

AS 10002:2022



Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ)



AS 10002:2022

This Australian Standard® was prepared by QR-015 Complaints Handling. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 16 March 2022.

This Standard was published on 25 March 2022.

The following are represented on Committee QR-015:

- Australian and New Zealand Ombudsman Association
- Australian Communications Consumer Action Network
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
- Australian Financial Complaints Authority
- Consumers Federation of Australia
- Office of the NSW Ombudsman
- Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals
- University of Newcastle

This Standard was issued in draft form for comment as DR AS 10002:2021.

Keeping Standards up-to-date

Ensure you have the latest versions of our publications and keep up-to-date about Amendments, Rulings, Withdrawals, and new projects by visiting:

www.standards.org.au

ISBN 978 1 76113 703 7

Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ)

Originated in Australia as AS 4269—1995.
Revised and redesignated as AS ISO 10002—2006.
Jointly revised and redesignated as AS/NZS 10002:2014.
Second edition 2022.

© Standards Australia Limited 2022

All rights are reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, without the written permission of the publisher, unless otherwise permitted under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth).

Preface

This Standard was prepared by the Australian members of the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee QR-015, Complaints Handling, to supersede, AS/NZS 10002:2014.

This document is based on but not equivalent to ISO 10002:2018, *Quality management — Customer satisfaction — Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations*.

The objective of this document is to provide guidance on complaint management within all types of organizations, including the planning, design, implementation, operation, maintenance and improvement of a complaint management system.

This document enables consistency in the effective treatment of complaints, particularly in a global marketplace.

Properly handled complaints result in improved organizational reputation, regardless of the organization's size, location or sector.

Implementation of the guidance set out in this document can —

- (a) provide a complainant with access to an open and responsive complaints process;
- (b) enhance an organization's ability to manage complaints in a consistent, systematic and responsive manner;
- (c) enhance an organization's ability to identify trends, eliminate causes of complaints and improve the organization's operational effectiveness;
- (d) encourage and support staff to improve their skills in complaint management;
- (e) provide a basis for the ongoing review and analysis of the complaint management system, the management of complaints, and any process improvements made; and
- (f) reduce the likelihood of complaints developing into ongoing disputes.

Organizations may wish to use the complaint management system in conjunction with customer satisfaction codes of conduct and external dispute resolution processes.

The major changes in this edition include:

- (i) Modifications and additions to the definitions.
- (ii) Revision of [Appendix E](#).
- (iii) Revision of [Appendix F](#).
- (iv) Revision of [Appendix H](#).

The term "informative" is used in Standards to define the application of the appendix to which it applies. An "informative" appendix is only for information and guidance.

Contents

Preface	ii
Introduction	v
1 Scope	1
2 Application	1
3 Normative references	2
4 Terms and definitions	2
5 Guiding principles	3
5.1 Enabling complaints.....	3
5.1.1 People focus.....	3
5.1.2 Ensuring no detriment to complainant.....	3
5.1.3 Visibility and transparency.....	4
5.1.4 Accessibility.....	4
5.1.5 No charges.....	4
5.2 Managing complaints.....	4
5.2.1 Responsiveness.....	4
5.2.2 Impartiality and fairness.....	4
5.2.3 Equity.....	5
5.2.4 Privacy and disclosure.....	5
5.2.5 Communication.....	5
5.3 Managing the parties.....	5
5.3.1 Conduct of parties.....	5
5.3.2 Work health and safety.....	5
5.3.3 Complaint involving multiple parties.....	5
5.3.4 Empowerment of staff.....	5
5.4 Accountability, learning and prevention.....	6
5.4.1 Accountability.....	6
5.4.2 Continuous improvement.....	6
5.4.3 Prevention of ongoing disputes.....	6
6 Complaint-management framework	6
6.1 Introduction.....	6
6.2 Commitment.....	6
6.3 Policy and procedures.....	7
6.4 Responsibility and authority.....	7
6.4.1 General.....	7
6.4.2 Governing bodies.....	8
6.4.3 Chief executive.....	8
6.4.4 Manager responsible for complaint management.....	8
6.4.5 Operational managers.....	9
6.4.6 Staff handling complaints.....	10
6.5 Staff awareness.....	10
7 Planning and design	10
7.1 System.....	10
7.2 Review process.....	10
7.3 Procedures.....	11
7.4 Resources.....	11
7.5 Integration with public relations and media activities.....	11
7.6 Training.....	11
8 Operation of the complaint management system	11
8.1 Communication.....	11
8.2 Providing support in the making of a complaint.....	12
8.3 Early resolution.....	12

8.4	Record of complaint.....	12
8.4.1	General.....	12
8.4.2	Frontline staff.....	13
8.5	Tracking of complaint.....	13
8.6	Acknowledgement of complaint.....	13
8.7	Managing the complaint.....	13
8.7.1	Initial assessment of complaint.....	13
8.7.2	Addressing the complaint.....	14
8.7.3	Communicating with the complainant.....	14
8.8	Closing the complaint, review and record keeping.....	15
8.9	Implementation of recommendations and remedies.....	15
9	Maintenance and improvement.....	15
9.1	Collection of information.....	15
9.2	Analysis and evaluation of complaints.....	15
9.3	Satisfaction with the complaint management system.....	16
9.4	Monitoring the complaint management system.....	16
9.5	Auditing of the complaint management system.....	16
9.6	Management review of the complaint management system.....	16
9.6.1	Purpose of review.....	16
9.6.2	Inputs to review.....	17
9.6.3	Outputs of review.....	17
9.7	Continual improvement.....	17
	Appendix A (informative) Guidance for small organizations.....	18
	Appendix B (informative) Guidance on accessibility.....	20
	Appendix C (informative) Data collection, analysis and reporting for complaint information.....	23
	Appendix D (informative) Impartiality and fairness.....	27
	Appendix E (informative) Unreasonable conduct by complainants.....	29
	Appendix F (informative) Responsibilities of management, employees and complaint management personnel.....	33
	Appendix G (informative) Dispute prevention and management.....	35
	Appendix H (informative) Three level model of complaint handling.....	38
	Appendix I (informative) Effective apologies.....	41
	Appendix J (informative) Options for redress.....	43
	Appendix K (informative) Implementing a root cause analysis system for complaints: A guide to investigating, preventing and reporting.....	45
	Appendix L (informative) Information to collect on a complaint form and usage of information.....	51
	Appendix M (informative) Continual monitoring.....	53
	Appendix N (informative) Audit.....	56
	Appendix O (informative) Role of information in reducing complaints.....	57
	Bibliography.....	60

Introduction

This document is compatible with AS/NZS ISO 9001 and AS/NZS ISO 9004:2011 and supports the objectives of these Standards through the effective and efficient application of a complaint management system. It may also be used independently of them. This document is not intended for certification or for contractual purposes.

AS/NZS ISO 9001, *Quality management systems—Requirements*, specifies requirements for a quality management system that can be used for internal application by organizations for certification or for contractual purposes. The system for complaint management described in this document can be used as an element of a quality management system.

AS/NZS ISO 9004:2011, *Managing for the sustained success of an organization—A quality management approach*, provides guidance on continual improvement of performance. This can further enhance the organization's performance in complaint management and increase the satisfaction of customers and other interested parties. It can also facilitate continual quality improvement based on feedback from complainants and other interested parties.

NOTES

Australian Standard®

Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ)

1 Scope

This document provides guidance on complaint management within all types of organizations, including the planning, design, implementation, operation, maintenance and improvement of a complaint management system.

This document emphasizes that active commitment at the organization's highest level is essential for effective complaint management (see [Clause 6.2](#)).

This document seeks to facilitate —

- (a) enhanced public confidence in the organization by creating an environment that encourages feedback and complaints, and sees complaints managed in a timely and fair manner;
- (b) recognition of the needs and expectations of complainants;
- (c) an open, accessible and effective complaints process;
- (d) a system that can be used by the organization to analyse, evaluate and audit complaints and their outcomes in order to deliver quality improvements;
- (e) a mechanism for reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization's complaint management practices and outcomes; and
- (f) accessibility of channels that can be used to make complaints, including social media channels such as facebook and twitter.

NOTE 1 There is no expectation that organizations seek to identify complaints made on third party social media accounts or channels.

NOTE 2 Guidance on complaint management for small businesses is given in [Appendix A](#).

NOTE 3 Statutory obligations may apply for the organization, as well as best practice guidance set out by the relevant external review accountability and regulatory bodies.

This document is not intended to change any rights or obligations of the organization as set out by such statutory or regulatory requirements.

2 Application

The complaint management system described in this document is suitable for use as one of the processes of a quality management system.

This document is intended to provide guidance to organizations of all sizes and in all sectors.

Although the principles in this document will have general application, in designing a complaint management system, each organization will need to take into account the following:

- (a) The value the organization seeks to derive from complaints in order to improve its operations.
- (b) Financial, operational and organizational requirements.
- (c) The number, demographics and characteristics of the organization's customers.
- (d) The nature and breadth of the organization's interactions with the public.
- (e) The number and type of complaints the organization receives.