

Christ Theological College

Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

Level 5/5 Microcredentials Provision - Validated by Union School of Theology

Document Control

Version: 2.0 (consolidates and supersedes the separate Academic Appeals Policy v1.0 and Academic Appeals Procedure v1.0)

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Applicable Programmes: CTC Micro-credentials (Level 4/5)

Applies to: All students registered on CTC provision, and applicants complaining about the handling of an application, including those studying or applying from outside the United Kingdom.

Validating Partner: Union School of Theology

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1. Policy Framework and Related Documents

This policy has been developed with reference to external reference points.¹

This policy should be read alongside the following CTC documents:

- Student Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Assessment and Moderation Policy
- Mitigating Circumstances Procedure
- Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policy
- Quality Assurance Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Programme Handbook for the relevant microcredential

Where any provision of this policy is found to conflict with the requirements of the validation agreement between CTC and UST, the validation agreement takes precedence and this policy will be amended at the earliest opportunity.

2. Introduction and Definitions

2.1 Christ Theological College (CTC) exists to equip and empower Christians from around the world to follow Christ and serve in God's mission, through contextually relevant theological education and ministerial training in the United Kingdom and beyond. Fair, transparent and consistent academic decision-making is integral to that purpose and to the trust students place in their qualifications.

2.2 The purpose of the academic appeals process is to give students a clear and accessible means of asking for an academic decision to be reviewed where they believe that the decision was not reached in accordance with CTC's published regulations and procedures.

¹ The list is not exhaustive. Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, *UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Advice and Guidance - Concerns, Complaints and Appeals* (Gloucester: QAA, 2018), 3-5; QAA, *Characteristics Statement: Microcredentials* (Gloucester: QAA, 2022), 6-9. Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, *The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies* (Gloucester: QAA, 2024), 20-24; Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, *The Good Practice Framework: Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals* (Reading: OIA, 2016), 10-14. The Framework is used here as a design benchmark for procedural fairness; it does not of itself confer a route of external review on CTC students, whose external escalation route is set out at Section 14. Union School of Theology, *Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure, version 1.5* (November 2025). CTC provision is validated by UST, and this procedure is designed to be compatible with the UST procedure at the point of escalation; Equality Act 2010.

2.3 An academic appeal is defined as a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progression, assessment and awards.²

2.4 An academic appeal is concerned with how a decision was reached, not with whether the academic judgement exercised was correct. Students may not appeal simply because they disagree with the mark or classification awarded.

2.5 The following terms are used throughout this document:

Term	Meaning
Appellant	The student submitting the appeal.
Academic decision	A decision on an assessment outcome, module mark, progression or final award.
Academic judgement	A judgement made about a matter where only the opinion of an academic expert is sufficient, such as the academic quality of a piece of work assessed against published criteria.
Mitigating circumstances	Circumstances beyond the student's control that could not reasonably have been foreseen or prevented, and which adversely affected performance.
Procedural irregularity	A departure from CTC's published regulations, procedures or assessment arrangements that may have affected the outcome.
Working day	Monday to Friday, excluding UK public holidays and published CTC closure periods.
Calendar day	Every day of the week, including weekends and public holidays.

2.6 Where this document specifies a period in calendar days, that period runs from the day after the relevant notification is sent. Where a deadline falls on a day on which CTC is closed, it is extended to the next working day.

3. Scope of the Policy

3.1 This policy applies to all students registered on CTC microcredential provision at Levels 4 and 5, whether studying from within or outside the United Kingdom.

3.2 The policy covers appeals against:

- an individual assessment outcome or module mark

² QAA, Concerns, Complaints and Appeals, 3. The definition adopted here follows the Quality Code's formulation of an academic appeal as a request for review of a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on student progression, assessment and awards.

- a decision on progression between stages or modules
- a decision on the conferment, or non-conferment, of a final microcredential award
- a penalty imposed following a finding of academic misconduct, where the appeal concerns the process followed or the proportionality of the penalty

3.3 The policy does not cover the following, which are addressed elsewhere:

Matter	Where it is dealt with
Dissatisfaction with teaching, supervision, resources, administration or the conduct of staff	Student Complaints Policy and Procedure
A request for circumstances to be taken into account before a decision is made	Mitigating Circumstances Procedure
A challenge to a finding of fact in an academic misconduct case	Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policy
A decision on an application for admission	Admissions Policy
Disagreement with academic judgement alone	Not admissible under any CTC procedure, see Section 7

3.4 Where a student raises a matter that falls partly under this policy and partly under another, the Academic Dean will determine which procedure applies to each element, will explain that determination to the student in writing, and will ensure that the elements are handled in a coordinated way. Where one element must be resolved before another can be considered, the student will be told this and given an expected timeframe.

3.5 If, at any point during an appeal, information emerges that raises a safeguarding concern, the person handling the appeal will refer the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the Safeguarding Policy. The safeguarding response takes precedence, and the appeal will be paused only for as long as is necessary.

4. Principles of the Policy

4.1 CTC aims to respond to any enquiry or appeal confidentially, fairly and promptly. Staff will be courteous to the appellant, will respond constructively and will, wherever possible, offer practical solutions.

4.2 The appeals process is evidence-based and procedurally focused. The appellant is responsible for setting out the ground relied upon and for supplying the evidence that supports it.

4.3 Decisions at each stage are taken by a person who was not involved in the decision being appealed. Where the size of the College makes complete separation difficult, CTC will use an external reviewer drawn from the External Examiner or from a person nominated by the validating partner, and will record why that step was necessary.

4.4 No student will be disadvantaged, or treated less favourably, as a result of submitting an appeal in good faith. Any suggestion that a student has been disadvantaged for this reason will be treated as a serious matter under the Student Complaints Policy and, where staff are involved, the Code of Conduct.

4.5 Appeals will be handled with due regard to data protection. Where an appellant wishes evidence to remain confidential, CTC will discuss with the appellant how the evidence can best be submitted, recognising that it may not always be possible to investigate thoroughly without disclosing evidence to those involved.

4.6 A written record is kept of every formal appeal and review, including the evidence considered, the reasoning applied and the outcome communicated.

4.7 The appellant will always be informed in writing of the outcome, with reasons for the decision, and will at the same time be told what further stage, if any, remains available.

4.8 An appeal may be withdrawn without prejudice at any point (Section 16).

4.9 CTC will not investigate an appeal that it considers to be frivolous or vexatious. A decision that an appeal is frivolous or vexatious will be taken by the Academic Dean, recorded with reasons, and communicated in writing with an explanation of the basis for that view. Persistence, strength of feeling, or an unsuccessful earlier appeal do not of themselves make an appeal vexatious.

4.10 CTC aims to complete the full internal process, from receipt of the formal appeal to the issue of a Completion of Internal Procedures letter, within 90 calendar days. Where this is not achievable, the appellant will be informed in writing, given the reason and given a revised date.

4.11 Reasonable adjustments will be made to the operation of this procedure for disabled students and for students with additional learning needs.³ Adjustments

³ Equality Act 2010, s. 20 (duty to make reasonable adjustments).

may include extended deadlines, alternative submission formats, the provision of documents in accessible formats, or support in articulating the appeal.

4.12 CTC recognises that many of its students study from outside the United Kingdom and across differing time zones. Deadlines are calculated to the end of the day in the student's own time zone, and CTC will not treat a delay caused by CTC's own communication arrangements as the student's default.

5. Quality Framework: Approach, Deployment, Review, Improvement (ADRI)

CTC applies the ADRI model to the design, operation and evaluation of this procedure.

5.1 Approach (philosophy and design)

CTC adopts a transparent and academically robust approach to appeals in which academic decisions may be reviewed only on defined procedural grounds. The design is proportionate to the scale of the College: the number of stages is limited to three, decision-making authority is vested in named individual post-holders rather than standing committees, and independence at the review stage is secured through the External Examiner or a nominee of the validating partner where internal separation is not possible.

5.2 Deployment (implementation)

The approach is deployed through a published three-stage process (Sections 10-12), supported by standard forms (Appendices A and B), defined timescales (Appendix C), and named responsible post-holders (Section 8). The policy is published on the CTC website and the virtual learning environment, referenced in each Programme Handbook, and introduced at student induction.

5.3 Review (evaluation)

Each appeal is evaluated on the evidence submitted and against CTC's published regulations. At institutional level, the Academic Dean prepares an annual summary of appeals activity recording volume, grounds relied upon, outcomes, timescale compliance and any recurring themes. That summary is considered by the Governing Board and made available to the validating partner on request.

5.4 Improvement (enhancement)

Findings from individual appeals and from the annual summary are used to improve assessment design, the clarity of assessment briefs and marking criteria, the consistency of internal moderation, the quality of feedback, and staff

development.⁴ Where an appeal reveals a defect in a procedure, the Academic Dean records the defect, the corrective action, the person responsible and the completion date, and reports completion to the Governing Board.

6. Grounds for Appeal

6.1 An appeal may be brought only on one or more of the grounds set out below. The appellant must state which ground or grounds are relied upon and provide supporting evidence.

6.2 Ground A - Procedural irregularity

There was a material irregularity in the conduct of the assessment or in the process by which the decision was reached, of such a nature that it may have affected the outcome. Examples include an assessment conducted otherwise than in accordance with the published arrangements, a failure to apply an agreed reasonable adjustment, or a failure to convene moderation as required.

6.3 Ground B - failure to apply CTC regulations correctly

CTC failed to apply its own published regulations in reaching the decision, including an administrative error in the recording, calculation, aggregation or transcription of marks.

6.4 Ground C - Assessment criteria not applied fairly or consistently

The published learning outcomes, marking criteria or grade descriptors were not applied fairly or consistently. This ground concerns the application of the criteria as published; it does not extend to disagreement with the academic judgement exercised in applying them.

6.5 Ground D-Incorrect, unclear or incomplete information

The student was given incorrect, unclear or incomplete information about the requirements of the assessment, the submission deadline, the mode of submission or the consequences of non-submission, and was materially disadvantaged as a result.

6.6 Ground E- Mitigating circumstances not previously considered

The student's performance was significantly affected by circumstances which were not, and could not reasonably have been, made known to the relevant academic body before the decision was taken. The appellant must:

⁴ QAA, Concerns, Complaints and Appeals, 8, on the use of appeals data to inform enhancement of assessment and academic practice.

- a. provide documentary evidence of the circumstances from an appropriate independent source;
- b. explain the effect of the circumstances on the assessed work; and
- c. explain, with reasons, why the circumstances were not disclosed at the proper time.

CTC recognises that there are circumstances including bereavement, serious illness, mental ill-health, domestic abuse and matters carrying cultural stigma, which a student may have been genuinely unable or reasonably unwilling to disclose earlier. Such reasons will be considered sympathetically and the requirement in 6.6(c) will be applied with sensitivity and without requiring disclosure beyond what is necessary.

7. Grounds That Are Not Admissible

7.1 An appeal will not be admitted where it rests solely on:

- disagreement with academic judgement, that is, disagreement with the mark, grade or classification awarded, where the criteria were properly applied;
- unawareness of published regulations, including word counts, referencing requirements, submission methods and deadlines that were published in the Programme Handbook or assessment brief;
- re-argument of evidence already considered, without new material evidence or a demonstrated defect in how that evidence was handled;
- dissatisfaction with the outcome of a mitigating circumstances decision, where that decision was properly reached under the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure;
- general dissatisfaction with teaching, resources or services, which falls under the Student Complaints Policy.

7.2 Where an appeal is rejected as inadmissible, the appellant will be told in writing which ground was relied upon, why it is not admissible, and where relevant, which other CTC procedure is the appropriate route. Rejection on admissibility grounds does not prevent the student from requesting a review under Section 12.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility in the appeals process
Student (appellant)	Submits the appeal within the published deadline, states the ground relied upon, provides supporting evidence, and responds to reasonable requests for clarification.

Module Tutor	Provides clarification of feedback and marks at Stage 1; provides factual information and marking records to the Programme Leader at Stage 2 when requested.
Programme Leader	Conducts the initial consideration at Stage 2, determines whether there is a case to answer, and conducts or oversees the formal investigation where there is.
Registrar	Receives and logs appeals, issues acknowledgements, monitors timescales, maintains the appeals record and issues Completion of Internal Procedures letters.
Academic Dean	Owens this policy; determines which procedure applies where a matter is mixed; oversees Stage 2; appoints the reviewer at Stage 3; prepares the annual appeals summary.
Principal	Acts as reviewer at Stage 3 where not previously involved; approves the use of an external reviewer where internal independence cannot be assured.
External Examiner	Provides independent academic input where the appeal concerns the application of academic standards, and may act as reviewer at Stage 3 where internal independence is not achievable.
Governing Board	Approves this policy, receives the annual appeals summary, and assures itself that the procedure is operating fairly and within timescale.
Union School of Theology	Validating partner; receives escalated appeals once CTC's internal procedures are complete, in accordance with UST regulations.

8.1 Where a named post-holder is the subject of the appeal, or was involved in the decision being appealed, that person takes no part in handling the appeal. The Academic Dean will substitute an alternative post-holder and record the substitution. Where the Academic Dean is conflicted, the Principal will act; where both are conflicted, the Governing Board will appoint an external reviewer.

8.2 CTC does not operate a standing Board of Examiners of the size found in larger institutions. Where this procedure requires reconsideration of an award decision, that reconsideration is undertaken by the assessment panel convened for the relevant assessment period, comprising the Academic Dean, the Programme Leader and the relevant marker, with the External Examiner consulted. The composition and reasoning of that panel are minuted.

9. Structure of the Appeals Process

9.1 The appeals process consists of three stages:

Stage	Nature	Who decides	Section
Stage 1	Informal	Module Tutor /	Section 10

	clarification (optional)	Programme Leader	
Stage 2	Formal academic appeal	Programme Leader, overseen by Academic Dean	Section 11
Stage 3	Review of the appeal decision	Principal, nominee, or External Examiner	Section 12

9.2 Stage 1 is optional and does not extend the deadline for submitting a formal appeal under Stage 2.

9.3 Stage 2 must be completed before Stage 3 can be requested. Stage 3 must be completed before any external escalation under Section 14.

10. Stage 1: Informal Clarification

10.1 Students are encouraged, though not required, to seek clarification before submitting a formal appeal. Many concerns arise from a misunderstanding of feedback or of how criteria were applied, and can be resolved quickly and without formality.

10.2 Informal clarification may involve discussing feedback with the Module Tutor, requesting an explanation of how the marking criteria were applied, or asking the Programme Leader to confirm that the correct process was followed.

10.3 Requests for informal clarification should be made within 5 calendar days of the decision being communicated, so that the formal deadline at 11.2 is not put at risk.

10.4 Informal clarification does not replace the formal appeal process, does not extend the deadline for a formal appeal, and does not result in any change to a mark. Where a marking or administrative error is identified at this stage, it will be corrected under the Assessment and Moderation Policy without the need for a formal appeal, and the correction recorded.

10.5 Staff will keep a brief written note of any informal clarification, recording the date, the substance of the enquiry and the response given.

11. Stage 2: Formal Academic Appeal

11.1 How to submit

To submit a formal academic appeal, the student must complete the Formal Academic Appeal Form at Appendix A and submit it, together with all supporting evidence, to the Academic Dean Matthew.reifsnider@ctcollege.org. Paper and electronic submissions are both accepted.

11.2 Deadline

The completed form and all supporting evidence must be submitted within 10 calendar days of the date on which the academic decision was communicated to the student. Late submissions will be considered only where the student provides a good reason for the delay, which CTC will assess sympathetically, having particular regard to illness, bereavement and connectivity or time-zone difficulties affecting students studying at a distance.

11.3 Acknowledgement

The Registrar will acknowledge receipt in writing within 4 calendar days, confirm the ground or grounds relied upon as CTC understands them, name the person who will consider the appeal, and state the date by which the student can expect an outcome.

11.4 Initial consideration

The Programme Leader will review the appeal and the supporting evidence and determine, on first impressions, whether there is a case to answer. In doing so the Programme Leader will consider whether the appeal is in time, whether it relies on an admissible ground, and whether the evidence supplied is capable of supporting that ground.

11.5 Outcome of initial consideration

- (a) No case to answer. The student is informed in writing, with clear reasons, and is told of the right to request a review under Section 12. The written response will explain in full the basis on which the original academic decision was reached.
- (b) Case to answer. The appeal proceeds to formal investigation under 11.6, and the student is informed that it is doing so.

11.6 Formal investigation

Where there is a case to answer, the Programme Leader will:

- d. review the assessment record, including the assessment brief, marking criteria, marks, feedback and any moderation record;
- e. consult the first marker and, where applicable, the internal moderator;

- f. consult the External Examiner where the appeal concerns the application of academic standards or where internal agreement cannot be reached;
- g. evaluate any mitigating circumstances relied upon, together with the supporting evidence and the explanation for late disclosure;
- h. verify that CTC's published regulations and any agreed reasonable adjustments were applied; and
- i. where relevant, establish whether any irregularity identified affected other students, in which case Section 13.5 applies.

The investigation is a review of process and evidence. It does not involve re-marking the work as a matter of academic judgement, save where re-marking is directed as a remedy under Section 13.

11.7 Meetings

The Programme Leader may invite the student to a meeting, held online where the student studies at a distance. The student may be accompanied by a supporter in accordance with Section 17. A brief record of the meeting will be kept and a copy provided to the student.

11.8 Outcome and Timescales

The outcome will be communicated to the student in writing within 14 calendar days of receipt of the appeal, with reasons, together with any action required by the student or by CTC to implement the decision, and a statement of the right to request a review under Section 12. Where the External Examiner must be consulted and this cannot be completed within that period, the student will be told before the deadline expires, given the reason and given a revised date.

12. Stage 3: Review of the Appeal Decision

12.1 Purpose and nature of the review

The review stage is not a rehearing of the appeal. Its purpose is to consider whether the formal stage was conducted properly and whether the outcome reached was reasonable. The reviewer will not ordinarily reconsider the substance of the matter afresh.

12.2 Grounds for review

A review may be requested only on one or more of the following grounds:

- CTC's published procedures were not followed correctly at the formal stage;

- the outcome reached was not reasonable in all the circumstances;
- new material evidence is available which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier, together with an explanation of why it was not provided.
- Disagreement with the outcome, without more, is not a ground for review.

12.3 How and when to request a review

The student must complete the Review of Appeal Decision Form at Appendix B and submit it to the Registrar within 4 calendar days of receiving the Stage 2 outcome. The request will be acknowledged in writing within 3 calendar days. Where a student needs longer to obtain evidence or to formulate the request, an extension should be requested within the 4-day period and will not be unreasonably refused.

12.4 Who conducts the review

The review is conducted by a person not previously involved in the case – ordinarily the Principal or a nominee. Where internal independence cannot be assured because of the size of the College, the Academic Dean will, with the approval of the Principal, appoint the External Examiner or a reviewer nominated by the validating partner, and will record the reason for doing so.

12.5 Questions the review must consider

The reviewer will address, and record findings on, each of the following:

- j. Were CTC's published procedures followed at the formal stage?
- k. Was the outcome reasonable in all the circumstances?
- l. Has the student been given clear and sufficient reasons for the Stage 2 decision?
- m. Where new evidence is submitted, has the student given a valid reason for not providing it earlier, and is the evidence material?

12.6 Process and timescales

The reviewer will determine within 3 calendar days whether there is a case to answer on first impressions. Where there is, the reviewer may hold a meeting with the student, ordinarily online, within 5 calendar days. A record will be kept. The outcome of the review will be communicated in writing, with reasons, within 14 calendar days of receipt of the review request.

12.7 Possible review outcomes

- the original decision is upheld;
- the original decision is overturned;
- the matter is referred back to the formal stage for reconsideration, with directions as to what must be reconsidered and why.

Where the review is not upheld, the Registrar will issue a Completion of Internal Procedures letter at the same time as the outcome, and in any event within 5 calendar days of it (Section 14).

13. Outcomes and Remedies

13.1 The remedies available at Stage 2 and Stage 3 include:

- the appeal is rejected and the original decision stands;
- the appeal is upheld in whole or in part;
- correction of an administrative or calculation error;
- re-marking of the work by an independent marker who has not previously assessed it;
- an opportunity for reassessment, which may be as a first attempt and without penalty where the circumstances warrant;
- referral of the decision to the assessment panel for reconsideration under 8.2;
- an apology, an explanation, or a commitment to specified procedural change;
- a combination of the above.

13.2 The aim in selecting a remedy is, so far as reasonably possible, to place the student in the position they would have been in had the fault not occurred.⁵ A remedy will not be withheld solely because it is administratively inconvenient.

13.3 Where an appeal is upheld, CTC will confirm in writing what will be done, by whom and by when, and will confirm to the student once the remedy has been implemented.

13.4 A mark may go down as well as up where work is re-marked. The student will be told this in writing before a re-mark is commissioned and given the opportunity to withdraw the appeal.

⁵ OIA, Good Practice Framework, 26-28, on the principle that a remedy should so far as possible place the student in the position they would have occupied had the fault not occurred.

13.5 Where an irregularity is found to have affected students other than the appellant, the Academic Dean will ensure that all affected results are reconsidered, that the affected students are informed, and that the External Examiner and the validating partner are notified. This action will be taken whether or not those students have themselves appealed.

14. Completion of Internal Procedures and External Escalation

14.1 CTC's internal procedures are complete when the Stage 3 review outcome has been issued, or when the student has allowed the Stage 3 deadline to pass without requesting a review.

14.2 At that point the Registrar will issue a Completion of Internal Procedures letter, which will set out the substance of the appeal, the stages followed, the outcome at each stage, the reasons for the final decision, and the date on which internal procedures were completed.

14.3 Once internal procedures are complete, a student who remains dissatisfied may escalate the matter to Union School of Theology as validating partner, in accordance with UST's own regulations and within the time limit specified by UST. The Completion of Internal Procedures letter must accompany any such escalation.

14.4 UST contact point for escalated academic appeals: Dean of School, Union School of Theology imcgee@ust.ac.uk.

14.5 Any avenue of external review beyond UST is governed by UST's own regulations and validation arrangements. CTC does not operate an independent external review scheme of its own, and students should not approach an external body before CTC's internal procedures are complete and a Completion of Internal Procedures letter has been issued.

14.6 CTC will cooperate fully and promptly with any request for information from UST arising from an escalated appeal, and will implement any remedy directed by UST under the validation agreement.

15. Group Appeals

15.1 Where the same issue affects a number of students, a group appeal may be submitted. The group must nominate one student to act as the point of contact, and each member of the group must confirm in writing that they wish to be included.

15.2 A single investigation will be conducted and a single outcome issued, but each student will receive the outcome individually and each retains an individual right of review under Section 12.

16. Withdrawal of an Appeal

16.1 A student may withdraw an appeal at any stage by notifying the Registrar in writing. On withdrawal, the decision made at the previous stage stands and becomes the final outcome, and the case is closed.

16.2 Withdrawal is without prejudice to the student and will not be recorded in any way that could affect their standing or progression.

17. Support for Students

17.1 A student bringing an appeal may be accompanied or supported at any meeting by one person of their choosing. The supporter must be independent of the circumstances giving rise to the appeal and must not be a person providing pastoral support to the student through the same process.

17.2 The supporter may be a fellow student, a friend, a family member, a minister or a representative of the student's sending church or organisation. The supporter is present to support the student, not to advocate in the student's place, although the student may ask the supporter to speak on a particular point.

17.3 Students may seek guidance on the process itself from the Registrar. The Registrar will explain how the procedure works but will not advise on the merits of an appeal.

17.4 Where a student appears to be in distress, or where the matters raised suggest a welfare concern, staff will offer appropriate pastoral support, or signposting to external support, alongside the appeal. Engagement with pastoral support is voluntary and has no bearing on the outcome of the appeal.

17.5 CTC recognises that English is an additional language for a proportion of its students. Where language presents a barrier, CTC will allow additional time, accept an appeal expressed in plain terms without penalty as to form, and ensure that written outcomes are expressed clearly and without unnecessary technical language.

18. Records, Confidentiality and Data Protection

18.1 CTC maintains a record of every formal appeal, comprising the appeal form, supporting evidence, correspondence, notes of meetings, evidence considered, the reasoning applied and the outcome issued.

18.2 Appeal records are held securely in a restricted-access location within CTC's document management arrangements, accessible only to the Registrar, the Academic Dean, the Principal, and any person appointed to consider the specific case. The location and access controls are recorded in the CTC Information Asset Register.

18.3 Appeal records are retained for six years from the conclusion of the appeal, after which they are securely destroyed, save where a longer period is required by the validating partner or by law.

18.4 Personal data is processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. Students are entitled to request a copy of the personal data CTC holds about them; requests should be made to the Registrar.

18.5 Appeal records are kept separately from the student's general academic file, and the fact that a student has brought an appeal is not disclosed to referees, sponsors or sending churches without the student's written consent.

18.6 Anonymised appeal data may be shared with the validating partner and used for the purposes described in Section 20.

19. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

19.1 CTC will not discriminate against any student in the operation of this procedure on the basis of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

19.2 Reasonable adjustments will be made so that disabled students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in bringing or pursuing an appeal. A student does not need to have a formal diagnosis to request an adjustment.

19.3 This policy is subject to an equality impact assessment at each review, and the outcome of that assessment is recorded in the version control table.

19.4 Appeals data is monitored, so far as the small numbers involved allow without compromising anonymity, for patterns that might indicate differential experience between groups of students. Where numbers are too small for meaningful disaggregation, the Academic Dean will record that fact rather than publish potentially identifying data.

20. Monitoring, Reporting and Enhancement

20.1 The Registrar maintains an appeals log recording, for each appeal: the date of receipt, the programme and module, the ground relied upon, the stage reached, the outcome, the elapsed time at each stage, and any remedy implemented.

20.2 The Academic Dean prepares an annual appeals report covering the number and type of appeals, the grounds relied upon, outcomes, compliance with published timescales, remedies implemented, themes identified and actions taken in response.

20.3 The annual report is considered by the Governing Board, which satisfies itself that the procedure has operated fairly and within timescale, and is made available to the validating partner on request or as required by the validation agreement.

20.4 Where an appeal identifies a weakness in assessment design, in the clarity of an assessment brief, in moderation practice or in the quality of feedback, the Academic Dean records the corrective action, the person responsible and the target date, and reports completion to the Governing Board.

20.5 A nil return is itself reported. An absence of appeals is not assumed to indicate an absence of problems, and the Academic Dean will consider whether students are sufficiently aware of the procedure and confident to use it.

21. Responsibilities, Approval and Review

21.1 The Academic Dean is the owner of this policy and is responsible for its operation, for the annual report, and for proposing amendments.

21.2 The Governing Board approves this policy and any subsequent amendment.

21.3 This policy is reviewed annually, and additionally whenever there is a material change in the requirements of the validating partner, in relevant legislation or in national guidance.

21.4 Amendments required to comply with the validation agreement may be made by the Academic Dean between scheduled reviews, and are reported to the Governing Board at its next meeting for ratification.

22. Policy Communication

22.1 This policy is published on the CTC website at www.ctcollege.org and on the virtual learning environment used by students.

22.2 The policy is referenced in each Programme Handbook, and the appeals process is explained at student induction. A record of induction coverage is retained by the Registrar.

22.3 Written notification of any academic decision that carries a right of appeal will state that right and identify where this policy can be found.

22.4 Staff involved in assessment and in handling appeals receive briefing on this policy at induction and whenever it is materially amended. A record of that briefing is retained.

22.5 Every effort will be made to respond to a request for this policy in an alternative format.

Appendix A: Formal Academic Appeal Form

Please complete all sections. Submit the completed form, with all supporting evidence, to the Academic Dean Matthew.reifsnider@ctcollege.org within 10 calendar days of the date the decision was communicated to you. Please read Sections 6 and 7 of the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure before completing this form.

Section 1: Student details

Full name	
Student number	
Programme / microcredential	
Level (4 or 5)	
Module (if applicable)	
Email address	
Contact number	
Country / time zone of study	
Do you have a disability or additional learning need you would like us to take into account? If yes, please describe any adjustment that would assist you.	

Section 2: The academic decision being appealed

Please indicate what you are appealing (tick all that apply)	
☐ Assessment outcome	☐ Module mark
☐ Progression decision	☐ Final award
☐ Academic misconduct penalty (process or proportionality)	☐ Other (please specify below)
Date the decision was communicated to you	
If you are appealing after the 10-day deadline, please explain why	

Section 3: Grounds for appeal

Ground	Tick
A - Procedural irregularity in the assessment process	☐
B - Failure to apply CTC regulations correctly (including administrative or calculation error)	☐
C - Assessment criteria not applied fairly or consistently	☐
D - Incorrect, unclear or incomplete information provided to you	☐
E - Mitigating circumstances not previously considered	☐

Section 4: Details of your appeal

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Section 5: Mitigating circumstances (Complete only if you have checked ground E)

What were the circumstances?	
How did they affect your assessed work?	
Why were they not disclosed at the time?	
What independent evidence do you attach?	

Section 6: Supporting evidence

Please list every document you are attaching.

Document	Date	What it shows

Section 7: Outcome sought

What outcome are you asking for? A requested outcome will be considered but cannot be guaranteed.

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Section 8: Declaration

I confirm that the information I have given is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that where work is re-marked, a mark may go down as well as up, and that I will be informed before any re-mark is commissioned.

Signed (student)		Date	
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Before you submit - Checklist

- Have you completed every relevant section of this form?
- Have you attached all your supporting evidence and listed it at Section 6?
- Have you checked Sections 6 and 7 of the policy to confirm your ground is admissible?

- Are you within the 10 calendar day deadline, or have you explained the delay?
- Do you have someone to support you? You may bring a supporter to any meeting (Section 17).

Appendix B: Review of Appeal Decision Form

Use this form only if you have received the outcome of a formal academic appeal (Stage 2) and remain dissatisfied. Submit it to the Registrar within 4 calendar days of receiving the Stage 2 outcome. Please read Section 12 of the policy before completing this form.

Section 1: Student details

Full name	
Student number	
Programme / microcredential	
Email address	
Date you received the Stage 2 outcome	
Do you require any adjustment to take part in the review?	

Section 2: Grounds for review

A review is not a rehearing. Disagreement with the outcome is not by itself a ground.

Ground	Tick
CTC did not follow its published procedures correctly at the formal stage	☐
The outcome was not reasonable in all the circumstances	☐
New material evidence is available which I could not, for valid reasons, provide earlier	☐

Section 3: Explanation

Please explain how the ground(s) you have ticked apply in your case. Be specific about what you say went wrong, or why the outcome was unreasonable.

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Section 4: New evidence (complete only if applicable)

What is the new evidence?	
Why could it not be provided earlier?	
Why is it material to the decision?	
What is the new evidence?	

Section 5: Outcome sought

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Section 6: Declaration

Signed (student)		Date	
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Appendix C: Summary of Timescales

All periods are in calendar days and run from the day after the relevant notification is sent. Where a deadline falls on a day CTC is closed, it extends to the next working day.

Step	Who	Timescale
Request informal clarification (optional)	Student	Within 5 days of the decision
Submit formal academic appeal (Stage 2)	Student	Within 10 days of the decision
Acknowledge formal appeal	Academic Dean	Within 4 days of receipt
Initial consideration case to answer?	Programme Leader	Within 5 days of acknowledgement
Communicate Stage 2 outcome	Programme Leader	Within 14 days of receipt of the appeal
Request review (Stage 3)	Student	Within 4 days of the Stage 2 outcome
Acknowledge review request	Academic Dean	Within 3 days of receipt
Reviewer decides whether there is a case to answer	Reviewer	Within 3 days of acknowledgement
Review meeting, where held	Reviewer	Within 5 days of that decision
Communicate Stage 3 outcome	Reviewer	Within 14 days of receipt of the review request
Issue Completion of Internal Procedures letter	Academic Dean	With the Stage 3 outcome, and in any event within 5 days
Complete the whole internal process	CTC	Within 90 days of receipt of the formal appeal
Escalate to Union School of Theology	Student	As specified in UST regulations

Where any timescale cannot be met, CTC will tell the student before the deadline expires, explain why, and give a revised date. Timescale compliance is monitored and reported annually under Section 20.

Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Reason for change	EIA check	Approval
1.0	Academic Dean	March 2025	Policy and Procedure created as two separate documents for microcredential validation.		Governing Board
2.0	Naar Mfundisi-Holloway	July 2027	Consolidated into a single Policy and Procedure document. External escalation route corrected to route through Union School of Theology as validating partner; direct escalation to an external adjudicator removed. External reference points cited and evidenced. Record-keeping arrangements specified in place of general reference to a quality assurance system. Roles, timescales, remedies, group appeals, withdrawal, support, equality and monitoring provisions expanded. Forms revised and a timescale summary added.	[insert]	[insert]
			Next review: [insert]		

Amendments at version 2.0 respond to feedback received from the validating partner on version 1.0, specifically: that the policy should refer to the procedure appropriately rather than duplicate it; that claims of alignment with external expectations must be evidenced; that escalation to an external adjudicator should be removed and the validating partner's details given instead; and that references to storage "within the QA system" required explanation.