



NQA COMPLAINTS PROCESS NQA-I/WP34/C21

1 SCOPE

- 1.1 All interested parties have the right to make a complaint to NQA Certification Private Limited (NQA-India) in respect to its certification activities or its certified clients.
- 1.2 Submission, investigation and decision making in respect of complaints, shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant.
- 1.3 Any investigation shall take into account the results of similar complaints and ensure that where applicable, correction and corrective action is undertaken.
- 1.4 **(IATF 16949 specific)** - All decisions must comply with IATF 16949, Rules for achieving and maintaining IATF recognition, SI's and FAQ's.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Responsibilities are as defined in the text of this Work Procedure

3 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 3.1 In the first instance, the complainant makes written representations to NQA-India.
- 3.2 Lead auditor responsible for regulatory affairs shall log the complaint, formally confirm receipt with the appellant and provide the appellant with the name(s) of the individual(s) responsible for the investigation and an anticipated timeframe for completion.
- 3.3. Each complaint shall be given an individual reference to facilitate tracking.
- 3.4 On occasions where the anticipated timeframe for completion is exceeded, the complainant shall be kept updated in respect of progress by the nominated investigator(s).
- 3.5 The individual(s) responsible for the validation, investigation and provisional decision shall be dependent upon the complaints subject matter. For example; not those who conducted the audit or made the certification decision in question.
- 3.6 The individual(s) responsible for the investigation and provisional decision shall meet all competence criteria defined by NQA-India pertaining to the role of



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decision maker in respect of the scheme or schemes to which the complaint relates.

- 3.7 The outcome of the investigation and provisional decision shall be reviewed and approved by the applicable Team Leader (or General Manager-NQA, India) prior to communication to the complainant.
- 3.8 The applicable Team Leader (or General Manager-NQA, India) shall be responsible for the initiation, monitoring and close out of corrective actions identified as being incumbent upon NQA-India. This shall be concluded in a timely manner.
- 3.9 Where complaints pertain to a member of the field force, Operations Manager-NQA, India, shall be responsible for the validation, investigation and provisional
- 3.10 Any complaint pertaining to a certified client shall be referred to the organization for comment and, where necessary, corrective action. Records of this interaction shall be retained.
- 3.11 Upon completion of a complaint investigation by Operations Manager (as per 3.9), the outcome shall formally be communicated to the appellant by the applicable Team Leader (or General Manager – NQA, India). The Team Leader shall be responsible for ensuring that any necessary follow up actions are completed in a timely manner as per 3.8.
- 3.12 Upon occasions where the complainant wishes to challenge the decision of the complaints investigation, the complaint may be escalated to the Operations Director, NQA, provided that he is independent as per 3.5.
- 3.13 In all cases, the decision of the Operations Director, NQA, is final and binding upon all parties.
- 3.14 On occasions where the Operations Director does not have demonstrable independence, the final decision may be taken by the Managing Director or Global Accreditation Director of NQA.
- 3.15 All complaints shall be reviewed at the monthly Management Review Meeting of NQA-India in order to ensure that valid containment, root cause and corrective action have been recorded/ implemented. This review acts as the formal ratification of closure.



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4 RECORDS

- 4.1 Comprehensive records of the investigation and decision making processes shall be retained. Copies shall be passed to Lead auditor responsible for Regulatory Affairs.
- 4.2 Records pertaining to all completed complaints shall be made available to the NQA-India's Impartiality committee upon request.
- 4.3 Records detailing containment, root cause and corrective actions incumbent upon NQA-India as a result of a given complaint shall be retained by Lead Auditor responsible for Regulatory Affairs.
- 4.4 Where applicable, The Operations Manager (or General Manager, NQA-India) shall ensure that the audit team scheduled to conduct the next visit to an organization that has:
 - (a) Made a complaint
 - (b) Been subject to complaint

Are furnished with a copy of all records pertaining to this matter.

5.0 NABCB Procedure

For clients certified under NABCB accreditation, the latest issue of NABCB document BCB-203 "**Complaints, Appeals and Disputes Procedures**" shall also be read in conjunction with this procedure to ascertain requirements to be met from the viewpoint of NABCB