

## APPEAL HANDLING

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COAE redresses all appeals received formally from its clients. All appeals are dealt with in a constructive, impartial and a timely manner. To handle appeals:

- I. COAE follows a documented process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on appeals.
  - II. COAE will be responsible for all decisions at all levels of the appeals-handling process. COAE will ensure that the persons engaged in the appeals-handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions.
  - III. Submission, investigation and decision on appeals will not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.
  - IV. The appeals-handling process includes at least the following elements and methods:
    - a. An outline of the process for receiving, validating and investigating the appeal, and for deciding what actions need to be taken in response to it, taking into account the results of previous similar appeals;
    - b. Tracking and recording appeals, including actions undertaken to resolve them;
    - c. Ensuring that any appropriate correction and corrective action are taken.
  - V. COAE on receiving the appeal will be responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the appeal.
  - VI. COAE will acknowledge receipt of the appeal and provide the appellant with progress reports and the result of the appeal.
  - VII. The decision to be communicated to the appellant will be made by, or reviewed and approved by, individual(s) not previously involved in the subject of the appeal.
  - VIII. COAE will give formal notice to the appellant of the end of the appeals handling process.
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