



Appeals and Complaints Procedure

1. SCOPE

The aim of this procedure is to determine the method to be applied by Q-check in the appeal and complaints originated from System certification, inspection activities or training activities executed by Q-check and appeal and complaints made regarding the certified organizations.

2. DEFINITIONS

Complaint: A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Q-check by a potential, applicant or certified client related to its products, productions processes or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Appeal: it is a Request by an applicant, or certified client for reconsideration of any decision made by Q-check related to the desired certification status.”

3. APPLICATION

Q-check offers public access to this document describing how the received complaints and appeals will be handled in its web site www.qcheck-cert.gr. Q-check offers public access to this document describing how the received complaints and appeals will be handled in its web site. Persons who give their opinions during the process starting from the receipt of complaints and appeals until their conclusion are obliged to act based on the principle of impartiality and should not make any discrimination towards the person or client bringing that complaint or inquiry. Persons who will be charged with tasks during this process should also maintain the principle of confidentiality. These persons should also be irrelevant with the subject of the complaint and appeal and apart from the persons who gave certification decision and auditors.

Q-check's General Manger has appointed an **Appeals and Complaints Committee** which is usually comprised by at-least 3 persons in order to deal and against specific certification decisions or other issues addressed by appellants/complainants. Rules of terms and operation of the Committee is described on form **FQF.22 Appeals and Complaints Committee Working Rules Instruction**.

3.1. Complaints related to the Training, Certification and Inspection Activities

Upon receipt of a complaint, Q-check confirms whether the complaint is related to certification activities for which it is responsible. If the complaint is about the certification activities, it will deal with the complaint. If the complaints is related to a certified client organization, the effectiveness of the certified management system is taken into account in the interrogation of the complaint.

The complaints in the issues of the audit reports, audit teams, content of the audit, inspection reports etc. regarding the training, system certification and inspection activities can be realized in writing or verbally by the related organizations. The related complaints are recorded to the Complaint Evaluation Form by the personnel getting the complaints and are conveyed to the Management Representative. The corrective action is started for the section which is subject to the complaint by the Management Representative.

The Management Representative meets with the manager of the department which is subject to the complaint in the Complaint Evaluation Form and corrective activity form and collects the data related to the complaint within at most (2) two working days. All data collected related to the complaint are sent to the Appeal and Complaint Committee members. The complainer is notified regarding at which stage the operation which is subject to the operation is and the following stages verbally and in writing. The consensus is reached with the committee members and ensures that the committee meets within reasonable time and investigates the complaint issue in details and makes a relative decision. The Head of the Certification Body is also notified regarding the issue simultaneously by the Appeal and Complaint Committee members.

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During the evaluation made by the committee regarding the nature of the complaint, the committee members can make information demand from the Department Responsible, Management Representative and/or Head of the Certification Body. In the direction of the decisions made by the Committee, the Management Representative fills the appropriate “*activity to be realized*” field of section of the form and notifies the customer regarding the decision made and application stages. The activity is resulted within maximum (1) one month as of the complaint date. The result of the complaint is notified to the complaint owner party in writing. The corrective activity started is closed by the management representative.

The complaints received in the issue of the inspection activities are evaluated by the Inspection Responsible. Whether the issue of the complaints received with the FQF.15 Complaint Evaluation Form, the Corrective Activity is started by the Inspection responsible. All operations realized during the handling of the complaint are realized under the control of the Inspection Responsible and the customer is notified regarding the result.

If the activity which is subject to the complaint requires repetition of the Audit, the appointed personnel will plan all necessary action according to certification and audit procedure to ensure that the audit is repeated by a competent team. The customer is notified according to the submitted report regarding the result of the operation. After the Customer notification, the Corrective Activity is closed.

All notifications are made in writing responsible to the complainer parties regarding the results of the applied decisions by being evaluated by the committee for the certified organizations. The follow-up of all corrective activities started and the operations of the closure of the corrective activity when the complaint is resulted are realized by the management representative.

3.2. Appeals

All raised objections against an audit or certification decision, the client's appeal will be requested in writing or by filling a complaint form that is available on Q-check's website.

In case of appeal to the decisions taken by Q-check (certification, withdrawn, suspension, etc...), the Appeal Complaint Committee is run as a place of solution. For the complaints arising from management systems, the request of the objecting person is transferred to the General Manager who decides, selects the members and invites the committee for a meeting. As a result of the decision in writing of the results are transmitted to the client.

Q-check and members of the comitee collects all needed information validates all selected informationand make decisions against selected evidence. Dring the cause of investigation the committee may require knowledge of Management Representative and / or the General Manager in decision making in cases where deems necessary. Also still can receive technical support from the lead auditor / auditor, technical experts where deems necessary. The Committee also has the right to invite the appellant to explain verbally or present further information about a specific issue. The proceeding of the appeal and the actions need to be taken are recorded on document “**FQF.70 Appeal and Complaints Committee Meeting Agenda and Decisions**” .

In the event of Corrective Procedure will be applied, to identify root cause, plan corrective action plans and the resulting impacts impact in order to eliminate occurrence of such situation. Records associated with the application of this procedure is maintained according to the Control of Records Procedure and are be recorded on document **FQF.12 Corrective Preventive Action Form** and verified by the General Manager.

The client will be kept informed during the appeal process and will be formally informed of the final decision by the General Manager. In cases where the client does not accept the results of the committee for Management Systems, related courts are addressed, if necessary, for legal solutions.

A list of complaints and appeals is maintained by the Organization to be reviewed at least once a year during management review. **FQF.71 List of Appeals and Complaint Form.**

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3.3. Notification of the related Parties

As all appeal s and complaints received by Q-check are extremely confidential, the third parties are not notified in any situations in the issue of the appeal and complaints and results. However the Certification Body and the Certified client can decide together, at exceptional cases, the extension and the time of what information can be allowed to be notified in public. When deemed required, it is allowed to be observed only by the organization accredited by Q-check. When it is at issue to give information to the legal authorities, the related customer is definitely notified.

REVISION INFORMATION		
Rev. No	Revision Date	Revision Explanation
0	1.12.2020	First publication.
1	01.03.2022	

PREPARED BY MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVE	APPROVAL GENERAL MANAGER
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