

Document Title:		
Procedure for Handling of Appeals and Complaints		
Revision No: 06		Date: 25-08-2020
Document No: ZQAPL/P-08	Prepared By: Management Representative	Approved By: Director Operations

1.0 Amendment Record

Rev No.	Date	Section No.	Description of Change	Approved By
01	7-12-2016	6.1 and 6.2	Restructured the contents in sections 6.1 and 6.2	Director Operations
02	6-2-2017	5	Technical Manager added	Director Operations
03	20-12-2017	6.2	Mention of verbal complaints added	Director Operations
04	01-10-2018	-	The document is revised for document number (Unique Identification added for (NABCB)	Director Operations
		1.0	The Amendment Record table is restructured	
05	10-08-2019	Document Title	Revision in Document No. (Addition of "ZQAPL" and Removal of Nomenclature of MSCD001 and Accreditation Board)	Director Operations
		3.0	Scope Statement Amended	
		4.0	References Amended	
		--	(i) Excluded the versions of referenced Standards throughout the Document with a disclaimer at footer of the document "All the Standards / Guidelines referenced within this document correspond to versions listed in the Document No. ZQAPL/D-20 - List of External Origin Documents" (ii) Reference of "ZQAPL-MSCD001" revised to "ZQAPL" at relevant locations	
06	25-08-2020	6.1	Appeals – Amended to address ICMED Requirement	Director Operations

Additional specific requirements as per ICMED 9000 & ICMED 13485 are either highlighted in Blue or placed in Blue Text Box

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2.0 Purpose

To establish and maintain a process by which an appeal or complaint made by an applicant, certified client or interested parties against decisions made by ZQAPL are dealt and resolved in a fair and reasonable manner.

3.0 Scope

All appeals and complaints made by applicants, certified clients or interested parties.

4.0 References

ISO/IEC 17021-1 - Clause 9.7, 9.8
Section 9.7 and 9.8 of Quality Manual

5.0 Responsibility

Director Operations, CFSI Chairperson

6.0 Procedure

6.1 Appeals

A statement shall be in writing with identification of the sender for consideration as appeal. An appeal is generally made by a client to reconsider a ZQAPL decision related to certification i.e. granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification.

Applicant, certified clients are advised of the appeal process in the "Informative Guide" provided to them at an appropriate stage of contact with ZQAPL. Informative guide is publicly accessible.

The Informative Guide provides the contact e-mail for the clients to appeal. The e-mail goes to Director Operations who in turn deals with the appeal.

The receipt of the appeal is acknowledged to the concerned party in writing and appellant is informed about the progress and outcome.

It is ensured that the person/s engaged in the appeals-handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions or have been involved in the subject of appeal. If Director Operations was involved as an auditor or certification decision maker in the case against which the appeal has been made, then the appeal is forwarded to CFSI chairperson and appellant is informed about this.

Submission, investigation and decision on appeals do not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

Effectiveness of these actions is reviewed by Director Operations or the CFSI Chairperson, as responsible to deal with specific appeal. The decisions taken by Director Operations or CFSI Chairperson is binding on ZQAPL to take suitable actions.

ZQAPL gives a formal notice to the appellant at the end of the appeals-handling process. The notice shall comprise of a written statement of the appeal findings including the reasons for the decisions reached. Also the appellant is informed about the available provision to formally present his case. Based on the presentation made, the ZQAPL Director Operations and/or ZQAPL Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality (CFSI) Chairperson appointed for hearing the case shall take a final decision on the appeal and a formal notice of the outcome at the end of the appeal process shall be handed over to the appellant. Subsequently, the feedback is sought from the appellant / concerned client.

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Note : All the Standards / Guidelines referenced within this document correspond to versions listed in the Document No. ZQAPL/D-20 - List of External Origin Documents

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Once the appeal has been resolved by ZQAPL Director Operations and/or ZQAPL Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality (CFSI) Chairperson, then no counter claim by either party in dispute can be made to amend or change the decision.

In instances where the appeal has been successful and the Certificate reinstated, then no claim can be made against ZQAPL for reimbursement of costs or any losses incurred as a result of the initial withdrawal notification.

6.2 Complaints

A statement shall be in writing with identification of the sender for consideration as complaint. In case of verbal complaint, the complainant shall be requested to put it in writing or the same shall be recorded at ZQAPL by the recipient and shall be confirmed with the complainant.

The complaints can be made by the client expressing dissatisfaction over ZQAPL decision related to certification i.e. granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification or any other unacceptable situation arising out of ZQAPL activities with the client and a response is expected.

Applicant, certified clients or interested parties are advised of the complaint process in the "Informative Guide" provided to them at an appropriate stage of contact with ZQAPL. Informative guide is publicly accessible.

The Informative Guide provides the contact e-mail for the clients to complain. The e-mail goes to Director Operations who in turn deals with the complaint.

This process is subjected to requirements for confidentiality, as it relates to the complainant and to the subject of the complaint.

ZQAPL gathers and verifies all necessary information to validate the complaint and acknowledge receipt of the complaint and provides the complainant with progress reports and the outcome.

It is ensured that the person/s engaged in the complaint handling process are different from those who carried out the audits or been involved in the subject of complaint. If Director Operations was involved as an auditor or certification decision in the case against which the complaint has been made, then the complaint is forwarded to CFSI chairperson and complainant is informed about this.

Submission, investigation and decision on complaints do not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

Effectiveness of these actions is reviewed by Director Operations or the CFSI Chairperson, as responsible to deal with specific complaint. The decisions taken by Director Operations or CFSI Chairperson is binding on ZQAPL to take suitable actions.

ZQAPL gives a formal notice to the complainant at the end of the complaint handling process and the relevant records are maintained. And the feedback is taken from the complainant / concerned client.

In another case, a complaint can be made by an Interested Party against ZQAPL certified client/s. An interested party is generally the one who has business interest with ZQAPL certified client/s.

A statement shall be in writing with identification of the sender for consideration as complaint. In case of verbal complaint, the complainant shall be requested to put it in writing or the same shall be recorded at ZQAPL by the recipient and shall be confirmed with the complainant.

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This process is subjected to requirements for confidentiality, as it relates to the complainant and to the subject of the complaint.

Upon receipt of a complaint from such an interested party, ZQAPL confirms whether the complaint relates to certification activities that it is responsible for, and if so, takes necessary correction and corrective actions. If the complaint relates to a certified client, then examination of the complaint is done by a short notice audit at client's end and base on the audit outcome, necessary correction and corrective actions are taken.

Submission, investigation and decision on complaints do not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant.

The complaint from an interested party is dealt by Director Operations. And in case, the interested party (complainant) does not accept the outcome reported by Director Operations then the interested party (complainant) has the right to raise the matter with Committee for safeguarding Impartiality (CFSI) chairperson.

The Informative Guide provides the contact e-mail id of ZQAPL Director Operations and CFSI chairperson.

ZQAPL gives a formal notice to the complainant at the end of the complaint handling process and the relevant records are maintained. The feedback is sought from the complainant / concerned client.

ZQAPL determines together with the client and the complainant that to what an extent, the subject of the complaint and its resolution is to be made public.

7.0 Records

- Appeal Complaint Log
- Records of Appeal and Complaints
- Corrective Action Request (Appeals / Complaints)