Terms of Reference

Committee Name	Appeals Committee
Date of Last Update	16 November 2026

1.0 Introduction

The terms of reference for the AIA Appeals Committee ("the Committee") describes its purpose, scope and authority.

The terms of reference provides clear and specific information on how the Committee is organised, what the Committee is created to achieve, its membership and meeting arrangements.

As with AIA professional members, Committee members must act in the public interest using their professional judgement and skills to build trust in AIA and the profession more widely.

AIA Committees are underpinned by the following key principles:

- **Selflessness** – members should take decisions in terms of the public interest and not in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or friends.
- **Integrity** – members should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might, or might be perceived to, influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity** – in carrying out the Association's business, including awarding contracts and recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, members should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** – members are accountable for their decisions and actions to the Association's membership and the wider public and must be submitted to appropriate scrutiny.
- **Openness** – members should be as open as possible about the decisions and actions that are taken. Members should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty** – members have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their appointments and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** – members should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

2.0 Purpose

The Appeals Committee is an independent regulatory committee established by Council to hear and determine appeals arising from decisions of the Disciplinary Committee and such other regulatory decisions as may be provided for under the AIA Constitution and Regulations.

The Committee shall:

- Protect the public interest
- Safeguard procedural fairness
- Promote confidence in AIA's regulatory and disciplinary framework
- Ensure disciplinary decisions are lawful, reasonable, proportionate and consistent
- Provide an independent review mechanism within AIA's regulatory system
- Ensure the principles of natural justice are upheld

The Committee shall exercise its functions independently and shall not be subject to direction by Council, the Investigations Committee or the Disciplinary Committee in relation to individual appeals.

3.0 Authority

The Committee derives its authority from the AIA Council, the governing body.

This is set out in the AIA Constitution under Bye Laws 9-11[1]. The Committee is not empowered to amend the AIA Constitution or reserved regulatory functions.

The Committee is authorised to:

- Hear appeals against findings and sanctions
- Review decisions of the Disciplinary Committee
- Consider appeals against other regulatory decisions where prescribed by AIA regulations
- Receive written and oral evidence
- Obtain independent legal advice
- Confirm, vary or overturn decisions
- Substitute alternative sanctions where appropriate
- Remit matters for further consideration
- Make such orders as are permitted under AIA regulations

4.0 Scope

The Committee shall deal with all matters relating to appeals following findings and sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.

The Committee shall not investigate allegations directly.

5.0 Core Responsibilities and Duties

The Committee shall:

5.1 Appeals Hearings

[1] https://www.aiaworldwide.com/about-us/governance/

- Conduct hearings in accordance with AIA's disciplinary procedures
- Ensure proceedings are fair, impartial and proportionate
- Consider all relevant evidence presented
- Ensure respondents have a reasonable opportunity to present their case
- Make decisions based solely upon evidence properly before the Committee

5.2 Decision Making

The Committee may:

- Dismiss an appeal
- Uphold an appeal
- Confirm the original decision
- Vary findings
- Reduce, increase or amend sanctions where permitted
- Refer a matter back to the Disciplinary Committee
- Order a rehearing where appropriate

All decisions shall be accompanied by written reasons.

5.3 Sanctions

Where allegations are upheld, the Committee may impose sanctions in line with the AIA Sanctions Handbook as agreed by the AIA Council and in force at the time of the matter arising.

The Committee shall ensure sanctions are proportionate, consistent and support public protection.

5.4 Public Interest Responsibilities

In carrying out its work the Committee shall:

- Place public protection at the centre of decision making
- Maintain confidence in the profession
- Balance proportionality with the need to uphold standards
- Promote ethical conduct
- Ensure disciplinary outcomes contribute to maintaining trust in AIA and its regulatory functions

5.5 Independence and Natural Justice

The Committee shall operate in accordance with the principles of:

- Independence
- Fairness
- Procedural propriety

- Transparency
- Objectivity
- Consistency
- Natural justice

No individual who has participated in the investigation of a matter shall participate in determining the outcome of that matter.

Members must withdraw from proceedings in the event of an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

6.0 Membership

The Committee consists of at least five members, of whom the Chairman shall be a lawyer and not less than two others shall be non-accountants. The other members should be Members of the Association always ensuring that the majority are non-accountants.

From the membership of the Committee a Chair is elected.

Only members of the Committee have the right to attend meetings of the Committee on a regular basis. Other individuals may be invited to attend all or part of any meeting, by the Chair as and when appropriate.

There is no length of time specified for membership of Committees.

All members attending the Committee have a right to vote, except for any individuals 'in attendance', and the Chair has the casting vote.

The AIA Council has the power to fill any casual vacancies in the Committee and to suspend or remove for misconduct any member.

The Committee may co-opt specialist advisers where necessary.

7.0 Chair Responsibilities

The Chair of the Committee is appointed in accordance with the Articles of the Association.

The Chair works with the Secretary to the Council and is responsible for:

- Ensuring meetings are called and held in accordance with AIA's Constitutional Documents and specific Committee Terms of Reference
- Agreeing dates, times, locations, and agenda for meetings
- Ensuring the meeting agenda and relevant documents are circulated to the members of the committee in advance of the meeting
- Officiating and conducting meetings
    - Ensuring there is sufficient time during the meeting to fully discuss agenda items
    - Ensuring that discussion on agenda items is on topic, productive and professional
    - Promoting constructive challenge
    - Ensuring minutes are complete and accurate, retained, included and reviewed at the next

meeting in line with AIA's policy

- Providing leadership and ensuring committee members are aware of their obligations and that the Committee complies with its responsibilities

8.0 Meetings

8.1 Frequency

The Committee shall meet as necessary to review cases and conduct its business to ensure that AIA meets its obligations under the Complaints, Disciplinary and Appeals Regulations.

8.2 Notice

Meetings of the Committee shall be arranged by the Secretary to the Disciplinary Process in line with the requirements of AIA's Constitution or additionally at the request of the Committee Chair.

The notification giving at least 21 days' notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the Respondent. Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting, confirming the venue, time, and date together with an agenda of items to be discussed and supporting papers, shall be provided to each member of the Committee, and any other person required to attend, no later than five working days before the date of the meeting.

8.3 Quorum

A meeting shall be quorate when at least three members of the Committee are present so long as the Chair is present and at least one non-accountant.

8.4 Decision Making

The Committee shall make decisions by majority vote. Where a vote is required on a particular decision each member shall have one vote and the Chair shall have a casting vote.

8.5 Conflicts of Interest

Members of the Committee are obliged to declare in advance of, and during, the meeting any actual, potential or perceived conflicts in line with AIA's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Conflicts shall be recorded in the minutes and members must withdraw from discussions or decisions where a material conflict exists.

Committee members must also complete annual declarations of interest.

8.6 Minutes

The Secretary to the Disciplinary Process shall minute the proceedings and resolutions of all meetings of the Committee; minutes of committee meetings shall be circulated to all members of the Committee and are reported to the AIA Council at the next Council meeting.

The minutes and papers of meetings held by the Committee should be held in accordance with agreed policies.

9.0 Reporting

The Committee shall report to Council on:

- Number and type of appeals
- Appeal outcomes

10.0 Equality & Diversity

10.1 Member Responsibilities

Members of the Committee are reminded at the commencement of each meeting that they are required to act at all times in accordance with AIA's Equality and Diversity Policy and to:

- Treat all individuals with dignity, fairness and respect
- Promote an inclusive culture that values diversity of thought, background and experience
- Avoid unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bias
- Ensure their contributions and decision-making are objective, evidence-based and free from personal prejudice
- Challenge behaviours, practices or proposals that may adversely impact equality, diversity or inclusion

10.2 Committee Responsibilities

The Committee shall support and promote AIA's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work. The Committee shall have due regard to the principles of fairness, accessibility, objectivity and non-discrimination when exercising its responsibilities.

In carrying out its functions, the Committee shall:

- Consider the equality, diversity and inclusion implications of all significant decisions relating to qualifications, assessments, routes to membership and learner support
- Seek to ensure that qualification requirements and assessment arrangements are accessible, proportionate and equitable
- Promote fair opportunities for all candidates regardless of age, disability, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or any other characteristic protected by applicable legislation
- Monitor relevant data relating to learner participation, progression, achievement and assessment outcomes to identify and address any unexplained adverse trends or disparities
- Ensure that reasonable adjustments are available and implemented appropriately for candidates with disabilities or other recognised needs
- Take account of the needs of international learners and the diverse geographic regions in which AIA qualifications are delivered

10.3 Equality Impact Considerations

The Committee shall ensure that significant changes to qualifications, assessment methodologies, regulations or policies are considered through an equality impact lens and that any potential adverse effects are identified, understood and mitigated where appropriate.

10.4 Reporting and Escalation

Any concerns relating to equality, diversity, inclusion, accessibility or potential discriminatory impacts arising from the Committee's work shall be reported to the Chair and, where appropriate, escalated through AIA's governance framework for further consideration and action.

11.0 Annual Review

11.1 Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference are reviewed annually by the Committee at the first meeting following the Annual General Meeting and changes enacted by the Secretary to the Council subject to approval by the AIA Council.

11.2 Performance Review

The Committee shall:

- Conduct an annual effectiveness review
- Review attendance, skills mix and performance
- Periodically benchmark its governance arrangements against recognised best practice