

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 suspend, or 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

3. Definitions:

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

3.2. 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.

4. Procedure:

Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility	Reference Documents
Receipt and Acknowledgement			
4.1.	All appeals against adverse decisions taken by SLAB will receive due consideration. Appeals will be addressed to the Chairman; SLAB and all appeals shall be forwarded to SLAB within 45 days of receiving any decision.	Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)	CAB communications
4.2.	Chairman will 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 will handle the appeal independently or appointing a competent officer to assist him/her.	Chairman, Director/CEO	Appeals File (GN-FL-02)

Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility	Reference Documents
4.3.	Received appeals are registered, acknowledged and arrangements will be made to gather and verify all relevant information to evaluate the validity of the appeal.	Director /CEO Chairman	Appeals Register (GN-RE-02)
4.4.	Appeals examined and evaluated as above will 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
4.5.	Received appeals will 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			
4.6.	The Governing Council of SLAB will appoint an Appeal Committee comprising of 03 persons, depending on the severity and complexity of the appeal to investigate it and recommend actions to be taken or Chairman of the Governing Council may decide on the investigation.	Governing council	Council minute Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
4.7.	If the decision is taken to appoint a committee, it will comprise following personnel. a) One member of the Governing Council other than the Chairman, SLAB as the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee. b) Two members representing the technical area in question. The selected members will be impartial and relevant to the scope covered by the appeal, as much as possible and impartiality will be maintained when selecting members for the committee.	Governing Council	Council minute, Procedure for Impartiality & Confidentiality (GN-PR-03) Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
4.8.	If committee is appointed, the appeal committee will consider the appeals taking into account all relevant information and facts available. The committee may take inputs from relevant decision making committee or relevant individuals involved in the decision appealed against.	Appeal committee, relevant individuals	Appeals File (GN-FL-02) Records of appeal committee

Sl. No.	Activity	Responsibility	Reference Documents
4.9.	The Appeal Committee will seek clarifications and information from all appropriate sources. If considered necessary, the Committee will 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 will be borne by SLAB.	Appeal Committee Director/CEO/ Additional Director/ Technical Manager/ designated Authorized Officer.	Appeals File (GN-FL-02) Records of appeal committee
4.10.	Based on the data gathered through any of the above stated means, the Appeal committee will make its recommendations and with detailed report submit to the Governing Council of the SLAB, for a decision.	Governing Council, Appeal committee	Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
Decision on Appeals			
4.11.	Based on the recommendation of the Appeals Committee, the Council will take decisions on the appeals submitted by CAB's. If the time taken to complete appeal handling process exceeds 03 months Director/CEO will send progress report.	Appeals Committee, Governing council	Appeals File (GN-FL-02)
4.12.	Decision of the SLAB Council, will be the final and SLAB will give formal notice on the Council Decision to the appellant at the end of the process.	Director /CEO Chairman, SLAB	GN-FL-02: Appeals File
4.13.	SLAB will 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 will be borne by the CAB.	Director /CEO	GN-FL-02: Appeals File