


Information on Complaint, Disputes and Appeals Handling Process	
 <p>Halal Quality Control (HQC) Germany</p>	DOC HQC-12

This process only applies to complaints, Disputes and Appeals related to Halal Certification activities

Purpose

To provide an overview of HQC’s complaint, disputes and appeals handling process.

Scope

HQC has a comprehensive process to handle complaints, disputes and appeals. It satisfies the requirements of both ISO/IEC 17021-1 and 17065. This process applies to complaints relating to HQC’s Halal certification services, and complaints against certified clients made to HQC.

Definition

Complaints: Expressions of dissatisfaction made to HQC with regards to its certification services or its certified clients (as it relates to the implementation of the clients’ management systems), where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Dispute: A difference in interpretation of a requirement which justifies formal documentation for further evaluation.

Appeal: A formal request for reconsideration of any dispute decision

Note

Submission, investigation and decision on complaints, disputes and appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the client filing the complaints, appeal and/or the dispute.

Process

1. Complaints

- 1.1. Any party wishing to submit a complaint shall contact the HQC office via telephone, email, or other type of communication
- 1.2 The complaint handling process is subject to the requirements for confidentiality.
- 1.3 Upon receipt of a complaint, HQC will log and acknowledge the complaint within 10 working days of receipt (typically via email). Once validated, it will be assigned to designated personnel for investigation and resolution.
- 1.4 HQC will take any necessary corrective actions related to the complaint, whether against HQC certification activities or against the certified client.

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1.5 When the complaint is against a certified client, the subject of the complaint is usually not to be made public. HQC will also notify the client of the receipt of a complaint against their certified system at an appropriate time.

1.6 Complaints are resolved through an investigation and validation process with decisions made by HQC. HQC has the responsibility of gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the complaint.

1.7 Investigation of complaints related to certified clients typically include an examination of the certified client's management system effectiveness, may necessitate a special audit and may lead to the suspension of the certification.

1.8 Whenever appropriate, HQC will provide the complainant with the outcome of the investigation, and a formal notice of the end of the process.

2 Disputes

2.1 A client wishing to dispute an HQC decision shall, within 30 days of the decision, submit a dispute to HQC by Email at: infohalalquality.de.

2.2 Within 10 business days of the receipt of the dispute, HQC will acknowledge receipt of the dispute by formal correspondence with the client.

2.3 Competent personnel who were not involved with the audit and/or decision making process related to the dispute will perform the investigation. The investigation may include a review of the client's documented dispute, related reports, and consultation with the audit team members as well as with the client's management.

2.4 HQC will document the decision related to the outcome of the investigation and forward it to the client within 30 working days of receipt of information related to the dispute. HQC will also inform the client of right to appeal the decision.

3 Appeals

3.1 A client wishing to exercise its right to appeal a dispute decision shall, within 30 days of the dispute decision, submit the appeal to HQC by Email at: info@halalquality.de.

3.2 Within 10 business days of the receipt of the appeal, HQC will acknowledge receipt of the appeal by formal correspondence with the client.

3.3 Appeals will be processed by a panel of three (3) members appointed by HQC's management

3.4 The panel is responsible for investigating, validating, and documenting the resolution of the appeal. Members of the Appeals Panel will make judgment based on facts and evidence provided.

3.5 HQC will document the decision related to the outcome of the full and thorough investigation and forward it to the client within 30 working days of receipt of the appeal.

3.6 The decision of the panel shall be the final decision of HQC.