



Christ Theological College

Application Complaints and Review Request Policy

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

Document Control

Version: 1.0

Date Approved: July 2026

Approved By: CTC Leadership Team

Policy Owner: Academic Dean

Review Cycle: BI-Annual

Next Review Date: July 2028

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

Preamble

Christ Theological College (CTC) delivers short, credit-bearing microcredentials at Levels 4 and 5, validated by Union School of Theology (UST). All provision is online, cohorts are currently small. Contact between CTC and an applicant is therefore direct and personal, and most difficulties can be resolved by a conversation with the person who handled the application. This policy exists for the occasions when that is not enough.

Applying to study is a significant step, and applicants are entitled to expect that their application will be handled consistently, without discrimination, and in line with what CTC has published about its entry requirements. Where an applicant believes that has not happened, they should be able to say so without fear of it counting against them, and have the matter looked at by someone who was not part of the original decision.

CTC is also clear about the limits of what it can reconsider. It will always look again at how a decision was reached. It will not substitute a different academic or admissions judgement for the one properly made, and it cannot reopen a decision an applicant has already accepted or one taken in an earlier intake.

The sections below set out the difference between a complaint and a request for review, the grounds on which each may be raised, the timescales that apply at each stage, and who will consider the matter. The timescales are expressed in working days and reflect the reality of a small part-time team; CTC would rather commit to a period it can meet than to one that looks impressive on paper.

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 CTC wants every applicant to be treated fairly, promptly and courteously. This policy explains what an applicant should do if they are dissatisfied with the way their application was handled, or wish to ask CTC to reconsider a decision.

1.2 This policy applies to applicants to CTC's microcredentials. It does not apply to enrolled students, who should use the (CTC Student Complaints Policy).

1.3 CTC delivers its provision entirely online and operates with a small part-time staff team. The timescales in this policy reflect that. All correspondence under this policy is by email unless an applicant requests otherwise.

1.4 The first point of contact for complaints under this policy is administrator at admin@ctcollege.org. Formal complaints are considered by the Principal at eben.adu@ctcollege.org.

2. Related Documents

- CTC Admissions Policy
- CTC Data Protection Policy
- CTC Equality and Diversity Policy
- The QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education (advice and guidance on admissions, recruitment and widening access)
- CTC's validation agreement with Union School of Theology

3. Definitions

3.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service CTC provided, or failed to provide, during the application process.

3.2 A review is a request for CTC to reconsider the outcome of an application, or the outcome of a complaint. A review may not challenge academic or admissions judgement.

4. Principles

4.1 Complaints are handled confidentially, fairly and as promptly as CTC's staffing allows.

4.2 No applicant will be disadvantaged in any current or future application because they have made a complaint.

4.3 A complaint may be withdrawn at any stage without prejudice.

4.4 Wherever possible, a complaint is considered by someone who was not involved in the original decision.

4.5 Anonymous complaints are recorded but are not normally investigated, because CTC cannot seek further information or respond.

4.6 CTC keeps a record of all formal complaints, their outcome, and any action taken.

5. Acceptable Grounds of Complaint

An applicant may complain where they believe:

- a. the decision was inconsistent with CTC's published entry criteria;
- b. they were unlawfully discriminated against during the application process;
- c. there was an administrative error or unreasonable delay in handling the application;
- d. information published by CTC about the microcredential or the application process was materially misleading.

6. Grounds for Requesting Review

A review of a decision may be requested only where:

- a. there were mitigating circumstances that CTC was not aware of when the decision was made, together with an explanation of why these were not disclosed earlier; or
- b. CTC did not follow the procedure set out in this policy.

7. Matters not Covered by this Policy

CTC cannot consider:

- a. disagreement with academic or admissions judgement;
- b. a decision the applicant has already accepted;
- c. applications relating to an earlier intake or academic year;
- d. complaints made by a third party, unless the applicant has given written consent;
- e. any matter that would require CTC to act contrary to the requirements of its validating partner or to legal or regulatory obligations.

8. Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

8.1 Most concerns are resolved quickly and informally. An applicant should raise the concern by email with [role/email] within 20 working days of the incident concerned or of receiving the outcome of their application.

8.2 CTC will respond within 10 working days, setting out what has been looked into and the outcome.

9. Stage 2 - Formal Complaint

9.1 If the applicant remains dissatisfied, or prefers to go straight to a formal complaint, they should submit the form at Appendix A within 10 working days of the Stage 1 outcome, or within 20 working days of the original decision where Stage 1 was not used.

9.2 The complaint should set out the concern clearly and attach any supporting evidence.

9.3 CTC will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days.

9.4 The complaint will be considered by the Principal, or – where the complaint concerns the Principal – by [a member of the Board of Trustees / governing body nominated for this purpose].

9.5 The applicant will receive a written outcome, with reasons, within 15 working days of acknowledgement. If more time is needed, the applicant will be told why and given a revised date.

10. Stage 3 - Review

10.1 An applicant may request a review of the Stage 2 outcome within 10 working days of receiving it, on the grounds set out in section 6 only. Disagreement with the outcome is not in itself a ground for review.

10.2 The review will be carried out by [a member of the Board of Trustees / governing body] who has had no previous involvement in the case.

10.3 A written outcome, with reasons, will be issued within 15 working days.

10.4 This is the final stage of CTC's internal process. CTC will issue a short statement confirming that its internal procedures have been completed.

11. After CTC's Internal Process

Applicants are not registered students, and complaints about admissions decisions fall outside the scheme operated by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

12. Records and Data Protection

12.1 Complaint records are held securely, separately from the application file, and are accessible only to those who need them.

12.2 Records relating to unsuccessful applicants are retained for (12 months) and then deleted, in line with the CTC Data Protection Policy.

13. Monitoring and Reporting

13.1 The Principal maintains a log of formal complaints and outcomes.

13.2 A summary of the number, nature and outcome of application complaints is reported annually to the Board of Trustees and included in CTC's annual monitoring report to UST.

14. Responsibilities, Approval and Review

14.1 The Principal is responsible for the operation of this policy and for maintaining the complaints log.

14.2 The Board of Trustees approves this policy. It will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if UST requirements, CTC's staffing, or relevant legislation change.

15. Communication

15.1 This policy is published on the CTC website at www.ctcollege.org/policies and referenced in applicant information.

15.2 CTC will provide this policy in an alternative format on request.

Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Reason for change	Equality impact check	Approval date
1.0	NMH	July 2026	New CTC policy, adapted with permission from the Union School of Theology Application Complaints and Review Requests policy and contextualised for CTC's online Level 4/5 microcredential provision	July 2026	July 2026