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Issue	Revision	Prepared	Reviewed	Approved
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1. Purpose

To establish an impartial, fair, confidential and timely process for receiving, validating, investigating and deciding complaints and appeals, and for suspension, withdrawal or reduction of certification scope in accordance with ISO/IEC 17024:2012.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to applicants, candidates, certified persons, certification decisions, examination and certification activities, ATOs/AQB's where applicable, and complaints concerning BSS NDT Pvt. Ltd. certification activities.

3. References

ISO/IEC 17024:2012;

ISO 9712:2021;

PCM-01;

Applicable BSS NDT procedures and forms.

4. Definitions

Appeal: Request by an applicant, candidate or certified person for reconsideration of an adverse certification decision.

Complaint: Expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, relating to BSS NDT certification activities or a certified person, where a response is expected.

5. Responsibilities

The Scheme Manager shall be responsible for receiving, registering, acknowledging, and coordinating the handling of complaints and appeals and for maintaining the applicable records.

Complaints shall be investigated, reviewed, and decided by competent and impartial person(s) who were not involved in the subject of the complaint.

Appeals shall be reviewed and decided by competent and impartial person(s) or the Appeals Committee who were not involved in the original examination, evaluation, or certification decision being appealed.

Before assignment, the independence and conflict-of-interest status of the person(s) involved in handling a complaint or appeal shall be verified and documented.

BSS NDT Pvt. Ltd., as the Certification Body, retains responsibility for all decisions at all levels of the complaints and appeals handling processes.

6. Complaints Process

Complaints may be submitted in writing. BSS NDT shall acknowledge receipt, determine whether the complaint relates to certification activities, validate it, investigate it, gather and verify necessary information, track actions, and communicate progress and outcome where appropriate. Submission, investigation and decision shall not result in discriminatory action against the complainant. Complaints shall be handled confidentially. Where a complaint concerns a certified person, that person shall be informed at an appropriate time. Corrective action shall be initiated where necessary. BSS NDT shall determine, together with the complainant and subject of the complaint where applicable, whether and to what extent the complaint and its resolution shall be made public.

7. Appeals Process

Appeals shall be acknowledged and processed in a constructive, impartial and timely manner. BSS NDT shall validate, investigate and decide the appeal, considering previous similar appeals where relevant. The person(s) deciding the appeal shall not have been involved in the original certification decision and shall not have participated in training or examination of the appellant within the period prohibited by the certification scheme. Progress reports and the outcome shall be communicated to the appellant. Formal notice shall be provided at the end of the appeal process. Submission, investigation and decision shall not result in discriminatory action.

8. Suspension, Withdrawal or Reduction of Scope

Certification may be suspended when certification requirements are temporarily not fulfilled, misuse occurs, required conditions are not maintained, or other justified grounds exist. BSS NDT shall specify actions required to end suspension. Failure to resolve the causes of suspension within the established period shall result in withdrawal or reduction of scope, as applicable. Following withdrawal, the certified person shall cease all claims and references to certified status and comply with requirements concerning certificates, marks and logos. Decisions shall be made only by the Certification Body in accordance with the certification scheme.

9. Records and Confidentiality

All complaints, appeals, investigations, evidence, decisions, communications and corrective actions shall be retained as controlled records in accordance with the BSS NDT records control procedure. Information shall be handled confidentially and disclosed only as authorized or legally required.

10. Monitoring and Improvement

Complaints and appeals shall be reviewed for trends, recurring issues, risks to impartiality and opportunities for improvement. Necessary corrections and corrective actions shall be implemented and effectiveness verified.

Complaints and appeals, including their status, trends, actions taken, and effectiveness of actions, shall be included as an input to Management Review. Where no complaints or appeals have been received during the review period, the status shall be recorded as Nil.

11. Timeframes for Complaints and Appeals

Activity	Maximum Time
Receipt of complaint/appeal	Same working day
Acknowledgement to complainant/appellant	Within 2 working days
Preliminary review and validation	Within 5 working days
Appointment of investigator/Appeals Committee	Within 5 working days
Investigation	Within 20 working days
Decision by competent person/Appeals Committee	Within 30 working days from receipt
Communication of decision	Within 5 working days after the decision
Closure of records	Within 3 working days after communication

Where additional time is required due to the complexity of the case or circumstances beyond the control of BSS NDT Pvt. Ltd., the complainant or appellant shall be informed in writing of the reason for the delay and the revised expected completion date. All such extensions shall be documented.

12. Records / Forms

Complaint Form and Register; Appeal Form and Register; Investigation Records; Decision and Communication Records; Corrective Action Records; Suspension/Withdrawal/Reduction Records.