



SAB Complaints Policy

The SafePlus Accreditation framework is highly valued by those assessors who have been successfully accredited. It is anticipated that occasionally accredited assessors may attract adverse publicity in the media or complaints may be made about an accredited assessor's practice or competence.

It is the policy of the SafePlus Accreditation Body (SAB) to review all complaints received in writing from any source that are related to an assessor's accreditation, competence or which otherwise raise questions about an assessor's suitability to hold accreditation; and to resolve any such complaints in a timely, fair and equitable manner.

Complaints about the conduct of accredited assessors should be made to the assessor's professional body/regulator/ registration authority. SAB cannot and will not assume authority for investigating or enforcing any standards or policies of an accredited assessor's professional body/regulator/ registration authority.

SAB will not adjudicate, arbitrate or mediate individual grievances against an accredited assessor.

To the extent that the complaint relates specifically to, or raises issues about an assessor's accreditation, competence or about an assessor's suitability to hold accreditation, the complaint should be made in accordance with this policy.

Complaints process

Complaints will be received initially by the SafePlus Accreditation Body Manager.

SAB will not pursue complaints that are not in writing or that are anonymous. The receipt of a complaint will be acknowledged within 10 working days.

If the complaint is not within the purview of SAB, the complainant will be notified and no further action will be taken.

If the complaint falls into the purview of SAB and appears to warrant investigation then the Manager will forward a copy of the complaint to the Board of the SAB within 14 days of receipt. The person who is the subject of a complaint will be notified of the complaint within 14 days of receipt and of the next steps in the complaints process.



The complaint will be investigated internally by staff within SAB. Further relevant information may be sought from the complainant, and third parties. The accredited assessor who is the subject of the complaint will be provided with copies of all relevant information obtained during the investigation and have the opportunity to respond to the complaint before the investigator makes his or her recommendation to the Board of SAB.

The investigator may recommend and the Board of SAB may decide in their discretion that:

- No further action needs to be taken;
- The assessor's accreditation should be reviewed;
- The assessor's accreditation should be suspended
- The assessor's accreditation should be removed.

Decisions of no further action or review of accreditation

Where the decision is that no further action needs to be taken or the assessor's accreditation needs to be reviewed a party who is dissatisfied with the decision may write to the Chair of the Board of SAB and request a review of the decision by a person who was not involved in the internal investigation.

A reviewer will be appointed to review the decision. The reviewer will be a person who was not involved in the initial decision and will be external to SAB. They will be a person with legal and /or health and safety assessment expertise, depending on the issue/s which gave rise to the decision. The review will be conducted 'on the papers'. The reviewer's decision will confirm, reverse or modify the decision of the Chair. The reviewer's decision will be final.

Suspension and Removal of Accreditation ("de-accreditation")

The Chair of the Board of SAB has the right to suspend or remove an assessor's accreditation following an investigation into a complaint. Without limitation the circumstances when this may arise include:

- Serious proven breaches of health and safety laws and regulations;
- Serious proven leadership failures relevant to an assessor's role as an accredited assessor as identified by a public or other independent inquiry;
- A refusal to comply with the specific instructions of a tribunal or Court of law;
- Fraud;
- Serious proven breaches of privacy and confidentiality; and



- Any other proven conduct which reflects on an assessor's ethics or competence to hold SafePlus accreditation.

The decision to suspend or remove an assessor's accreditation shall be made by the Chair of Board of SAB in his or her discretion, following receipt of a recommendation from the person who investigated the complaint. If the Chair decides that status as an accredited assessor should be suspended or removed an assessor will be informed in writing. The correspondence will indicate clearly why accreditation has been suspended or removed and the date from which it takes effect.

Once accreditation has been suspended an assessor may not continue to use SafePlus branding. An assessor must not:

- Make any new reference to being a SafePlus accredited assessor;
- Seek to use SafePlus as grounds for contesting any circumstances which may have lead to the decision to suspend accreditation

Once accreditation has been removed an assessor must:

- Within 30 days of receipt of the correspondence notifying of de-accreditation, remove from public display all references to accreditation (including on websites)
- Within 60 days of receipt of the correspondence notifying of de-accreditation, remove references to accreditation on all pre-existing stationery and publicity material and not make any claim to being a SafePlus accredited assessor (previous accreditation can be referred to with reference to the applicable dates)

An assessor may request a review of a decision to suspend or to remove his or her accreditation within 10 working days of the receipt of the correspondence notifying of suspension or de-accreditation.

A request for a review must be in writing to the Chair of the SafePlus Accreditation Body.

An external reviewer (an independent Barrister) will be appointed to carry out the review. The applicant will be afforded an opportunity to make written submissions but the review will be conducted 'on the papers'.

The external reviewer may:

1. Confirm or vary the decision to suspend or remove accreditation;



2. Set aside the decision to suspend or remove accreditation and substitute another decision that the reviewer considers appropriate.

The SafePlus Accreditation Body will give the applicant written notice of the decision on the external review and reasons for the decision within 14 days of making the decision.

The decision of the external reviewer will be final.

An application for external review does not affect that operation of the original decision or prevent the taking of any lawful action to implement or enforce the decision, however once the decision on the external review is made and if a new decision is substituted then that new decision take effect.

Retention of documentation

It is the policy of SAB to retain all documentation associated with any complaints which may be made against an accredited assessor for a period of not more than one accreditation cycle (3 years) and for a period of not more 5 years for complaints received about SAB itself.

Accredited assessors must maintain a record of any complaints made and upon request make that available to SAB.