

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

## COMPLAINTS-HANDLING PROCESS

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMPLAINT RECEIPT BY EQCS

- Complaints must be submitted through written texts which can be submitted after a reason for complaint has arisen, or after receipt of the certification decision.
- If no complaint is received within this timeframe the decision becomes final and may not be appealed against, and the complaint become declined.
- EQCS will not respond to anonymous requests/forms without clear contact information.
- After receipt of the request in writing, EQCS shall investigate whether it relates to the certification activities and scopes for which EQCS is responsible, and decide the acceptance of it.
- Where the request is identified and accepted to be investigated, EQCS shall acknowledge the same to the complainant or the concerned person submitted the request.
- In case where the request is not accepted, EQCS shall give notice to the complainant of it with the reason(s), and guidance on how to proceed further with this request.
- If request is received by any staff member, he will be forwarded to the QM for his review and action, and then related records will be updated by QM.
- QM who will conduct an initial evaluation of the request and decide if the submission is accepted or denied within 7 working days, based on whether the request contains a valid reason to file the complaint.
- An complaint does not alter the effectiveness of the certification, unless has been granted by the complaint/appeal committee in its final decision. All restrictions applicable to a customer as a consequence of a certification decision of suspension remain in effect during the period of suspension, regardless of the outcome of an appeal.
- The QM maintains a log of all complaints, appeals and informs the complaints/appeals review committee in order to move the process forward.

### REASONS OF COMPLAINT:

All requests must state the reason(s) for complaints and need to be supported by information and evidence.

Unsatisfactory performance recorded on the "Client Satisfaction Form" by any EQCS client in respect of the audit conducted by EQCS auditors shall be treated as a complaint and dealt with accordingly.

IMPOTANT: Please note that a complaint will only be accepted if it is accompanied by or based on clear and credible information in accordance with below reasons.

In case request does not contain a convincing reason, QM will contact the concerned complainant for more clarification on convincing reason for complaining.

Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- A complaint is about conformity assessment and/or appeals and the way that the conformity assessment system functions.
- A complaint about EQCS Client etc.....
- Level of service quality or delivery.
- Details about the complaints about the conformity assessment activities
- Dissatisfaction, whether it is from person in the certification body, or the certification activities of the certification body, or administrative processes, financing processes, etc.....
- Decisions made based on immaterial grounds;
  - Decisions based on immaterial information, or information for which there is no credible basis.
- In general, hearsay is treated as information for which there is no credible basis;
- Failure to consider presented, relevant information in reaching a decision;
- Reasonable perception of bias against the complainant;
- Unreasonable delay in the decision-making process;
- Prejudicial procedural irregularities in reaching the decision;
- Disputes about facts relevant to the decision;
- Disputes about interpretations relevant to the decision.
- Request for review for a specific evaluation decision for a specific application
- Other specific reasons.
- An allegation against EQCS policy or EQCS compliance with standards

## **NOTES**

- For complaint (s) related to certified organization(s), a direct approach to the organization(s) in question is recommended.
- A confidentiality agreement with the organization(s) may not allow EQCS to reveal documents or sensitive information to the complainant, however clear information and response should be provided to complainant.
- EQCS does not disclose any personal information without consent of the person(s) in question, but may refer the matter to the organization concerned at an appropriate time to proceed with

the complains-handling process further. Any specific person of the organization concerned may be identified during the process.

#### **INVESTIGATION AND PREPARATION OF ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AND RESPONSE**

After accepting the complaint, QM shall nominate the individual(s) previously not involved in the subject of the request complaint, and instruct him/her (them) to investigate and validate the subject of the complaint.

In case where the complaint is related to an organization certified by EQCS, EQCS shall refer the matter to the organization at an appropriate time in order to collect and verify all the necessary information.

The nominated individual (s) shall investigate the matter, and decide actions to be taken by EQCS and a response to the complainant or person requesting the review. If applicable and found obligatory, the same will be recorded in register of appeal/complaint by QM. In case of any detected departure, to evaluate the situation, analyze the cause and proposing corrective actions.

#### **COMMUNICATION OF DECISION**

EQCS shall communicate the decision on the response to the complainant.

Where the complainant agrees with the decision, EQCS shall give notice to the complainant of the end of the complaints handling process.

#### **REQUEST OF RE-EXAMINATION**

In case where the complainant/person requesting review disagrees with the decision, he may request EQCS to re-open the investigation of the matter within 30 days after the receipt of the decision. Such a request can only be accepted if the request is accompanied with additional information, such as new findings of the fact.

After receipt of such a request, EQCS shall re-open the investigation of the matter and give notice to the complainant/person requesting review of further decision(s) in accordance with the above-mentioned process.