



COMPLAINTS, APPEALS, DISPUTES



## COMPLAINTS, APPEALS, DISPUTES

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Date: 03.10.2019

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### DEFINITIONS

#### COMPLAINT

A documented claim against the conduct of an employee or sub-contractor of W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE.  
A documented claim against a certified client by a user of that client, or any other interested party.

#### APPEAL

A documented claim from a client company against the Certification recommendation of the W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE audit team, and subsequent Certification decision by Management

#### DISPUTE

A documented claim, made by a member of W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE' staff, against a decision or action made by any W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE manager. Disputes are sent to senior management where a decision is made to either; find the dispute justified, and therefore establish and take action on the causes and make relevant changes to the Policy or Practices of W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE, or find the dispute not justified, and make a note in the relevant personnel files.

#### STATEMENT OF INTENT

All complaints received by W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE will be appropriately addressed and a reasonable effort will be made to resolve all of the complaints received. It is important that W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE staff are aware of the appropriate balance between the principles of openness and confidentiality (refer to the Policy Manual); including responsiveness to complaints, in order to demonstrate integrity and credibility to all.



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Process Flow Chart	Associated Documentation
<p>1 All W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE' clients are advised of their right to appeal or make a complaint against any certification decisions, staff members or sub-contract auditors through the issue of the Codes of Practice (documenting client rights and the window of time for appeals to be made). Also, the Appeals and Complaints Information Page is issued to a client as part of the W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE Reports.</p> <p>The first point of appeal is to the lead auditor at the closing meeting. If the client is not satisfied with the response, or does not feel able to discuss the specific issue with the lead auditor, then an appeal may be made directly to either the non-accredited W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE office or the accredited W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE office.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Codes of Practice</li> <li>• Appeals and Complaints Information Page in Reports</li> </ul>
<p>2 Any appeal, complaint or dispute is required to be made in writing on a Complaint Form or an Appeals Form, to allow a full investigation. If the company/person raising the issue will not document the appeal/complaint then the issue can go no further.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeals Form</li> <li>• Complaints Form</li> </ul>
<p>3 Records of the handling of appeals and complaints must be clear and complete at all times, to allow tracking and to allow later review by the W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE Impartiality Committee and, as appropriate, Accreditation Bodies.</p>	
<p>4 Complaints or appeals may be received from (or about) W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE' clients at any time, and shall be transferred onto the correct Appeals Form or Complaints Form, as appropriate. Upon receipt of an appeal or complaint from a client, a letter of acknowledgement is sent, advising that the appeal/complaint has been received and is being investigated. A copy of the appeal/complaint is stored in the relevant client file.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeals Form</li> <li>• Complaints Form</li> </ul>
<p>5 The appeal/complaint is then passed to the local Certification Manager for review and investigation of the causes. If any of the reviewing staff were involved in the audit of an appealing/complaining client (or any other party involved in the appeal/complaint), then they would not be able to investigate this situation once it came to the attention of the non-accredited W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE office or accredited W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE office. If the outcome of the Certification Manager's review and investigation shows that the appeal/complaint is justified (upheld), the Complaints and Appeals Register is updated accordingly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints and Appeals Register</li> </ul>
<p>6 In the case of a complaint against a client, W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE shall confirm whether the complaint relates to certification activities that it is responsible for. If so, an unscheduled audit of the client may be necessary, or a note may be made for specific details to be reviewed during the next scheduled audit of the client.</p> <p>If an unscheduled – short notice – audit is decided on as necessary the audit shall be conducted by a suitably coded and approved Lead Auditor and, depending on resource availability, preferably one who has no prior involvement with the client involved to ensure impartiality although this may not always be possible in the case of smaller offices with limited auditor resource.</p> <p>The amount of audit time required for such an unscheduled short notice audit shall be determined on a case by case basis to ensure full coverage of all possible circumstances that have possibly given rise to the complaint.</p> <p>Where an unscheduled short notice audit is seen as necessary the client shall be advised of the need for the audit and a full report shall be prepared by the Lead Auditor of all activities and findings and recommendations on conclusion of such an audit.</p>	



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	<p>Any complaint about a certified client shall also be referred by W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE to the certified client in question at an appropriate time.</p> <p>In the case of a complaint about a staff member or sub-contract auditor, a record is stored in the relevant personnel file and the appropriate training needs are identified, or disciplinary action may be taken.</p>	
7	<p>All certified clients shall make available, when requested, all records of complaints and corrective actions taken, in accordance with the standards they are certified to or other normative reference documents. Communication regarding complaints made against EMS clients shall be immediately reviewed, to consider the environmental impacts regarding the complaint. If it is deemed necessary, an unscheduled visit shall be made, during which the actions taken to resolve the issue will be evaluated. If it is established that the action taken is not considered suitable, registration of the client may be suspended.</p>	
8	<p>For all upheld appeals/complaints, investigations shall be conducted to develop the necessary corrective and preventive actions and assess the effectiveness of the corrective actions. The results of the investigations shall be passed to the accredited Certification Manager, including any subsequent Document Change Requests (refer to P-OPE-360 Document Control)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document Change Request</li> <li>• P-OPE-360 Document Control</li> </ul>
9	<p>If the outcome of the Certification Manager's review and investigation shows that the appeal/complaint is not justified (rejected), the Complaints and Appeals Register is updated accordingly. The Appeal Form or Complaint Form, and all investigation documentation, are sent to the accredited office Certification Manager.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints and Appeals Register</li> <li>• Appeals Form</li> <li>• Complaints Form</li> </ul>
10	<p>In the case of a complaint, the accredited office Certification Manager shall review and record all the available documentary evidence and then pass this to the Impartiality Committee for review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints Form</li> </ul>
11	<p>In the case of an appeal, the accredited office Certification Manager shall review and investigate the documentary evidence. If the outcome of the Certification Manager's review and investigation shows that the appeal is justified (upheld), the accredited office Certification Manager shall liaise with the local Certification Manager, and conduct an investigation to develop corrective and preventive actions and assess the effectiveness of the corrective actions, including raising or reviewing Document Change Requests if required (refer to P-OPE-360 Document Control). All the available documentary evidence shall then be passed to the Impartiality Committee for review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeals Form</li> <li>• Document Change Request</li> <li>• P-OPE-360 Document Control</li> </ul>
12	<p>If the outcome of the accredited office Certification Manager's review and investigation shows that the appeal is not justified (rejected), the Appeals Form and all investigation documentation are sent to top level management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeals Form</li> </ul>
13	<p>If the outcome of the top level management review and investigation shows that the appeal is justified (upheld), the top level management shall liaise with the accredited office Certification Manager, and conduct an investigation to develop corrective and preventive actions and assess the effectiveness of the corrective actions, including raising or reviewing Document Change Requests if required (refer to P-OPE-360 Document Control). All the available documentary evidence shall then be passed to the Impartiality Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeals Form</li> <li>• Document Change Request</li> <li>• P-OPE-360 Document Control</li> </ul>
14	<p>If the outcome of the top-level management review and investigation shows that the appeal is not justified (rejected), the Appeal Form and all investigation documentation are sent to the Impartiality Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeals Form</li> </ul>



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15	The decision to be communicated to the appellant/complainant shall be made by, or reviewed and approved by, individuals not previously involved in the subject of the appeal. W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE shall give formal notice wherever possible to the appellant/complainant of the end of the appeals/complaint handling process.	
16	In the case of a complaint, W3 SOLUTIONZ FZE shall determine, together with the client and the complainant, whether and, if so to what extent, the subject of the complaint and its resolution shall be made public.	