

Document owner: General Manager
Document approver: Director

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KQ Certification Ltd.
Client feedback Policy
(Complaints, Disputes and Appeals)

1.0 Purpose

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

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to the full scope of KQ Certification operations, Certification activities and geographies in which it operates.

The Certification process offered by KQ Certification 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.

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.

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 KQ Certification will seek and receive such feedback.

KQ Certification’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 Documents
- Accreditation body specific requirements

3.0 Definitions

Term	Definition
Client feedback - general	General information about the organisation’s performance during the planning, delivery, and support of its client Certification service.
Complaint	Expressions of dissatisfaction made to KQ Certification with regards to its Certification process, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
Dispute	A dispute is where an interpretation of the requirements of the KQ Certification process and the Standard(s) utilised results in a difference of opinion between the KQ Certification 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 KQ Certification Body process.

4.0 Responsibility and authority

Responsibility	
Director	The Director has ultimate responsibility for approval of the Client feedback Policy and decisions related to it.
General Manager	The General Manager has responsibility for the definition of the Certification Body’s Client feedback policy, processes, and controls. In addition, the General 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 (SP008) 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 General Manager further action to be taken.
Appeals panel	The appeals panel, established by the General 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	The Director 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 General Manager as required.
General Manager	The General 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 General 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.

Note: The full definition of Responsibility and Authorities related to Client complaints, disputes and appeals is detailed in the supporting process SP508 Client complaints, disputes, and appeals process.

5.0 Reference documents

ISO 17021-1:2015: Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 1: Requirements

IAF Mandatory documents as applicable

Accreditation body specific requirements as applicable to the accreditation held.

6.0 Policy

KQ Certification'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 integrity of the Certification service offered.

KQ Certification 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.

KQ Certification is committed to being non-discriminatory in its handling of feedback received, including complaints, disputes and appeal raised, treating the parties involved with respect, fairly and equally.

KQ Certification has distinct processes to support this Policy and manages different types of Client feedback accordingly, as follows:

6.1 Client feedback - general

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: feedback@kqcertification.com.

Where concerns are raised KQ Certification will aim to resolve the issue, to mutual satisfaction and where necessary, invoke its Complaints, Disputes and Appeal Process.

KQ Certification routinely implements its Client satisfaction monitoring process – SP508-1, to gain feedback on the client assessments that it delivers.

6.2 Complaints

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.

If you wish to make a complaint about the service that KQ Certification has provided you are requested to follow the process described in our Complaints, Disputes and Appeals Process – SP508, available from our web site: <https://kqcertification.com/resources.php>

6.3 Disputes

Where an interpretation of the requirements of the KQ Certification process and the Standard(s) utilised results in a difference of opinion between the KQ Certification representative and a client representative as to which is correct as dispute can be raised with the aim of resolving the situations.

If you wish to raise a dispute you are requested to follow the process described in our Complaints, Disputes and Appeals Process – SP508.

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

6.4 Appeals

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 – SP508.

6.5 Accredited Certification services

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 we are unable to resolve the issue with you directly to the client's satisfaction.

7.0 Our contact details

Where a client has a query on the information contained within this document, they are encouraged to contact us. Our contact details are as follows and detailed on our web site (kqcertification.com):

Email:	feedback@kqcertification.com	Website:	kqcertification.com
Tel.	+44 (0) 7885 377 456	Address:	KQ Certification Ltd. Crendon Barns, Lower Wick Road, Dursley, GL11 6DD, United Kingdom.

6.0 Records

Records in relation to the management of Client feedback are maintained for a minimum of seven years, in accordance with the Records Management Policy P005.

Revision log		
Revision	Description of Change	Release Date
0.1	First draft	29th March 2024.
1.0	First issue	29 th March 2024.
1.1	Updated for readability	9 th May 2024.