

Complaints and Appeals Policy

Objective: To establish a fair, transparent, and effective process for handling complaints and appeals related to RQS's validation and verification activities, ensuring objectivity and compliance with ISO 17029 standards.

Scope: This policy applies to all complaints and appeals received from clients, stakeholders, and other interested parties regarding validation and verification services provided by RQS.

Policy Statements

1. **Fair Treatment:** All complaints and appeals will be treated fairly, with transparency and objectivity.
2. **Impartial Investigation:** Complaints and appeals will be reviewed by personnel not directly involved in the validation/verification activity under review.
3. **Timely Response:** Complaints and appeals will be acknowledged within three (3) business days and resolved within 30 days whenever possible.
4. **Confidentiality:** All parties involved will maintain the confidentiality of complaint and appeal details, protecting the privacy of the complainant or appellant.
5. **Documentation:** A record of each complaint and appeal, including details of the investigation and outcome, will be maintained to improve RQS's services and compliance.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Complaint and Appeal Officer:** Responsible for logging complaints, conducting initial reviews, and ensuring impartiality.
- **Investigation Team:** Assigned on a case-by-case basis to investigate the complaint or appeal.
- **Review Committee:** Reviews the final decision on appeals and complaints and ensures compliance with policies.

Complaints and Appeals Process Flowchart

1. Receive Complaint or Appeal:

- **Intake:** Complaint or appeal is submitted via form (hard copy, email, or online).
- **Acknowledgment:** Acknowledge receipt within three business days.

2. Initial Review:

- **Complaint/Appeal Officer Review:** Review the nature and validity of the complaint/appeal.
- **Classification:** Classify as valid or invalid; invalid complaints are dismissed, and the complainant is notified.

3. Assign Investigation Team:

- Assign personnel not involved in the original decision to investigate.

4. Investigation:

- **Data Collection:** Gather relevant documentation and input from involved parties.
- **Findings and Analysis:** Assess findings based on evidence and ISO 17029 guidelines.

5. Decision and Response:

- **Decision:** Outcome documented and reviewed by the Review Committee.
- **Response to Complainant/Appellant:** Notify the complainant of the decision, including justification for the decision.

6. Follow-up and Closure:

- Ensure any corrective actions are implemented.
- Document and close the complaint/appeal within 30 days if resolved.

General Manager

Souad El-Tahar