Appeals and Complaints Handling Procedure		
Document No: IGC-P-ACHP		**Revision No: 03**
ISO GLOBAL CERTIFICATION **Drafted By:** Managing Director **Date of Review:** 2026-11-02	**Purpose**	To receive, validate, investigate and resolve complaints and appeals fairly, independently and confidentially, with traceable actions and communications.
	Scope	Complaints and appeals concerning IGC certification activities and complaints concerning certified clients, across the schemes IGC is authorised to provide.
	Reference	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015; IGC-P-CBMS; applicable management-system standards and current IAF mandatory documents. Clauses 9.7 and 9.8; ISO/IEC 27006-1:2024 where ISMS certification is involved.
	Responsibility	Top Management and the designated personnel specified in this procedure.

1. Definitions and responsibilities

An appeal is a request for reconsideration of an IGC decision relating to certification. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, relating to IGC activities where a response is expected. Top Management remains responsible for decisions at all levels. The case coordinator records and communicates the case; competent independent personnel investigate and decide or review/approve the outcome.

IGC-P-FRP sets the appeals panel's formal rules. Complaints and appeals are submitted on the IGC-F-CF complaint form or IGC-F-AF appeal form, available through the client portal or on request, and are recorded in the IGC-R-CAR Complaints & Appeals Register.

2. Receipt and classification

Record written, portal and verbal complaints/appeals, including date received, complainant/appellant, affected client or certification decision, issues raised, evidence, coordinator and status. Forward cases received elsewhere to the designated coordinator. Distinguish appeal from complaint by the substance of the request, not its title.

Acknowledge receipt of appeals and, whenever possible, complaints. Confirm that the case relates to certification activities for which IGC is responsible. Gather and verify the necessary information; where it falls outside responsibility, explain the reasons and record the communication.

3. Independence, confidentiality and fair treatment

Persons engaged in handling an appeal shall be different from those who carried out the audit and made the certification decision. The appeal outcome shall be made by, or reviewed and approved by, persons not previously involved in the subject of the appeal. Complaint outcomes shall likewise be made by, or reviewed and approved by, persons not previously involved in the subject of the complaint.

Record competence, confidentiality and conflict-of-interest checks before appointment. Anyone with a conflict is replaced. Do not assign an original auditor or decision maker to decide an appeal against their own work. Independence checks and independent approval are recorded in the case file.

Submission, investigation and decisions shall not result in discriminatory action. Restrict information to authorised parties and protect both the complainant and the subject. Sensitive ISMS evidence shall be handled through agreed secure access and controlled disclosure.

4. Appeal investigation and determination

Validate the appeal and consider relevant evidence and previous similar appeals. Appoint an independent competent person or panel under IGC-P-FRP. Hear the appellant and relevant personnel as necessary, request further evidence and record the factual basis and applicable criteria. Informal clarification may resolve a misunderstanding but shall not deny access to the appeal process.

Determine whether to uphold, revise or reverse the challenged decision, or require further evaluation. Provide written reasons and ensure any resulting audit or certification changes follow the authorised certification decision process. Retain deliberations, evidence, conflicts checks and approval.

5. Complaint investigation and determination

Validate the complaint, investigate its cause and determine appropriate correction and corrective action. For a valid complaint about a certified client, consider the effectiveness of the certified management system and refer the complaint to that client at an appropriate time. Decide whether additional audit or certification action is necessary.

The outcome is independently made or reviewed/approved before communication. Determine together with the certified client and complainant whether, and to what extent, the subject and resolution are made public, subject to applicable legal disclosure obligations. Client opinion alone does not determine publication.

6. Targets, progress reports and escalation

IGC aims to complete the investigation of a complaint within three weeks of receipt and to decide an appeal within three months of receipt. Progress against these targets is monitored in the case record. Escalate any threatened delay to Top Management; record reasons, revised arrangements and communications rather than silently exceeding the target.

Provide progress reports and the result to the appellant; do so whenever possible for complaints. Give formal notice of the end of the appeals process and, whenever possible, of complaint closure. The reasoned outcome is always communicated in writing.

7. Actions, closure and records

Assign actions and accountable owners; verify effectiveness before closure where corrective action is necessary. Link internal process deficiencies to the relevant internal audit/management-system action record and IGC-P-CAP; an internal nonconformity is raised only where a complaint or appeal is substantiated.

Retain receipt, validation, independent appointment, evidence, investigation, decision, progress/outcome communications, corrective action and verification in the existing case register and controlled files. Top Management considers trends during management review. For ISMS certification, apply ISO/IEC 27001:2022 including Amendment 1:2024 as the client audit criteria and ISO/IEC 27006-1:2024 as the additional certification-body requirements. IGC’s ISO/IEC 27001 certification is not accredited.

8. Public accessibility

Make the documented complaints and appeals processes publicly accessible. This procedure is published on the IGC website and is available on request. Do not disclose confidential case records when publishing the process.