

Centre for Christian Studies
Policy and Procedures for
Appeal from decisions relating to readiness
for continuing or completing the program

Decisions regarding readiness to continue in, or complete the program are made by the Program Staff following assessments which include the student, field volunteers, peer learners and others as appropriate. Decisions are communicated to the student by a member of the Program Staff as soon as possible to be followed by written confirmation. Questions about, or disagreement with, the decision should be discussed informally with the appropriate staff member. If this discussion does not prove satisfactory, there is a formal appeal procedure (see appendix for the procedure).

The purpose of the appeal procedure is to ensure that just decisions have been made in relation to students and is designed to be congruent with the Centre's educational stance:

Education at the Centre happens within a living community, with each person as both learner and educator ... We see persons as physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual beings. Our focus is on the learner and on integration of learning within the whole person. Learning is discerning meaning, relating content to our experience. We seek integration of knowledge and experience, theory and practice, reflection and action, support and challenge ... This learning process calls us all to be transformed.

The appeal procedure outlined below relates solely to decisions made by Centre staff. It does not apply to, or affect, course evaluations made within the university, theological college or seminary where the required external courses are taken. Appeal procedures set forth in the handbook or calendar of such institutions will govern appeals related to those course evaluations.

In keeping with the educational stance of the Centre, each appeal begins with an informal process of discussion and mediation with the final resource being a formal hearing before the Appeal Committee. Membership in the Appeal Committee consists of:

- a) The Program Committee Chair or volunteer representative;
- b) A student, or recent graduate, who has not participated in a Learning Circle with the student making the appeal in the school year in question;
- c) A member of the Program Staff or the Principal (not involved in initial decision or mediation);
- d) Two representatives of the broader Centre community, chosen by these criteria: knowledge of and familiarity with the Centre, geographical location, and, respected for their sense of justice and fairness.

The decision of the Appeal Committee is final and binding on all parties to the appeal.

Appeal Procedure

1. A student wishing to question any decision regarding readiness to proceed or complete,





may, **within two weeks** from the date of receiving the written confirmation of the Program Staff decision, make an informal oral request to the Principal, (or another member of the Program Staff if the Principal is believed to be involved in making the initial decision) who, as soon as is possible, will arrange a mutually convenient date for the student and appropriate staff members to talk with her/him to review the decision. This meeting may be held by phone. The Principal, or Program Staff person, as mediator, shall attempt to resolve the dispute by clarifying the objectives and perspective of both parties. The student and/or the staff member(s) may have a support person participate, if they so desire. Written reason should follow from the Principal (or Program Staff), along with a brief statement of the decision to uphold or overturn the initial decision, which should include contact information for the Chair of the Program Committee.

2. Should the process with the Principal (or Program Staff) fail to resolve matters, either the student or staff member(s) may, within one week, make a formal written appeal to the Chair of the Program Committee.
 - (a) The written notice of appeal shall include:
 - (i) the name, address, email address and telephone number of the appellant;
 - (ii) the facts relied upon and grounds for appeal;
 - (iii) a copy of the findings and reason from 1. above.
 - (x) As soon as possible following receipt of the written notice of appeal, the Chair of the Program Committee shall convene a meeting of the Program Committee to constitute the Appeal Committee. The Program Committee Chair will inform the student and staff members cited in the appeal of membership of the Appeal Committee.
 - (c) The Appeal Committee shall, as soon as possible, fix the time, method, (by electronic means, for example, teleconference, or face to face, or a combination of methods) place and date for the hearing and advise both the student and staff members of same. The Appeal Committee shall consult with Treasurer regarding budget for the Appeal.
 - (d) Where a face to face meeting is deemed possible and advisable by the Appeal Committee, the Centre for Christian Studies will cover the transportation costs for the student, staff members and/or Appeal Committee members. The Centre will not be responsible for the transportation costs for any representation that either party brings to the hearing. The Centre will cover the costs of a hearing held by teleconference or other electronic means.
 - (e) Along with the notice of the hearing, the Appeal Committee shall forward to the responding party the written notice of appeal; and in return, the responding party shall, three full days prior to the hearing date set, deliver to the Appeal Committee and to the appellant written submissions setting forth the facts relied upon in support of the response.
 - (f) Should either party wish to rely on other documentation in support of its appeal

position, such documentation should be appended to the notice of appeal or response thereto with copies provided as well to the Appeal Committee. If either party wishes to have representation at the Hearing, they must inform the Appeal Committee, in sufficient time to facilitate the involvement of the representation..

- (g) Written material exchanged between the parties and delivered to the Appeal Committee will form the basis of the hearing record.
 - (h) Each party will be called upon to make personal representations before the Appeal Committee on the specified hearing date. Additional representations, if requested by either party, may be permitted by the Appeal Committee. The student and staff members will participate in the hearing, with or without support persons of their choosing.
 - (i) Following review of submissions by both parties to the appeal, the Appeal Committee is empowered to uphold or reverse the initial decision and, where deemed necessary, to make such recommendations to the relevant governing body as is appropriate in the circumstances.
 - (j) The Appeal Committee may reserve its decision or render it orally at the time of the hearing. In any event, a formal written decision should be delivered to both parties within ten days from the date of the appeal hearing.
 - (k) The decision of the Appeal Committee is final and binding on all parties to the appeal.
 - (l) The appeal record shall consist of the notice of appeal, the written response, appended documentation, if any, the decision of the Principal (or Program Staff), and the decision of the Appeal Committee; and will be retained in the student's file until such time that the student may graduate, and in the Personnel file of the cited staff for the duration of their employment at the Centre. The record shall be deemed a public document unless an application is made by either party and accepted by the Appeal Committee to maintain the record as a private, confidential matter.
 - (m) The Appeal Committee has jurisdiction at all times to govern its own procedure.
- (3) The recommendations of the Appeal Committee shall be implemented by Centre staff and volunteers as appropriate.
 - (4) The decision of the Appeal Committee shall be communicated to the Program Committee at its next meeting.

Flow Chart

Decision made regarding continuing or completing program made by staff
Student questions decision regarding continuing or completing 
Student and Staff persons meet Mediation by Principal or Program Staff 
Student or staff writes an appeal 
Appeal Committee hears oral representations 
Appeal Committee Decision Final

June 1994
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