

 <p>مركز الإمارات العالمي للاعتماد Emirates International Accreditation Centre CB-PRS-009</p>	 <p>FIRST مجموعة سكوربيتى جروب SECURITY GROUP</p>	FIRST SECURITY GROUP CERTIFICATION DEPARTMENT		Doc. No.: FSG.CERT.15.12
		<u>APPEALS, DISPUTES AND COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE</u>		Rev.: 1 Date:07.02.24

**CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE
(Clause 9.8 & 9.9 of ISO 17024:2012)**

APPEALS, DISPUTES & COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE and SCOPE:

FSG-TDC aims to provide high quality services to scheme members and their customers. All appeals, disputes and complaints that arise will be dealt with promptly, professionally and transparently. FSG-TDC will follow the complaints process for any disputes that require resolution.

The approach adopted is to understand the root cause of the complaint and/or appeal, investigate and report on the validity of the claim and further develop our services using an ethos of continuous improvement.

Upon request, FSG-TDC will provide senior management, EIAC and any other authorised third party with a report of all logged Appeals, Disputes and Complaints upon request.

This information will be used to help in the production of bulletins to scheme members and the policies and procedures operated by FSG-TDC as well as providing a transparent account of our Appeals, Disputes and Complaints handling.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- i. FSG-TDC QHSE TEAM
- ii. FSG-TDC Management

3. PROCEDURES/PRINCIPLES

APPEALS, DISPUTES AND COMPLAINTS THAT HAVE BEEN RECEIVED WILL BE DEALT WITH AS FOLLOWS:

- 3.1 In an objective and impartial manner and with due adherence to the principles of fairness and the audi alterem partem rule**
- 3.2 In a transparent and confidential manner FSG-TDC is responsible for all decisions made at all levels of this appeals, disputes and complaints-handling process.**
- 3.3 Investigation of and decisions on appeals and complaints shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant or complainant.**
- 3.4 Take all reasonable steps to investigate and establish the exact nature, basis, reasons and factual background of appeals, disputes and complaints and the identification of the parties who are involved in the complaint or the ramifications thereof;**
- 3.5 Should the appeals, disputes and complaints involve allegations regarding the unprofessional conduct of personnel or associated personnel of FSG-TDC, sensitivity will be shown regarding prevailing and applicable legal implications and consequences.**
- 3.6 Take all reasonable steps, including the possible contracting of an external expert, to resolve the complaint expeditiously and with fairness to the parties involved;**
- 3.7 An appellant or complainant will have the right to appeal, lodge a dispute or make representations regarding any aspect of the procedures, findings, conclusions or remedial steps taken by FSG-TDC with regards to appeals, disputes and complaints which have been lodged.**

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4. CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

The Appeal-Committee will

- 4.1. If an investigation resulting from appeals, disputes and complaints has revealed that an error / fault in the assessment/ certification/ appeals or complaint handling of a candidate has occurred due to the certification system implemented, FSG-TDC immediately refers such error to the QHSE TEAM and thereby to the top management to rectify the said system.
- 4.2. If an investigation resulting from appeals, disputes and complaints, has revealed that an error / fault in the training delivery, assessment, or certification of a candidate had occurred due to a discretionary or other bona fide error by any personnel or associated personnel of FSG-TDC, immediately address such by means of training of the employees concerned.
- If an investigation resulting from an appeal, dispute or complaint, has revealed that an error / fault in the assessment, or certification of a candidate has occurred due to gross negligence by team of FSG-TDC or any other unprofessional conduct which warrants the consideration of disciplinary action against the individual(s) involved. If an investigation resulting from a complaint, has revealed that an error / fault in the training delivery, assessment, or certification of a candidate has occurred due to the negligence or other unprofessional conduct by a sub-contracted external analyst / expert, consider steps to terminate further employment of such an external analyst / expert.

5. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS OF ACTIONS:

- 5.1 The Division Manager shall on a quarterly basis evaluate the effectiveness of the appeals, disputes and complaints process, by drawing 20% of the files against which appeals / complaints were lodged.
- 5.2 The Division Manager shall peruse (but not limited) the following:
- The outcomes of the appeals/complaints
 - The database on appeals, disputes and complaints and ensure it is correctly completed.
 - The completion of the authorised forms when dealing with appeals, disputes and complaints
 - Any correspondence between the candidate and FSG-TDC
 - Peruse any feedback received from the candidate.
- 5.3 Should the Division Manager ascertain that the effectiveness does not conform to required standards, a meeting shall be held with FSG-TDC Top Management and necessary steps shall be implemented to improve upon appeals, disputes and complaints process.
- 5.4 **Monitoring appeals**
FSG-TDC will ensure that:
- a) appropriate records are maintained of the numbers and types of appeals received and their outcomes
 - b) operation of the policy is reported to the QUALITY ASSURANCE DIVISION OF FSG as part of its remit for the quality assurance of FSG-TDC Training & Certifications.
 - c) reports are made to the Top Management of FSG-TDC as part of the self- evaluation procedure
 - d) guidance from the regulators is reviewed and the policy is updated to comply with best practice
 - e) information from monitoring activities is made available to EIAC as part of FSG-TDC's self-evaluation procedure and on request.
- 5.5 **Compliance with EIAC'S appeals procedure**
1. FSG-TDC will comply with the requirements of any appeals process established by DAC in the form in which it may be published and revised from time to time.

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2. FSG-TDC will give due regard to the outcome of any such appeals process in relation to its qualifications.
3. Where an appeal through DAC's process results in the identification of a failure in the FSG-TDC assessment process, FSG-TDC will take all reasonable steps to identify any other candidates affected, correct or mitigate as far as is possible the effect of the failure, and ensure that the failure does not recur.
4. Where EIAC notifies FSG-TDC of failures that have been discovered in the assessment process of another awarding organization, FSG-TDC will review whether or not a similar failure could affect its assessment process. If FSG-TDC does identify a potential failure, it will take the same action as it would if the failure had been identified within its own assessment process.

6. PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH APPEALS DISPUTES & COMPLAINTS

FSG-TDC will establish and maintain a robust policy and associated procedure for handling appeals, disputes and complaints from its corporate clients and individual candidates.

Types of appeal, dispute or complaint that FSG-TDC will deal with:

The following types of appeal, dispute or complaint may be made in the context of this policy:

Candidates/ clients/ corporates/ trainees may appeal, dispute or complain against decisions relating to

- the results of assessment
- sanctions imposed following a proven case of malpractice or misconduct.
- decisions on certifications

7. PROCESS

FSG-TDC's approach to handling an appeal, dispute or complaint: PROCESS

1. Verbal appeal, dispute or complaint may be made in the first instance to the QHSE REPRESENTATIVE OF FSG-TDC.
2. Verbal appeal, dispute or complaint will be resolved as quickly as possible and normally within 2 working days
3. Where an appeal, dispute or complaint cannot be resolved in this way, they must be made in writing to the FSG-TDC QHSE Representative by electronic mail or letter, no later than 5 working days after receipt of the decision to be appealed.
4. FSG-TDC QHSE Representative will escalate the matter to the QHSE TEAM within 2 working days.
5. FSG-TDC QHSE TEAM will acknowledge receipt of a formal appeal, dispute or complaint within 5 working days and will maintain a record of the details of the appeal, dispute or complaint
6. FSG-TDC QHSE TEAM will investigate the appeal, dispute or complaint, with the co-operation of the appellant and drawing on other relevant sources of information.
7. A decision from this part of the process will be communicated to the candidate within 5 working days in writing.

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8. Where the report is inconclusive, or the candidate remains unhappy with the outcome, the QHSE TEAM will undertake a comprehensive review of the report and all associated evidence within 15 working days. During this time, the TEAM may seek additional evidence as appropriate and necessary
9. FSG-TDC will keep candidates informed about the progress of their case and the likely timescale for its resolution.
10. The outcome at each stage of a case will be communicated to candidates, in writing, within 5 working days of decisions being made.

8. DEALING WITH THE OUTCOMES OF APPEALS

- 8.1 Candidates are notified in writing within 5 working days of the decision being reached. Where an appeal, dispute or complaint is upheld, FSG-TDC will set out the precise actions to be taken and will communicate these to the relevant parties formally and in writing. The outcomes of all appeals, disputes or complaints, including details of responses provided and actions taken are recorded and kept on file.
- 8.2 Some appeals, disputes or complaints may have wider implications, for example the outcome of an appeal, dispute or complaint may indicate a failure in FSG-TDC's assessment process. In these circumstances, FSG-TDC will identify other candidates who may have been affected, correct or mitigate the effect of the failure and take all necessary steps to avoid a recurrence.
- 8.3 In the event that the outcome of an appeal, dispute or complaint requires a review and revision of other policies and procedures, (such as those for reasonable adjustments or special considerations, or for malpractice and maladministration), FSG-TDC will undertake this work, making recommendations to the appropriate committees where necessary, as quickly as possible. Revisions will be communicated to all relevant parties and FSG-TDC personnel at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.4 Where an appeal, dispute or complaint is not upheld, FSG-TDC will set out in detail the QHSE TEAM's reasoning and communicate these to the relevant parties formally and in writing.

FSG-TDC PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH APPEALS DISPUTES & COMPLAINTS (REFER NEXT DOCUMENT)

This policy condenses the original content while preserving all clauses and detailed information, aiming for clarity, conciseness, and compliance with ISO policy requirements.