

QUALITY COUNCIL OF INDIA

Procedure for Complaint and Appeals

QCI-PADD-PR-01- Procedure for Complaint and Appeals

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1. **Objective**

- 1.1. This procedure is applicable for handling complaints, appeals and disputes about PADD or PADDs Applicant/Approved /Recognized bodies received directly or indirectly by PADD. The objective is to drive maximum benefit from such complaints and appeals by instituting an enquiry or taking suitable corrective action and process improvement wherever necessary.

2. **Definition**

- 2.1. Appeal-Request by an applicant/approved/recognized body for reconsideration of any adverse decision made by PADD related to its desired approval/recognition status.
- 2.2. Complaint-Expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, by any individual or organization, to PADD, relating to the activities and/or staff of PADD or applicant/approved/recognized bodies, where a response is expected.
- 2.3. PADD- Project Analysis and Documentation Division
- 2.4. PADD Applicant/Approved/Recognized bodies - Organization or body that can be the object of approval/recognition eg.-Conformity Assessment Bodies, Certification Bodies, Organizations, HRAAs, Consultant Organizations, Institutes, etc.

3. **Scope**

- 3.1. Applies to all complaints and appeals regardless of source, made about PADD, its representation or PADD applicant/approved/recognized bodies, including but not limited to:
 - a) Internal Customers
 - b) Customers of applicant/approved/recognized bodies
 - c) Any individual or entity which has a complaint regarding PADD
 - d) Any applicant/approved/recognized body who complain about the conduct of PADD employees including Assessors, Experts etc.
 - e) Any other interested party.

4. **Responsibility**

- 4.1. Joint DIRECTOR, PADD is responsible for handling complaints and appeals made about PADD, PADD's applicant/approved/recognized bodies and customers of bodies.

5. Review of Decision

- 5.1. In case an applicant/accredited body wishes for review/reconsideration of any decision taken by PASS, they may send a request for same to padd.schemes@qcin.org
- 5.2. The following procedure is applicable-
 - 5.2.1. Request received from body by PADD is recorded in the same serial as date of receipt.
 - 5.2.2. Request must mention specific complaints (not generic in nature) and supported by documentary evidence.
 - 5.2.3. Anonymous/ pseudonymous requests are not be entertained.
 - 5.2.4. Only substantial errors/mistakes on procedural matters are taken up for consideration. Re-assessment of any aspect of assessment or request for deviation from the scheme cannot be considered.
 - 5.2.5. Such 'Reviews' are taken up for consideration in a internal review process of the relevant scheme as early as possible.
 - 5.2.6. Bodies making the request may be asked to present their case in person or through a Virtual Meeting.
 - 5.2.7. Decision of the internal review is intimated to the concerned organization/body.

6. Complaints

- 6.1. Complaint can be made by any person or body against the following:
 - a) PADD, its staff, its operation and/or procedures.
 - b) The assessors, experts, committee members or staff of PADD.
 - c) Assessment process followed by the assessors and/or by PADD
 - d) Use of the applicant/approved/recognized status either in scope or in use of the logo
 - e) Quality of assessment.
 - f) Applicant/approved/recognized Body.
 - g) Approved/recognized organizations for misuse of the approved/recognized status either in scope or in use of the logo, including making of fraudulent reports.
- 6.2. The complaint must be made in writing to .padd_scheme@qcin.org ,PADD with complete details of the complainant (name, address, organization etc.) and description of the problem with specific references along with documentary evidences preferably.
- 6.3. The complaint details are reviewed for its completeness and PADDT will acknowledge the complaint within 7 days (excluding postal time) with brief details on the approach for addressing the complaint. In case any more information is needed, the complainant shall be asked for the same. If the complaint does not fall under the domain of PADD, the complainant shall be informed of the same while providing possible assistance like referring the complaint to concerned body/organization.

- 6.4. If the complaint has no details of the complainant or the description is not adequate, PADD reserves the right of dealing with the complaint as deemed fit.
- 6.5. In case the complaint pertains to other organization but relates to PADD's applicant/approved/recognized organizations, then the concerned body is informed and efforts are also made to seek information from the organization. Based on any inputs received from the concerned body, the complainant is advised to follow up with the relevant body.
- 6.6. The status of the complaint is informed to the complainant time to time including its closure.
- 6.7. If the complaint is against the non-compliance of applicant/approved/recognized criteria by any applicant/approved/recognized body, then PADD shall encourage the complainant to utilize the procedure for complaints of the respective applicant/approved/recognized body. If the complainant insists and the body agrees then PADD may carry out the investigation. The report of the analysis is sent to both the parties along with the invoice (see clause 8) as applicable to recover the cost of such complaint analysis.
- 6.8. In case the complaint pertains to an applicant/approved/recognized body, the complaint would be referred to the applicant/approved/recognized body for possible resolution. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response of the body, the complaint would be taken up further.
- 6.9. In case the complaint is received through some other organization/stakeholder, and not directly from the related individual, then the organization would be briefed of the outcome at the end of the complaint addressal process.
- 6.10. PADD will follow each complaint to conclusion and initiate possible corrective actions if any.
- 6.11. In case one applicant/approved/recognized body complains about other applicant/approved/recognized body without any substantial issue due to business competition suitable action may be taken against complainant.
- 6.12. The information/records relating to complaints shall be maintained.

7. **Appeals**

- 7.1. Any person or body can file an appeal against the decision of PADD to the JD, PADD under following cases:
 - a) After provision of "Request for Review" has been utilized.
 - b) Refusal to accept an application
 - c) Refusal to proceed with assessment
 - d) Non-conformities and corrective action requests.
 - e) Changes in approved/recognized scope.

- f) Decisions to deny, suspend or withdraw approved/recognized.
 - g) Any other action that impedes the attainment of applicant/approved/recognized.
- 7.2. In case an appellant submit its appeal after exhausting the process of review of decision, the appellant needs to clearly specify the difference between submission made during review and new documents/issues submitted in appeal.
- 7.3. The appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the decision of PADD along with all the necessary documents in support of the appeal.
- 7.4. PADD verifies the documents for completeness and may ask for additional documentary support if necessary. Once the documents are complete, the scheme SPOC acknowledges the receipt of the appeal and forwards the same to the PADD. The JD, PADD has the right to either disallow/accept the appeal based on the merit of the contents of the appeal.
- 7.5. JD, PADD is allowed to take necessary actions to discharge the appeal. It would be ensured that the members had not been involved in the subject matter of the appeal.
- 7.6. PADD may ask the appellant to present the facts in person or through VC to if necessary or if so desired by the appellant.
- 7.7. PADD may ask any of the staff, assessors and staff for the facts to help in discharging the appeal based on facts.
- 7.8. JD, PADD gives its recommendation/decision for necessary action to discharge the appeal to the satisfaction of the appellant and regarding the corrective actions, if any, that must be taken to avoid such recurrences. The decision of PADD in this regard will be final and shall be communicated to applicant/approved/recognized
- 7.9. PADD shall take follow up actions time to time and shall maintain the record of all appeals, final decision and of all follow-up actions taken.

8. Financing the Complaint, Appeal and Dispute Process

- 8.1. If the resolution of the complaint, is done without undertaking any travel or additional assessment, no financing will be needed for such resolutions. If the resolution calls for undertaking travel and assessment, the cost will be borne by the defaulting party. PADD may plan special assessment for verification of complaints and market feedback, the charges for such assessments shall borne by respective organizations as per defined fee structure available on website [UPDATED-FEE-STRUCTURE-FOR-QCI-SCHEMES_14-Aug-2023-Ver.-5.pdf](#)
- 8.2. Complaints by individual against an Applicant/Approved/Recognized Body, individual person will not be asked to pay for any cost of the resolution of the complaint. The cost will be financed by any of the defaulting entity.

9. Records

- 9.1. PADD shall maintain a record of all complaints (FR_15_Complaint & Appeal Tracker), disputes and appeals received, actions taken, corrective actions, if any, and their effectiveness. These records would be maintained for a period of at least 6 years.

10. Turnaround time

- 10.1. Acknowledgement of complaint- within 7 days of receipt
- 10.2. Resolution of complaint- Based on nature and criticality of complaint, complainant shall be updated on the progress of resolution, at least in 15 days

11. Other means of handing complaints/appeals

- 11.1. Any complaints received through other means i.e. Quality Setu, Weekly VC etc. shall be dealt as per guidelines and requirements defined in this document.
- 11.2. Any other requirement stated in specific document shall be considered while handling complaints/appeals.