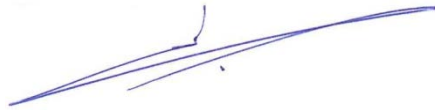


Guidelines for Dealing with Complain and Appeal PB3G

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1. Definitions

- **Complaint**

Expression of dissatisfaction by any person or organization against to the activities of EGAC or a CAB accredited by EGAC.

- **Appeal**

It is a request by a CAB to EGAC for reconsideration of any adverse decision made by EGAC related to its desired accreditation status.

- **EGAC Performance**

EGAC is committed to provide a world class, value adding accreditation service and aim to maintain the highest standards in all EGAC dealings with EGAC customers, third parties and stakeholders. However, EGAC recognize that on occasion it may be necessary for EGAC customers, or those using accredited services to raise a complaint/appeal with EGAC.

If you are a third party who has concerns about the activities of an EGAC accredited CAB, or you are a direct customer of EGAC who is unhappy with EGAC service, then EGAC want to hear about it.

2. EGAC Can Help If:

- You are an EGAC accredited CAB wanting to make a complaint/appeal or raise a concern.
- You have raised a complaint/appeal with an EGAC accredited CAB but believe they have not addressed your concerns in line with accreditation requirements.
- You have justifiable concerns a complaint/appeal against accredited CAB by EGAC.
- You have noted a misuse of the national accreditation symbol.

3. EGAC Can't Help If:

- The body/organization you wish to complain/appeal about is not EGAC accredited or certificated by an EGAC accredited certification body.
- Your complaint/appeal is anonymous, verbal or not supported by clear evidence which would warrant /justify an investigation by EGAC.
- Your issue surrounds specific financial or legal issues contractual disagreement with an EGAC accredited CAB or an organization which has been certificated by an EGAC accredited certification body.

4. What to do if you have a complaint/appeal?

EGAC is committed to providing a world class, value adding accreditation service in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and European Accreditation (EA) for the purpose of recognition arrangements. EGAC aims to deal with any complaints/appeal EGAC receives in a fair confidential and impartial manner.

5. EGAC role and remit when dealing with complaints/appeals

EGAC will investigate complaints/appeals in accordance with the requirements placed upon us by the international standard ISO/IEC 17011:2017 “*Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*”. EGAC is not a regulator and as a consequence EGAC doesn't have any legal powers. In addition, EGAC is not an arbitration service

and therefore, cannot mediate between an accredited CAB and its customers concerning any specific contractual or financial disagreements or legal issues. Anonymous, verbal or unsubstantiated complaints will not normally be logged and investigated by EGAC unless there is clear evidence available to justify an investigation.

6. Confidentiality

EGAC is required by the international standard ISO/IEC 17011:2017 to have arrangements in place with all EGAC customers to safeguard the confidentiality of information obtained via the process of accreditation. Therefore, EGAC is not permitted to disclose confidential information about its customers outside of the organization without the written consent of the customer. The only exception is where the law requires such information to be disclosed without such consent

7. How will EGAC deal with your complaint/appeal?

Once EGAC receive your complaint/appeal in writing EGAC will review all the evidence you have provided. This process may require the submission of additional information or further clarification of the issues prior to the complaint/appeal being formally logged. If EGAC determine during the review process that the matter being complained/appealed about is not within EGAC remit, EGAC will advise you as to why your complaint/appeal will not be pursued. On completion of EGAC review, EGAC will register your complaint/appeal, allocate a unique reference number and an investigating officer/Committee will be appointed. A formal acknowledgement confirming receipt of the complaint/appeal, detailing the EGAC remit for the investigation, will be sent on completion of the logging process. This normally takes place within 7 working days of receipt, unless further information or clarification is required. EGAC will provide details of the likely timescales for the investigation to be completed. It should be noted that timescales may vary dependent on the severity and extent of the issues within the complaint/appeal. On completion of EGAC investigation, EGAC will inform you of the outcome and whether your complaint/appeal has or has not been upheld. Please note for complaints/appeals received from third parties about EGAC accredited CABs, EGAC is limited as to the level of information ,EGAC may provide in relation to EGAC investigation and the complaint/appeal outcome for reasons of confidentiality.

- All persons involved shall take necessary measures to preserve the confidentiality of information obtained during the investigation of the complaint.
- A complainant may request to remain anonymous to other parties involved in providing information for the investigation and the designated investigator shall take adequate steps to preserve confidentiality.
- Any individuals named as investigators that have a real or perceived conflict of interest or confidentiality issue with the information included within the complaint shall excuse themselves immediately from any discussions or potential receipt of information regarding the specific complaint.

8. Timing of Complaints Process

- If the complainant is unable to submit all necessary information within 30 days of the submission of the original information to enable EGAC to authenticate the complaint, EGAC shall close the complaint and inform the complainant of the closure.
- EGAC shall refer an authenticated complaint to the relevant IAF regional accreditation relevant accreditation department within 5 working days of concluding that the information relating to the complaint can be authenticated.

9. Conditions for Acceptance of a Complaint/Appeal

EGAC's policy is to accept complaints/appeals which are relevant to EGAC, or to the related accredited activities of an EGAC accredited CAB; if authenticated, received by e-mail, filed in person, or by phone. Authentication would normally involve the receipt of a complain request record and/or other documentary evidence. This formal procedure shall be followed when a complaint/appeal is received.

10. Types of Complaints/Appeals

Complaints/appeals received by EGAC are categorized into two types:

- **TYPE A**

Concerning the activities of EGAC, e.g. Complaints/appeals about conduct of assessments, conduct of EGAC staff.

- **TYPE B**

Is directed to EGAC concerning the accreditation activities of EGAC-accredited bodies.

11. Handling The Complaint

After a complaint is received in EGAC, EGAC quality manager will register it and then EGAC designate the relevant manager/committee concerned with the complaint. EGAC quality manager will send a copy of the complaint to the relevant manager/committee for investigation.

- **For complaints of type A**

The relevant manager will investigate the complaint and then prepare a written report on complain to describe whether EGAC procedures and policies have been met or not. Where grounds have been found for EGAC to reconsider its treatment of the complainant, the report will append specific recommendations on the actions to be taken.

- **For complaints of type B**

EGAC shall formally designate a committee to deal with the complaint, the committee formally request the accredited CAB to respond to EGAC, giving initial comment on complain and indicating the actions it propose to be taken to investigate.

On receipt of the report, EGAC may if necessary modify the appended recommendations (but not the factual report). EGAC will formally notify the complainant as soon as possible with the outcome of EGAC investigations and proposed EGAC actions.

EGAC shall keep all papers of the complaint (the original complaint, the report of complaint investigation, the formal report and other correspondences) in a file named "COMPLAINTS".

12. Handling With Appeals

- **Conditions for acceptance of an appeal**

Appeals will be considered only against an accreditation decision made by EGAC relating to the granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending or terminating of accreditation.

This process should not be followed for appeals received without documented authentication.



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All appeals concerning the accreditation decisions of EGAC shall be directed to EGAC and not to any committees, groups or committees associated with EGAC. Appeals shall not be handled by any group or committee except as indicated in this procedure.

13. Timescales

EGAC quality manager shall inform all appellants in writing, within 7 working days of receipt of an authenticated appeal of the action that EGAC plans to be taken.

Where the appellant does not accept the results of the internal review by EGAC and when EGAC has no justifiable reason to reject the appeal then, the appeal shall be considered by an appeals committee within 30 days of receipt of the authenticated appeal, The appellant shall be given at least 7 working days' notice of the time and place of the meeting of the appeals committee.

If an appellant fails to provide the information required by EGAC and any other attachments to authenticate the appeal within a period of 21 days from receipt of the appeal request from EGAC the appeal shall be automatically rendered invalid.

The independent appeal committee has all rights to investigate or asking for any documents related to the appeal, also it investigates the situations with the appellant and with the relevant managers.

After all needed clarification for appeal has been done; appeal committee takes its independent decision for the appeal.

Appeal committee decision is a final decision and no resuming can be done on it.

EGAC has to notify the appellant with the appeal committee decision outcomes after its declaration and resuming the process after that according to the appeal committee decision.