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Quality Techno Certification

*Complaints and Appeals Procedure*



## Complaints and Appeals Procedure

# Quality Techno Certification

ISO/IEC 17065: 2012

Code:

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## 0.0 Amendments and Revision list

.	Issue / Revision	Issue / Revision description	Issue/Rev No.	Issue / Rev date
0	First issue	Issue of procedure	01 Rev0	25/01/2025

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## 1.0 Scope

This procedure describes the processes for handling of complaints, claims and disputes.

Complaint an expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, manifested by a person or an organization to a conformity assessment body and. omission, and on the activities of that body, which is awaiting a response.

Appeal : request addressed by the supplier of the object of conformity assessment on the conformity assessment body , and omission, for reconsideration a decision that he has taken with respect to that object.

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## 2.0 Reference

Refer to ISO 17065: Clause 7.13

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## 3.0 Responsibility

- Certification Director
- Quality manager
- Managing Director

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## 4.0 Procedure

### 4.1 Acknowledgement of Complaint/Appeal/Review request receipt by QTC.

- 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 or Evaluation Decision.**
- If no Complaint, Appeal or Review request is received within this timeframe the decision becomes final and may not be appealed against, and the complaint become declined.
- QTC will not respond to anonymous requests/forms without clear contact information.
- After receipt of the request in writing, QTC shall investigate whether it relates to the certification activities and scopes for which QTC is responsible and decide the acceptance of it.
- Where the request is identified and accepted to be investigated, QTC shall acknowledge the same to the complainant/appellant or the concerned person submitted the request.
- In case where the request is not accepted, QTC shall give notice to the complainant of it with the reason(s), and guidance on how to proceed further with this request.
- In order to file either a complaint or appeal or review to QTC , the affected customer/organization has to submit a completed form **QTC-F-7.13 - Complaints and Appeals Form** to the Quality Manager at QTC via email to [info@qtc.sa](mailto:info@qtc.sa) ; the form can either be downloaded from QTC website (<https://qtc.sa/> . ), or to be requested through the above email or immediately handed by QTC Quality Manager.
- If request is received by any staff member, he will be forwarded to the Quality Manager for his review and action, and then related records will be updated by QAM.

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- 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 /appeal /review request.
- Once receiving a form, the QM will assure on whether the request contains an actionable Review or Appeal (either against an Evaluation or a Certification decision) or if the request should be dealt with as complaint.
- An Appeal or Review request does not alter the effectiveness of the Certification or Evaluation decision, unless the Appeal/Review has been granted by the Complaint/Appeal/Review 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 requests for Reviews and informs the Appeal or Review Committee in order to move the process forward.

#### 4.2 Reasons of Complaint/Appeal/Review Request:

All requests must state the reason(s) for complaints in the Complaints form, **QTC-F-7.13 - Complaints and Appeals Form**, and need to be supported by information and evidence.

**IMPROTANT:** Please note that a Complaint, Appeal or request for Review 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, QAM will contact the concerned appellant or more clarification on convincing reason for complaining or appealing.

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 QTC Client, QTC Certified product, 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, finances 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 appellant;

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- 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.
- Appeal for certification decision to a specific application
- Request for review for a specific evaluation decision for a specific application
- Other specific reasons.
- An allegation against QTC policy or QTC Compliance with standards.

**NOTES:**

- For complaint (s) related to certified organization(s) (Product & facility), a direct approach to the organization(s) in question is recommended.
- A confidentiality agreement with the organization(s) may not allow QTC to reveal documents or sensitive information to the complainant, however clear information and response should be provided to complainant.
- QTC 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.

**4.3 Investigation and preparation of actions to be taken and response of complain:**

After accepting the complaint/appeal/review request, 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 (product & facility) certified by QTC, QTC 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 QTC and a response to the complainant/Appellant/ or person requesting the review. If applicable and found obligatory, Quality Form will be filled by CPAR in case of any detected departure, to evaluate the situation, analyze the cause and proposing C.A. and P.A. CPAR will be handed over to the concern person/department responsible on causing the Complaint/ Appeal.

**4.3.1 Communication of decision**

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

Where the complainant agrees with the decision, QTC shall give notice to the complainant/Appellant of the end of the Complaints handling process.

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#### 4.3.2 Request of re-examination

In case where the complainant/appellant/person requesting review disagrees with the decision, he may request QTC 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, QTC shall re-open the investigation of the matter and give notice to the complainant/appellant/person requesting review of further decision(s) in accordance with the above-mentioned process.

#### 4.3.3 Convocation and deliberation in Complaints Committee

If the complainant disagrees with further decision(s) based on the first investigation or after investigation is re-opened, and requests further investigation, QTC shall convoke the **Complaints Committee**.

The Committee consists of one neutral outside members previously not involved in the subject of the complainant. At the Committee, deliberation shall be made on the results of the investigation/re-investigation and on actions to be taken, and response based on the decision of the Committee shall be communicated to the complainant/appellant/person requesting review. This is the end of the process.

IMPORTANT: Complaints Committee will make a decision within 30 working days after receiving the disagreement of the last decision communicated by QTC QM to the concerned person

#### 4.3.4 Complaints Committee:

##### **A. The composition of the Complaints Committee is the following:**

- Managing Director
- QTC Quality Manager (or his/her delegate if he is involved in the certification process).
- Certification director (or his/her delegate if he is involved in the certification process).

A representative of the organization/person who raised the Complaints request should be present as well during the Complaints Committee gathering.

The Complaints Committee may invite other involved staff members to get background information to the case or external consultants to make submissions to the Complaints Committee if they deem it necessary (case by case).

##### **B. Terms and Conditions of Complaints Committee:**

- Every member should be present in the committee gathering. This will constitute the quorum for Complaints Committee meetings (e.g. 3 personnel out of 3).
- Any member involved in the certification decision will be excluded from the Complaints Committee in order to avoid any conflict of interest. His delegate will be replacing him in attending the committee and participating in the decision.

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- In case a Complaints Committee member opts to resign from the Complaints Committee or otherwise ceases to be a member, the QM will nominate a replacement according to the above listed criteria to the Managing director, who decides on the assignment of the new committee member.
- During a Complaint, only information which existed and was presented at the time the decision was made will be considered.

**C. Voting:**

- Complaints Committee decides on the presented cases by simple majority vote.
- The committee makes decisions according to the procedure outlined in this document and all its proceedings are documented by the QM in the [QTC-F-7.13 - Complaints and Appeals Form](#) Complaints handling form.

**D. Outcome of committee decisions: A decision can have the following outcomes:**

- Original decision overturned: This means that the decision taken against a complaint will be changed, QM will act as indicated by the decision. The effect of this changed decision is explained to the complainant with the communication of the decision.
- Original decision confirmed: This means that the decision taken against a complaint or decision being complaint against is confirmed and will not be changed. The Complaints Committee will recommend to the QM, if any deadlines of the consecutive certification workflow need to be extended due to the proceedings of the appeal/review.

**4.3.5 Appeals/Review against Decisions of the Complaints Committee**

Appeals against decisions made by the Complaints Committee, and review request against QTC decisions will be heard by the Appeal/Review Committee only if the appellant can demonstrate a significant factor affecting the final certification decision that has been made and Indicate reasonable grounds highlighting why the Appeal/Review Committee could come to a different conclusion on the same facts the Complaints Committee was confronted with.

**A. The composition of the Appeal/Review Committee is the following:**

- Managing Director
- Member of impartiality committee which is the one representing the client's side.
- Member of impartiality committee which is the one representing Government authority.

**B. Terms and Conditions of Appeals/Review Committee:**

- Appeals against decisions made by the Complaints Committee are not automatic and all requests for such appeals are evaluated according to the criteria mentioned above. Only when the Appeal/Review Committee is convinced that one or more of these criteria apply the appeal will be heard.

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- Please note also that a decision taken by the Appeal/Review Committee is final and that no Appeal will be accepted to this decision.
- After the appeal outcome is issued and appellant is notified, appellant is informed that he can address related accreditation bodies in case of dissatisfaction.
- QTC Management have right to appoint person for committee depending on required balance of interest.

**C. Voting:**

- Complaints Committee decides on the presented cases by simple majority vote.

**D. Outcome of committee decisions: A decision can have the following outcomes:**

- Original decision overturned: This means that the decision taken against a complaint will be changed QM will act as indicated by the decision. The effect of this changed decision is explained to the complainant with the communication of the decision.
- Original decision confirmed: This means that the decision taken against a compliant or decision being complaint against is confirmed and will not be changed. The Complaints Committee will recommend to the QM.

**4.3.6 Publication of Complaints/Appeals/Review Requests**

QTC shall determine, by mutual consent between the concerned person (complainant/appellant or requesting review) and QTC , whether and, if so to what extent, the subject of the complaint/appeal and its decision(s) shall be made public. Where the complaint is for an organization (product & facility) certified by QTC , such decision shall be made also in consultation with the organization.

**4.3.7 Correction and corrective action**

QTC shall take appropriate corrections and corrective actions regarding the complaints accepted in accordance with the actions determined by QTC to be taken. All these actions shall be documented by the QM in the **QTC-F-7.13 - Complaints and Appeals Form**

- Department if any deadlines of the consecutive certification workflow need to be extended due to the proceedings of the appeal/review.

**5.0 Related forms**

S	Forms name	code
1	Complaints and Appeals Form	QTC-F-7.13.1