clearly the nature of your concern and the grounds for its appeal, and send it to the Academic Dean.
- You must do this within 15 days of the outcome of your discussion with the Registrar (or Overseas Student Liaison Officer in the case of Overseas Students, or another staff member of a student's college appointed to resolve grievances for students other than overseas students), or if you have chosen to bypass stage 1.1.1 of this policy, within 25 days of the results being released.
- The normal grounds for a formal appeal are one or more of the following:
  - the lecturer did not provide a unit outline as required
  - the assessment requirements in the unit outline were varied in an unreasonable way
  - you believe that the examiners' judgement was not applied objectively because of prejudice against you
  - you believe there has been a clerical error in the calculation of the grade
  - you believe that due regard has not been given to the evidence of illness or misadventure if submitted by the specified date
  - you believe you have been disadvantaged in some way due to the circumstances surrounding your unit's examination or other assessment.

**Note:** A fee may be charged for appeals where you have been awarded a passing grade in the unit. See <https://actheology.edu.au/fees/> for fee values.

##### Academic Dean's action

**Note:** If the Academic Dean was involved in the original decision, the college Principal must appoint another person of appropriate rank and expertise to review the matter.

- Acknowledge the grievance in writing within 5 days.
- Try to resolve the grievance within 15 days. This could involve:

- bringing the student and the relevant lecturer together to discuss the matter
- having the contested assessment marked by another lecturer in the same college.
- Advise the student of your decision in writing, including:
  - setting out your reasons
  - advising that if the student does not agree with the decision, they have the right of formal appeal to the Dean of the ACT
  - enclosing a copy of this policy and instructing the student to read it.

### **Advice to students**

If your concerns of an informal complaint are not resolved by the Academic Dean of your college, or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may lodge a formal complaint to the Academic Dean under this section of the policy. See **1.1.2** above for how to do this.

If your concerns of a formal complaint are not resolved by the Academic Dean of your college, or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may contact the Dean of the ACT. See **1.1.3** below for how to do this.

**Note:** A fee may be charged for an appeal where you have been awarded a passing grade in the unit. See <https://actheology.edu.au/fees/> for fee values.

### **1.1.3: Appeal to the Dean of the ACT**

#### **Student's action**

- Put your grievance in writing, explaining clearly the nature of your concern and the grounds for its appeal, and send it to the Dean of the ACT.
- You must do this within 15 days of receiving the Academic Dean's written response.
- If the student's grievance relates to an externally marked project of 12,000 words or more, the student may submit the project for a review of the grade awarded, as well as a report detailing the issues perceived to have influenced the mark awarded. Appeals need to be lodged within 25 days of the results being released.

**Note:** A fee may be charged for appeals where you have been awarded a passing grade in the unit. See <https://actheology.edu.au/fees/> for fee values.

See Part 4 of this document for  
Contact details for the Dean of the ACT

#### **Dean of the ACT's action**

**Note:** If the Dean of the ACT was involved in the original decision that has become the matter in dispute, the Chair of the ACT Board must appoint another person of appropriate rank and expertise to review the matter.

- Acknowledge the grievance in writing within 5 days.
- Try to resolve the grievance within 15 days.
- Advise the student of your decision in writing, including:
  - setting out the reasons the final grade was awarded
  - advising the student that if they do not agree with the decision, they have the right of formal appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee
  - enclosing a copy of this policy and instructing the student to read it.

- If the student’s grievance relates to an externally marked project of 12,000 words or more, the Dean may choose to send the unmarked project to another examiner as a ‘blind marking’, or may choose to send both the marked project as well as the student’s appeal and supervisor’s report detailing the issues perceived to have influenced the mark awarded, or may choose another course of action in relation to the student’s appeal.
- The ACT Dean may also communicate to the student’s college the existence of the grievance, the outcome of the grievance, and any matters arising from the grievance that will support the Affiliated College in improving its academic quality and compliance with ACT policy.

### Advice to students

If your concerns are not resolved by the Dean of the ACT, or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may approach the Academic Appeals Committee. See **1.1.4** below for how to do this.

### 1.1.4: Appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee

#### Student’s action

- Put your grievance in writing, explaining clearly the nature of your complaint and the grounds for its appeal.
- Send it to the ACT’s Registrar (for the Academic Appeals Committee) within 15 days of receiving the ACT Dean’s written response.

**Note:** The membership of the Academic Appeals Committee is decided on a case-by-case basis (explained in the *Committees of the Academic Board Policy*, available at [www.actheology.edu.au](http://www.actheology.edu.au)). Therefore you should send your complaint through the ACT’s Registrar.

Where the ACT Registrar is convinced that the student has valid grounds for their appeal he/she may act on behalf of the Academic Appeals Committee without convening a formal meeting. If the determination of the ACT Registrar on behalf of the Academic Appeals Committee does not satisfy the student the ACT Registrar will then arrange a meeting of the Academic Appeals Committee and submit the student’s appeal to their judgement

See Part 4 of this document for Contact details for the Registrar

#### Response to the student’s appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee

- Acknowledge the formal appeal in writing within 5 days.
- Try to resolve the grievance within 15 days.
- Advise the student of the decision in writing, including:
  - setting out the reasons the final grade was awarded
  - advising the student that if they do not agree with the decision, they have the right of formal appeal to an independent external agency
  - enclosing a copy of this policy and instructing the student to read it.
- The Registrar may also communicate to the student’s college the existence of the grievance, the outcome of the grievance, and any matters arising from the grievance that will support the Affiliated College in improving its academic quality and compliance with ACT policy.

**Advice to students**

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of this appeal, you can make a final appeal free of charge to Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA), which is an independent third party.

Please see **3. External dispute resolution** for how to proceed with this step.

**1.2 Concerns about other academic matters**

In this policy, ‘other academic matters’ means matters relating to student admission or progression, the curriculum and awards in a course of study, and marks for intra-semester assessments. Students are encouraged to commence at 1.2.1 (informal resolution), but may choose to bypass this step and move to formal grievance resolution at 1.2.2.

**1.2.1: Informal resolution with the lecturer****Student’s action**

- Discuss your concern informally with the relevant lecturer at your college of enrolment.
- If the concern is about the result of an intra-semester assessment, ask that the assessment be reviewed by the lecturer of the unit of study.
- You must do this within 25 days of the academic decision.

**Lecturer’s action**

- Respond to and deal with the matter promptly, giving a full explanation of the reasons for the action, inaction or academic decision.
- If the student’s concerns are not resolved, explain the next step, as set out below.
- Give the student a copy of this policy and instruct them to read it.

**Advice to students**

If your concerns are not resolved by the lecturer, or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may contact the Academic Dean of your college of enrolment. This may be done on an informal or a formal basis. See **1.2.2** below for how to do this.

**Note 1:** If you choose to approach the Academic Dean informally, this does not prevent you making a formal appeal later if necessary.

**Note 2:** There may be a fee for a formal appeal. See <https://actheology.edu.au/fees/> for fee values.

**1.2.2: Appeal to the Academic Dean****INFORMAL COMPLAINT**

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**Student’s action**

- Contact the Academic Dean to discuss your concern in person.
- You must do this within 15 days of the outcome of your discussion with the lecturer.

**Academic Dean’s action**

- Respond to the student’s concern promptly, giving a full explanation of the reasons for the academic decision, action or inaction.



## FORMAL COMPLAINT

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### Student's action

- Put your grievance in writing, explaining clearly the nature of your complaint and the grounds for its appeal, and send it to the Academic Dean.
- You must do this within 15 days of the outcome of your discussion with the lecturer, or if you have chosen to bypass 1.2.1 of this policy, within 25 days of the academic decision.

### Academic Dean's action

**Note:** If the Academic Dean was involved in the original decision, the college Principal must appoint another person of appropriate rank and expertise to review the matter.

- Acknowledge the grievance in writing within 5 days.
- Try to resolve the grievance within 15 days.
- If the grievance relates to the mark for an intra-semester assessment, arrange for the assessment to be marked by another lecturer in the same college.
- Advise the student of your decision in writing, including:
  - setting out your reasons
  - advising that if the student does not agree with the decision, they have the right of formal appeal to the Dean of the ACT
  - enclosing a copy of this policy and instructing the student to read it.

### Advice to students

If your concerns of an informal complaint are not resolved by the Academic Dean of your college, or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may lodge a formal complaint to the Academic Dean under this section of the policy. See **1.2.2** above below for how to do this.

If your concerns of a formal complaint are not resolved by the Academic Dean of your college, or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may contact the Dean of the ACT. See **1.2.3** below for how to do this.

### 1.2.3: Appeal to the Dean of the ACT

#### Student's action

- Put your grievance in writing, explaining clearly the nature of your complaint and the grounds for its appeal, and send it to the Dean of the ACT.
- You must do this within 15 days of receiving the Academic Dean's written response.

See Part 4 of this document for Contact details for the Dean of the ACT
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#### Note for students

If your complaint relates to the mark for an intra-semester assessment, the Dean may appoint an independent assessor who will re-mark the assessment script. A fee may apply for these appeals. See <https://actheology.edu.au/fees/> for fee values.

### Dean of the ACT's action

**Note:** If the Dean of the ACT was involved in the original decision that has become the matter in dispute, the Chair of the ACT Board must appoint another person of appropriate rank and expertise to review the matter.

- Acknowledge the grievance in writing within 5 days.
- Try to resolve the grievance within 15 days.
- If the grievance relates to the mark for an intra-semester assessment, consider having the assessment re-marked by another lecturer in a different college.
- Advise the student of your decision in writing, including:
  - setting out your reasons
  - advising the student that if they do not agree with the decision, they have the right of formal appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee
  - enclosing a copy of this policy and instructing the student to read it.
- The ACT Dean may also communicate to the student's college the existence of the grievance, the outcome of the grievance, and any matters arising from the grievance that will support the Affiliated College in improving its academic quality and compliance with ACT policy.

### Advice to students

If your concerns are not resolved by the Dean of the ACT, or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may approach the Academic Appeals Committee. See 1.2.4 below for how to do this.

### 1.2.4: Appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee

#### Student's action

- Put your grievance in writing, explaining clearly the nature of your concern and the grounds for its appeal.
- Send it to the ACT's Registrar for the attention of the Academic Appeals Committee.
- You must do this within 15 days of receiving the Dean of the ACT's written response.

**Note:** The membership of the Academic Appeals Committee is decided on a case-by-case basis (explained in the *Committees of the Academic Board Policy*, available at [www.actheology.edu.au](http://www.actheology.edu.au)). Therefore you should send your complaint through the ACT's Registrar.

Where the ACT Registrar is convinced that the student has valid grounds for their appeal he/she may act on behalf of the Academic Appeals Committee without convening a formal meeting. If the determination of the ACT Registrar on behalf of the Academic Appeals Committee does not satisfy the student the ACT Registrar will then arrange a meeting of the Academic Appeals Committee and submit the student's appeal to their judgement

See Part 4 of this document for Contact details for the Registrar

#### Response to the student's appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee

- Acknowledge the formal grievance in writing within 5 days.
- Try to resolve the grievance within 15 days.
- Advise the student of the Committee's decision in writing, including:

- setting out their reasons
  - if the grievance relates to the mark for an intra-semester assessment, advising that the decision is final
  - on other academic matters, advising the student that if they do not agree with the decision, they have the right of formal appeal to an independent external agency
  - enclosing a copy of this policy and instructing the student to read it.
- The Registrar may also communicate to the student’s college the existence of the grievance, the outcome of the grievance, and any matters arising from the grievance that will support the Affiliated College in improving its academic quality and compliance with ACT policy.

**Advice to students**

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of this appeal, you can make a final appeal free of charge to the Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA), which is an independent third party.

Please see **3. External dispute resolution** for how to proceed with this step.

## 2. Grievances about non-academic matters

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In this policy, ‘non-academic matters’ means various administrative and other matters related to fees, withdrawals, expulsion, allegations of bullying or harassment, etc, and any other action, inaction or decision that students may consider are interfering with the progress of their studies or with the granting of an award.

Students may lodge grievances without fear of reprisal, and the appeals process provides for review by an independent third party if internal processes do not resolve a grievance. Students are to commence at step 2.1a if the grievance relates to the college the student is/was enrolled in, or step 2.1b if the grievance relates to ACT policy or regulations.

### 2.1a Lodge Grievance to the Principal

#### Guidance for students

Take this step if your grievance relates to the college you are enrolled in.

#### Student’s action

- Put your grievance in writing, explaining clearly the nature of your concern and the grounds for its appeal, and send it to the Principal of your college.
- You must do this within 25 days of the decision, action or inaction.

#### Principal’s action

**Note:** If the Principal was involved in making the original decision, action or inaction that has become the matter in dispute, the Chair of the college council (or equivalent) must appoint another person of appropriate rank and expertise to review the matter.

- Acknowledge the grievance in writing within 5 days.
- Try to resolve the grievance within 15 days.
- Advise the student of your decision in writing, including:
  - setting out your reasons
  - advising the student that if they do not agree with the decision, they have the right of formal appeal to the Dean of the ACT
  - enclosing a copy of this policy and instructing the student to read it.

### 2.1b: Lodge Grievance to the ACT’s Registrar

#### Guidance for students

Take this step if your grievance relates to ACT policy or regulations.

#### Student’s action

- Put your grievance in writing, explaining clearly the nature of your concern and the grounds for its appeal, and send it to the ACT’s Registrar.
- You must do this within 25 days of the decision, action or inaction.

**Registrar' action**

**Note:** If the Registrar was involved in making the original decision, action or inaction that has become the matter in dispute, the Dean of the ACT must appoint another person of appropriate rank and expertise to review the matter.

- Acknowledge the grievance in writing within 5 days.
- Try to resolve the grievance within 15 days.
- Advise the student of your decision in writing, including
  - setting out your reasons
  - advising the student that if they do not agree with the decision, they have the right of formal appeal to the Dean of the ACT
  - enclosing a copy of this policy and instructing the student to read it.

See Part 4 of this document for  
Contact details for the Registrar

**2.2: Appeal to the Dean of the ACT****Guidance for students**

If your concerns are not resolved by the Principal or the Registrar, as applicable, or if you believe the process has not been followed, you may contact the Dean of the ACT. This may only be done on a formal basis, as follows:

**Student's action**

- Put your grievance in writing, explaining clearly the nature of your concern and the grounds for its appeal, and send it to the Dean of the ACT.
- You must do this within 15 days of receiving the written response from the Principal or Registrar.

See Part 4 of this document for  
Contact details for the Dean of the  
ACT

**Dean of the ACT's action**

**Note:** If the Dean of the ACT was involved in the original decision that has become the matter in dispute, the Chair of the ACT Board must appoint another person of appropriate rank and expertise to review the matter.

- Acknowledge the grievance in writing within 5 days.
- Try to resolve the grievance within 15 days.
- Advise the student of your decision in writing, including:
  - setting out the reasons for the decision
  - advising the student that if they do not agree with the decision, they have the right of formal appeal to an independent external agency
  - enclosing a copy of this policy and instructing the student to read it.

- The ACT Dean may also communicate to the student’s college the existence of the grievance, the outcome of the grievance, and any matters arising from the grievance that will support the Affiliated College in improving its academic quality and compliance with ACT policy.

**Advice to students**

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of this appeal, you can make a final appeal free of charge to the Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA), which is an independent third party.

Please see **3. External dispute resolution** for how to proceed with this step.

**Note for Colleges**

If an affiliated college is dissatisfied with the ACT Dean’s decision, they should refer to the Affiliated College Appeal Policy.

### **3. External dispute resolution**

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Students who remain dissatisfied with the outcome of any appeal, except those related to a mark for an intra-semester assessment, may make a final written appeal – free of charge – to Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA).

Affiliate colleges and the ACT office may also make representations to IHEA regarding the matter.

IHEA is an independent third party, and its decisions are final and binding on all parties.

See Part 4 of this document for Contact details for the Independent Higher Education Australia
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## Part 3: Regulatory Bodies

If a student has a complaint about the ACT's actions, they may raise concerns with the Tertiary Education Quality & Standards Agency (TEQSA) regarding the ACT's registration as an education and course provider.

TEQSA does not deal with students' academic or non-academic grievances. Those grievances are dealt with under this policy.

See Part 4 of this document for Contact details for TEQSA

An overseas student may lodge a complaint with the Overseas Student Ombudsman if he/she is not satisfied with the way that his/her complaint has been handled by a provider. You can complain about the ACT if you believe ACT or its colleges have not followed the rules correctly or treated you fairly. Complaints might be about:

- refusing admission to a course
- course fees and refunds
- course or provider transfers
- course progress or attendance
- cancellation of enrolment
- accommodation or work arranged by your provider

You can also complain if a provider has failed to take action or is taking too long to take some action. This might include, failing to provide student results in the normal timeframe, or failing to provide services included in the student's written agreement with the provider, for example.

See Part 4 of this document for Contact details for the Overseas Students Ombudsman

## Part 4: Administration and contact details

### Contact details

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Dean of the ACT

Prof James Dalziel  
Dean & CEO  
Australian College of Theology  
Level 5, 33 York Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Ph: 02 9262 7890  
[CEO@actheology.edu.au](mailto:CEO@actheology.edu.au)

ACT Registrar

Mr Simon Davies  
Registrar  
Australian College of Theology  
Level 5, 33 York Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Ph: 02 9262 7890  
[registrar@actheology.edu.au](mailto:registrar@actheology.edu.au)

Tertiary Education Quality & Standards Agency (TEQSA)

TEQSA  
GPO Box 1672  
MELBOURNE VIC 3001  
Ph: 1300 739 585  
[www.teqsa.edu.au](http://www.teqsa.edu.au)  
[enquiries@teqsa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@teqsa.gov.au)

Overseas Students Ombudsman

Commonwealth Ombudsman  
GPO Box 442  
Canberra ACT 2601  
Ph: 1300 362 072  
<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>

IHEA

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Suite 612, Level 6  
198 Harbour Esplanade  
Docklands VIC 3008  
Ph: (03) 9642 5212

### Administration

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Policy owner	Board of Directors of the ACT
Location of the policy	The policy is published on the ACT website <a href="http://www.actheology.edu.au">www.actheology.edu.au</a> .
Applicable legislation and standards	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015, Section 2.4.  TEQSA Act 2011, section 26 (delivery of courses through affiliate colleges must comply at all times with the Threshold Standards)



	Educational Services to Overseas Students Act (2000) National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities' Providers of Education to Overseas Students, 2018
Review of policy	Every two years
Last update	August 2021 (Board of Directors)

## Part 5: Principles of natural justice

All staff involved in resolving a grievance have a duty to observe the principles of natural justice (or ‘procedural fairness’). In summary, they encompass the following elements:

1. The right of the student to a fair hearing.
2. The right to an independent, unbiased decision-maker.
3. A final decision that is based solely on the relevant evidence with all submissions considered.



Summary of Grievance Resolution Procedures

