



Recognized
Prior
Learning

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The Early Childhood Education Recognition of Prior Learning Program

Complaint and Appeals Process

Date: January 2021

The Early Childhood Education Recognition of Prior Learning Program was developed through funding from the Canada - Nova Scotia Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and the Provincial Departments of Labour and Advanced Education and Education and Early Childhood Development.

Complaints and Appeals

The following outline the principles and administrative process(es) by which a RPL Program Candidate may register a complaint with respect to the conduct of any individual or the management and administration of the RPL Program, including raising concerns where they believe standards in the assessment process and / or the assessment tools have not been met.

AECENS ensures complaint and appeal procedures are fair, ethical, transparent, equitable, timely and result in appropriate action.

Informal Complaint Process

When an RPL Program Stakeholder has a complaint related to the RPL Program, they are encouraged to raise the matter directly and immediately with the Respondent (e.g. AECENS staff, Assessors, or invigilators). Informal (ad hoc) complaints can be provided verbally with the goal of seeking resolution or clarification for any immediate problems.

Informal (ad hoc) complaint resolution processes are necessarily limited to alternatives that are within the administrative discretion of the Respondent. If a resolution satisfactory to the Candidate is beyond the discretion of the Respondent, the Candidate may choose to register a formal (written) complaint.

Formal Complaint Processes

A Candidate may choose to register a formal complaint without first engaging in the informal complaint process. A Candidate may choose, within 20 business days, to submit a formal written complaint to the AECENS Executive Director.

The AECENS Executive Director reviews the information provided by the Candidate and determines a resolution or course of action with respect to the complaint. The AECENS Executive Director's determination is described in a letter sent to the Candidate within 20 business days of receiving the formal written complaint.

The resolution or course of action determined by the AECENS Executive Director may be a matter of immediate action or a matter of gathering further information in anticipation of actions to be taken in future.

AECENS reserves the right to not respond to a formal written complaint that is anonymous or based on hearsay, or contains insufficient or incomplete information, or is made more than 20 business days after the incident which led to the complaint, or where no response is received from the complainant within 20 business days of receipt of correspondence regarding the determination of the AECENS Executive Director.

Appeals

Candidates may exercise their right to appeal any of their assessment results.

Grounds for Appeal

A Candidate's appeal must fit within one or more of the following grounds for appeal:

- A significant error in the assessment, scoring, determination and / or calculation of the Candidate's assessment result,
- A credible claim of Assessor or Invigilator bias or discrimination,
- Failure by the Assessor or Invigilator to follow the established assessment procedures, and
- Extenuating circumstances, beyond the Candidate's control, that impacted the Candidate's performance or made it impossible for the Candidate to be fairly assessed. Candidates are expected to provide evidence to support a claim for any extenuating circumstances.

Where reasonable grounds for appeal are not evident, the Executive Director denies the Candidate's appeal.

Appeal Process

Candidates who choose to appeal the results for any of the RPL Program assessments may initiate the appeal process by completing and submitting an Appeal Request form accompanied by the Appeal Fee of \$150.00 within 5 business days of receiving their assessment result.

A Candidate whose appeal results in any change to their assessment outcomes is refunded the full amount of the Appeal Fee.

The Candidate's Appeal Request form must be fully completed and must clearly and concisely state the grounds for the appeal. Additional relevant information and documentation may be attached and submitted with the Appeal Request form.

The AECENS Executive Director will review the information provided by the Candidate and make a decision regarding the appeal within 10 business days of receiving the completed Appeal Request form. Candidates will be provided an explanation for the rationale for the decision.

If the matter is not resolved by the AECENS Executive Director's decision, the Candidate may request an escalation of the appeal result to the AECENS RPL Program Committee for further review. The request for escalation must be submitted in writing in an envelope addressed to the AECENS RPL Program Committee, including the basis for the request for a review of the AECENS Executive Director's decision. The request for escalation must be submitted within 10

business days of receiving the AECENS Executive Director's written decision on the initial appeal (or the expiry of the time allowed for a decision) and must be accompanied by an additional Appeal Fee of \$250.00.

Within 20 business days of receiving the request for escalation of appeal, the AECENS RPL Program Committee will review the information provided by the Candidate and make a decision with respect to the escalated appeal. The AECENS Program Committee's decision is provided in a letter addressed to the Candidate and includes an explanation of the rationale for their decision.

A Candidate whose escalated appeal results in any change to their assessment outcomes is refunded the full amount of the Appeal Fees.

Definitions

"AECENS RPL Program Committee" means:

- a sub-committee of the AECENS Board of Directors whose responsibilities include oversight of the operations of the RPL Program and liaison with the AECENS Executive Director with respect to matters related to the RPL Program.