

## ASF-GOV-005

# Complaints and Appeals Procedure

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| Document code      | ASF-GOV-005                                                                     |
| Version            | V2.0                                                                            |
| Effective date     | 2026-11-25                                                                      |
| Approved by        | Prof. Giorgi Pkhakadze, MD, MPH, PhD — President, Accréditation Sans Frontières |
| Submission address | info@accreditation.ge · france-asf.fr/complaints/                               |
| Next review        | November 2031                                                                   |

## Version History

| Version | Date       | Description                            | Approved by                       |
|---------|------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| V0.1    | 2026-10-27 | Initial draft                          | —                                 |
| V1.0    | 2026-11-10 | Standards Development Committee review | Standards Development Committee   |
| V2.0    | 2026-11-25 | Final approved                         | Prof. G. Pkhakadze, ASF President |

## 1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This document establishes the formal procedures for receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints and appeals arising from ASF accreditation activities. Two distinct routes are provided: the Complaints Procedure (Section A) for matters concerning the conduct of the accreditation process, and the Appeals Procedure (Section B) for challenges to formal accreditation decisions.

1.2 ASF is committed to handling all complaints and appeals fairly, transparently, and in a timely manner. All processes are independent of the individuals involved in the original activity.

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## SECTION A — COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### 2. What Constitutes a Complaint

2.1 A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction concerning:

- a) the conduct of a surveyor during an assessment visit
- b) the fairness or transparency of the assessment process
- c) the conduct or impartiality of ASF staff or committee members
- d) an accredited organisation's compliance with ASF accreditation requirements and standards
- e) any other aspect of ASF's accreditation process, excluding formal accreditation decisions (which are subject to the Appeals Procedure, Section B)

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### 3. Who May Submit a Complaint

3.1 A complaint may be submitted by: any organisation participating in or affected by ASF accreditation activities; any surveyor, staff member, or adviser of ASF; any patient, service user, or member of the public who has a legitimate concern regarding an accredited organisation's compliance.

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### 4. Submitting a Complaint

4.1 Complaints must be submitted in writing to ASF at: [info@accreditation.ge](mailto:info@accreditation.ge), or through the online form at [france-asf.fr/complaints/](https://france-asf.fr/complaints/).

4.2 A complaint should include: the name and contact details of the complainant; a clear description of the issue; the names of any individuals involved; supporting evidence where available.

4.3 ASF will acknowledge receipt of a complaint within five (5) working days.

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### 5. Investigation

5.1 Complaints are investigated by a designated ASF representative who was not involved in the activity that is the subject of the complaint.

5.2 The investigator may request additional information from the complainant and from the individuals concerned. All parties are given the opportunity to present their position.

5.3 The investigation is completed and a decision communicated within thirty (30) working days of acknowledgement, except in cases of exceptional complexity where the complainant is informed of the revised timeline.

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## 6. Outcomes and Records

6.1 The complainant is notified in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the decision. Where a complaint is upheld, ASF will specify the corrective action to be taken.

6.2 All complaints, investigation records, and outcomes are retained as controlled documents for a minimum of five years.

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## SECTION B — APPEALS PROCEDURE

### 7. What Constitutes an Appeal

7.1 An appeal is a formal challenge by an applicant or accredited organisation to a formal accreditation decision issued by ASF. Appealable decisions include: accreditation denied; accreditation deferred; accreditation suspended; accreditation withdrawn.

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### 8. Grounds for Appeal

8.1 An appeal may be submitted on the following grounds:

- a) the accreditation decision was not made in accordance with ASF's published procedures
- b) the assessment process was materially affected by a procedural error or breach of impartiality
- c) material evidence that was available at the time of the assessment was not properly considered

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### 9. Submission Timeline

9.1 An appeal must be submitted within twenty (20) working days of the date of the written notification of the accreditation decision.

9.2 Appeals submitted outside this period will not be accepted except in exceptional circumstances at ASF's discretion.

## 10. Independent Appeals Panel

10.1 Appeals are considered by an independent ASF Appeals Panel, which must not include any individual who participated in the original assessment or accreditation decision.

10.2 The Appeals Panel shall comprise a minimum of three members, including at least one clinical expert and one governance expert. Members declare conflicts of interest in accordance with the ASF Impartiality Policy (ASF-GOV-003) before participating.

## 11. Appeals Process

11.1 ASF acknowledges receipt of an appeal within five (5) working days.

11.2 The appeal is considered primarily on the basis of written submissions. The Appeals Panel may request additional information or, at its discretion, convene a hearing.

11.3 The Appeals Panel issues its decision within forty-five (45) working days of acknowledgement. Both parties are notified in writing with full reasoning.

## 12. Possible Outcomes

12.1 The Appeals Panel may:

- a) uphold the original accreditation decision
- b) modify the accreditation decision
- c) overturn the accreditation decision and refer the matter back for reassessment

12.2 The decision of the Appeals Panel is final. No further internal appeal is available.

## 13. Records

13.1 All appeals, submissions, panel deliberations, and outcomes are retained as controlled documents for a minimum of seven years.

### Approved by

| Name and title                                                                      | Signature | Date       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Prof. Giorgi Pkhakadze, MD,<br>MPH, PhD President,<br>Accréditation Sans Frontières |           | 2026-11-25 |

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