**Complaints Policy**

Recognising Excellence is committed to providing a high quality effective audit service to all clients. Our quality systems and processes are developed to ensure that all clients receive a positive audit experience which is fair and transparent and exchanges good practice and drives continuous improvement. These same principles apply to our service provision, and we welcome feedback from our clients on all aspects of the audit process to continually improve our service offering.

Our complaints process seeks to ensure that we:

* Become aware of any level of dissatisfaction if and when it arises;
* Take all reasonable steps to ensure that dissatisfaction is addressed and resolved, wherever possible;
* Reassure clients that do complain that their complaint will be taken seriously and that we will address their concerns without delay;
* Learn from experience to lessen the risk of complaints in the future

A complaint is defined as:

“Any expressions of dissatisfaction, whether it is received verbally or in writing”.

Complaints may concern the conduct of an SQM Auditor, the outcome of an Audit, or relate to the communication and service provided by Recognising Excellence.

**Complaints Procedure**

If you have a complaint, please contact the SQM Quality Manager of Recognising Excellence via one of the following channels:

Recognising Excellence

Unit 3 Twigworth Court Business Centre

Tewkesbury Road

Twigworth

Nr Gloucester

Gloucestershire

GL2 9PG

Telephone: 01452 688357

Email: [sqm@recognisingexcellence.co.uk](mailto:sqm@recognisingexcellence.co.uk)

Where a complaint is received via the telephone, dependent upon the nature of the complaint, we may ask you to follow this up with us in writing.

**Complaints Process**

The SQM Quality Manager of Recognising Excellence will:

* Acknowledge your complaint within 2 working days of receipt. We may at this point ask you to confirm or explain any detail as necessary;
* Investigate your complaint and liaise with all parties involved as appropriate. This may include reviewing documentation that supported your audit application, including any audit report that has been prepared;
* If appropriate, may meet with you to further discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint;
* Provide a formal response in writing within 14 working days of the complaint being made, with the outcome of the investigation and with a view to resolving the issue;
* Take any resulting actions required to lessen the potential of a repeat issue in the future.

If the matter remains unresolved at this time, the complaint will be escalated to the SQM Contract Manager who will consider and investigate further and provide a written response within 10 working days.

The SQM Quality Manager will log all complaints received in our central register and will record the nature of the complaint and action taken. The central register will be reviewed on a quarterly basis to identify emerging trends / development requirements and will inform discussions with the Legal Aid Agency during the quarterly contract review of our license with them.

The activation and outcome of the complaints process will not impact upon the Providers eligibility to re-apply for accreditation against the Specialist Quality Mark.