CTF Complaints Procedures

[Academic appeals and student complaints; QAA Quality Code Chapter B9]

Policy adopted: 13th March 2018

Scope

1. This procedure applies to complaints about people acting in the course of providing services to students on behalf of the CTF charity including, but not limited to, admissions, teaching and assessment. It also applies to staff directly employed by the charity.

2. Complaints about services, activities, resources or employment provided by Member Institutions (“Houses”) should be made through that House’s own procedures.

Introduction

3. The Federation takes its responsibilities for the well-being of staff and students seriously and is committed to the provision of a high quality educational experience. Where individuals have cause for concern about any aspect of their Federation life, we undertake to respect that concern and to handle complaints in a way which is sympathetic, fair and efficient; encourages informal conciliation; facilitates early resolution; maintains individual privacy and confidentiality and permits useful feedback.

4. We recognize that complaints and concerns can arise in many different circumstances and that they need to be handled in different ways:

   a. complaints about behaviour that fails to respect the personal integrity and individuality of others or which constitutes harassment on the grounds of race, sex, physical appearance, religious conviction or any other ground, will be handled through the Federation’s anti-bullying and harassment procedures;

   b. complaints arising from or relating to an individual’s employment by the Federation will be handled through the disciplinary or grievance procedures;

   c. complaints about the teaching of a particular course or module should be taken up with the appropriate Award Secretary in the first instance. The Federation Office can advise students on who this is;

   d. complaints about the results of any formal examination or assessment will be handled by the relevant University or awarding body, using their own examination appeals procedures. Contact details are given at the end of this document;

   e. complaints about Common Awards decisions should be using the separate procedures which are annexed to this document.

5. All other complaints should follow the procedure outlined below. In all cases, it is helpful if the complaint or concern is raised as soon as possible after the event(s) which gave rise to it.
6. At every stage it is useful to keep a personal written record of what has been discussed, with whom and the outcome, even if the complaint is resolved at the informal stage.

**Stage 1: Seeking Advice**

7. Individuals considering making a complaint should if possible discuss this decision with an appropriate person within their own House. For students this would normally be their personal tutor or Director of Studies. For staff it would be their manager.

**Stage 2: Informal process**

8. The individual should make an informal approach to the person who would be in a position to resolve the complaint. This could be someone in charge of a facility or service or the person about whom they wish to complain. If the complainant does not feel able to make a personal approach to another individual, then this stage should be omitted and they should proceed to Stage 3.

**Stage 3: Formal process**

9. If it is not possible to resolve the complaint informally, or if the complainant does not wish to deal directly with the person about whom they are complaining, the formal process should be followed. This also applies if the complaint is about a serious or urgent matter.

10. The complainant should make a written statement of the circumstances of the complaint and any steps which have been taken to resolve it. This should be sent to the Federation President or, if the complaint concerns the President, to the Chair of the Federation Governing Council.

11. The President (or Chair) will investigate the matter. This will usually involve referring the written statement to the individual or organization complained about so that they may make a written response. The investigation may involve a meeting of all interested parties or may be dealt with entirely by written submissions. If there is a meeting, the complainant will be invited to bring a friend or colleague to help them represent themselves. This may be someone unrelated to CTF and may be a trade union representative but otherwise may not be someone acting in a legal capacity. The companion may not speak on the complainant’s behalf (unless this is a reasonable adjustment to ensure equality of access).

12. Complainants will be given up to 10 working days to respond to any requests for further information.

13. Once the investigation is complete, the President (or Chair) will give a written report of their findings and a recommendation of any remedy or further action that should be taken. The length of time taken to complete an investigation will depend in part on the complexity of the complaint, but it is expected that most complaints would be resolved within 20 working days (extended by any time required for the complainant to respond to requests for information).

**Stage 4: Appeal**

14. If the complainant is not satisfied with the result of the investigation they may appeal to the Chair of the Federation Governing Council (or, in the case of the complaint being about the Chair, the Vice-Chair). He/she will review the matter and make a binding response within 20 working days.
External Complaint Schemes

15. If the complainant is not satisfied with the result of the Federation’s complaint procedure, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) might be able to help. www.oiahe.org.uk. The OIA is an independent organisation which has been set up to consider student complaints. Its service is free but be aware that the OIA cannot help with some issues.

16. HEFCE’s The Unsatisfactory Quality Scheme (UQS) is intended to identify and address a broad range of matters relating to the integrity of academic standards and the quality of the academic experience. Under the scheme, individuals or groups can raise issues about academic standards or the student academic experience. www.hefce.ac.uk/reg/forstudents qualidadeissues

Contact details

Federation Office           general-enquiries@theofed.cam.ac.uk  01223 767 787
President                   Details available from the Federation Office  
Chair of CTF Governing Council Details available from the Federation Office

Complaints processes

Anglia Ruskin University admissions complaints process  
www.anglia.ac.uk/study/more-information-for-applicants/admissions-complaints-and-appeals-procedure

Anglia Ruskin University academic complaints process  
https://web.anglia.ac.uk/anet/staff/sec_clerk/rul_regs.phtml

BTh and DTM students  
www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk

Common Awards students: see Annex
Annex: Common Awards Admissions Complaints and Appeals procedure

1. If an applicant has a query following the provision of feedback and is unable to resolve this informally, a complaint may be made. A complaint is defined as a specific concern related to a procedural error, irregularity or mal-administration in the admissions procedures or policies.

2. Appeals, defined as a request by an unsuccessful applicant for a formal review of the outcome of an admissions decision, will not be considered.

Stage One: Informal Resolution

3. Applicants who have a complaint to make should raise it as soon as possible, raising it no later than 2 weeks after the event unless there is good reason for the delay. Even if a formal complaint is received, the Cambridge Theological Federation will try to resolve the complaint using informal mechanisms in the first instance, where appropriate. At the conclusion of any informal resolution attempts, the applicant will be informed of the formal complaint procedure and deadline for submitting a formal complaint.

Stage Two: Formal Resolution

4. The formal stage will be instituted only when the informal procedures have been exhausted and the complainant remains dissatisfied.

   Formal complaints should be submitted in writing to the Registrar of the Cambridge Theological Federation no later than 2 weeks after receiving the outcome of the informal resolution process. The Registrar will investigate the details of the complaint and report the findings and outcomes to the student in writing within two weeks of receiving the complaint. The complaint will be reviewed in relation to the administration of the Cambridge Theological Federation’s admissions policies and procedures.

Stage Three: University Review

5. If the complainant remains dissatisfied once the Cambridge Theological Federation’s informal and formal procedures are exhausted, the complainant must be informed of his or her right to request a review by Durham University. A further appeal may be submitted by the applicant to Durham University within 2 weeks of receiving the final decision through the Federation’s formal procedure. Formal complaints should be submitted in writing to the Common Awards Team (common.awards@durham.ac.uk). The University will determine whether to review the admissions complaint to ascertain whether the Cambridge Theological Federation’s admissions policies and processes had been implemented correctly. If procedural irregularities are identified, the complaint might be referred back to the Cambridge Theological Federation for further review.

6. Applicants will not be discriminated against in any further application should they request feedback, or make a complaint under the Federation’s policies and procedures.
Common Awards Academic Appeals

Students may appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners or of a Committee of either The Cambridge Theological Federation (“the Federation”) or the University of Durham (“the University”) on an academic matter affecting them and shall be subject to the University of Durham’s (“the University’s”) General Regulation VII: Academic Appeals.

Introduction and scope

12.1 An academic appeal is a request from a Durham University Common Awards student for formal review of an academic decision affecting that student.

12.2 An academic appeal investigation has a limited scope. Effectively the investigation amounts to a check as to whether the decision appealed was reached:

(a) in accordance with correct University procedures; and

(b) in the light of relevant information.

12.3 Matters of academic judgement cannot be appealed. The University defines “academic judgement” as the professional and scholarly knowledge and expertise which Federation staff, Durham University staff and the external examiners draw upon in reaching an academic decision.

12.4 Academic judgement therefore includes, but is not restricted to, decisions about the academic standard attained by students, marks and grades to be awarded for individual pieces of work or modules, and degrees and degree classifications to be awarded, or not.

12.5 In view of its limited scope, there are essentially only two possible grounds for appeal:

(a) that there might have been a serious error in the way in which the original decision was made;

(b) that there exists or existed circumstances affecting a student’s performance of which, for good reason, the Board of Examiners or Committee or University Officer might not have been aware when the original decision was made.

12.6 This procedure is designed to encompass academic complaints from students concerning their experience on the Common Awards pathways within the Cambridge Theological Federation. This procedure does not apply to students pursuing their degrees through the University of Cambridge or Anglia Ruskin University.

POSSIBLE REMEDIES

12.7 If the appeal is upheld it will normally be sent back for reconsideration by the body that made the original decision. This does not necessarily mean that the original decision will be reversed or altered. Normally marks for work will only be changed if there was an error in recording or processing them.
PRINCIPLES

12.8 The Academic Appeal Regulations of both the Federation and the University are based on the following principles:

(a) that staff and students are expected to act fairly and reasonably;

(b) that students must not submit frivolous or vexatious appeals and staff must not investigate cases in which any potential conflict of interest might arise. Where practicable, senior staff should avoid becoming involved in the early stages of an academic appeal because it may compromise their ability to be involved at a later stage;

(c) that students must abide by Federation and University General Regulations and Student Codes of Practice published in the University Calendar and available on the University’s web site at http://www.dur.ac.uk/university.calendar/volumei/;

(d) that students may appeal without fear of disadvantage unless misconduct is uncovered in the course of investigating the appeal;

(e) that staff and students will be expected to comply with deadlines. Time limits for appeals will be extended only in exceptional circumstances, such as if you did not receive timely notification of the decision for reasons outside your control;

(f) that, before submitting a formal appeal, students should attempt to resolve the matter informally where feasible. Where a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal approach, he or she should submit a Stage 2 formal appeal, using the relevant academic appeal proforma. This is available on Moodle, the Federation’s intranet.

(g) that complete confidentiality cannot be always guaranteed if effective action is to be taken on an academic appeal. Therefore students are asked to sign a disclaimer on the Federation’s appeal pro-formas authorising the investigating authority to consult others and share information on a need to know basis. Staff dealing with appeals must, however, ensure that information disclosed by an appeal is only disclosed to third parties on a need to know basis. Normally no information is disclosed to anyone outside the University, without the student’s express permission;

(h) that students may consult the Director of Studies of their Federation House to seek advice on their appeal in complete confidence. Whilst a contemporaneous record of the discussion will be kept, if the student wishes, the information remains confidential within the law. Where complete confidentiality is requested by a student, this might limit the extent to which an academic appeal can be investigated. Authoritative advice on the appeals regulations or complaints procedure is contained in the regulations. To ensure that an independent investigation is undertaken,
the Officer investigating the appeal or complaint (normally the Federation’s Registrar) should not be asked for advice in advance of the notification of the decision;

(i) that, where an academic appeal is upheld, the remedy will be implemented within a reasonable timescale;

(j) that in addition to the Academic Appeals regulations, the Federation and the University have established the following other procedures for students to use if they consider they have personally been discriminated against or unjustly treated:

- Student Complaints Procedure (for complaints about academic support or service delivery);
- the Respect at Work and Study: Policy, Code of Practice and Procedures for Staff and Students to make a Complaint about Harassment (for allegations of harassment (including racial, sexual, bullying or harassment because of a disability) between fellow students, by a member of staff against a student or by a student against a member of staff);

(k) that students are not normally permitted to initiate more than one procedure simultaneously.

(l) that Academic Appeals are monitored by the Federation and the University annually because they provide important evidence about how effectively you procedures of both the Federation and the University have operated in practice. The Federation Governing Council and the University Senate therefore receive an annual report containing an anonymised analysis of formal complaints and appeals including a breakdown by gender, age, ethnicity and disability based on information supplied at registration. Where appropriate the report will contain recommendations for improving practice in the Federation and the University.

Decisions That Can Be Appealed

12.9 Students may use these regulations to appeal against the following decisions:

(a) a confirmed decision of a Board of Examiners

(b) a decision of a Federation or University Committee or of a Federation or University officer on any academic matter affecting a student’s appealing (e.g., a decision regarding Academic Progress).

Grounds for Appeal

12.10 The grounds are:
(a) that a student was adversely affected by illness or other relevant factors, of which he or she was previously unaware and of which for a good cause he or she was unable to disclose to the Examiners or other decision-making body or Officer

AND/OR

(b) that the student has evidence that parts of the relevant documented procedure were not applied correctly or his or her marks were not calculated correctly and this procedural defect was significant enough to have materially affected the decision, making it unsound

AND/OR

(c) that the Board of Examiners or other decision making body or Officer took a decision which was not reasonable in all the circumstances.

12.11 Appeals on other grounds will not be accepted.

12.12 The appeals process has three stages:

1. Informal process
2. Formal process
3. Referral to Durham University

12.13 The student may withdraw an appeal or stop the process at any time in Stage 1 and in Stage 2, with the consent of the Reviewer.

Stage 1: Informal process

12.14 As the first stage in making an appeal, the student should contact the Registrar of the Federation by completing the appropriate form, available on Moodle. This initial contact must be made within 15 working days after receiving formal confirmation of the decision relating to the award of a qualification or notification of the failure of a unit or course which determines failure on the subject programme as a whole.

12.15 The Office of the Registrar will acknowledge the request for a review when received. Any request for additional documentary evidence should be provided by the student within 15 working days of the request.

12.16 The review will be conducted by the Registrar who will consult with the relevant Moderation Panel and other persons or bodies, if appropriate.

12.17 As a result of the review, the Registrar will procure as far as possible such remedy as s/he considers fair and equitable in all the circumstances and may, for example, confirm a substituted award in writing to the student (at the address given in the student’s record), or confirm the original award providing reasons for the decision.
Stage 2: Formal process

12.18 If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the review under Stage 1, he or she may contact the President of the Federation by completing the Appeals Form (Stage 2), available on Moodle within 15 working days of receiving notification of the outcome.

12.19 On receiving an appeal form, the President will request the Registrar to provide, normally within 15 working days, a full written report covering all the circumstances leading to the appeal, a copy of which will be provided to you. The President will invite the student to make representations in writing on the written report within a further 15 working days, or longer where appropriate, and will then appoint a Federation Reviewer with no prior involvement in the case.

12.20 The Reviewer will be a member of the Federation’s faculty. The appointment of a Reviewer is a formal procedure that will normally be completed within 30 working days.

12.21 The Reviewer will consider the documents relating to the case, including the report of the Registrar, the student’s representations and the results of any further enquiries they may make, at their discretion. All documents considered by the Reviewer will be made available to the student. If the Reviewer agrees that the matter has been considered fully and appropriately and that there are no grounds for a hearing, the student will be informed in writing that the appeal has been dismissed. The letter will be sent to the address given in the student's record and will present the reasons for the decision. If, however, it appears that the student may have grounds for making an appeal, the Reviewer will arrange a hearing to which the student will be invited and, if he or she wishes, may be accompanied by a member of the Student Forum executive or other appropriate person. Others involved in the case may also be invited to appear before the Reviewer and will be provided with the same documents as the student and the Reviewer.

12.22 Following full consideration of the case, the Reviewer may make one of the following decisions:

- Dismiss the appeal with reasons;
- Require the Chairperson of the Board of Examiners to reconvene the meeting of the examiners to reconsider their earlier decision;
- Require the appointment of an additional examiner and reconvene a meeting of the original examiners together with the additional examiner to reconsider their earlier decision;
- Require re-examination of the student’s work on the module or course and, where relevant, examination papers, under whatever arrangements he or she may specify;
- Determine such other procedure as appears fair and appropriate in the circumstances.

12.23 The Reviewer will issue a report containing his or her findings about the appeal, along with his or her reasons.

12.24 The appropriate Federation Programme Manager will assist the Reviewer and will be present throughout the whole proceedings of any hearing, and will prepare the draft report.
12.25 The Reviewer may terminate the proceedings at any time or determine that an appeal is rejected as vexatious or frivolous.

12.26 The Federation President will communicate the decision, with reasons, to the student in writing, normally within 15 working days of the Review or hearing.

12.27 When the recommendations of the Reviewer are completed, the Federation will send a completion of procedures letter to the student at the address given in the student’s record.

12.28 The decision of the Reviewer is final within the Federation.

12.29 All decisions reached by the Reviewer will be reported to the Federation Management Committee.

12.30 If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, and believes that the complaint has been handled improperly or unfairly according to this policy, he or she may request that the complaint is reviewed by Durham University (“the University”).

12.31 The student can request a review by writing to Durham University no later than 10 working days after the date of the Stage 2 response.

12.32 The student must provide the following information:

(a) details of the complaint (including relevant correspondence from Stages 1 and 2, and any further new supporting documentation);
(b) details of why he or she remains dissatisfied;
(c) details of the form of resolution or redress sought.

12.33 Receipt of the request for a review will be acknowledged by the University within five working days. This acknowledgement will advise students that they may seek advice from the Durham Students’ Union (DSU) throughout the Stage 3 process.

12.34 The University will determine whether to review the appeal to ascertain whether the Cambridge Theological Federation’s policy and processes had been implemented correctly.

12.35 The possible outcomes include:

(a) if procedural irregularities are identified: the appeal will normally be referred back to the Federation for re-investigation;
(b) if the complaint is deemed to be outside the parameters of an ‘academic appeal’: the appeal will be referred back to the Federation for investigation as a complaint that is outside the Common Awards provision;

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1 Quality Code B9 Indicator 1.
2 Quality Code B9 Indicator 5.
3 Quality Code B9 Indicator 3.
4 Quality Code B9 Indicators 4-6.
5 Quality Code B9 Indicator 1.
6 Quality Code B9 Indicator 6.
(c) if the Federation’s policies and processes had been implemented correctly: the appeal normally will be dismissed, the reasons for dismissal will be provided to the student in writing, and a completion of procedures letter will be issued.

12.36 The student will be notified of the University’s decision within 28 days of the University’s receipt of the request for a review.\(^7\)

12.37 If the University dismisses the review request there shall be no further opportunity for the complaint to be pursued within the University.\(^8\)

12.38 the student that he or she can refer the appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.\(^9\)

**OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR (OIA)**

12.39 If Stages 1-3 have been completed and the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome, he or she may complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) within 3 months of the issue of a completion of procedures letter by the University.\(^10\)

12.40 Information about the OIA and the procedure for submitting complaints can be obtained from Durham University’s Academic Support Office, the Durham Students’ Union website, or from the OIA website: [www.oiahe.org.uk].\(^11\)

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\(^7\) *Quality Code B9* Indicator 5.

\(^8\) *Quality Code B9* Indicator 6.

\(^9\) *Quality Code B9* Indicator 6.

\(^10\) *Quality Code B9* Indicator 6.

\(^11\) *Quality Code B9* Indicator 3.
Common Awards Academic Complaints

Academic Complaints: Scope of the Procedure

12.41 The procedure is designed to encompass academic complaints from students concerning their experience on the Common Awards pathways within the Cambridge Theological Federation (“the Federation”). This procedure does not apply to students pursuing their degrees through the University of Cambridge or Anglia Ruskin University. 12

12.42 ‘Academic complaints’ can relate to any aspect of the approved academic provision including (but not restricted to) complaints from students concerning their experience of: 13

(a) the arrangements for, or delivery of, teaching or assessment for the academic programme;
(b) the adequacy of supervision for modules that are a formal and assessed part of the academic programme;
(c) the academic support that is part of the academic programme;
(d) assessed placements that are a formal part of the academic programme;
(e) administrative or support services that relate to the academic programme;
(f) information or publicity in relation to the academic programme;
(g) the infrastructure for academic programmes, including learning resources and teaching spaces.

12.43 The above is not a definitive or exhaustive list; academic complaints may relate to other areas of academic provision or support where these are perceived to have had a negative impact on a student’s academic programme or progress.

12.44 If the complaint relates to an academic teaching member, it will be referred to the President of the Federation, who will in turn refer it to the staff member’s line manager. Any such complaint will follow the policy of the staff member’s house, as outlined in the Staff Handbook of the House.

12.45 This procedure does not extend to ‘academic appeals’ (i.e. appeals relating to examinations or assessments or to academic progress or against expulsion or exclusion on academic grounds). Information on the Federation’s approach to academic appeals is available on the Federation’s intranet (Moodle) and information on the University of Durham’s (“the University/the University’s”) approach to academic appeals is available in the University Calendar, General Regulation VII - Academic Appeals. 14

12.46 Equally, the procedure does not cover the following, for which separate procedures exist: 15

(a) complaints involving a decision that a student has failed to meet his/her academic commitments (see Durham University’s Academic Progress procedure)

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12 Quality Code B9 Indicator 3.
13 Quality Code B9 Indicator 3.
14 Quality Code B9 Indicator 3.
15 Quality Code B9 Indicator 3.
(b) complaints involving an allegation of misconduct by a student (see the University Calendar, General Regulation IV – Discipline)
(c) complaints involving an allegation of harassment (see Durham University’s Respect at Work and Study policy)

12.47 It is expected that the student will pursue the complaint personally; complaints submitted by a third party will not normally be accepted.\(^{16}\)

12.48 The effectiveness of any complaints procedure depends on the Federation being able to collect appropriate information from the parties involved in order to investigate the matter properly. For this reason, anonymous complaints will not be dealt with under this procedure. It is at the discretion of the person receiving an anonymous complaint to determine how the matter is handled.\(^{17}\)

12.49 Complaints by a group of students are often of a general nature where it is usually more appropriate for you to raise the matter with a student representative in the first instance. Complaints may then be made by a group of students if the relevant representation system has not achieved a satisfactory outcome, or this is not thought to be an appropriate route.\(^{18}\)

12.50 If the complainant remains dissatisfied once the Federation’s informal and formal procedures are exhausted, you will have the right to request a review by Durham University. The University will determine whether to review the complaint to ascertain whether the Federation’s policy and processes had been implemented correctly.\(^{19}\)

12.51 It is the Federation’s practice to review its policies and procedures on an annual basis in order to identify any areas of practice or provision for enhancement.\(^{20}\)

Stages of the Process

12.52 The complaints process has 3 Stages:\(^{21}\)

| LEVEL 1: Investigation of the complaint at Theological Educational Institution level |
| STAGE 1: Informal resolution (Cambridge Theological Federation) |
| STAGE 2: Formal resolution (Cambridge Theological Federation) |
| LEVEL 2: Referral to the University (if the complaint cannot be resolved at TEI level) |
| STAGE 3: University review (Durham University) |

Stage 1: Informal Stage

12.53 Most complaints can be resolved informally and, where practicable, a complaint should be dealt with as closely as possible to the point at which it arises. If the student wishes to

\(^{16}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 1.
\(^{17}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 1.
\(^{18}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 1.
\(^{19}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 1.
\(^{20}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 7.
\(^{21}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 5.
raise a complaint he or she should, therefore, initially discuss the matter with those directly responsible. If he or she is unhappy about approaching the person directly responsible, the student may seek counsel from his or her Director of Studies, module leader or another member of the Cambridge Theological Federation core staff.\textsuperscript{22}

12.54 The student should raise a complaint no more than 28 days after the event that the complaint concerns unless there is good reason for the delay.\textsuperscript{23}

12.55 The Principal of the House to which the student belongs, or designated officer, should if, possible, have a face-to-face discussion with the student, to come to an understanding of the exact nature of the dissatisfaction and to explore what outcome is sought.\textsuperscript{24}

12.56 If appropriate, the Principal, or designated officer, should initiate mediation as part of the informal resolution.\textsuperscript{25}

12.57 Wherever possible, student complaints should be resolved at this informal level, without the need to resort to formal proceedings. The student should normally expect to receive a written or verbal acknowledgement within five working days and a full response within fifteen working days of receipt of the complaint.\textsuperscript{26}

12.58 At the conclusion of any attempts at informal resolution, the student will be informed of the formal complaint procedure (Stage 2).\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{Stage 2: Formal Stage: TEI (the Cambridge Theological Federation)}

12.59 If the Stage 1 procedures have been exhausted, and the student is not satisfied with the response, he or she may initiate a formal complaint to the Federation President.\textsuperscript{28} In the first instance, the student should contact the Office of the Registrar by email at ctfadmin@hermes.cam.ac.uk.

12.60 If a complaint is received at Stage 2, without prior consideration at Stage 1, the Federation will normally try to resolve the complaint using informal mechanism in the first instance where appropriate.\textsuperscript{29}

12.61 The information to be included in the complaint by the student is as follows:\textsuperscript{30}

(a) details of the complaint;
(b) a statement of the action already taken to try and resolve the complaint informally and why the response given is considered unsatisfactory;
(c) any supporting information or evidence;
(d) the form of resolution or redress sought.

\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 2.
\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 5.
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 5.
\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 2.
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 5-6.
\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 6.
\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 6.
\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 2.
\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 3.
12.61 This information should be documented on the Cambridge Theological Federation Complaints form. The relevant form can be found on Moodle.\textsuperscript{31}

12.62 The Cambridge Theological Federation will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days.\textsuperscript{32}

12.63 The person dealing with the formal complaint must be independent of the source of the complaint and will either investigate the matter him- or herself or will delegate responsibility to another appropriate person to undertake the investigation on his or her behalf.\textsuperscript{33}

12.64 The person dealing with the formal complaint will seek resolution of the complaint by a means appropriate to its nature and circumstance. Such means may include:\textsuperscript{34}

(a) correspondence between the parties;
(b) negotiation with you or with appropriate members of staff or with both;
(c) facilitation of a conciliation meeting between the individuals concerned;
(d) facilitation of a mediation meeting between the individuals concerned.

12.65 If the person dealing with the formal complaint decides to investigate the complaint via correspondence, the student will be sent a copy of any comments obtained during this process and will be invited to submit a response. This will be done prior to a decision being reached in relation to the complaint.\textsuperscript{35}

12.66 In very exceptional circumstances (for example, in particularly complex cases, or those involving disciplinary issues), provisions may be made for hearings. The Committee shall consist of the Chairman of the Federation Governing Council (or his/her nominee) and two other members of the academic staff of the Federation appointed for the particular purpose who have not been involved in any earlier proceedings. The parties will be notified in writing of the date and time of the committee, and the names of its members as soon as reasonably practicable, and at least ten working days before the date of the hearing. If any party wishes to object to any of the Committee members he/she must do so as soon as possible and in any event at least five working days before the date of the hearing. The only ground for objection is that of possible bias arising from involvement in the process at an earlier stage, or involvement in a related appeal hearing, disciplinary hearing or grievance procedure. The student may be accompanied at the hearing by a fellow student or a member of staff.\textsuperscript{36}

12.67 The Level 1 procedures (Stages 1 and 2 combined) should normally be completed, and a written response sent to the student, within eight weeks of the complaint being received.\textsuperscript{37}

12.70 The possible outcomes from the Stage 2 process include:\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 3.
\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 5.
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 4.
\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 4.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 5.
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 5.
\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Quality Code B9} Indicator 5-6.
(a) a resolution, reached in co-operation with the student, following conciliation or mediation if appropriate;
(b) if the complaint is upheld, a recommendation will be made outlining how the issue(s) identified in the complaint should be addressed including, if applicable, appropriate redress to the student;
(c) dismissal of the complaint with reasons given to the student in writing.

12.71 The response will also inform students registered for the Common Awards of their right to request a review of the complaint by Durham University.\(^{39}\)

12.72 A copy of the letter to the student informing him or her of the outcome of the complaint will be retained in accordance with Cambridge Theological Federation’s *Data and Record Retention Policy*.\(^{40}\) A copy of the letter will also be sent to the Principal of the Federation House of which the student is a member.

\(^{38}\) *Quality Code B9* Indicator 5-6

\(^{39}\) *Quality Code B9* Indicator 6.

\(^{40}\) *Quality Code B9* Indicator 4.
Stage 3: Review Stage for University of Durham students

12.73 If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, and believes that the complaint has been handled improperly or unfairly according to this policy, he or she may request that the complaint is reviewed by Durham University.\(^{41}\)

12.74 The student can request a review by writing to Durham University no later than 10 working days after the date of the Stage 2 response.\(^{42}\)

12.75 The student must provide the following information:\(^{43}\)

(a) details of the complaint (including relevant correspondence from Stages 1 and 2, and any further new supporting documentation);
(b) details of why he or she remains dissatisfied;
(c) details of the form of resolution or redress sought.

12.76 Receipt of the request for a review will be acknowledged by the University within five working days. This acknowledgement will advise students that they may seek advice from the Durham Students’ Union (DSU) throughout the Stage 3 process.\(^{44}\)

12.77 The University will determine whether to review the complaint to ascertain whether the Cambridge Theological Federation’s policy and processes had been implemented correctly.\(^{45}\)

12.78 The possible outcomes include:\(^{46}\)

(a) if procedural irregularities are identified: the complaint will normally be referred back to the Cambridge Theological Federation for re-investigation;
(b) if the complaint is deemed to be outside the parameters of an ‘academic complaint’ (as defined in para. 12.42, above): the complaint will be referred back to the Cambridge Theological Federation for investigation as a complaint that is outside the Common Awards provision;
(c) if the Cambridge Theological Federation’s policies and processes had been implemented correctly: the complaint normally will be dismissed, the reasons for dismissal will be provided to the student in writing, and a completion of procedures letter will be issued.

12.79 The student will be notified of the University’s decision within 28 days of the University’s receipt of the request for a review.\(^{47}\)

12.80 If the University dismisses the review request there shall be no further opportunity for the complaint to be pursued within the University.\(^{48}\)

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\(^{41}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 1.
\(^{42}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 5.
\(^{43}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 3.
\(^{44}\) Quality Code B9 Indicators 4-6.
\(^{45}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 1.
\(^{46}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 6.
\(^{47}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 5.
\(^{48}\) Quality Code B9 Indicator 6.
12.81 The University’s formal response at the completion of Stage 3 will advise the student that he or she can refer the complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. 

OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR (OIA)

12.82 If Stages 1-3 have been completed and the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome, he or she may complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) within 3 months of the issue of a completion of procedures letter by the University. 

12.83 Information about the OIA and the procedure for submitting complaints can be obtained from Durham University’s Academic Support Office, the Durham Students’ Union website, or from the OIA website: www.oiahe.org.uk. 

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49 Quality Code B9 Indicator 6.
50 Quality Code B9 Indicator 6.
51 Quality Code B9 Indicator 3.