

## **Appeals and complaints Handling Process**

### **1 Purpose & Public Availability**

This procedure defines how TAKEED(AFC) receives, validates, investigates and closes appeals (objections to certification decisions) and complaints (expressions of dissatisfaction with the CB or with a certified client).

The full text of this process is published on the TAKEED(AFC) website and is available free of charge on request.

### **2 Principles**

- TAKEED(AFC) retains responsibility and final authority for all decisions at every level of appeals/complaints handling (ISO/IEC 17021-1 §9.8.1 a).
- Submission, investigation and decision shall not result in any discriminatory action against the appellant or complainant (§9.7.3).
- Personnel (or panel members) who investigate and decide appeals/complaints are independent of the audit team and the original certification decision and are appointed by the Impartiality Committee.
- Confidentiality of both the complainant/appellant and the certified client is protected unless disclosure is required by law or mutually agreed.

### **3 Eligibility & Jurisdiction**

- Appeals: may be lodged by any client holding, or having applied for, TAKEED(AFC) certification.
- Complaints: may be lodged by clients, regulators or other parties with an interest in a TAKEED-issued certificate.
- Non-clients' complaints are accepted where related to misuse of certification marks, false claims, public-interest issues or statutory matters.
- Disputes are governed by the laws of Egypt.

#### 4 Process Summary

Step	Target time	Responsible	Key actions
4.1 Receipt & Validation	Day 0-2	Admin Officer	Log in Complaints & Appeals Register; confirm whether the issue relates to TAKEED(AFC) certification activities (§9.8.1 a).
4.2 Acknowledgement	≤ 5 work-days	General Manager	Written acknowledgement to sender, explaining process, expected timelines and providing case reference.
4.3 Progress Updates	Every ≤ 30 days	Case Manager	Written interim status reports until closure (§9.8.2 b).
4.4 Investigation	≤ 60 days*	Appointed Panel (not previously involved)	• Gather evidence and conduct interviews. • For complaints about a certified client, evaluate effectiveness of the client's MS; initiate short-notice special audit if needed (IAF MD 1 §3.2).
4.5 Decision		Appeals Panel / Complaints Panel	Panel reaches consensus; GM ratifies.
4.6 Correction & Corrective Action	≤ 30 days from decision	Client or TAKEED(AFC) function concerned	Root-cause analysis, action plan, implementation and verification.
4.7 Closure & Formal Notice	≤ 90 days from receipt	GM	Written notification of outcome, rationale and right of escalation to EGAC.
4.8 Records & Follow-up	—	Quality Manager	Maintain full dossier ≥ 5 years after closure (EGAC Proc 13); verify effectiveness at next internal audit.

#### 5 Escalation

If the complainant or appellant is dissatisfied with the decision, they may escalate the matter to EGAC. Contact details are provided in the closure letter.

#### 6 Confidentiality & Data Protection

All information is kept confidential in accordance with P-01 "Document & Record Control" unless disclosure is required by law or authorized in writing by the concerned parties.



#### 7 Records

- Complaints & Appeals Register (F11-01)
  - Investigation Report (F11-02)
  - Panel Decision Minute (F11-03)
  - Corrective-Action Verification Record (F11-04)
- Records are retained for at least five (5) years and are available to EGAC on request.

#### 8 References (current editions – valid 2025)

- ISO/IEC 17021-1 §9.7-9.8, 17021-2, -3, -6 (2023), -7, -10
- ISO 22003-1 : 2022 • ISO/IEC 27006-1 : 2024 • ISO/IEC 20000-6 : 2017 • ISO/TS 21030 : 2023
- IAF MD 1, 2, 4 (2025), 5, 11, 17, 22, 28 • EGAC E-03, E-04, Proc 10, Proc 13