

BJTC Complaint and Appeals

1. SERVICE COMMITMENT

This commitment sets out the Broadcast Journalism Training Council's expected level of service to training providers and those receiving training from them. Our aim is to offer a service that is efficient, effective and evolving.

The BJTC will:

Provide courses seeking Accreditation with detailed guidance and advice where needed on how to obtain BJTC accreditation status;
Offer on-line the criteria and procedures for acquiring and maintaining Accreditation;
Acknowledge a submission for Accreditation from a course within fifteen working days;
When all necessary information has been obtained, ensure that the Accreditation Secretary agrees suitable arrangements for a visit with the course management;
Exhibit the prevailing Appeals and Complaints procedures on the BJTC website.

2. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

In addition the BJTC will: -

Log all complaints.

Ascertain whether the complainant has exhausted the college or university's own complaints procedure.

Consider a complaint where a college or university's complaints procedure has been exhausted except where it would be inappropriate for the college/university procedure to be utilised.

Ratify any decision of the Complaints and Appeals panels through the full Council.

Ensure that any member of the Council who has a direct interest in the course under complaint is excluded from voting on the matter.

3. APPEALS PROCEDURE

3.1 Right to appeal: a college or university may appeal against a decision by Council to refuse to accredit a course or to withdraw Accreditation from a course.

3.2 Grounds for appeal: an appeal will be considered where a college or university has evidence that the panel did not comply with the Council's own visit procedures and administrative guidelines, as set out in Guidelines, currently available on the website.

3.3 Procedures: the appeal must be made to the Chair in writing with all supporting evidence, within one month of the promulgation of the BJTC decision. The chair, or in his/her absence the deputy chair, will ask the Complaints and Appeals Officer to convene a panel to hear the appeal.

3.4 At the discretion of the panel, additional information may be sought from each side.

3.5 Panel composition: the panel will comprise not less than three Council members of which one must be the Complaints and Appeals Officer, and a member from industry and a member from the academic community. None of the panel members will have taken part in the panel visit that resulted in the refusal/withdrawal of Accreditation.

3.6 Appointment of Complaints and Appeals Officer: the Council will appoint a Complaints and Appeals Officer (CAO) annually, who will sit as an ex-officio member of the Council. To ensure impartiality, the CAO will leave the meeting for agenda items dealing with Accreditations.

3.7 Time constraints: the Appeals Panel will meet within six weeks of the formal lodging of an appeal with the Chair.

3.8 Outcomes: the Appeals Panel may either uphold the decision of the original panel or order a new Accreditation visit.

4. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

4.1 Right to complain: the BJTC will receive complaints from individuals connected to a Recognised course, including both students and staff.

4.2 Relevant areas: the BJTC will only consider complaints in relation to alleged breaches of BJTC Guidelines.

4.3 All complaints will be made through the Company Secretary who will refer the matter to the Complaints and Appeals Officer (CAO).

4.4 All complaints must be made in writing and accompanied by full supporting evidence.

4.5 Once a complaint has been made the nature of the complaint will be indicated to the college or university together with the supporting evidence.

4.6 The Institution will have one month to respond to such a complaint in writing, with written evidence to the BJTC and a copy to the complainant. The complainant shall have the right - within one further month - to reply to that document to the CAO, with a copy to the institution. Where the Institution does not respond within the scheduled time scale, the Council may order a BJTC visit, which will attract a fee.

4.7 A complainant may not make additional charges, or materially change the nature of the original complaint during the process outlined above.

4.8 Within one month of the conclusion of the exchange of evidence, the Complaints and Appeals Officer will convene a Complaints sub-committee consisting of at least three BJTC members, including the CAO, an industry member and an academic member. At the discretion of this panel additional information may be sought from each side.

4.9 The complaint will either be dismissed or upheld. If the complaint is upheld the Council will require an extraordinary visit to the course, for which a fee will be charged.