

8. Facts discovered after the issue of the validation/verification statement

(As per ISO 14065:2020, 9.8; followed: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 9.8.)

8.1 In the event of an incomplete request that is received from responsible parties after the issue date, Project Coordinator forwards it to the concerned client and if required, the project participants as well. Assessment team reviews the reason for incomplete request (completeness check or information and reporting check) of validation and verification and decide if any additional CAR/CL is to be raised in the project activity using Findings Assessment to client, project participants. After thorough assessment, it is considered whether the verification statement requires revision or withdrawal.

8.2 For the specific project the request for review was called upon, the assessment team reviews the points raised as request for review and decide if any additional CAR/CL is to be raised on the project using Findings Assessment to client, project participants. On satisfactory closure of the raised CAR/CL, the team prepares the detailed response against the issues. Request Review Response' and make necessary changes in the validation/verification report. The prepared and revised documentation is then sent to the technical reviewer for review and approval who conducts the review following the procedure defined and sends the approved files and all related documentation to Technical Manager. Technical Manager reviews and approves the final report/response, before submitting to members of client or responsible parties. Technical Manager can also request additional documentation or clarification from the assessment team/Technical reviewer.

8.3 The updated documents shall be sent to the concerned GHG Programme and to the client, project participants containing the new facts or information with updated response regarding the issues raised in the report.

9. Handling of Appeals

(As per ISO 14065:2020, 9.9; followed: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 9.9.)

9.1 VKU Certification has implemented and maintains the below procedure for appeals made, by any existing or old client, against any decision.

9.2 The process for handling appeals includes the following:

a) Any client can file an appeal using the 'Complaint Register' and submit it to Quality Manager through email or online portal, post or any other lawful means of communication. In case the appellant has not used the appropriate form, Quality Manager sends him the correct and records the information in it before handling the appeal. On receipt of the appeal

Quality Manager acknowledges it and informs the client about the next steps. He ensures the validity of the appeal on the following points;

- Appellant is a genuine client
- Identity of appellant is established
- Appeal is formal and related to any of VKU Certification’s opinion/decision

Quality Manager can request additional information from the appellant if required and record it in ‘Complaint Register’.

b) The outcome of the investigation which includes any gaps, observation, non-conformity, and decision are recorded and used as appropriate for implementing the corrective action. In the event, Quality Manager is subject to the appeal, Technical Manager handles the appeal instead. The ‘Complaint Register’ is used to record appeals including actions undertaken to resolve them. The information received from appellant are made available to the panel, is recorded and archived on the server. Quality Manager tracks the appeal process and ensures the final decision within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal.

c) After establishing the validity of the appeal, VKU Certification constitutes a panel and request impartiality committee for the approval. They put all received and relevant information through the panel to be taken into account for the investigation. The panel can also request Quality Manager for additional information, if necessary.

9.3 The quality manager /technical manager (in case of dispute with quality manager) will be responsible for gathering all necessary information to determine whether the appeal is substantiated.

9.4 On receipt of the appeal Quality Manager/technical manager (in case of dispute with quality manager) will acknowledge it and inform on the progress of investigation and provide information/notice on the final decision to appellant.

9.5 VKU Certification has made available the process for handling appeals available to all interested party through its website.

9.6 VKU Certification has appointed an independent panel to take decisions on the appeals. Further mentioned in Section 9.2 (c)

9.7 Impartiality committee ensures by taking the below measures that the submission, investigation, and decision on appeals do not result in any discriminatory action against the appellant.

- By appointing an independent panel
- Maintaining the confidentiality about the appellant and subjects to appeal

- Avoiding conflict of interest of the panel

9.8 VKU Certification’s Impartiality committee ensures by endorsing the final decision in the related ‘Complaint Register’ that the decision is made by the independent appeal panel and communicated to appellant as appropriate.

10. Handling of Complaints

(As per ISO 14065:2020, 9.10; followed: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 9.10.)

10.1 VKU Certification implements and maintains the below procedure for receiving, managing, evaluating, and investigating complaints, making decisions on them, and taking appropriate corrective actions. VKU Certification makes its complaints procedure publicly available through its website.

10.2 Who so ever at VKU Certification receives the complaint in any form (email, letter etc.) bring it to the notice of Quality Manager for managing it, who;

- Acknowledge the complainant about the complaint
- Send complainant to ‘Complaint Register’ for gathering the required information
- Record the complaint in the ‘Complaint Register’, Refer [22] in Annexure A
- Gather related information and requests the additional information if necessary
- Verify all necessary information for evaluating the validity of the complaints against the criteria as set out in section 13.1.3.
- If complaint found valid and genuine, constitute, and propose ‘Complaint, Dispute and Appeal Panel’ to impartiality committee for its approval.
- The panel investigates the complaint and submits its report to Quality Manager who decides the actions to be taken in response to complaint.

10.3 VKU Certification will gather all necessary information to determine whether the complaint is substantiated.

10.4 The received complaint is acknowledged within three working days by sending the acknowledgement letter through email to the complainant. All complaints are investigated within 30 days of their receiving date. The name of the persons, appointed as panel members are also informed to the complainant through email.

10.5 VKU has made available the detailed process for handling complaints to all interested parties through its website.

10.6 VKU Certification determines the authenticity of complaint by evaluating the complaint against the following criteria –

- Complainant is a genuine stakeholder
- Identity of complainant is established
- Complaint is formal
- Its related directly/indirectly to the validation and verification functions of VKU Certification

10.7 The decision of the independent panel will be not result in any discriminatory actions towards the complainant.

10.8 VKU Certification ensures that resolution of complaints shall be made by, or reviewed by the following-

- The team is independent of those who are part of or carried out the validation or verification/certification activities.
- The person appointed as team member either have the same competency of the subjects to complaint or higher.
- Team members have provided their no conflict of interest and confidentiality declaration. Team Declaration for COI' in advance of taking the job as per relevant VKU Certification's procedures.
- The team is led by Technical Manager and in case he is a subject to the complaint and not independent, this role is taken by Quality Manager himself/herself. In case Quality Manager is subject of complaint it is dealt as per procedure defined in 13.1.1 of VKU QMS.

11. Records

(As per ISO 14065:2020, 9.11; followed: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 9.11.)

11.1 VKU Certification established, implemented, and maintains a procedure for maintaining and managing specific records pertaining to its validation and/or verification/certification activities, including the following records:

- a)** All information in respect of requests for validation and/or verification/certification and the information received from the project participants in relation to such requests are archived on the server by the team leader working on the project in the project specific folders. Refer [1] in Annexure A
- b)** Records pertaining to contracts, including the results of contract reviews (conducted and approved) are uploaded on the server by Project Coordinator under the guidance of Technical Manager. Refer [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#) [\[4\]](#) and [\[5\]](#) in Annexure A
- c)** Records pertaining to preparation and planning of validation and verification/certification activities are uploaded by team leader of the project on the