European compliance alliance	**EUROPEAN COMPLIANCE ALLIANCE SRL** Certification Body — ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	**PR-APE-01** Appeals Procedure
Section 11 — Appeals and Complaints	**ISO 17021-1 Clause: 9.8**	**v1.0 | July 2025**

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Purpose	To describe how ECA receives, manages and resolves appeals submitted by clients or candidates dissatisfied with certification decisions.
Fundamental right	Every client or candidate has the right to appeal any ECA decision. This right is non-negotiable and its exercise can never harm the client's relationship with ECA. Every appeal will be treated impartially and reviewed by persons independent of those who took the original decision.
Reference clause	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 — Clause 9.8: The certification body shall have a documented process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on appeals. The process shall ensure the independence of those who review the appeal from those who took the original decision.
What is an appeal?	An appeal is a request for reconsideration of a certification decision with which the client disagrees: an unfavourable decision to certify, suspension or withdrawal, a reduction of scope that is not accepted, or any other formal ECA decision on the status of the certification.
Difference from a complaint	An APPEAL challenges a specific certification DECISION. A COMPLAINT concerns the conduct of the process, the auditors or ECA's service, without necessarily challenging a formal decision.
Responsible person	General Manager: manages appeals and ensures the independence of the process. Appoints the independent reviewer for each appeal.

2. CHANNELS AND DEADLINES

Submission channel	Email: advisorlatam@csbglobal.org — Subject: 'Appeal — [Name of the organisation] — [Date]'
Deadline to submit the appeal	Maximum 30 working days from notification of the decision being appealed.
Acknowledgement of receipt by ECA	ECA acknowledges receipt of the appeal within 5 working days, confirming the number assigned and the process to be followed.
Resolution deadline	ECA resolves and notifies the decision on the appeal within 45 working days of the acknowledgement of receipt. If more time is required, the appellant is notified with the reasons.
Cost	The appeal process is free of charge for the appellant.

3. APPEALS MANAGEMENT PROCESS

1	**Step 1: Receipt and registration** The General Manager receives the appeal, assigns it a unique number (APE-[YEAR]-[NUMBER]) and sends an acknowledgement of receipt to the appellant within 5 working days. The appeal is recorded in Section 5 of this document.
2	**Step 2: Admissibility check** The General Manager verifies that: (1) the appeal was submitted within the 30-working-day period, (2) it refers to a formal ECA decision, (3) it is sufficiently substantiated. If it is not admissible: notifies the appellant with the reasons.
3	**Step 3: Appointment of the independent reviewer** The General Manager appoints a reviewer who did not take part in the decision being appealed, or in the audit of the file. The reviewer may be: an uninvolved alternate decision-maker, an experienced qualified external auditor, or an independent external expert.
4	**Step 4: Review of the file** The independent reviewer reviews the complete file (EXP-CER-01) and the documentation provided by the appellant. They may request additional information. If the appellant requests it, a hearing may be held to present their case.
5	**Step 5: Decision on the appeal** The independent reviewer takes one of the following decisions: (a) APPEAL UPHELD — the original decision is modified, (b) APPEAL PARTIALLY UPHELD — the original decision is modified in part, (c) APPEAL REJECTED — the original decision is maintained with justification.
6	**Step 6: Notification to the appellant** The General Manager notifies the appellant of the decision on the appeal, including the full justification. The notification states that the decision is final within ECA, but that the appellant may approach the accreditation body if they consider the process was not adequate.
7	**Step 7: Implementation and follow-up** If the appeal was upheld, the Technical Director implements the necessary changes and updates the records (REG-DEC-01, BD-CER-01, DIR-CER-01). The General Manager verifies that there are no retaliatory actions against the appellant.

4. GUARANTEES OF INDEPENDENCE

Separation from the original decision-maker	The reviewer of the appeal CANNOT be the person who took the original decision, nor the Lead Auditor of the file, nor the Technical Director if he made the prior technical recommendation.
No retaliation	ECA guarantees that lodging an appeal has no negative consequences for the relationship with the client or for the certification process.
Transparency of the process	The appellant receives information on the process, the deadlines and the justification of the final decision.

External oversight	If the appellant considers that the appeal process was not conducted properly, they may lodge a complaint with the accreditation body.

5. APPEALS REGISTER

Appeal no.	Date received	Appellant	Decision appealed	Designated reviewer	Decision on the appeal	Resolution date

6. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Prepared by	Description
1.0	15 July 2025	EUROPEAN COMPLIANCE ALLIANCE S.R.L.	Initial creation of the Appeals Procedure. 7 steps and guarantees of independence.
Update in the event of regulatory or process changes.			

7. APPROVAL

Prepared by:	Approved by:
EUROPEAN COMPLIANCE ALLIANCE S.R.L. Date: 15 July 2025	**Sergio Pinzón** Technical Director Date: 15 July 2025