



Policy Number: GOV-ALL-002

ACTT

Appeals Policy

Version No. 1.0

Summary	This policy is developed to make certain that post secondary and tertiary education (PSTE) institutions, awarding bodies and organisations are provided with a clear system by which requests for appeals of decisions made by ACTT can be made and are in keeping with internationally accepted standards for quality assurance.
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Version Control

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ACTT Appeals Policy

1.0 Policy Rationale

As espoused in its core values, ACTT is committed to and notes the important role that integrity, trust, and excellence play in the higher education and quality assurance systems. A critical characteristic of such systems being processes for appeals. While ACTT is committed to ensuring fairness and equity in its decision-making processes, there may be instances where stakeholders may feel aggrieved by decisions of the Council and may wish to appeal same. ACTT must therefore ensure its processes for appeals are clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.

This policy is benchmarked against policies on appeals from other international quality assurance bodies including Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC), Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the Joint Board of Moderators (JBM) and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

2.0 Policy Statement

This policy aims to provide guidelines to post secondary or tertiary education (PSTE) institutions, awarding bodies and organisations on the process by which to request reconsideration of a decision of the awarding of status by the Council.

3.0 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all post secondary or tertiary education (PSTE) institutions, awarding bodies and organisations subject to the awarding of status by the Council. These include:

- Institutions accredited by ACTT
- Institutions registered by ACTT
- Foreign awarding bodies and institutions recognised by ACTT
- Local awarding bodies registered by ACTT
- Non-Traditional PSTE organisations
- Professional Skills Organisations
- Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)
- Non-governmental organisations
- Employers' Associations
- Government Agencies

4.0 Key Definitions

APPEAL	A request for review of a decision of the Council charged with making decisions concerning the awarding of status to (PSTE) registered, accredited and recognised institutions, awarding bodies and organisations.
REMAND	To send a decision back to the Council for reconsideration/re-evaluation. This occurs when the Appeals Committee finds that the Council has made a decision that is not in keeping with Chapter 39:06, ACTT's policies or approved regulations.

5.0 Duties and Responsibilities

CATEGORY	RESPONSIBILITIES
ALL ACTT Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and complying with the policy and procedure(s); and • Accessing training and developing competencies to enable them to comply with the policies and procedures relevant to their role and identified training needs.
Technical Departments <i>(Accreditation and Quality Enhancement, Qualifications and Recognition)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that institutions and awarding bodies understand and adhere to the policy and procedures; • Supporting the implementation of the policy and related procedure(s) and ensuring that the necessary resources are made available for same. • Monitoring adherence to the policy and related procedure(s).
Corporate Secretary/Legal Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhering to the policy and related procedure(s); • Supporting the implementation of the policy and related procedure(s) and ensuring that the necessary resources are made available for same; and • Monitoring adherence to the policy and related procedure(s) by employees and PSTE institutions and awarding bodies.
Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhering to the policy and related procedure(s)
Appeals Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhering to the policy and related procedure(s); • Reviewing requests for appeals, conducting hearings and making final judgements on the decisions made by the Council.

6.0 General Principles

Any post secondary or tertiary education (PSTE) institution, awarding body or organisation subject to a decision on the awarding of status by the Council is entitled to a review of the Council's decision by an Appeals Committee.

6.1 *Grounds for Appeals*

Pursuant to Chapter 39:06, Section 11, PSTE institutions, awarding bodies or organisations affected by a decision of the Council may appeal the decision on the following grounds:

- i. that the Council failed to comply with the procedures laid down in its regulations, rules or policies and that the failure amounted to a significant breach of such procedures;
- ii. that the decision of the Council is based on information that is substantially incorrect or is of insufficient weight to support the decision; or
- iii. that the decision of the Council is arbitrary or unreasonable, or inconsistent with or unsupported by the policies of the Council.

An appeal shall only be considered as official if substantiated and supported by appropriate evidence, references, and examples. The appeal shall clearly and concisely set forth the grounds for the appeal, referring to specific standards or guidelines of the Standards for Conferment of Institutional Title, Registration, Recognition, Accreditation or Programme Approval (See *Procedures for Appeals*).

6.2 *Initiation of an Appeal:* The institution must submit a written notice of intent to appeal the decision of the Council, based on the grounds listed in Section 6.1, within 10 days of receipt of the decision and External Evaluation Report. Institutions shall address the written notice to the Chairman of the Accreditation Council Trinidad and Tobago, and submit to the Corporate Secretary to officially report their intent.

6.3 *Filing of an Appeal:* The appeal submission must contain a detailed statement of facts of the appeal and evidence, together with a processing/administrative fee. The appeal shall be addressed to the Chairperson – Appeals Committee and submitted within 30 days of receipt of the Council's decision and site visit report and in accordance with the Appeals Committee's '*Regulations*' or '*Procedures for Appeals*'.

6.4 *Appeals Committee*

6.4.1 The Appeals Committee shall comprise three persons appointed by the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

6.4.2 The Appeals Committee shall meet to consider the institution’s appeal and review all material evidence available inclusive of the institution’s application for granting of status, the External Evaluation Report and recommendations, the decision of the Council, the appeal submission and evidence.

6.4.3 The authority of the Appeals Committee shall be limited to affirming, amending or remanding decisions made by the Council on the granting of status.

6.4.4 The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

6.5 *Fees:* The institution is responsible for the costs of the appeal.

7.0 Process Map

Figure 1 depicts the key stages involved in managing appeals of Council decisions on status at ACTT.

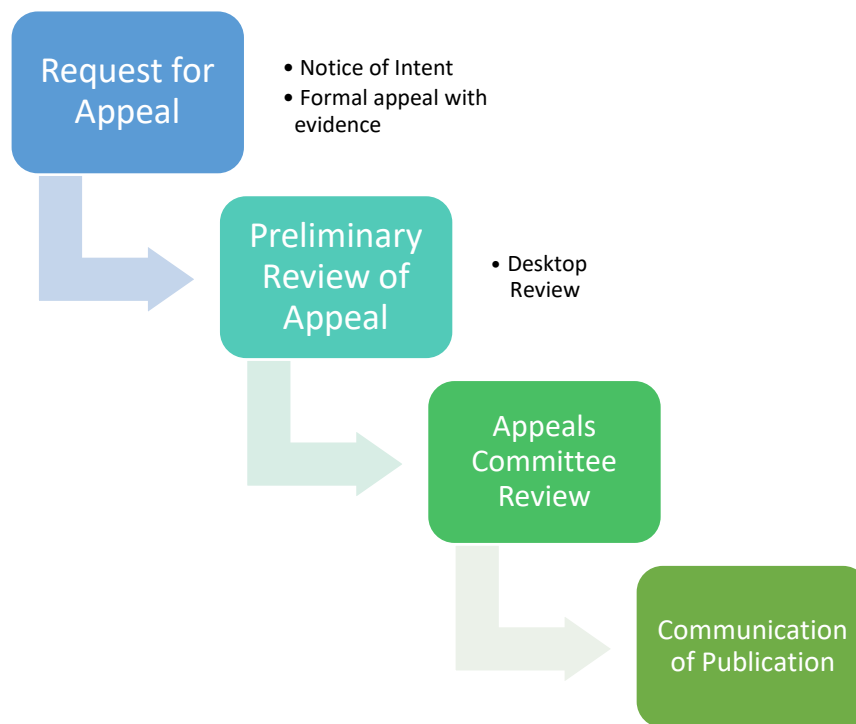


Figure 1 - 4 Key Stages in the Appeals Process

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