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Purpose

To define a procedure to ensure that appeal, complaints and disputes with clients or any interested party are promptly dealt with.

Scope

Applicable to all services provided by QRC.

Responsibility

As noted in details.

1.0 Appeals, Complaints & Disputes :

It would be the endeavour of QRC to provide efficient and satisfactory services as detailed in the Request Form. However, in case it is felt that any decision or the conduct of QRC is unjust and prejudicial to any party that party can appeal to QRC and seek redressal. These appeals are to be sent to QRC in writing at following e-mail id Info.clients@qrcsolutionz.com

Appeals, complaints and disputes brought to the notice of QRC are promptly dealt with and remain confidential. Information about the client from sources other than the client are kept confidential. This procedure is applicable to decisions pertaining to certification including maintenance.

It is ensured that personnel are not employed to investigate any appeal, complaint or dispute if they have been directly involved in the activities towards the Organization or any other party involved in the appeal, complaint or dispute in question within the certification cycle.

It is ensured that submission, investigation and decision on appeals and complaints shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant / complainant.

In situations where appeals or complaints cannot be resolved by Scheme Manager, the same shall be referred to CEO further it shall be referred to Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality.

A summary of appeals / complaints received, actions taken/completed is forwarded to the Scheme Manager for presentation in the Management Review meeting. Actions as decided in the Management Review meeting are implemented for further effectiveness.

1.1 Appeals:

1.1.1 "Appeal" means "any request for review that is conveyed in writing, against a decision made by QRC taking into consideration the explanation provided by the client". This may be either during the course of audit at the client's premises or any work pertaining to QRC.

1.1.2 Appeals can be due to:

a) Refusal of an audit by QRC;
b) Non acceptance of scope of certification;
c) Decisions made on misuse, suspension, withdrawal, cancellation, extending and reducing the certification;
d) Failure to recommend certification by QRC;
e) Notification by any third party/interested party against the grant of certification by QRC.

1.1.3 Any appeal from client or interested parties seeking redressal when received is recorded and acknowledged by Scheme Manager. The appeal should contain all available documentary evidence. Scheme Manager will responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information related to the complaints. Any such appeals referred to management are examined in fairness and reviewed by Scheme Manager and any other personnel as required either separately or jointly. The appellant may be asked to withdraw the appeal if found not relevant. Actions shall be initiated by Scheme Manager for resolving the appeals within a stipulated period of 3 months.

1.1.4 Resolution of Appeal shall be handled in the following manner:

An attempt is made by the team leader to resolve the issue at the audit site. If the appeal is not resolved, the matter is taken up to Scheme Manager. In case the Scheme Manager is unable to resolve the appeal, the same shall be referred, with all information (including documentary evidence) to the CEO. If appeal is not resolved, then the matter is taken up to Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality.

1.1.5 Scheme Manager tracks and maintains a record of all appeals along with remedial actions pertaining to the certification system and keeps the appellant updated about the progress and outcome.

1.1.6 Scheme Manager identifies problems requiring any actions to prevent recurrence of the above for corrective action (and preventive action if required) commensurate with the nature and risk involved. These include measures such as:

- Restoring conformity to the certification system process
- Assessing the effectiveness of remedial/corrective actions taken.

1.1.7 A formal notice of conclusion of the appeal handling process shall be provided to the appellant.

1.1.8 Scheme Manager shall be ensure that the persons engaged in the appeals-handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions.

1.2 Complaints:

1.2.1 Normally complaints (dissatisfaction expressed by a person or by the Organization) are made to QRC. Any complaint received by QRC, whether it pertains to QRC functions or the certified Organization, would be treated in all seriousness and investigated. These complaints are recorded by Scheme Manager and the complainant would be informed of the receipt of complaint and advised on the investigation required within a reasonable time of 1 month. Actions are initiated by Scheme Manager for resolving & restoring conformity to Management System and for closing the complaint within three months from the date of receipt of complaint unless delayed for a specific reason. The results and actions taken/completed are informed accordingly to the concerned parties. Scheme Manager will responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information related to the complaints.

1.2.2 For complaints received against certified Organizations, Scheme Manager may decide to:

a. Advise to visit / audit may be planned for ascertaining the actions taken and ensuring effectiveness of the certified management system.

b. Advise verification of actions taken during forth-coming surveillance audit.

1.2.3 Any such complaints referred to management are examined in fairness and reviewed by Scheme Manager and any other personnel as required either separately or jointly. The complainant may be asked to withdraw the complaint if found not relevant. A complaint after the date on which it has been received, is to be dealt with, within three months.

1.2.4 Resolution of Complaint shall be handled in the following manner:

a) An attempt is made by the team leader to resolve the issue at the audit site. If the appeal is not resolved, the matter is taken up to Scheme Manager, who analyses and initiates correction, corrective action / preventive action. In case the Scheme Manager is unable to resolve the Complaint, the same shall be referred, with all information (including documentary evidence) to the CEO. If appeal is not resolved, then the matter is taken up to Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality

1.2.5 Scheme Manager tracks and maintains a record of all complaints along with remedial actions pertaining to the certification system and keeps the complainant updated about the progress and outcome.

1.2.6 Scheme Manager identifies problems requiring any actions to prevent recurrence of the above for corrective action (and preventive action if required) commensurate with the nature and risk involved. These include measures such as:

a) notification to appropriate authorities as required by regulation
b) restoring conformity to certification system process
c) preventing recurrence;
d) evaluating and mitigating any adverse incidents (including hazards, safety & security) and their associated risks and impacts
e) ensuring satisfactory interaction with other components of the Management System
f) Assessing the effectiveness of remedial/corrective actions taken.

1.2.7 In case of complaints relevant to public interest, the certified organization and the complainant shall be consulted and if felt necessary information about the complaint and its resolution will be made available for public viewing.

1.2.8 A formal notice of conclusion of the complaints handling process shall be provided to the complainant.

1.3 Disputes:

1.3.1 Disputes here convey disagreement and are applicable to certification process decisions made during the course of audit including document adequacy.

1.3.2 The team leader is authorized to resolve the dispute and conclude the audit effectively.

1.3.3 The dispute if not resolved adequately by the team leader can be brought to the notice of Scheme Manager as an appeal. The Scheme Manager shall resolve the matter through the appeal handling process (as described in earlier sections)

1.3.4 Resolution of Complaint shall be handled in the following manner:

a) An attempt is made by the team leader to resolve the issue at the audit site. If the dispute is not resolved, the matter is taken up to Scheme Manager, who analyses and initiates correction, corrective action / preventive action. In case the Scheme Manager is unable to resolve the dispute, the same shall be referred, with all information (including documentary evidence) to the CEO. If dispute is not resolved, then the matter is taken up to Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality.

1.4 Addressing All Appeals, Complaints and Dispute at CSI Level:

1.4.1 The Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality meetings are convened.

1.4.2 If any, a summary of appeals, complaints and disputes is reviewed, as part of routine agenda, in all CSI meetings for adequacy of actions taken and for any suggested improvements

1.4.3 During the course resolution of any appeals, complaints and disputes if a decision is made to refer specially to CSI, this aspect will be specifically reviewed .If required a special session is convened.

1.4.4 At least two members of the CSI (Appeals committee), two members from QRC and client representative if any, will have to be present when the appeal, complaint or dispute is taken up and none of them would have any interest in the party making the appeal, complaint or dispute. In case an appellant submits to QRC motivated objections in writing against a certain member, this member during the duration of appeal, shall withdraw in favour of a substitute, if the objections are judged to be well founded.

1.4.5 The decision of the Impartiality committee shall be final and binding on both parties. The same shall be communicated to the concerned parties and decision implemented.

Reference Documents
Appeals Complaint Log Register
Appeal and Complaint Form

Issue No.	Rev. No & Date	Prepared By	Approved By	Remarks
01	00 /01.03.2020	Akshata Bhaskar	Vamsi K M	Initial Released
02	01 /20-09-2021	Vidya Katke	Vamsi K M	(Added para On page no. 4) 1.1.8 Scheme Manager shall be ensure that the persons engaged in the appeals-handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions.
03	02/17-01-2022	Vidya Katke	Vamsi K M	QRC Logo changes
04	03/19-11-2026	Vidya Katke	Dr. Deepti M.	Reviewed and approved.