

KQC Client Feedback Policy

(Including, Complaints Disputes and Appeals)

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Operations and Technical Manager		Director, Operations

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Policy document serves to set the principles of how KQ Certification Limited (KQC) gains and receives client feedback, including Complaints, Disputes, Appeals.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to the full scope of KQC operations, Certification activities and geographies in which it operates.
- 2.2. The Certification process offered by KQC is applicable to manufacturing and service organisations, in public and private sectors, it is administered in a non-discriminatory manner and impartial manner no matter what the commercial arrangements and interests are.
- 2.3. The Certification process is designed to provide the client service of system assessment and Certification by assessing and monitoring the client's definition and implementation of their management System in an objective and impartial manner, against the audit criteria defined.
- 2.4. It is recognised that the Certification process can be demanding and applied in challenging circumstances that gives rise to positive feedback when the process delivers the service clients anticipate and negative feedback, including complaints, disputes, and appeals, when the outcome is not as the client anticipates. This policy sets the principles by which KQC will seek and receive such feedback.
- 2.5. KQC's management system is maintained in accordance with, the current requirements of the following documents, including the handling of General feedback, Complaints, Disputes and Appeals:
- ISO/IEC 17021 series, including the management system requirements of 17021-1 - option A
 - IAF Mandatory and Guidance Documents
 - IAF Decisions
 - Accreditation body specific requirements

3. Definition

Please refer to the KQC Quality Manual (M001) Annex 01 for the current definitions that relate to the KQC Management System.

Term	Definition
Client feedback - general	General information about the organisation's performance during the planning, delivery, and support of its client Certification service.
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, by any party related to the activities of the certification body or a certified client, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
Dispute	A dispute is where an interpretation of the requirements of the KQC Certification process and the Standard(s) utilised results in a difference of opinion between the KQC representative and a client representative as to which is correct. Note: Where a dispute cannot be resolved within 30 days it shall progress to an Appeal.
Appeal	An appeal is a formal request against a decision that has been made in the KQC Certification process.

4. Responsibility and authority

Responsibility	
Director, Operations, Director, Commercial	The Director, Operations and Director, Commercial have ultimate responsibility for approval of the Client feedback Policy and decisions related to it.
Operations and Technical Manager	The Operations and Technical Manager have responsibility for the definition of the Certification Body's Client feedback policy, processes, and controls. In addition, the Operations and Technical Manager has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of decisions made related to this Client feedback policy.
Employees and contractors	Employees and contractors are each individually responsible, relative to their role, for the receiving, generation, and capture of client feedback.
Sub-contractors	Subcontracting organisations, if used, are responsible, relative to their role, are responsible for the receiving, generation, and capture of the Client feedback in accordance with the policy.
Clients	All clients are contractually required to follow the defined process for complaints, disputes, and appeals (SP506) and are encouraged to provide feedback on the Certification service that they have received, to help the Certification Body enhance its offering.
All Stakeholders	All stakeholders are encouraged to relay client feedback that they become aware of concerning the KQ Certification service, to help the Certification Body enhance its offering.
Independent dispute investigator	The independent dispute investigator is responsible for the reviewing the dispute(s) allocated to them and recommending to the Operations and Technical Manager further action to be taken.
Appeals panel	The appeals panel, established by the Operations and Technical Manager, has responsibility for reviewing the appeal(s) allocated to them, making an appeal decision, and determining any further action required.
Impartiality Committee	The Impartiality Committee has responsibility to meet, review client feedback that relates to matters of impartiality, and make recommendations related to impartiality under its agreed Terms of Reference.
Authority	
Director, Operations	The Director, Operations has ultimate authority for the implementation of processes and controls that reflect the organisation's Client feedback Policy (this document). This authority may be delegated to the Operations and Technical Manager as required.
Operations and Technical Manager	The Operations and Technical Manager, under the authority of the Director, has operational authority for the implementation of processes and controls that reflect the organisation's Client feedback Policy (this document). The Operations and Technical Manager has the authority to implement or take alternative actions to that recommended by the independent dispute investigator.
Impartiality Committee	The Impartiality Committee has authority for reviewing matters of impartiality and making recommendations to the Management Board of the Certification Body, which relates to Customer feedback received. Where the management has referred a matter of impartiality to the Impartiality Committee for decision the Impartiality Committee's decision will be implemented by the Management Board of the Certification Body.
Appeals panel	The Appeals panel has authority to hear and review an appeal then make a decision to be implemented by the Management Board of the Certification Body.

5. Reference documents

Document number	Document title
ISO 17021-1:2015	Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 1: Requirements
IAF MD series	IAF Mandatory and Guidance documents as applicable
IAF Decision number	IAF decisions as applicable
N/A	Accreditation body specific requirements as applicable to the accreditation held.

6. Policy

- 6.1. KQC's Client feedback policy role is to encourage feedback from clients to:
- Enable it to enhance its Certification services
 - Provide a mechanism to review and resolve any potentially incorrect decisions made
 - Highlight any potential risks to the impartiality and integrity of the Certification service offered
- 6.2. KQC is committed to providing a high-quality, professional, and transparent service to all our clients. We welcome all feedback and will receive it in a positive and constructive manner.
- 6.3. KQC is committed to being non-discriminatory in its handling of feedback received, including complaints, disputes and appeal raised, treating the parties involved with respect, objectivity, fairly and equally.
- 6.4. KQC has distinct processes to support this Policy and manages different types of Client feedback accordingly, as follows:
- 6.4.1. Client feedback - general**
- 6.4.1.1. All feedback, including positive feedback, concerns and complaints about the level of service provided or the performance of staff can be submitted directly via our website here. You can also email your feedback to: info@kqcertification.com.
- 6.4.1.2. Where concerns are raised KQC will aim to resolve the issue, to mutual satisfaction and where necessary, invoke its Complaints, Disputes and Appeal Process (SP506).
- 6.4.1.3. KQC routinely implements its Customer Satisfaction Process (SP513) , to gain feedback on the client assessments that it delivers.
- 6.4.2. Complaints**
- 6.4.2.1. We recognise that there may be occasions when the client feels the level of service received has fallen below their expectations. Telling us about this gives us the chance to review concerns and, where necessary, make internal improvements to our systems and processes.
- 6.4.2.2. If you wish to make a complaint about the service that KQC has provided you are requested to follow the process described in our Complaints, Disputes and Appeals Process (SP506) available from our web site: <https://kqcertification.com/resources.php>
- 6.4.3. Disputes**
- 6.4.3.1. Where an interpretation of the requirements of the KQC process and the Standard(s) utilised results in a difference of opinion between the KQC representative and a client representative as to which is correct as dispute can be raised with the aim of resolving the situations.

6.4.3.2. If you wish to raise a dispute you are requested to follow the process described in our Complaints, Disputes and Appeals Process (SP506).

Note: Where a dispute cannot be resolved within 30 days it shall progress to an Appeal.

6.4.4. Appeals

6.4.4.1. Where a formal request is needed against a decision that has been made in the KQ Certification Body process and appeal can be raised following our Complaints, Disputes and Appeals Process (SP506.)

6.4.5. Accredited Certification services

6.4.5.1. Where the client feedback issue, complaint, dispute, or appeal relates to an accredited Certification Service that we have provided the client has the right to register the complaint with the relevant Accreditation Body, if KQ Certification are unable to resolve the issue directly to the client's satisfaction.

6.5. KQC contact details

6.5.1. Where a client has a query on the information contained within this document, they are encouraged to contact us.

6.5.2. Our contact details are as follows and detailed on our web site:

Email: info@kqcertification.com

Website: kqcertification.com

Tel: +44 (0) 7885 377 456

Address: KQ Certification Ltd., Office 3, Unit 1, Haggwood Quarry Industrial Estate, Honley, Holmfirth, United Kingdom, HD9 6PW.

7. Records and resources

7.1. Records and resources in relation to the Client feedback Policy are maintained for a minimum of 7 years, in accordance with P023 Control of Records Policy.

Revision log		
Revision	Description of Change	Release Date
0.1	Draft issue	5 th May 2024
1.0	Reviewed and initial release	11 th August 2024
1.1	Reviewed and amended job titles and document references	10 th February 2025
1.2	Reviewed for clarity	13 th August 2025