

# The LRQA management systems complaints and appeals process

## CLIENT INFORMATION NOTE

### Complaints and disputes

#### Overview

Occasionally during or following audit related activities there may be disagreements or disputes over the audit outcomes, NCR (Non-Conformance Report) or audit recommendations etc. These kinds of issues may be classified as technical complaints. Where such instances occur the LRQA audit team will try to resolve them during any on-going audit by providing any additional clarification or feedback to resolve the issue, for example, prior to the audit closing meeting. Where this does not meet with the client's expectation, a client may decide to progress to formally submitting feedback to LRQA using the complaint or feedback process outlined via the LRQA website.

Complaints, disputes, and feedback of dissatisfaction raised outside of the assessment, validation, or verification process either by an LRQA client or a third-party should be made via the LRQA website section 'Contacting LRQA'.

#### Initial review

On receipt of a complaint, feedback or appeal, the instance will be logged, and a responsible person will be assigned to undertake an investigation with the aim to identify a resolution.

#### Technical complaints

Technical complaints are those relating to LRQA's audit delivery, verification recommendation outcome or NCR's etc. For these types of technical complaints, a client may, with justification, raise an objection through the LRQA feedback or complaints process. All related feedback records shall be maintained by LRQA in accordance with the retention of records policy. When feedback is received by LRQA relating to dissatisfaction, where appropriate, an investigation will be undertaken, the outcome of which shall be communicated to the client. Where that response does not resolve the issue or dissatisfaction for the client a further appeal review may be requested by the client with relevant justification.

#### Non-technical complaints

Non-technical Complaints, such as those related to invoices or audit planning issues, will be managed by the appropriately allocated responsible person and are not subject to the technical complaint appeal process. All non-technical feedback records will be

maintained in accordance with the LRQA records policy.

#### Third-party complaints

If a Third-party complaint is received, it will be treated in the same way as other feedback while maintaining confidentiality and impartiality.

#### Final decision

An LRQA assigned responsible person for managing feedback will communicate the outcome of the investigation to the relevant party while maintaining any confidentiality requirements.

For technical complaints or appeals a review by a representative of the independent impartiality committee may be undertaken, where justified, for instances relating to continued certification or similar level of severity. The outcome of that appeal review will be final.

When LRQA receives a complaint relating to one of our certificated clients, depending upon the type of issue raised, this will normally be investigated by LRQA at the next audit of the client. LRQA reserves the right to undertake an additional short notice audit of a client where the nature of the complaint could have a significant impact on the certification held by the client.

## Accreditation bodies

An individual or organisation that has raised a complaint against either LRQA or one of LRQA's clients has the right to communicate their complaint to the appropriate accreditation body at any point in the complaints or appeals process. As an accredited certification body LRQA will co-operate with all such bodies in accordance with the terms of our accreditation.

## Confidentiality and impartiality

Feedback will be managed by LRQA in a confidential and impartial manner.

## Get in touch

Visit [www.lrqa.com](http://www.lrqa.com) for more information

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The LRQA logo consists of the letters 'LRQA' in a bold, sans-serif font. The 'R' is stylized with a teal-colored element. The logo is enclosed within a teal square border.

LRQA

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