



## STUDENT ACADEMIC COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

*Te Kupenga is a leading provider of Catholic thought leadership, knowledge and faith formation in NZ and is the home of three national agencies: the Catholic Theological College, responsible for providing approved tertiary qualifications; the National Centre for Religious Studies, responsible for supporting religious education in Catholic schools; and the Nathaniel Centre for Bioethics, responsible for research and advocacy on bioethical issues.*

*For those involved in a University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA) degree or course, UNDA Policies and Procedures also apply. Where there is a conflict between this policy and UNDA policies, the UNDA policies should be followed.*

### Purpose

1. To ensure the services provided by Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College (CTC) are meeting the needs of students and prospective students.
2. To respond quickly and fairly to student concerns.
3. To provide fair and equitable resolution to complaints, grievances and/or appeals.

### Scope

This policy relates primarily to complaints raised by students relating to teaching, classes, or academic matters.

For complaints against Te Kupenga personnel for actions related to conduct or human rights concerns, refer to the Disputes, Complaints and Legal Protections Policy.

For International Students who feel that the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice has been breached, refer to NZQA for the process of reporting an alleged breach.

For complaints against student behaviour, refer to the Student Behaviour and Conduct Policy.

For complaints against students for academic dishonesty, or for unethical research or field placement activities, refer to the Academic Integrity Policy.

Where the issue regards a minor (under 18) or a vulnerable adult, whether current or historic, refer to the Safeguarding Policy.

## Principles

1. All actions taken under this policy will be based on the values and mission of Te Kupenga and will be underpinned by mutual respect and fairness.
2. All persons involved in a formal complaint, grievance or appeals process will have the right to be informed that a complaint, grievance or appeal concerning them has been made, that they will be consulted as part of the investigation, and that they will be informed of the outcome of that process.
3. Those involved in the process of a complaint, grievance or appeal will maintain confidentiality and procedural fairness.
4. Students who bring a complaint or grievance, or who request an appeal of a decision, will be treated without bias, pre-judgement or disadvantage.
5. Students and staff of CTC will familiarise themselves with and adhere to all the relevant regulations, written procedures and standards of conduct outlined in CTC's pertinent policies and procedures.
6. CTC reserves the right to deal with a frivolous, vexatious or malicious complaint or grievance through the Student Behaviour and Personal Conduct Policy.
7. At any point of intervention, all parties have the right to have an advocate and/or whānau/family support present.
8. If at any time the student does not feel safe or able to approach the person directly, they may move to the next level of the process.
9. Response times are given to ensure concerns are dealt with promptly, for all parties. However, where there are valid reasons why these have not been adhered to, this will be taken into consideration in any decision.
10. For clarity, durations of time are in calendar days rather than working days.

## PROCEDURES

### *Assessment or Academic Issues*

These procedures relate to complaints and grievances regarding assessment, or concerns with teaching and/or classes.

1. The student should approach the lecturer in person, where they feel able and safe to do so, to raise the concern in a conversation. Many concerns may be clarified or solved in this way.
2. Where they do not feel they are able to approach the lecturer in person, or where they are not satisfied with the response:
  - a. The student shall write to the lecturer about the cause of complaint or grievance stating fully the matter for concern.
  - b. The lecturer shall reply formally in a written reply within seven days of the receipt of letter, with an explanation and decision. A copy of or link to this policy should be given with the reply.
3. For cases where complainant is not satisfied with the decision, or where they feel they cannot approach the lecturer:
  - a. The student shall write to the Dean within seven days of the receipt of written reply from lecturer, stating the complaint and attaching the correspondence to date.
  - b. In cases where the student has felt that they cannot approach the lecturer, they should contact the Dean within seven days of the issue occurring, stating the complaint and attaching any relevant documentation.
  - c. The Dean shall consult appropriately with all parties concerned. Where the dispute is over an assessment, an internal moderator shall mark the assessment task. Both parties shall be informed of the decision in writing within seven days.

4. Right of Appeal: internal  
For cases where the student is not satisfied with the above two procedures:
  - a. The student shall write to the Director within seven days of receipt of the Dean's written decision, enclosing all correspondence.
  - b. The Director shall review the case and consult appropriately. Where the dispute is over an assessment, the Director will arrange for an external moderator to mark the assessment task.
  - c. The Director will inform both parties of the decision.
5. Right of Appeal: external  
For cases where student is not satisfied with the above, there shall be a right of appeal. Students can take recourse with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority or ITENZ; contact information is below.

### ***Administrative Issues***

These procedures relate to complaints and grievances arising from office matters or any other administrative related issues.

1. The student should approach the administrator in person, where they feel able and safe to do so, to raise the concern in a conversation. Many concerns may be clarified or solved in this way.
2. For cases where it is applicable to firstly approach the staff member concerned:
  - a. The student shall write to the member of staff, stating the matter.
  - b. The member of staff shall write to the complainant within seven days of receipt of the letter, with an explanation and decision. A copy of or link to this policy should be given with the reply.
3. For cases where complainant is not satisfied with the above:
  - a. The student shall write to the Registrar within seven days of receipt of letter from the member of staff, enclosing both original statements.
  - b. The Registrar shall consult appropriately and inform the complainant of decision, within seven days of receipt of letter from complainant.
4. Right of Appeal  
For cases where the above is not to the satisfaction of the complainant:
  - a. The student shall write to Director within seven days of receipt of the Registrar's written decision, enclosing all correspondence.
  - b. The Director shall consult appropriately and, in instances where policy matters are in question, will reserve the right to take the issue to the Academic Advisory Board or Governance Board for consultation. The Director shall inform the complainant of the decision within four weeks of the receipt of the letter.
5. For cases where it is not appropriate for the complainant to contact the staff member concerned in the first instance, the complaint should follow the subsequent steps.

### ***Withdrawal and Refunds Issues***

These procedures relate to complaints and grievances arising from withdrawal and refunds issues.

1. The student should firstly contact the Registrar:
  - a. The student shall write to the Registrar, stating the matter.
  - b. The Registrar shall write to the complainant within seven days of receipt of the letter, stating the decision. A copy of or link to this policy should be given with the reply.
2. Right of Appeal  
For cases where the above is not to the satisfaction of the complainant, or where there is a reason that they are not able to approach the Registrar:

- a. The student shall write to Director within seven days of receipt of the Registrar's written decision, enclosing all correspondence.
- b. The Director shall consult appropriately and, in instances where policy matters are in question, will reserve the right to take the issue to the Academic Advisory Board or its equivalent, for consultation. The Director shall inform the complainant of the decision within four weeks of the receipt of the letter.

In the case where students are not satisfied with the internal and external procedures at CTC and would like a resolution service, they are advised to contact the Independent Tertiary Education New Zealand (ITENZ) Quality Commission, of which CTC is a member.

Information can be found at <http://www.itenz.co.nz/quality-commission/services/>

Contact details:

Email: [admin@itenz.co.nz](mailto:admin@itenz.co.nz)

Free phone: 0800 692737

In the case where students are not satisfied with the internal and external procedures at CTC, they are advised to contact the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).

The NZQA contact details are:

Level 13, 125 The Terrace

WELLINGTON

Tel: (04) 463 3000

Fax: (04) 463 3112

### **Review and Approval**

The *Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy & Procedures* are subject to the normal three-year review cycle. The Academic Advisory Board should be consulted as part of the review process, before approval by the Te Kupenga Governance Board.

Reviewed: October 2024

Next review: October 2027