


<b>UNIVERSAL – Certification Services</b>	
<b>APPEALS and COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE</b>	<b>Document No: UPR.06</b>

## 1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this procedure is determination of the handling methods for the appeals and complaints about the system certification activities being implemented by *UNIVERSAL* together with the complaints and disputes about the certificated organizations.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

**Appeal:** The state of disagreement inspite of the decisions of *UNIVERSAL* in the case of dispute and complaint.

**Complaint:** The negative expressions of the organizations or other interested parties about the performance, procedures and policies related to the certification activities of *UNIVERSAL*, the employees serving in the name of *UNIVERSAL*, the organizations certificated by *UNIVERSAL* and their activities within the scope of the related certificates.

## 3. RELATED DOCUMENTS

UFR.32 Complaint Evaluation Form

*UFR.137 Appeals Evaluation Form*

## 4. APPLICATION

*The appeals and complaints-handling process includes at least the following elements:*

- a) an outline of the process for receiving (from web site, phone,mail,fax etc) , validating (asking certified client or audit team, decision maker etc) , investigating the appeal / complaint ( Appeals and Complaint Evaluation Committee) , and for deciding what actions need to be taken in response to it;*
- b) tracking and recording complaints with UFR.32 Complaint Evaluation Form and appeals with UFR-137 Appeals Evaluation Form ,including actions undertaken in response to them;*
- c) ensuring that any appropriate correction and corrective action are taken by Management Representative.*

### 4.1. The Complaints about The System Certification Activities of *UNIVERSAL*

The complaint about the certification activities, such as reports, audit teams, audit scope, etc. can be forwarded in writing or orally.


*UNIVERSAL is responsible for all decisions at all levels of the complaintshandling process.*

*Submission, investigation and decision on complaints shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant.*

*Upon receipt of a complaint, UNIVERSAL confirms whether the complaint relates to certification activities that it is responsible for and, if so, shall deal with it. If the complaint relates to a certified client, then examination of the complaint considers the effectiveness of the certified management system.*

The complaints are recorded to The Complaint Evaluation Form and forwarded to The Management

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Representative by the personnel who receive the complaints.

The complaints received by *UNIVERSAL* are evaluated by the related department manager and The Management Representative in (7) seven working days. The owner of the complaint is informed beforehand in writing and the complaint may be forwarded to The Complaint Evaluation Committee, depending to its content.

The complaints about audit reports, audit teams, audit scope, etc. are evaluated by The Complaint Evaluation in the first The Complaint Evaluation meeting.

The required corrective/preventive actions are initiated in accordance with the decisions made in the meeting or following the evaluation of The Management Representative.

The owner of the complaint is informed in writing about the results of the actions taken in (1) one month following the complaint dated.

*For personnel certification activities; Complaints against a person certified by Universal GmbH or approved educational institutions must be submitted in writing to the office of Universal GmbH within a period of 4 weeks after discovery. The complainant receives written feedback within 2 weeks. Within a reasonable time, he will receive the result of the review and the opinion on the complaint.*

#### **4.2. The Complaints about The Certificated Organizations**

The written or verbal complaints about the certificated organizations sent to *UNIVERSAL* web address or *UNIVERSAL* head office are recorded to The Complaint Evaluation Form and forwarded to The Management Representative by the personnel who receive the complaints.

*Any valid complaint about a certified client shall also be referred by the certification body to the certified client in question at an appropriate time.*

The complaints arising from the nonconformities in the quality systems of the organizations are forwarded by The Management Representative in writing to the related organization and the organization is requested to give written information about the actions taken or to be taken in relation with the complaints about herself.

The arriving information is evaluated by The Managements Representative. Depending on the importance of the complaint, an audit may be conducted in the organization or it may be checked in the audit conducted in the regular period if the records related to the complaints made are regularly maintained or not.

The information received from the organization is forwarded to the complained organization for her information.


All of the corrective or preventive actions are followed by The Management Representative.

#### **4.3. The Appeals About The System Certification and Certificated Organizations Activities**

*UNIVERSAL is the responsible for all decisions at all levels of the appeals-handling process. Submission, investigation and decision on appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.*

*In cases UNIVERSAL receives the appeal to its decision for Management System Certifications, UNIVERSAL is*

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*responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the appeal.*

*The appeals-handling process includes all following steps for receiving, validating and investigating the appeal, and for deciding what actions need to be taken in response to it will be recorded.*

*The requirement for appeals procedure is appeals receiving will be within 15 days from the date of the audit or the decision notification.*

*The subject of appeals shall be within the scope of the certification activity of UNIVERSAL.*

*The following reasons can be subject to appeals:*

- ✓ Refusal of company application
- ✓ Non-acceptance of Company audit result (Major nonconformities etc.)
- ✓ Failure to provide certificates to the company, although successful audit result and issue
- ✓ Suspension of the certificate
- ✓ Cancellation of the certificate
- ✓ Company's refusal to accept the scope of the certificate etc.

*For the appeal to be dealt with effectively, the appeal's application must contain the following information:*

- ✓ Decision date, client number and report number that is subjecting to appeals
- ✓ Reasons and justifications for the appeals
- ✓ Name, surname and contact information of the person making the appeals application

*Regarding the audit activity to be carried out, the company to be certified has the right to appeals to the planned Audit Team. It can notify UNIVERSAL in writing of this appeals with its reasons. If there is an appeal based on objective evidence as a result of the audit planning, a new audit team is assigned and a solution is provided.*


*The company has the right to appeal in writing to the decision made during the audit process or at the end of the audit. After the UNIVERSAL Certification Manager has informed by Lead auditor, the object of appeal is recorded in the report / audit note form and UFR.137 Appeals Evaluation Form.*

*There may be verbal or written (web, individual) appeals applications requests. Appeals to the audit results and decisions, including their justifications, must be reported with the UFR.137 Appeals Evaluation Form as documented.*

*Upon receipt of the appeals, UNIVERSAL confirms whether the appeal is related to the certification activities for which it is responsible. If the appeals is related to its own certification activities, it will be accepted.*

*If the appeals is received in writing but in a different format, it is recorded by the Management Representative with the UFR.137 Appeals Evaluation Form. The subject of the dispute is written and asked to be answered by the Audit Team / Decision Maker. If the Audit Team / Decision Maker's answer is not found satisfactory by the relevant party/applicant, the object of appeals is conveyed to the Decision Maker, and the result of the evaluation is re-communicated to the Applicant and his approval is requested. If the applicant does not find the answer sufficient, the Subject of the appeal is transferred to the agenda of the Appeals and Complaints Committee with the approval of the General Manager. But the persons engaged in the appeals evaluation -handling process are selected as different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions.*

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*And about the objection to be evaluated, the date when the issue will be discussed, and the names and CVs of the members of the Appeals and Complaint Committee are notified to the relevant party for confirmation, and the person or the Appeal's applicant is notified by the Management Representative with a letter that they can attend the meeting if they request.*

*At the Appeals and Complaints Committee meeting, it is evaluated in a way that ensures impartiality, independence and integrity by the members, different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions.*

*In the meantime, the Committee can ask for the opinion of an expert or experts when necessary, but the experts who will give their opinion must have at least 4 years of work experience in the relevant sector.*

*Committee opinion and records regarding the appeals, evaluations, all comments, suggested corrective/preventive actions and other relevant information are submitted to the Management Representative and presented to the General Manager.*

*The final decision is taken by the General Manager. With the approval of the General Manager, a written notification is prepared by the Management Representative to the Appeal's applicant.*

*If the objection is justified, taking into account similar objections and their consequences, CPA is opened and necessary actions are initiated. The costs of the work to be done are not requested from the customer.*

*The decision, regarding the appeals, shall be completed within 1 month at the latest after the date of appeals. UNIVERSAL shall acknowledge receipt of the appeal and shall provide the appellant with progress reports and the result of the appeal. The evaluation process records, corrective and preventive actions has been archived for tracking similar appeals.*

*Records of appeals are kept by the Management Representative. And before the MRM meeting, it is statistically evaluated and reported to the General Manager.*

*For personnel certification activities; Appeals against the decision(s) of the Certification Body Universal GmbH must be submitted to the office of Universal GmbH within a period of 4 weeks after receipt of the corresponding notification. The process is same for Appeals evaluation handling. The Appeals and Complaints Committee selected by the General Manager will be different from those who carried out the exams and made the certification decisions. The Appeal's applicant will receive a written response within 2 weeks. Within a reasonable time, he/she will receive the result of the review and the decision.*


**4.4. Informing The Related Parties**

*UNIVERSAL determines, together with the certified client and the complainant / appeal's applicant, whether and if so to what extent, the subject of the complaint and its resolution is made public.*

All the complaints, appeals and disputes received by UNIVERSAL are kept as top secret and never be communicated to third parties.

If considered necessary, only the accreditation body that accredited UNIVERSAL is let to know.

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REVISION INFORMATION		
Rev. No	Revision Date	Revision Explanation
0	23.06.2008	Procedure is re-established because of passing ISO/IEC 17021 standard.
1	09.11.2013	Grammatical and editorial amendments have been done. Manual's fonts have been changed from "Tahoma" to "Calibri".
2	20.01.2014	The company name and the logo corrected as "UNIVERSAL AG"
3	05.06.2014	The company name and the logo corrected as "UNIVERSAL "
4	04.01.2016	<i>Transition to ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 standard</i>
5	01.11.2017	<i>Addition of Personnel certification requirements</i>
6	24.05.2021	<i>Procedure Clause 4.3 correction according to ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 (DAkkS NC Correction)</i>

<b>PREPARATION</b>	<b>APPROVAL</b>
MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVE	MANAGING DIRECTOR

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