

Procedure for dealing with appeals

1. Scope:

1.1 This document describes the procedure for handling appeals received from Conformity Assessment Bodies (both applicant and accredited CAB's) against adverse decisions taken by SLAB.

1.2 The procedure covers appeals by CAB's, against decisions taken by SLAB in respect of – refusal to accept an application; refusal to proceed with an assessment; changes in scope of accreditation; decisions to deny, leave in abeyance, suspend, or forced withdrawal of accreditation; and any other action that impedes the attainment of accreditation.

2. References:

SLAB Quality Manual - Clause No 7.13

SLAB Act No 32 of 2005 – Section 20 (2)

ISO/ IEC 17011 - Section 7.13: Conformity Assessment – Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment bodies

4. Definitions:

4.1 Appeal: Request by a conformity assessment body for reconsideration of any adverse accreditation decision related to its desired accreditation status

4.2 Complaint: Expression of dissatisfaction other than appeal, by any person or organization to the SLAB relating to activities of SLAB or activities of an Accredited CAB with regard to accreditation where a response is expected.

5. Procedure:

Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility	Reference Documents
Receipt and Acknowledgement			
5.1	All appeals against adverse decisions taken by SLAB shall receive due consideration. Appeals shall be addressed to the Chairman, SLAB and all appeals shall be forwarded to SLAB within 30 days of receiving any decision.	Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)	CAB communications
5.2	Chairman shall discuss the received appeal with Director/CEO and decide the mechanism for investigating appeal. If the appeal is against a decision taken by the Director/CEO, the Chairman shall handle the appeal independently or appointing a competent officer to assist him/her.	Chairman, Director/CEO	Appeals File (GN-FL-02)

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Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility	Reference Documents
5.3	Received appeals are registered, acknowledged and arrangements shall be made to gather and verify all relevant information to evaluate the validity of the appeal.	Director /CEO Chairman	Appeals Register (GN-RE-02)
5.4	Appeals examined and evaluated as above shall be taken up for further action. If a prima-facie case exists and the appeal appears to be valid and having some substance, they are taken up for further action, with the approval of the SLAB Council.	Chairman, Director/CEO, Governing Council	Appeals Register (GN-RE-02) Appeals File (GN-FL-02) Council minute
5.5	Received appeals shall be acknowledged within two weeks of receipt.	Chairman/Director/CEO	Appeals Register (GN-RE-02) Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
Investigation of appeal and Recommendations			
5.6	The Governing Council of SLAB shall appoint an Appeal Committee comprising of 2-5 persons, depending on the severity and complexity of the appeal to investigate it and recommend actions to be taken.	Governing council	Council minute Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
5.7	The members of the committee shall be appointed from the following personnel given in the priority order. a) Chairman of the Governing Council as the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee. b) One member representing the technical area in question c) One additional member of the Governing Council d) Two members representing the industry, Chambers, Professional bodies, Associations and/or reputed individuals The selected members shall be impartial and relevant to the scope covered by the appeal, as much as possible and impartiality shall be maintained when selecting members for the committee.	Governing Council	Council minute, Procedure for Impartiality & Confidentiality (GN-PR-03) Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
5.8	Consent for the appointed committee shall be taken from the appellant. Any objections shall be justified by the appellant.	Chairman/Director/CEO Appellant	Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
5.9	The appeal committee shall consider the appeals taking into account all relevant information and facts available. Representative/s from relevant committee or relevant individuals involved in the decision appealed against, may provide technical inputs but shall not be involved in the formulation of recommendations of the Appeal Committee.	Appeal committee, relevant individuals	Appeals File (GN-FL-02) Records of appeal committee

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Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility	Reference Documents
5.10	The Appeal Committee shall seek clarifications and information from all appropriate sources. If considered necessary the Committee shall ask SLAB to depute its staff or an assessor or an expert for a verification visit to the CAB to investigate the matter. All expenses for such visits shall be borne by SLAB.	Appeal Committee Director/CEO/ Additional Director/ Technical Manager/ designated Authorized Officer.	Appeals File (GN-FL-02) Records of appeal committee
5.11	Based on the data gathered through any of the above stated means, the Appeal committee shall make its recommendations and with detailed report submit to the Governing Council of the SLAB, within a reasonable time, for a decision.	Governing Council, Appeal committee	Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
Decision on Appeals			
5.12	Based on the recommendation of the Appeals Committee the Council shall take decisions on the appeals submitted by CAB's. If the time taken to complete appeal handling process exceeds 03 months Director/CEO shall send progress report.	Appeals Committee, Governing council	Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
5.13	Decision of the SLAB Council, shall be the final and SLAB shall give formal notice of the appeal handling process to the appellant at the end of the process.	Director /CEO Chairman, SLAB	GN-FL-02: Appeals File
5.14	SLAB shall not levy fresh charges to the CAB on appeal handling process. If the outcome of the appeal to remain the decision unchanged, cost incurred during the appeal handling process shall be borne by the CAB.	Director /CEO	GN-FL-02: Appeals File