sanas South African National Accreditation System

Report

Report 6 of 2013 November

THE SANAS COMPLAINTS PROCESS – P12

The process for the handling of complaints and appeals is detailed in SANAS document P 12 "Handling of Complaints and Appeals".

Anyone, whether it's an accredited facility, a facility still in the process of obtaining their accreditation, SANAS assessor, a customer of an accredited facility, a SANAS member of staff or any other interested party, is welcome to raise a complaint with SANAS – if it is done in accordance with the P12 process.

SANAS considers complaints as an opportunity for improvement, and where problem areas are identified, corrective actions are implemented to address the problem, and preventative actions are taken to try and ensure that the same problem does not recur. However, human nature always finds a way for the same types of problems to creep in every now and then, and so SANAS' improvement processes are never ending. Your role in raising complaints will ensure that SANAS' improvement processes are always evolving, and each step forward will hopefully lead to complete eradication of difficult problem areas.

- ***Complaints against Accredited facilities***

Where we receive complaints against one of our accredited facilities, we have to ensure that the complaint is first submitted directly to the facility, in order to give the facility the first opportunity to address the complaint in accordance with their own complaints procedures. SANAS will then only investigate a complaint against a facility if the facility has not taken the appropriate corrective action within a reasonable amount of time.

- ***Complaints against misuse of the Accreditation / Symbol***

Where SANAS has been informed that an accredited or non-accredited facility is misusing the accreditation symbol, the SANAS corporate logo or in the case of accredited facilities, misrepresenting their accreditation, SANAS will get involved in addressing the matter right from the start, as this is a criminal offence in terms of the Accreditation Act.

- ***Complaints against non-conformances***

Complaints or appeals against non-conformances raised at an assessment will not be registered as official complaints. Instead, the Field Manager will hold an ad-hoc AAC (Approvals Advisory Committee) with expertise in the relevant technical discipline, where required, to review the non-conformance and decide on its validity. The decision of the AAC will be final.

Your knowledge of and attention to this process will ensure that due attention is given to effectively addressing your complaint.

See on next page a step by step overview of the process that must be followed in order to ensure your complaints are addressed.

Below see a step by step overview of the process that must be followed in order to ensure that your complaints are addressed.

A. COMPLAINTS:

Step 1: You must submit a complaint in writing to the SANAS Quality Manager within 1 month of the event that lead to the complaint.
Note: If the complaint is against an accredited facility, you must provide the Quality Manager with evidence that you have already submitted the complaint directly to the facility, as well as evidence or information to show that they have not satisfactorily addressed the complaint within a reasonable amount of time (e.g. 3 months)

Step 2: The Quality Manager and/or Senior Manager will decide on the validity of the complaint. Where a complaint is not valid, the Quality Manager will provide you with adequate reasons.

Step 3: Valid complaints are registered and allocated to an independent and competent investigator.

Step 4: SANAS will try and resolve complaints within 1 month of receipt, where possible. Where not possible, you will be kept up to date with the progress of the complaint.

Step 5: Conclusions of the investigation will be communicated to you.

If SANAS has not resolved the complaint to your satisfaction, then you may submit an APPEAL.

B. APPEALS

Appeals are lodged as a result of a disagreement with an adverse decision made by SANAS, such as refusal to accept an application or to proceed with an assessment, decisions to deny, suspend or withdraw accreditation, or any other action that impedes your accreditation.

Step 1: You must submit the appeal in writing to the SANAS CEO within 1 month of the event that lead to the appeal.

Step 2: The CEO will decide on the validity of the appeal. Where an appeal is not valid, you will be provided with adequate reasons.

Step 3: Valid appeals are registered and either investigated by the CEO himself or by an independent and competent SANAS manager.

Step 4: Appeals will be resolved within 3 months of receipt, where possible. Where not possible, you will be kept up to date with the progress of the appeal until it has been resolved.

Step 5: The CEO will rule on the outcomes of all appeals, the conclusion of which will be communicated to you.

If SANAS has not resolved the appeal to your satisfaction, within reason, then the CEO will refer the appeal to the Chairman of the SANAS Board of Directors.

C. APPEALS SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD

Step 1: The Board will first consider the merits of the appeal.

Step 2: Where justified, an Appeals Board will be appointed to investigate the appeal and ensure that SANAS followed due process in addressing the appeal.

Step 3: The Appeals Board may arrange a hearing, the date and time of which will be communicated to you.

Step 4: If either SANAS or yourself wishes to be represented by legal counsel or witnesses, then this decision and the details of the witnesses must be communicated to the Appeals Board and the other party within 5 working days of the hearing.

Step 5: The Appeals Board will decide on its judgement by a majority of votes. The decision of the Appeals Board is final and is not open to further appeal.



NEWLY PUBLISHED / REVISED SANAS DOCUMENTS

Doc No.	Applicable Programmes	Title	Date Published	Comments
R 79-03	Calibration Laboratories	Requirements for the Issue of SANAS Calibration Certificates	2013/07/31	Reviewed - refer to the Amendment List in the document
F 82-07	Inspection Bodies	Vertical Assessment General Criteria for the Operation of Various Types of Bodies Performing Inspection ISO/IEC 17020	2013/07/31	Reviewed - Updated to the ISO/IEC 17020:2012 requirements
P 14-23	All facilities	SANAS Fees	2013/07/31	Corrected error - refer to the Amendment list in the document
F 206-01	Inspection Body Assessors	Recommendation Report - Inspection Body Pre-assessment	2013/08/07	New Form for Pre-assessments of Inspection Bodies
F 207-01	Verification Laboratory Assessors (Legal Metrology)	Recommendation Report- Verification Laboratory Pre-assessment	2013/08/07	New Form for Pre-assessments of Verification Laboratories
R 50-03	Calibration Laboratories	Estimation of the Uncertainty of Measurement by Calibration Laboratories and Specification of Calibration and Measurement Capability on Schedules of Accreditation	2013/08/14	Reviewed - refer to the Amendment List in the document
R 76-03	All	Extraordinary (Unscheduled) Assessments to SANAS Accredited Facilities	2013/10/23	Reviewed - refer to the Amendment List in the document
F 04-08	All	Recommendation Report	2013/10/23	Reviewed - aligned the F04 with SANAS document P06 “Preparation of Reports”
P 06-06	All	Preparation of Reports	2013/10/23	Reviewed - refer to the Amendment List in the document
P 40-02	All	On-Site Clearance of Findings	2013/10/23	Reviewed - refer to the Amendment List in the document

NEWLY PUBLISHED / REVISED ILAC and IAF DOCUMENTS

Please access the relevant websites for these documents:
IAF Website: www.iaf.nu
ILAC Website: www.ilac.org

Doc No.	Applicable Programmes	Title	Date Published	Comments
ILAC P10:01/2013	ISO/IEC 17025 and ISO 15189 Laboratories	ILAC Policy on Traceability of Measurement results	2013	Describes the ILAC policy with regard to the metrological traceability requirements from ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and ISO 15189:2007. The date of implementation is January 2014
ILAC P14:01/2013	Calibration Laboratories	ILAC Policy for Uncertainty in Calibration	2013	Provides requirements and guidelines for the estimation and statement of uncertainty in calibration and measurement
IAF MD 5:2013	Certification Bodies	Duration of QMS and EMS Audits	2013/03/04	Provides mandatory provisions and guidance for CABs to determine the audit duration for stage 1 and stage 2 initial audits, surveillance audits and recertification audits
IAF MD 10:2013	Certification Bodies	Assessment of Certification Body Management of Competence in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021:2011	2013/02/11	Provides a harmonised approach to how Accreditation Bodies assess a Certification Body's management of competence in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021:2011
IAF MD 12:2013	Certification Bodies	Assessment of Certification Body Activities for Cross-Frontier Accreditation	2013/09/04	Provides requirements for the consistent application of Clause 7 of ISO/IEC 17011 regarding an Accreditation Body (AB)'s Assessment of Conformity Assessment Bodies (CAB)'s that provide certification in countries outside the country in which their head office is located

NEWLY QUALIFIED ASSESSORS

We wish to welcome and congratulate our new technical assessors:

CALIBRATION

- Thomas Mautjana
- Chris Matthee

We hope to have a long and successful working relationship with you as part of the SANAS assessor family!