



Brisbane College of Theology

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GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The College is committed to maintaining the highest levels of equity, justice and fairness in carrying out its mission of providing an academic environment founded on ecumenical cooperation between its member schools. The College seeks to maintain an excellent reputation for the integrity of its programs and its sense of community.

As members of our community, students are entitled to justice in all their interactions with the College. Unresolved grievances prevent students from gaining the full benefit from their study program. Consequently, the College's Grievance Procedures are based on the standards of fairness and natural justice established in common law and upheld by the College's Vision Statement.

In this policy **student** refers to a person enrolled in a course at the Brisbane College of Theology; and also to persons seeking to enrol in courses at the College.

These Grievance Procedures will be published on the BCT website at www.bct.edu.au and in the handbook, available in CD-Rom format, free of charge from the College.

Two separate grievance procedures exist:

1. **Academic related grievances**; and
2. **Non-academic grievances** related to matters of institutional procedures and practice.

1. ACADEMIC-RELATED GRIEVANCES

The procedure for academic-related grievances provides for complaints on issues such as admissions, recognition of prior learning, student assessment and academic grades, other course-related matters, issues related to awards and is available to both current and prospective students.

Students at the Brisbane College of Theology have access to a three stage academic grievance process which is set out below. Each stage is free of charge.

1.1 Initial Grievance

If a student considers that an error has been made or an injustice exists in relation to any of these matters, the student should initially discuss his/her concerns with the appropriate academic or administrative person responsible for that aspect of the course.

1.2 Applying for a resolution of the Initial Grievance

Should the student not be satisfied with the outcome of such a discussion, he/she may apply for a formal review of the decision concerned.

1.2.1 Applications for the first review should be submitted in writing to the Academic Dean of the student's Member School within fourteen days of the receipt of the results (assessment item or final grade) or other decision related to such matters as admission, RPL, other course-related matter or issues related to programs and awards, or other decision.

1.2.2 The application should include all necessary information and documentation, and should state clearly the specific grounds upon which the request for a review of the original decision is based.

1.2.3 Should a student, or prospective student, for whatever reason, choose not to seek a resolution of the original grievance with the staff member involved, and in the manner prescribed, such choice will not prevent such student or prospective student taking the matter directly to their Academic Dean for a resolution. Application to the Academic Dean can, in this case, be classified as both an initial application and a first review.

1.2.4 The Academic Dean may, if she/he feels it appropriate, deal with the matter her/himself. If they should deem it not appropriate to do so, they will refer it directly to the Academic Committee.

1.3 Application for Review – Academic Committee

If the Academic Dean chooses to deal with the application her/himself and the student is subsequently not satisfied with the decision of the Academic Dean on the matter, the Academic Dean must, then, at the request of the student, or prospective student, refer the matter to the Academic Committee, or the student or prospective student may choose to do so themselves, directly and in writing. This application should be submitted within fourteen days of the Academic Dean's decision.

1.3.1 Upon receipt of an application for a review, the Academic Committee will appoint a sub-committee drawn from its members, including at least one external member, to investigate the complaint and the student will be invited to make further written and/or oral representation to the sub-committee.

1.3.2 The result of the review by the sub-committee will be communicated to the student in writing within twenty-one days of the receipt of the appeal unless a further extension of time is mutually agreed.

1.4 Application for Review – Dean of the Brisbane College of Theology

Where a student is not satisfied with the decision of the sub-committee appointed by the Academic Committee, the student may appeal to the Dean of the Brisbane College of Theology.

1.4.1 The Dean will appoint an independent, external person or body to make recommendations to the College within twenty-one days of the receipt of the appeal.

1.4.2 The following persons are the College's external reviewers and may review decisions singly, or in a combination to form a panel, as required:

- Dr Peter Ralphs, Principal, Bible College of Queensland, Brisbane.
- Pastor Brian Millis, Principal, Christian Heritage College, Brisbane.
- Revd Bruce Alder, Principal, Nazarene Theological College, Brisbane.

If the initial grievance relates to a decision made by the Dean of the College, the student may make the complaint to the President of the Council, who will appoint an independent external person or body to make recommendations to the College within six weeks of the receipt of the appeal.

At each stage in this grievance procedure, the College will provide reasons and full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedure if requested by the complainant and / or the respondent.

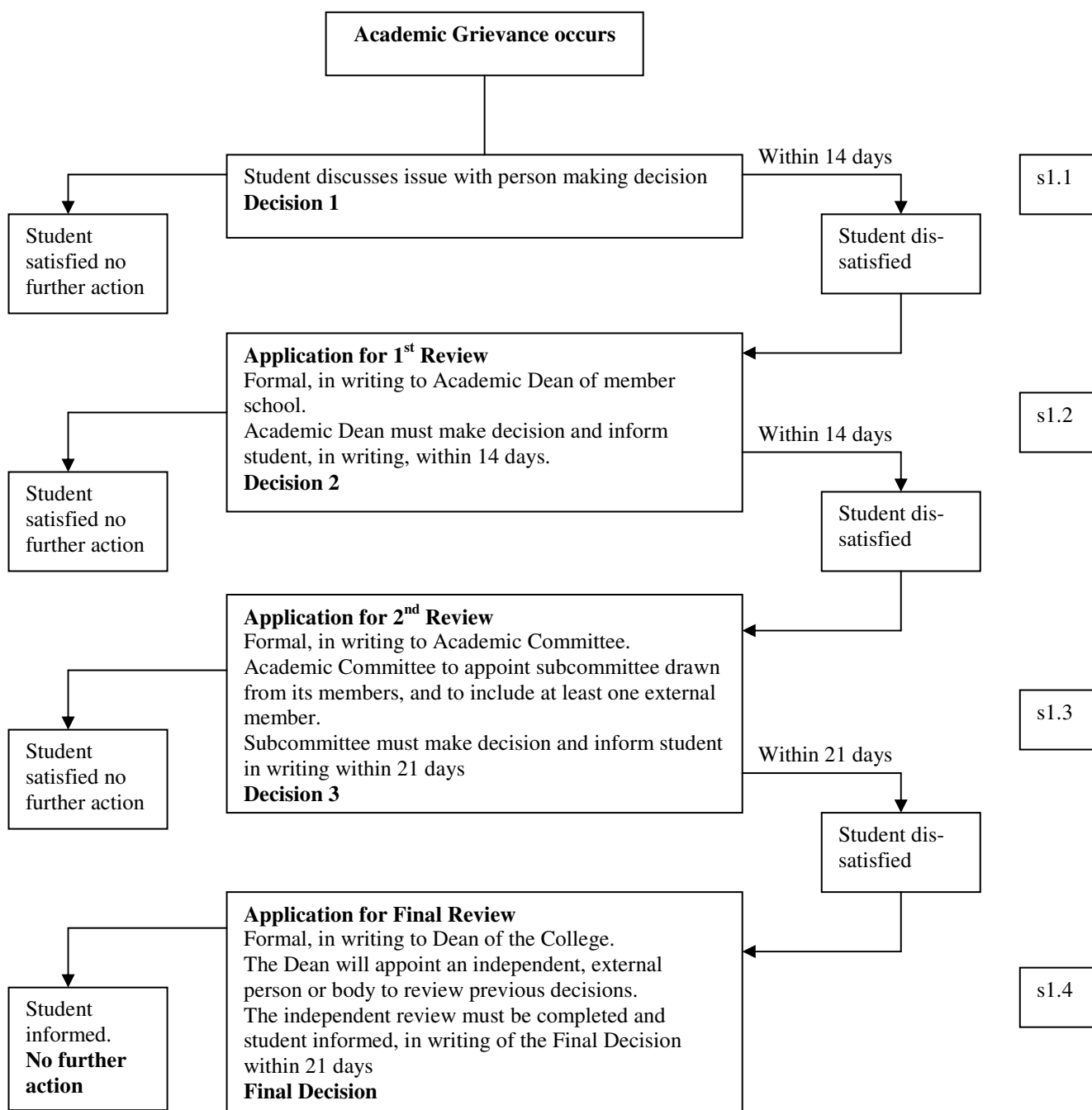
The College will not victimise or discriminate against any complainant or respondent, even if some of the procedural steps are not carried out in the exact order as detailed here.

The complainant and/or the respondent are permitted to be accompanied and assisted by a third party at any stage throughout the process.

Confidentiality

1. The College will retain confidential records relating to grievances for at least five years, and allow parties to the complaint appropriate to these records.
2. The records will be kept in the BCT Registry Office.
3. Access to the records will be limited to the senior officers of the College.

Flow Chart of Academic Grievance Procedure



2. NON-ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES

The procedure for non-academic grievances addresses student grievances of an administrative nature, such as institutional practices, financial issues, resources, marketing, physical access for students with disabilities to facilities and services, and other non-academic issues related to the Brisbane College of Theology.

Students at the Brisbane College of Theology have access to a three stage non-academic grievance process which is set out below. Each stage is free of charge.

2.1 Initial Grievance

If a student considers that an error has been made or an injustice exists in relation to any of these matters, the student should initially discuss his/her concerns with the appropriate academic or administrative staff member concerned.

2.2 Applying for a Resolution of the Initial Grievance

Should the student not be satisfied with the outcome of such a discussion, he/she may submit a formal statement of his/her grievance to the Registrar within fourteen days, or, should the issue concern the BCT Registry, with the Dean.

2.2.1 Should a student, or prospective student, for whatever reason, choose not to seek a resolution of the original grievance with the staff member involved, and in the manner prescribed, such choice will not prevent such student or prospective student taking the matter directly to the BCT Registrar for a resolution. Application to the Registrar can, in this case, be classified as both an initial application and a first review.

2.2.2 Upon receipt of a complaint the Registrar (or the Dean, as appropriate) will convene a review panel to which both the student and the lecturer or administration staff member may make such written and/or oral submissions as they consider appropriate. The review panel will meet within six weeks and its decision will be communicated to the student in writing within a further two weeks.

2.3 Application for Review – Administrative Committee

Should the student not be satisfied with the decision of the review panel, he/she may appeal within fourteen days to the College's Administrative Committee.

2.3.1 The Administrative Committee will appoint a sub-committee drawn from its external members to investigate the complaint and the student will be invited to make further written and/or oral representation to the sub-committee.

2.3.2 The result of this investigation will be communicated to the student within twenty-one days of the receipt of the appeal unless a further extension of time is mutually agreed.

2.4 Application for Review – Dean of the Brisbane College of Theology

Should the student not be satisfied with the decision of the sub-committee of the Administrative Committee, the student may appeal to the Dean of the Brisbane College of Theology.

2.4.1 The Dean will appoint an independent, external person or body to make recommendations to the College within twenty-one days of the receipt of the appeal.

2.4.2 The following persons are the College's external reviewers and may review decisions singly, or in a combination to form a panel, as required:

- Dr Peter Ralphs, Principal, Bible College of Queensland, Brisbane.
- Pastor Brian Millis, Principal, Christian Heritage College, Brisbane.
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If the initial grievance relates to a decision made by the Dean of the College, the student may make the complaint to the President of the Council, who will appoint an independent external person or body to make recommendations to the College within six weeks of the receipt of the appeal.

At each stage in this grievance procedure, the College will provide reasons and full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedure if requested by the complainant and / or the respondent.

The College will not victimise or discriminate against any complainant or respondent, even if some of the procedural steps are not carried out in the exact order as detailed here.

The complainant and/or the respondent are permitted to be accompanied and assisted by a third party at any stage throughout the process.

Confidentiality

1. The College will retain confidential records relating to grievances for at least five years, and allow parties to the complaint appropriate access to these records.
2. The records will be kept in a secure location in the BCT Registry Office.
3. Access to these records will be limited to the senior officers of the College

Flow Chart of Non-Academic Grievance Procedure

