

Complaint and Appeal Policy for Accredited Mediator Training Program

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a structured process for participants to raise complaints and appeals concerning any aspect of the accredited mediator training program. This policy aims to ensure that all grievances are addressed in a fair, transparent, and timely manner, to maintain the highest standards of training quality and participant satisfaction.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all participants, trainers, coaches and administrative staff involved in the accredited mediator training program. It covers complaints and appeals related to:

- a. Training content and structure
- b. Trainer, Assessor and Coach performance and conduct
- c. Assessment and evaluation processes
- d. Certification and accreditation issues
- e. Administrative and logistical arrangements
- f. Discriminatory practices or harassment

3. Definitions

- a. Complaint: A formal expression of dissatisfaction concerning any aspect of the training program, including but not limited to the content, delivery, or trainer conduct.
- b. Appeal: A formal request to review or reconsider a decision made concerning a participant's assessment, certification, or any other relevant issue.
- c. Complainant: The individual or entity raising a complaint or appeal.
- d. Respondent: The person or entity against whom the complaint or appeal is made.
- e. Resolution: The outcome or decision made in response to a complaint or appeal.

4. Guiding Principles

- a. Confidentiality: All complaints and appeals will be handled with strict confidentiality, ensuring that the identity and information of all parties are protected.
- b. Impartiality: Complaints and appeals will be managed impartially, ensuring no bias or unfair treatment toward any party.
- c. Transparency: The process for handling complaints and appeals will be transparent, with clear communication provided to all parties involved.

- d. Timeliness: Complaints and appeals will be addressed promptly within the stipulated timeframes.
- e. Accessibility: All participants will have easy access to the complaint and appeal process.
- f. Continuous Improvement: Feedback from complaints and appeals will be used to improve the quality of the training program.

5. Procedure for Filing a Complaint

Step 1: Submission of Complaint:

- a. The complainant must submit a formal written complaint within 10 business days of the incident or issue.
- b. The complaint should be addressed to the organizers and must include:
 - 1. A clear and concise description of the complaint
 - 2. Relevant dates, locations, and details
 - 3. Names of any individuals involved
 - 4. Supporting evidence or documentation (if applicable)
 - 5. Desired resolution or outcome

Step 2: Acknowledgment of Complaint

- a. The organizers will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 business days.
- b. The complainant will receive an overview of the complaint process, including anticipated timelines and the contact information of the person handling the complaint.

Step 3: Investigation

- a. An independent investigator or panel, not involved in the subject of the complaint, will be appointed to review the complaint.
- b. The investigation may include:
 - 1. Reviewing relevant documentation
 - 2. Interviewing the complainant, respondent, and any witnesses
 - 3. Gathering additional information as needed
 - 4. The investigation will be conducted in a fair, objective, and impartial manner.

Step 4: Resolution and Decision

- a. A decision will be made within 20 business days of receiving the complaint.
- b. The decision will be based on the findings of the investigation and will include:
 1. A summary of the findings
 2. A determination of whether the complaint is upheld or not
 3. Any corrective actions or remedies to be implemented
 4. The complainant will be informed in writing of the decision and any actions to be taken.

Step 5: Follow-up

- a. If corrective actions are required, a follow-up review will be conducted within 30 days to ensure compliance and effectiveness.
- b. The complainant will be informed of the follow-up findings and any further actions, if necessary.

5. Procedure for Filing an Appeal:

Grounds for Appeal - Appeals will only be considered on specific grounds, such as:

- a. Procedural Error: There was a failure to follow the correct procedures that may have affected the outcome.
- b. New Evidence: New evidence has come to light that was not available at the time of the original decision.
- c. Bias or Unfair Treatment: There is a reasonable belief that bias or unfair treatment influenced the decision.

6. Appeal Process:

Step 1: Submission of Appeal

- a. The appellant must submit a formal written appeal within 15 business days of receiving the original decision.
- b. The appeal should be addressed to the Organizers and must include:

1. A detailed explanation of the grounds for appeal
2. Relevant supporting documentation or evidence
3. The desired outcome of the appeal

Step 2: Acknowledgment of Appeal

- a. The Organizers will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 5 business days.
- b. The appellant will be informed of the next steps and the anticipated timeline for the appeal process.

Step 3: Review of Appeal

- a. The Organizers will appoint an appeals Committee, consisting of senior staff members and independent experts not involved in the original decision, to review the appeal.
- b. The review may include:
 1. Examination of the original decision and all related documentation
 2. Consideration of any new evidence presented
 3. Interviews or hearings with the appellant and other relevant parties
 4. The committee will ensure a fair and unbiased review process.

Step 4: Decision on Appeal

- a. The Appeals Committee will make a decision within 30 business days of receiving the appeal.
- b. The decision will be based on the merits of the appeal and the evidence presented.
- c. The appellant will be notified in writing of the outcome, including a detailed explanation of the decision.

Step 5: Final Resolution

- a. The decision of the appeals committee is final. If the appeal is upheld, appropriate corrective actions will be taken, and the appellant will be informed of the next steps.

- b. If the appeal is not upheld, the appellant will receive a detailed explanation and have the option to request a meeting for further clarification.

7. Record Keeping

- a. All complaints and appeals, along with documentation of the investigation and resolution process, will be kept on file for a minimum of five years.
- b. Records will be maintained in a secure and confidential manner, accessible only to authorized personnel.

8. Communication of Policy

- a. This policy will be communicated to all participants during the induction process and will be readily available on the training program's website and participant handbook.
- b. Participants will be encouraged to provide feedback and ask questions about the complaint and appeal process.

9. Review of Policy

- a. This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with best practices.
- b. Any amendments to the policy will be communicated promptly to all participants and stakeholders.