



Procedure QP11

Complaints and Appeals Management

Issue Status Sheet

The issue status is indicated by the version number in the footer of this document. It identifies the issue status of this Procedure. When any part of this Procedure is amended, a record is made in the Amendment Log shown below. The Procedure can be fully revised and re-issued at the discretion of the Governance Team. Please note that this Procedure is not valid if printed or downloaded and is classed as “uncontrolled”.

Version No.	Amendment	Date	Approved By (Document Owner)
5	General review of the document; changed company name from EuCI Ltd to Amtivo Southern Europe Ltd; alignment to Amtivo corporate template	09.09.2026	DS MG

Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
Purpose	4
Scope	4
Applicability	4
Risk 4	
2. Definitions	4
3. Roles and Responsibilities	4
4. Process	4
4.1 CONDITIONS FOR ACCEPTANCE OF A COMPLAINT OR AN APPEAL	4
4.2 HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS	4
4.3 CONFIDENTIALITY	5
4.4 RECORDS AND FOLLOW-UP	5
5. Change Management	6
Policy Review and Approval	6
Document Control	6
Implementation	6
6. References.....	6

1. Introduction

Purpose

To establish guidelines concerning the reception, evaluation and decision-making on appeals and complaints.

Scope

This procedure covers the handling of complaints, defined as disagreements on the quality of the service offered by ASE to its clients or by ASE-certified clients to their own customers, and appeals, defined as customer disagreements with audit team findings or ASE Certification Committee decisions.

Applicability

This procedure applies to all ASE processes.

Risk

Any risk identified when following this procedure shall be recorded in the Risk Register.

2. Definitions

Complaints: disagreements on the quality of service offered by ASE to its clients, or by ASE-certified clients to their own customers.

Appeals: customer disagreements with Audit Team findings or ASE Certification Committee decisions.

Appeal and Claim Owner (ACO): the person in charge of a specific appeal or complaint.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Compliance Director: is in charge of the Appeals and Complaints management process. If the Compliance Director is directly involved in a specific case, the AISE General Manager substitutes for him or appoints an appeal/complaint responsible for the specific case.

ACO: is responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the appeal or complaint and also for all decisions at all levels of the complaints-handling process.

4. Process

4.1 CONDITIONS FOR ACCEPTANCE OF A COMPLAINT OR AN APPEAL

This procedure applies only when a documented submission is made to ASE, clearly indicating that a complaint or an appeal is being raised. Such a submission must include the name and address of the person or entity submitting the complaint or appeal.

This procedure does not apply to complaints received without documented authentication, including:

- verbal complaints where the complainant declines to confirm in writing;
- anonymous written communications;
- sources apparently not involved with the complaint;
- hearsay.

4.2 HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

ASE ensures that the submission, investigation and decision on complaints will not result in any discriminatory action against the complainant.

Any ASE staff member or auditor acting on behalf of ASE who receives a complaint or appeal is required to register it on form fo.QP11.01 "Appeal and Complaint Management Form".

If the conditions for acceptance are met (section 4.1), the complaint or appeal is immediately forwarded to the Compliance Director, or to the AISE General Manager if the Compliance Director is directly involved. The Compliance Director (or AISE General Manager) classifies the submission as:

- an appeal;
- a complaint related to certification activities;
- a complaint related to a certified client.

In the case of classification (c), suitable communication is sent to the relevant client as soon as possible.

The Compliance Director (or AISE General Manager) personally investigates the matter or designates an Appeal or Claim Owner (ACO) to carry out this duty. The ACO shall be an ASE staff member who has the competence to deal with the matter and is independent from it. In the following, the person in charge of the appeal or complaint is referred to as the ACO.

The ACO gathers and verifies all documents and evidence related to the appeal or complaint. The ACO promptly acknowledges the interested parties of the receipt of the complaint and proceeds with the investigation, establishing as clearly as possible whether accepted ASE procedures have been scrupulously followed and whether all decisions taken properly reflect stated ASE policy and requirements. The ACO takes into account the results of similar appeals or complaints.

At the end of the investigation, the ACO promptly submits a report to the AISE General Manager and to the Compliance Director (whichever did not own the investigation), accurately describing the matter and making specific recommendations on the corrective and preventive actions to be taken. The Compliance Director (or AISE General Manager) analyses the report and either:

- confirms the recommended actions; or
- defines alternative actions, after clearly justifying the reason for the decision.

As soon as possible after the report is issued and the definitive action is established, the Compliance Director (or AISE General Manager) formally notifies interested parties, with due regard to ASE confidentiality policies, of the outcome of the investigation and of the proposed actions, formally closing the process. They are also responsible for putting in motion all necessary steps to implement the identified actions within the defined timeframe.

The Compliance Director determines whether to make complaints public and, together with the client and the complainant, to what extent.

All the above actions are recorded on form fo.QP11.01.

Corrective and preventive actions are implemented in line with ASE procedure "QP10 – CORRECTIVE AND PREVENTIVE ACTIONS".

4.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

ASE personnel shall take all necessary measures to preserve the confidentiality of information obtained during the investigation of a complaint or appeal. In particular, any reasonable request for anonymity or confidentiality made by those raising claims or statements in connection with a complaint or an appeal shall be respected.

All information is processed in line with ASE procedure "QP12 – CONFIDENTIAL AND PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION".

4.4 RECORDS AND FOLLOW-UP

All documents related to the receipt, investigation, processing and outcome of each appeal and complaint, including the report, decision and evidence of actions undertaken, shall be recorded in line with QP03 requirements.

The Compliance Director review the outcome of each complaint and appeal to identify any improvements or modifications that may be appropriate for the ASE Management System. Complaints and appeals are followed up in Management Review meetings.

5. Change Management

Policy Review and Approval

This procedure is reviewed at least every five years, or sooner if changes in accreditation requirements (ISO/IEC 17021-1 or relevant IAF Mandatory Documents) require it.

Document Control

- This procedure shall be controlled in line with the document control procedure.

Implementation

- This procedure shall be communicated to all relevant stakeholders in order to be effectively implemented.

6. References

- ISO/IEC 17021-1 - Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems;
- QP03 – DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT
- QP10 – CORRECTIVE AND PREVENTIVE ACTIONS
- QP12 – CONFIDENTIAL AND PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION

Forms

- fo.QP11.01 Appeal and Complaint Management Form.

For every reference, the latest edition of the referenced document, including any amendments, applies.