



STANDARDS ORGANISATION OF
NIGERIA

DOC NO: SON-MS/CA/001

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

This Procedure is established by the under-listed authorities. It is to be used and complied with by all SON-MS staff

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0. Contents and record of Changes

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0.2 Record of Change

S/N	Date	Details Of Change		Authorisation
		Page	Clause/Sub-clause and comment	Name and signature
03	19-09-2017	All	Review and update for clarity	D (MSC)
04	20-09-2017	Header on all Pages	Change of SON-MS/CA logo to SON logo	D (MSC)
05	06-03-2019	All	Review and update in line with current changes as regards the Organogram	D (MSC)
06	4/6/2023	All	Review and update in line with current practice	D(MSC)

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1. **Purpose**

To ensure that complaints and appeals received by SON-MS/CA are appropriately addressed within the stipulated period.

2 **Scope**

This procedure applies to all complaints and appeals received by the Standards Organisation of Nigeria, Management Systems Certification Department.

3, **Terms and Definitions**

3.1 **Complaint**

Any expressed dissatisfaction, written or verbal, with any service offered by the SON-MS/CA

3.2 **Complainant**

The originator of the complaint

3.3 **Appeal**

A request by client of the SON-MS/CA for further consideration(s) or change in the decision of SONMS/CA on any issue concerning certification

3.4 **Appellant**

Client of SON-MS/CA making an appeal to SON

3.4 **SON**

Standards Organisation of Nigeria

3.5 **MS/CA**

Management Systems Certification

3.6 **D MS/CA**

Director Management Systems Certification

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3.7 **DD MSC**

Deputy Director Management Systems Certification

3.8 **QAM**

Quality Assurance Manager

4. **Reference**

ISO/IEC 17021-1 Conformity assessment – requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

5. **Procedure**

5.1 **Complaints on activities and services of SONMSC**

- 5.1.1 Complaints received by letters, phone, e-mails and any other means are recorded in compliant register, assigned complaint no and filed in the complaint file by the designated officer.
- 5.1.2 Complaints information is thereafter entered into complaint form. QA validates all complaints and assigned to GH where applicable or inform Top Management where it is about the certified client to the appropriate Group Head.
- 5.1.3 The Group Head ensures that all complaints are acknowledged by letters, phones and/or e-mails within 24 hours after receipt.
- 5.1.4 The Group Head appoints Client Manager to investigate where applicable complaint received.
- 5.1.5 The Client Manager carries out the investigation and then reports the investigation outcome carried out in the complaint form within 72 hours after receipt.
- 5.1.6 The proposed correction, corrective and /or preventive actions are indicated on complaint form by the Client Manager as appropriate and forwarded to Group Head, who gives progress report of the complaints to the complainant.
- 5.1.7 The Group Head reviews and communicates the proposed decision to DDMSC for approval within 24hours after receipt.
- 5.1.8 DDMSC approved action is forwarded to Group Head within 24 hours after receipt

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5.1.9 The Group Head communicates approved decision or actions taken to the complainants

5.2 Appeals

5.2.1 MSC clients may appeal any decision of SON-MSC. This may include decisions not to award certification, decisions to suspend or to withdraw certification, decisions to reduce the scope of certification granted

5.2.2 All appellants shall be advised to file a written appeal. This may be in the form of a letter or e-mail.

5.2.3 The appeal is registered on appeal register and appeal form, which is forwarded to QA for validation. QA also assigned the appeal to the appropriate Group Head who appoints a Client Manager to investigate.

5.2.4 The Group Head ensures that all appeals are acknowledged by letters/e-mails within 24 hours after receipt.

5.2.5 Once the investigation is completed, the Group Head ensures that Client Manager reports the outcome of the investigation and proposed action on the Appeal Form. The Form is forwarded to DD MSC for approval of proposed action while the Group Head gives progress report to client on the appeal

5.2.6 The Group Head communicates the decision of the SONMSC to the appellant in letter/email.

5.2.7 If the appellant does not agree with the outcome of the appeal process, the dispute resolution mechanism (detailed in the certification terms and agreement) shall come into effect.

5.3 Tracking of complaints and appeals

5.3.1 All complaints and appeals are tracked and records kept in the appropriate register by QAM4. (Does this position exist in the department)

5.3.2 Complaints in hard copy registers are tracked by indicating dates of actions taken.

6. Impartiality

Any individual or team involved in the resolution of complaints or appeals are

- not persons named in the subject of the said complaint

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- not person(s) involved in certification decision