

Dear Kelly,

I should first of all clarify the role of this office in this process. We are here to provide confidential, impartial, and informal advice and support to students who have concerns or enquires about alleged acts, omissions, unreasonable or unfair conduct. We are not involved in formal complaint resolution but we do provide advice to students should they wish to pursue such options.

Looking through the material you have provided it appears that there are two complaints for me to advise you on — one is about your 2021 PhD application and one is about behaviour of ANU academic staff.

The 2021 PhD application complaint

As I understand it, your complaint about your 2021 PhD application is that the University did not properly consider the material you provided in support of your application. I can see from the record of your application that while you seem to have included a hyperlink to your website as a 'writing sample', you did not include a research proposal. As a consequence, your application was considered incomplete. Further, no supervision was identified in the application, or was available in the relevant department.

In addition, the ANU [Research Awards Rule](#) provides that appeals against admission decisions must be made within 20 working days of the date the admission decision was sent to you. The decision was sent to you on 22 November 2021. In order for this part of your complaint to be considered, it needed to be commenced by 20 December 2021. The earliest email I have from you about the admission issue is well after that date. If you did in fact commence an appeal before that date please provide me with a copy of the appeal correspondence.

Given that it appears your 2021 PhD application was incomplete, and that an appeal of the admission decision had to be lodged by 20 December 2021, the University is unlikely to accept an appeal application from you against the decision to refuse admission in relation to the 2021 PhD application.

There are other options for you to pursue a PhD. Given the lack of supervision available, re-applying to do a PhD in Philosophy is unlikely to produce a different outcome, but given your area of interest you could see if someone in [Psychology](#) would be interested and available to supervise you. You could also apply to do the PhD at other institutions.

The complaint about PhD supervision in 2007-2013

The second part of your complaint concerns events said to have occurred while you were studying a PhD in Philosophy at ANU in about 2007-2013. The complaint can be broadly summarised as follows: your supervisor bullied you, did not like you, did not supervise you properly and impeded your (academic) progress; you were "forced" to apply for periods of leave after returning from the USA; and these circumstances prevented you from completing your PhD.

You provide no evidence in support of any of these claims, and there is nothing apparent in your student record to indicate anything negative in your supervisor's behaviour towards you in that period of time. On the contrary, his comments on your annual plans and requests for extensions, for example, are positive, encouraging and supportive of you.

Following the grievance [policy](#) and [procedure](#), without some evidence to support your claims, the University is unlikely to view this complaint as genuine.

I note you have been provided with your complete student record and documents about your 2021 PhD application. Unless you are able to provide some evidence to support your claims, my advice is that I do not think pursuing either complaint would be fruitful.

Regards,

Peter Hendriks

Dear Ms Roe,

Thank you for your emails. My advice of 24 August remains the same. Nevertheless it appears that you want to progress the complaint about your 2009-2013 PhD supervision.

Currently your complaint appears in slightly different forms in several emails that also contain a lot of other information the relevance of which is not apparent. For your complaint to be progressed, it will need to be edited and condensed for clarity and relevance.

If the above is correct and you would like to progress this complaint, please send me a concise list of your contentions, where possible with reference to numbered documents in your student record, and with relevant supporting evidence attached. On receipt of the complaint in a form able to be processed, I will inform you of next steps and an indicative timeline.

In the meantime, I request once again that you please limit your communications on this matter to this office.

Regards,

Peter Hendriks