



**Accreditation Education Research & Scientific Service Center,
Nepal**

Procedure for Handling Complaints

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1. Policy

It is the policy of AERSSC that the stakeholders including the customer complaints are assessed with top priority and will be utilized as an opportunity for improvement also by AERSSC.

2. Scope

This document describes the procedure for handling all complaints received by AERSSC from any sources e.g. letters, emails, faxes, telephones or reports appearing in print media and references in electronic media against the quality of the services provided and personnel involved in the accreditation process.

3. Objective

To define authority, responsibilities and quality system used to ensure that all customer's complaints are received, documented, assessed and responded in a timely basis.

4. Responsibility

- 4.1 The CEO will be responsible for allocating responsibilities for and reporting on complaints.
- 4.2 The CEO is responsible for monitoring complaints and is responsible for final decision on the closure of complaints.
- 4.3 The CEO is responsible for analyzing all the complaints and their outcome for possible trends and presenting them to the management review meeting.

5. Definitions

Complaint:

Expression of dissatisfaction other than appeal by any person or organization to AERSSC relating to its activities, personnel and assessors/experts.

Appeal:

Request by a CAB to AERSSC for consideration of an accreditation decision.

Customer Feedback:

A compliment or complaint received from a person or organization relating to AERSSC's activities, personnel, assessors/experts.

Dispute:

Complaints that have not been resolved through the AERSSC complaints handling system.



6. Procedure

6.1 Investigation of Complaints

Complaints received by AERSSC may broadly fall in to three categories:

- a) Complaints against CABs,
- b) Complaints against Quality of services provided by AERSSC,
- c) Complaints against officials involved in the Accreditation process.

Procedure for dealing with each category of complaints is in given in this procedure.

6.2 Receipt of Complaints

6.1.1 All complaints relating to an organization accredited by AERSSC will be referred to the accredited organization. Only when the accredited organization has not been able to resolve the complaint, it will be referred to AERSSC.

6.1.2 All complaints received in AERSSC will be channelled to the CEO and it will be treated as confidential unless otherwise required by law. Arrangements will be made by CEO to maintain records pertaining to all complaints covering date of receipt, date of acknowledgement, action taken, date of closure or final disposal and decisions taken.

6.1.3 Within a week of registering the complaint, complainant will be acknowledged with the assurance that AERSSC will be informing the outcome within a reasonable period of time.

6.1.4 Within a week of conducting the investigation of complaint, the CEO will notify the complainant in writing about the outcome of the investigation.

6.1.5 If a complaint is outside the scope of AERSSC activities or the information provided in the complaint is inadequate for any meaningful follow-up, the complaint will be treated as closed by informing the complainant.

6.3 Procedure for dealing with complaints against CAB's

6.3.1 The CEO where appropriate will give opportunity to the CAB to address the complaint before further investigation.

6.3.2 The CEO will place the findings of the investigation to the Board, along with the recommendation on action to be taken against the CAB. The CEO if necessary may consult the Expert and make a decision.

6.3.3 The complainant will be informed about the decision by AERSSC.

6.4 Procedure for dealing with complaints against Quality of services provided by AERSSC

6.4.1 When the complaint is against an Assessor or Accreditation Committee member, a panel will be appointed by the Chairman CAAB, comprising a Member of the CAAB, a Member of an Accreditation Committee and a CEO who may have knowledge about the matter contained in the complaint. The Committee may seek clarification from the concerned CAB.

6.4.2 In extreme cases the decision may involve disciplinary action against the concerned AERSSC staff member as per staff rules and regulations. In the case of an Assessor or Accreditation Committee Member, deletion of the assessor from the empanelled list or



removal of an Accreditation Committee member from the committee will be considered with the approval of the Chairman, CAAB.

6.4.3 If the complaint is against the CEO, AERSSC, then the Chairman AERSSC will handle the complaint under the guidance of the Board.

6.4.4 The complainant will be informed about the outcome of the complaint.

7. Reporting on Complaints and Other Related Actions

7.1 As an outcome of the investigation of the complaint and root cause analysis if any corrective action is felt necessary the same will be initiated by the CEO.

7.2 All records pertaining to complaints will be maintained up to date by the CEO. The status of complaints will be reported to the Chairman, AERSSC. After completion of the investigation process with satisfactory actions taken on each complaint, the complaint will be closed out and accordingly, the complaints register will be updated.

7.3 The CEO will analyze all the complaints and their outcome for possible trends. The complaints received, handling of complaints and the corrective actions taken will be discussed as one of the agenda items in the Management Review Meeting at the CAAB. The analysis of complaints will be placed before the Board in accordance with the Management review procedure.

7.4 The Complaint records will be maintained by AERSSC where all correspondence in respect of complaints received, decisions by CEO/Chairman, and any other relevant documents are filed in chronological order.