

NSAI

COMPLAINTS POLICY

2019-2021

How NSAI deals with your complaint

Revision 3 – August 2019

OUR COMMITMENT¹

Guided by our organisational values we are fully committed to providing our customers with an efficient, timely, professional and courteous service.

We promise we will deal with your complaint in a thorough, fair, impartial and timely manner. If we have made a mistake we will apologise and do our best to put things right.

Our values:

- We recognise the importance, and encourage the continuous honing, of our technical **expertise** to ensure we are always abreast of developments
- We ensure a consistent and positive approach in our work through the **dedication** and enthusiasm of our staff
- We protect our **impartiality** which guarantees no predisposition in our work or in our dealings with business and public alike
- We respect our customers and demonstrate an **engaging** and respectful approach always
- We see **pride in our work** as a byword for excellence with each of us responsible for the highest of standards
- We value **thoroughness** in all our work which has to stand the test of time and take into account all known variables

¹ This Complaints Policy does not affect any statutory right of complaint or appeal applicable to your particular circumstances.

Issues covered by the Complaints Policy

If, for any reason, you are not satisfied with any aspect of the quality of our services or you believe the services we provided or that were provided on our behalf fall short of what you expected, or if you believe you have been treated unfairly or have been disadvantaged personally by a service failure, you have a right to make a complaint under our Complaint Policy.

For example, if you are dissatisfied with:

- The manner in which you were treated;
- Incorrect information or guidance provided by us;
- Difficulties in contacting us; or
- Responses to emails/letters have not being issued within accepted timeframes.

Issues not covered by the Complaints Policy

The Complaints Policy does not cover administrative decisions taken as part of our operations. For example, applicants who have been refused approvals, certification or verification, or have approval or certification withdrawn or suspended may appeal those decisions by invoking appeal mechanisms provided in the relevant legislation.

We welcome information on your concerns about a certified or verified product, premises, behaviour of a certification client or trader, our logos or marks and any other matter relating to our certification schemes or the legislation we enforce. This information will be treated in confidence and investigated as part of our operations.

Only where the information about our activities relates to the quality of our service delivery will it be treated as a complaint covered by the Complaints Policy.

HOW TO COMPLAIN

You can make an informal or formal complaint depending on the nature of your grievance. All complaints are dealt with in confidence.

We believe it is best to deal with things as soon as possible and at the earliest and in the most direct way. If you have a complaint, you can raise it by phone or in writing by mail, fax or email to any member of staff.

You can contact our Customer Service Administrator by phone, email or mail:

Customer Service Administrator
National Standards Authority of Ireland
1 Swift Square
Northwood
Dublin 9
D09 AOE4

Tel: +353 1 807 3800

Email: info@nsai.ie

Our head office is open to the public -

Monday to Thursday: 9.15 h to 13.00 h and 14.00 h to 17.15 h
Friday: 9.15 h to 13.00 h and 14.00 h to 17.00 h

Overview of our Complaints Handling Procedure

Informal Resolution	Formal
Generally verbal but can be in writing	Generally written but can be verbal
Dealt with by frontline customer contact staff	Dealt with by a senior staff member in the area
Can be resolved easily, and more often immediately or within 2 working days	Needs further investigation by a senior staff member or external person
Less serious impact on complainant	Serious impact on complainant
No need for further follow up with complainant	Requires follow-up with complainant as part of investigation and/or to report outcome

Informal Resolution

Informal complaints are those which we can, for the most part, deal with 'on-the-spot' or provide a solution within a short time delay, usually no more than **2 working days**. If your complaint, although informal, is complex in nature it may take longer to respond, in which case you will be told about the delay.

Because informal complaints tend to be less serious in nature we will not usually carry out an investigation. The staff member you contact will do all they can to help you to resolve the issue, or if the matter cannot be resolved to your satisfaction, they will explain why, and you can then ask for your complaint to be formally investigated.

We value your feedback and if your complaint is about our systems or procedures we will note your views and give them consideration when we next review our processes. You can be assured that your concerns will be forwarded to the appropriate manager.

Making a Formal Complaint

Formal complaints are those of a more serious nature and usually require a thorough investigation. A complaint about a staff member will be treated as a formal complaint unless you specifically request that it to be treated informally.

In order to help us to provide the best service we can, it would help us greatly in dealing with your complaint if you could:

- Provide your name, address and a daytime telephone number or email address on your correspondence or when requested
- Quote relevant reference numbers when you telephone us, or on any written correspondence
- Give us as much detail and clear information as possible about your complaint stating relevant dates and times
- List your specific concerns starting with the most important
- Be clear about what you are hoping to achieve (for example an explanation, apology, etc.)
- State your preferred method of communication.

DEALING WITH YOUR COMPLAINT

We will formally acknowledge your complaint, whether made in writing or not, within **5 working days** and explain how we are dealing with it.

We will establish whether you have any particular requirements we need to be aware of.

We will deal with your complaint in an open and honest way.

If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, we will need their agreement to you acting on their behalf.

We will make sure your interactions with us in the future do not suffer just because you have made a complaint.

INVESTIGATION

We will tell you who we have asked to investigate your complaint. If your complaint is straightforward, it will usually be assigned to a senior staff member in the area to look into and get back to you. If the complaint is serious, we may ask a senior member of staff from the wider organisation or someone from outside of the NSAI to investigate.

We will set out to you our understanding of your complaint and ask you to confirm that we have got it right. We will also ask you to tell us what outcome you are hoping for.

The person looking at your complaint will usually need to see the files we hold relevant to your complaint. If you don't want this to happen it is important that you tell us.

If there is a simple solution to your problem we will ask if you are happy to accept this.

We aim to resolve concerns as quickly as possible and aim to have a full response within **30 working days**.

If your complaint is more complex we will:

- Let you know within this time why we think it may take longer to investigate
- Tell you how long we expect it to take
- Give you regular updates on any progress made

The extent of this investigation will depend on how complex and how serious the issues you have raised are. The person who is investigating your concerns will aim first to establish the facts and if needed, will draw up an investigation plan.

In some instances, we may ask to meet you to discuss your complaint. Occasionally, we might suggest mediation of another method to try to resolve your complaint.

When looking at your complaint we will look at relevant evidence. This could include files, notes of conversations, letters, emails or whatever may be relevant to your complaint. If necessary, we will talk to our staff or others involved and look at our policies and guidance.

OUTCOME

If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we have found in keeping with your preferred form of communication.

If we find that we got it wrong, we will tell you what happened. If we find there is fault in our systems or the way we do things, we will tell you how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.

If we got it wrong we will always apologise.

PUTTING IT RIGHT

If we didn't do something well, we will aim to put it right. If you have lost out as a result of a mistake on our part we will try to put you back in the position you would have been in if we had got it right.

APPEAL

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint investigation you can apply to have the decision reviewed by a senior staff member within **10 working days** of the final decision on your complaint.

In your application for appeal you should explain the reasons you believe your complaint was not dealt with correctly or why you dispute the decision made.

The senior staff member will consider the complaint file and will inform you whether they agree with the process and outcome of the original investigation. If the senior staff member considers it appropriate a new investigation may be undertaken on your complaint.

REVIEWING A COMPLAINT

If you believe you have been adversely affected by an action taken by NSAI and are dissatisfied with the outcome of the NSAI complaints investigation process, you may complain to the Ombudsman.

Complaints should be made directly to the Ombudsman at:

Office of the Ombudsman
18 Lower Leeson Street
Dublin 2 D02 HE97

Tel: +353 1 6395689

Lo-call: 1890 223030

Fax: +353 1 6395674

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie

LEARNING

We take complaints seriously and try to learn from mistakes. The issues leading to formal complaints are closely monitored as part of our quality management system to ensure the necessary changes can be made to our processes to prevent such complaints from reoccurring.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to a complaint. We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because someone is forceful or determined. We understand that in times of trouble and distress, some people may act out of character.

We believe that all complainants have a right to be heard, understood and respected. However, we also consider that our staff have the same rights. We, therefore expect you to be courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence.

NSAI Offices and Contact Details

Head Office

National Standards Authority of Ireland

1 Swift Square
Northwood
Santry, Dublin 9
D09 AOE4

Tel: +353 1 807 3800

Email: info@nsai.ie

Website: www.nsai.ie

NSAI National Metrology Laboratory

Griffith Avenue Extension
Glasnevin, Dublin 9,
D11 E527

NSAI Regional Centre

Plassey Park Road
National Technology Park
Castletroy, Limerick,
V94 X6X0

NSAI Regional Centre

Ballybrit Business Park,
Ballybrit, Galway
H91 NX52

NSAI Legal Metrology,

Rossa Avenue,
Bishopstown, Cork
T12 YA37

NSAI Legal Metrology,

IDA Industrial Estate,
Poppintree,
Dublin 11
D11 DV70

NSAI Legal Metrology,

IDA Business Park,
Coe's Road, Dundalk, Co Louth
A91 EY29

NSAI Legal Metrology,

Finisklin Industrial Estate,
Sligo
F91 W314

NSAI Legal Metrology,

IDA Industrial Estate,
Northern Extension, Cork Rd, Waterford
X91 HD59