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1. PURPOSE

This procedure defines the process for receiving, recording, evaluating, investigating, resolving, and closing complaints and appeals related to certification activities delivered by Eurofins Assurance Vietnam.

The objective is to ensure that complaints and appeals are:

- handled impartially, professionally, and within defined timelines;
- subject to confidentiality requirements;
- investigated by competent personnel independent from the activities under review;
- resolved effectively with appropriate corrective actions where necessary;
- monitored and reviewed for continual improvement.

The effectiveness of the complaints and appeals process shall be reviewed during the annual Management Review.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all complaints and appeals received from:

- certified clients;
- applicants;
- scheme owners;
- accreditation bodies;
- external stakeholders;

in relation to certification services provided by Eurofins Assurance Vietnam, including applicable schemes such as:

- LEAF Marque
- GLOBALG.A.P.

This procedure is publicly available to external stakeholders through Eurofins Assurance communication channels.

3. DEFINITIONS

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, by any person or organization relating to certification activities, where a response is expected.

Appeal

A request by a client for reconsideration of a decision made by the certification body related to certification activities.

Complainant / Appellant

The person or organization submitting a complaint or appeal.

Validator

The assigned responsible person who evaluates the complaint or appeal, determines severity, and coordinates resolution actions.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance Department is responsible for:

- receiving complaints and appeals;
- acknowledging receipt within the required timeframe;
- recording cases in the complaint monitoring system;
- conducting preliminary review;
- assigning responsible personnel for investigation;
- escalating critical cases where necessary.

Scheme Manager / Assigned Investigator is responsible for:

- investigating the complaint or appeal;
- performing root cause analysis where applicable;
- determining correction and corrective actions;
- ensuring closure within defined timelines.

Investigators shall be independent from the audit and certification decision activities related to the case.

Business Unit Manager is responsible for:

- overseeing complaint handling effectiveness;
- supporting corrective action implementation;
- reviewing escalated complaints or appeals.

Technical Assistant is Responsible for:

- maintaining records of complaints and appeals;
- monitoring closure effectiveness;
- ensuring timely communication with complainants/appellants;
- verifying effectiveness of corrective actions.

Certification Decision Personnel

Shall not be involved in investigating appeals against their own certification decisions.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1. Receipt, Acknowledgement and Record

If a client wishes to submit a complaint or appeal regarding the audit or certification process, the matter shall first be submitted to Eurofins Assurance Vietnam in accordance with this procedure.

Complaints and appeals may be received through written or verbal channels, including:

- email,
- formal letters,
- website submissions,
- phone calls,
- audit or sales feedback.

The default mailbox for receiving complaints and appeals is: fa.compliance@cpt.eurofinseu.com

All complaints and appeals shall:

- be acknowledged within **five working days**, unless otherwise required by the applicable scheme;
- be recorded in the complaint monitoring system;
- be assigned to a responsible validator for evaluation and follow-up.

All records shall be maintained to ensure traceability.

5.2. Confidentiality and Impartiality

All complaints and appeals shall be treated confidentially:

- Where requested, the identity of the complainant shall remain confidential from the client.
- Anonymous complaints or unsubstantiated expressions of dissatisfaction shall be treated as stakeholder comments and reviewed during the next audit where relevant.
- Personnel handling complaints and appeals shall be independent from:
 - the audit activities concerned;
 - the certification decision concerned.

This is to ensure impartiality in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065.

5.3. Review and Assignment

The Compliance Department shall perform a preliminary review of the complaint or appeal and assign the case to competent personnel.

Where the Scheme Manager was involved in the activity under complaint or appeal, an independent person shall be assigned.

Where the appeal concerns scheme decisions made at GCC level, the investigation shall be conducted by GCC in cooperation with the relevant local office.

Critical risks shall be escalated to Regional Management or Legal Division, such as:

- possible litigation,
- accreditation risks,
- legal summons,
- reputational damage,

Investigation and Resolution

The resolution process shall include:

- investigation of the issue and assessment of business impact;
- root cause analysis where necessary;
- definition and implementation of corrections and corrective actions;
- communication of findings and actions taken;
- verification of implementation effectiveness;
- documentation and retention of records.

Complaints may only be closed after a final written response has been provided to the complainant.

5.4. Resolution Timeframes

Unless otherwise required by the applicable scheme:

- complaint or appeal resolution shall be completed within four weeks;
- corrective actions for high-severity issues shall be closed within 90 days.

Where delays occur due to client or third-party responsiveness, the reasons shall be documented.

For complaints received from accreditation bodies or scheme owners, corrective action effectiveness shall be verified during the next internal audit.

5.5. Complaint Handling

Complaints shall be handled at the contracting entity level.

Where necessary, an audit may be initiated as part of the investigation process, and the client shall be informed of the reason for such audit.

Relevant scheme-specific reporting timelines shall be followed. For example:

- complaints related to GLOBALG.A.P. shall be reported within 24 hours
- complaints related to LEAF Marque shall be reported within 5 working days

All relevant databases shall be updated within the required timeframe.

5.6. Public Disclosure of Complaints

Eurofins Assurance, the complainant, and the client shall determine whether complaint information needs to be made public.

Formal authorization shall be obtained before disclosure unless failure to disclose may impact stakeholders.

Examples include:

- product defects causing injury or death;
- environmental failures causing serious harm;
- serious food safety issues.

The decision regarding disclosure shall be recorded.

5.7. Appeal Handling

Appeals shall be managed at the level where the certification decision was made.

Appeals shall:

- be reviewed independently from the original certification decision;
- be communicated to the Business Unit Manager;
- be included as input to impartiality review meetings where relevant.

The final appeal decision shall be formally communicated to the appellant and recorded.

5.8. Escalation of Complaints and Appeals

If the complaint or appeal is not resolved satisfactorily, or if the matter relates to the requirements of the certification standard beyond the scope of the certification body, the complainant may escalate the matter to Certification Scheme Owner through the official contact channels.

- GLOBALG.A.P. standards: complaints@agrava.com
- LEAF standards: LEAF Marque Ltd (Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG. Email: info@leafmarque.com. Tel: +44 (0)2476 413911).

For a complaint about the LEAF Marque System, complaints, or appeals must be made by submitting a complaints form to enquiries@leaf.eco. The complaints form and complaints procedure can be found on the LEAF website.

Complaints relating to certification body performance may be reviewed as part of the scheme oversight activities, and sanctions may be applied where poor certification body performance is identified.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

Complaint and appeal records shall be analyzed for trends and recurring issues.

Results shall be reviewed during:

- Management Review;
- Internal Audit;
- Impartiality Meetings.

This review shall be used to identify opportunities for improvement in the certification process.

7. VERSION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Change
3	4 May 2026	Reorganized Document structure for improved clarity
2.1	10 May 2025	Change channel of receiving complaint and appeal
2	2 May 2024	Periodic review
1	18 December 2020	First issuance