

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to set out a standardized and structured process for handling complaints and appeals received and to ensure that they are handled in a professional and responsible manner.

Definition (ISO/IEC 17000:2020)

Complaint: an expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, by a person or organization to a conformity assessment body in relation to that body's activities, where a response is expected.

Appeal: a request by the person or organization that is the subject of assessment activities to a conformity assessment body to reconsider a decision made by that body.

Forwarding procedure

Any appeal or complaint must be submitted in writing using the appropriate form (last page of this document) in order to activate the process. If the company/person raising the issue does not document the appeal/complaint, it cannot be processed.

Complaints or appeals may be received from (or about) AJA Europe Srl's customers at any time and must be recorded and classified, as appropriate, as an appeal or complaint. Upon receipt of an appeal or complaint, a confirmation letter is sent to the sender informing them that the appeal/complaint has been received and is being investigated. A copy of the appeal/complaint is kept in the client's file.

All AJA Europe's customers are informed by means of the General Rules and Regulations of their right to appeal decisions made by both staff members and external auditors regarding their certification and of the timeframe to be respected. A copy of the notice on appeals and complaints is also issued to the client as an integral part of the reports delivered at the end of the audits.

The wish to lodge an appeal may be expressed directly to the Lead Auditor during the closing meeting. If the client is not satisfied with the response or does not wish to discuss it with the Lead Auditor, it may subsequently appeal directly to the local branch or central accredited office.

Procedure and responsibility

Records relating to the handling of appeals and complaints must always be clear and complete to enable traceability and subsequent review by the Impartiality Committee and, where appropriate, Accreditation Bodies.

The appeal/complaint is initially assessed by the relevant local staff for review and investigation of causes. Those who were involved in the audit being reviewed (without distinction between internal and/or external personnel), may not be involved in activities related to the specific complaint/appeal.

The results of the investigation must then always be forwarded to the Group Compliance Manager who will decide whether to accept or reject the appeal/complaint.

In the event of an appeal, the Group Compliance Manager must examine all documentary evidence. If the outcome of the Compliance Manager's review and investigation shows that the appeal is justified (upheld), the Group Compliance Manager will contact the local Compliance Manager/Certification Manager to identify corrective and preventive actions and assess the effectiveness of the corrective actions taken, including requesting a review of documents if

PROCEDURE 1 – COMPLAINTS, APPEALS, DISPUTES



necessary. All available documentary evidence will then be forwarded to the Impartiality Committee for review.

If the outcome of the Group Compliance Manager's review and investigation shows that the appeal is not justified (rejected), the appeal form and all documentation of the investigation are sent to senior management.

If the outcome of the review and investigation by the senior management shows that the appeal is justified (upheld), the senior management will contact the Group Compliance Manager and consider what corrective and preventive actions to take to assess their effectiveness, including any revised documents, if necessary. All available documentary evidence will then be forwarded to the Impartiality Committee.

If the outcome of the review and senior management investigation shows that the appeal is not justified (dismissed), the appeal form and all documentation of the investigation undertaken will be sent to the Impartiality Committee.

In the case of a complaint against a client, AJA Europe must confirm whether the complaint falls within the scope of the certification activities for which it is responsible. If this is the case, it may be necessary either to schedule an unscheduled audit at the client, or to note specific details to be reviewed during the next scheduled audit at the client. It will be up to AJA Europe how and when to notify the client of receipt of the complaint. In the event of a complaint about a member of staff or an external auditor, a copy will be kept in the resource's reference file and any necessary action will be identified which may be either educational or, in more serious cases, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

All certified customers shall make available upon request, records of all complaints and corrective actions taken in accordance with the standards for which they are certified or in accordance with other normative reference documents.

Complaints made about customers who have certified the Environmental Management System will be immediately reviewed to assess their environmental impacts and control. If deemed necessary, an unscheduled visit is carried out to assess the actions taken by the client and aimed at resolving the problem. If the actions taken are not considered adequate, the client's certificate may be subject to suspension/withdrawal.

AJA Europe will formally notify the complainant/complainant of the end of the complaint/complaint handling process.

In the event of a complaint, AJA Europe will determine, together with the customer and the complainant, whether and how the complaint and its resolution can/should be made public.

If you wish to file a complaint or appeal, please fill the below form. You can contact the Group Compliance Manager by e-mail in the person of Khairul Bashar, k.bashar@acubetic.com, or the Italian office of AJA Europe Srl by writing directly to info@acubetic.com.

We will contact you as soon as possible.

AJA Europe Srl is Partner of the A CUBE TIC Group

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COMPLAINT OR APPEAL FORM

Surname First name or Company name	
First and last name of the reference person	
Email	
Phone	
Grounds for complaint or appeal	
How do you prefer to be contacted?	