



Complaints and Appeals Handling

GE-QP-02 / Version - 6



	Name / Signature	Position	Date
Prepared By	Mohamed Salama 	Quality Manager	20/03/2023
Reviewed By	Emad Essa 	CEO	22/03/2023
Approved By	Emad Essa	CEO	22/03/2023

MARCH 22, 2023

This document is an uncontrolled copy of a controlled document held by the Quality Management System.
Prior to use, ensure this document is the most recent revision. To request changes, submit a Document Request to Quality Manager.

1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 This procedure aims to describe the steps adopted by TABSEER for:
 - a) Complaints Handling.
 - b) Handling of appeal against a taken decision.
 - c) Handling of request of review an evaluation decision.
 - d) Collecting valuable feedback from clients
- 1.2 This Standard Operating Procedure applies to all parties that are involved in the complaints, appeals and review request procedure, including the concerned staff members.
- 1.3 All TABSEER clients have the right to make a complaint, appeal against any taken decision or request a review of any evaluation decision TABSEER may take if they can bring forward good arguments. This standard operating procedure outlines the principles and responsibilities with regards to complaints, appeals and review requests.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 CEO
- 2.2 Quality Manager
- 2.3 Sales manager
- 2.4 Company staff

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Complaint:
means expression of dissatisfaction by individual(s) or organization(s) with an issue related to TABSEER services in writing.
- 3.2 Certification Decision:
A decision taken by designated staff to grant or deny initial certification, confirm certification after surveillance audit, renew certification, extend a certificate, suspend a certificate, lift the suspension or to decertify. A Certification Decision becomes effective with immediate effect.
- 3.3 Evaluation Decision:
A decision taken by designated staff to confirm non-conformities identified during an audit, confirm corrective measure proposals or objective evidence, verify objective evidence during a follow-up audit without suspension, not to suspend for a major non-conformity. An Evaluation Decision becomes effective with immediate effect.
- 3.4 Appeal:
A request to review and reverse a Certification Decision. Appeals against Certification Decisions are decided on by the Appeal/Review designated staff.

3.5 Requests for Review:

These are requests to review an Evaluation Decision.

3.6 Appeal/Review designated staff:

Is an internal quality control process that objectively supervises the decision-making process within TABSEER considering any raised argument and objection by the involved parties. Thus, it ensures that operations are exercised with due diligence and uniformity in interpreting the Standards. As a company-internal body its role is not that of an external and/or official arbitration body nor a court-like institution Process.

4. Procedure

4.1 Acknowledgement of Complaint/Appeal/Review request receipt by TABSEER

- 4.1.1 Complaints, Appeal or Review request must submit through written texts that can submit after a reason for complaint has arisen, or after receipt of the Decision or Evaluation Decision.
- 4.1.2 If no Complaint, Appeal or Review request is received within this timeframe the decision becomes final and may not be appealed against, and the complaint become declined.
- 4.1.3 TABSEER will not respond to anonymous requests forms without clear contact information.
- 4.1.4 After receipt of the request in writing, TABSEER investigate whether it relates to the activities and scopes for which TABSEER is responsible and decide the acceptance of it.
- 4.1.5 Where the request is identified and accepted to be investigated, TABSEER acknowledge the same to the complainant/appellant or the concerned person submitted the request.
- 4.1.6 In case where the request is not accepted, TABSEER give notice to the complainant of it with the reason(s), and guidance on how to proceed further with this request.
- 4.1.7 In order to file either a complaint or appeal or review to TABSEER, the affected customer/organization has to submit a completed form to TABSEER via email to info@tabseer.co; the form can be downloaded either from TABSEER's website (www.tabseer.co), or to be requested through the above email or immediately handed by TABSEER quality manager.
- 4.1.8 If request received by any staff member, she/he will be forwarded to quality manager for his review and action, and then related records will be updated.
- 4.1.9 Once receiving a form, the quality manager will assure on whether the request contains an actionable Review or Appeal (against either an Evaluation or a decision) or if the request should deal with as complaint.

- 4.1.10** Quality manager who will conduct an initial evaluation of the request and decide if the submission is accepted or denied within 2 working days, based on whether the request contains a valid reason to file the complaint /appeal /review request.
- 4.1.11** An Appeal or Review request does not alter the effectiveness of the Certification, Inspection or Evaluation decision, unless the Appeal/Review has been granted by the Complaint/Appeal/Review Committee in its final decision. All restrictions applicable to a customer as a consequence of a Certification Decision of suspension remain in effect during the period of suspension, regardless of the outcome of an Appeal.
- 4.1.12** The Quality manager maintains a log of all Complaints, Appeals and requests for Reviews and move the process forward.
- 4.2** Reasons of Complaint/Appeal/Review Request:
- 4.2.1** All requests must state the reason(s) in the complaint report form, and need to be supported by information and evidence.
- Note:** *Complaint, Appeal or request for Review will only be accepted if it is accompanied by or based on clear and credible information in accordance with below reasons, in case request does not contain a convincing reason, quality manager will contact the concerned appellant for more clarification on convincing reason for complaining or appealing.*
- 4.2.2** Reasons may include, but are not limited to:
- a) A complaint is about conformity assessment and/or appeals and the way that the conformity assessment system functions.
 - b) A complaint about TABSEER Client, TABSEER Certified product, etc.....
 - c) Level of service quality or delivery.
 - d) Details about the complaints about the conformity assessment activities.
 - e) Dissatisfaction, whether it is from person in the company, or its activities, or administrative processes, finances processes, etc.....
 - f) Decisions based on immaterial information, or information for which there is no credible basis. In general, hearsay is treated as information for which there is no credible basis
 - g) Failure to consider presented, relevant information in reaching a decision
 - h) Reasonable perception of bias against the appellant
 - i) Unreasonable delay in the decision-making process
 - j) Prejudicial procedural irregularities in reaching the decision
 - k) Disputes about facts and interpretations relevant to the decision
 - l) Appeal for certification decision to a specific application
 - m) Request for review for a specific evaluation decision for a specific application
 - n) Other specific reasons.

- Page 4 of 7

4.6 Convocation and deliberation

4.6.1 If the complainant disagrees with further decision(s) based on the first investigation or after investigation is re-opened, and requests further investigation, quality manager shall convoke the CEO and general manager for meeting.

4.6.2 At the meeting, deliberation shall be made on the results of the investigation/re-investigation and on actions to be taken, and response based on the decision of the meeting shall be communicated to the complainant/appellant/person requesting review. This is the end of the process.

Note: *The decision will be made within 30 working days after receiving the disagreement of the last decision communicated by TABSEER quality manager to the concerned person.*

4.7 The composition of the Complaints/Appeals/Review Request meeting is the following:

4.7.1 General manager.

4.7.2 CEO.

4.7.3 The TABSEER Quality Manager.

4.7.4 Department Manager (or their delegate if she/he is involved in the process).

4.7.5 TABSEER staff member(s) who have the information about the details of the specific case under complaint will be present to demonstrate the case details in front of meeting members.

4.7.6 The CEO may invite other external consultants to meeting if they deem it necessary (case by case).

4.7.7 Meeting terms and conditions:

- a) Any member involved in the certification decision will be excluded from the key meeting members in order to avoid any conflict of interest. His delegate will be replacing him in attending the committee and participating in the decision.
- b) At the discretion of the staff member responsible for decision or evaluation decision in front of the meeting members, the case should present to the members either by the responsible of the case analysis or the involved person in the original process.
- c) During a process, only information which existed and was presented at the time the decision was made will be considered.
- d) Additional credible information presented and accepted during a process, which was not present at the time the original decision was taken and could have led to a different outcome in the original decision, will result in a recommendation to the certification unit to re-open the case and take into consideration the new information for a decision (within the time frame mentioned above for accepting a complaint/appeal/Review Request).

4.7.8 Outcome of decisions:

a) Original decision overturned:

This means that the decision taken against a complaint will change, department manager and quality manager will act as indicated by the decision. The effect of this changed decision is explained to the complainant with the communication of the decision.

b) Original decision confirmed:

This means that the decision taken against a complaint or decision being complaint against is confirmed and will not be changed. The CEO will recommend to the department manager and quality manager if any deadlines of the consecutive workflow need to extend due to the proceedings of the appeal/review.

4.8 Publication of Complaints/Appeals/Review Requests:

TABSEER shall determine, by mutual consent between the concerned person (complainant/appellant or requesting review) and TABSEER, whether and, if so to what extent, the subject of the complaint/appeal and its decision(s) shall be made public.

4.9 Correction and corrective action:

TABSEER shall take appropriate corrections and corrective actions regarding the complaints accepted in accordance with the actions determined by TABSEER to be taken. All these actions shall be documented by the quality manager in the related forms.

4.10 Client Feedback

4.10.1 Feedback collection channels:

- Online surveys or feedback forms on company website.
- Dedicated email address or contact person for feedback submissions.
- Postal mail or fax, if applicable
- In-person meetings or interviews with clients, if feasible

4.10.2 Timing and frequency

- Feedback can be provided at any time during the certification process or after completion, encourage clients to provide feedback promptly to ensure timely response and action
- For clients that have continues requests, the feedback requested every 6 months.

4.10.3 Types of feedback may include:

- Suggestions for improvement in certification processes or communication.

- Complaints or concerns regarding the certification services or interactions with certification personnel.
 - Positive feedback or testimonials about certification experience.
- 4.10.4 Confidentiality and anonymity**
- Emphasize the confidentiality and anonymity of client feedback
 - Assure clients that their feedback will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and that their identity will not be disclosed without their explicit permission.
 - Encourage clients to provide honest and open feedback
- 4.10.5 Feedback form cover relevant aspects**
- Overall satisfaction with the certification services
 - Effectiveness of communication and responsiveness of certification personnel
 - Clarity of the certification process and requirements
 - Areas for improvement or suggestions for enhancing the certification experience
- 4.10.6 Sales department manager designate responsible personnel to receive, record and maintain the feedback records securely.**
- 4.10.7 The feedback reported to quality department to evaluate and identify the potential complaint and improvement.**

5. Related Forms

- 5.1** GE-QF-02-01 Client Feedback
- 5.2** GE-QF-02-02 Complaint report
- 5.3** GE-QF-02-03 Client Complaint Appeal Register