

British Engineering Services Limited

Customer Complaints and Appeals Procedure Summary

Introduction

It is British Engineering Services policy to establish and maintain positive co-operation and liaison with Customers. This shall be achieved through the operation of a transparent business process, which shall allow Customer access to British Engineering Services Limited premises and processes, subject only to restriction as necessary to preserve individual Customer confidentiality and British Engineering Services Limited intellectual property rights.

The primary objectives of this procedure are to ensure that:

- Complaints are directed to the appropriate channels and a prompt response is made.
- Complaints are handled in a pro-active manner with a high level of customer care.
- Staff responsibilities and actions necessary for the handling, control and recording of complaints are defined.
- A full investigation of the root causes of complaints is made and, as far as possible, that any corrective and preventive actions are taken to prevent similar complaints occurring.
- Complaints are adequately reviewed and management information provided, as appropriate.
- Where considered appropriate, specific auditing is performed on the area of activity and responsibility involved in the complaint.
- Satisfactory records of complaints and their resolution are created and maintained.

Definitions:

'Appeal' - Formal request by a certification services client for re-examination of the circumstances associated with a decision to reject all or part of an application for Quality System or Product Certification. (Such complainants should be advised that any written appeal or complaint will be reviewed by the independent Certification Services Oversight & Impartiality Committee).

'Complaint Handler' – Designated person within the Q&C team who records, tracks and processes complaints.

'Complaint Owner' – The Designated Manager responsible for owning and dealing with the complaint and its resolution.

'Complaint' - expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, by any person or organization, relating to the activities of the Company, where a response is expected

COMPLAINTS PROCESS

All complaints shall be notified to the Quality & Control (Q&C) team via the Manager of the relevant department. Complaints shall be handled by staff with sufficient experience and training to process the complaint. These persons are part of the Q&C team within the Customer Services department. They are designated Complaint Handlers.

British Engineering Services Limited maintains a central complaint register in an electronic format.

The following information will be recorded:

- A unique reference number for identification of the complaint.
- A description to indicate the type of complaint / which Department the complaint relates to
- The date the complaint was received by the Q&C department
- The organisation and name of the complainant

- The nature of the complaint (Notes field)
- The Departmental Manager responsible for owning the complaint
- All relevant electronic communications / evidence relating to the complaint including the opening and closing letters issued to the complainant
- A summary of the corrective and preventative action taken. This shall be provided by the Complaint Owner where required. Description field
- The date when corrective action is fully complete
- Any follow up action taken

All complaints are to be immediately logged and acknowledged by an opening letter which is issued to the complainant by the Complaint Handler. The opening letter shall contain the unique complaint reference number and the name of the Departmental Manager responsible for the ownership of the complaint.

Complaints must be investigated by the relevant Departmental Manager with sufficient experience and authority (or ready access to authority) to deal with the complaint.

Where appropriate, the Complaint Owner must seek advice if there is any doubt about how the complaint should be addressed. This may involve discussions with Senior Management or the British Engineering Services Limited Risk Team.

If no correspondence is received from the complainant within 4 weeks of the last correspondence to the complainant, the complaint shall be closed.

Upon conclusion of the complaint, a closing letter shall be issued to the complainant by the Complaint Handler. The closing letter shall contain the unique complaint reference number and shall give formal notice of the end of the complaint to the complainant.

For complaints that are finance related, they shall be reported to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) as required. If a complainant remains unhappy with the result of the complaint handling from British Engineering Services Limited, they shall have the option of raising the complaint with the Financial Ombudsman. This shall be outlined in the closing letter sent to the complainant.

Appeals

Appeals are registered in the same manner as Complaints and relevant data presented for independent assessment to either the Assessment Panel or the Impartiality and Oversight Committee with recommended action. The Scheme Leader issues an acknowledgement to the appellant including a statement of the process extracted from this section of the procedure and timescales to be followed, together with the constitution of the Assessment Panel which will hear the appeal. If the appellant has reason to object to the constitution of the Panel, the Chairman of the Impartiality and Oversight Committee will be advised and an alternative Panel drawn up taking account of the objection. This arrangement will be considered final.

In the event that the matter requires urgent response, the Scheme Leader makes suitable arrangements, such as a telephone discussion. The outcome of the proceedings with a statement of the reason for the decision reached will be communicated to the appellant. Irrespective of the outcome of any appeal, a written statement will be issued including a reason for the decision reached. In the event that the Appeal is successful, the certification will be issued or re-instated with effect from the date the appeal was lodged.

All documentation related to complaints shall be retained for at least 10 years.