



COPORATE POLICY

CP 1.0 COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.1 Introduction

All complaints about the conduct of ISQua activities or ISQua staff, officers or official representatives should be directed to the CEO in the first instance. The CEO may investigate such complaints herself/himself or may appoint an appropriately qualified 'Delegated Officer' to undertake an investigation. Any Delegated Officer so appointed shall report to the CEO on the outcome of that investigation.

The CEO, ISQua will report to each meeting of the Board on the nature and outcome of complaints decided since the previous Board meeting.

The CEO and Delegated Officers who investigate formal complaints or allegations of misconduct are accountable for conducting those investigations in a fair, impartial and professional manner and in accordance with the ISQua's procedures. The principles set out below should always be observed when investigating complaints.

Should the subject of a complaint be the CEO, the complaint should be directed to the President.

1.2 Principles

The CEO and Delegated Officers who investigate complaints should:

- a. Establish terms of reference for the investigation.
- b. Commence the process as soon as possible following the complaint being referred to him or her.
- c. Contact the complainant within 48 hours of the complaint being referred to him or her and tell the complainant:
 - That the complaint is being investigated and the process that applies (and give the complainant a copy of this policy and any other relevant policy). The person conducting the investigation may also seek clarification as to the nature of the complaint for the purpose of understanding the complaint being made;
 - The terms of reference;
 - What the investigation will involve (for example paper based evidence, interviews etc);
 - The expected timeframe for completing the investigation, which should always be reasonable but realistic, taking into account resources and a variety of other factors;
 - That they will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.

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- d. Contact the person(s) against whom the complaint is made (if a person(s) is identified) as soon as possible after contacting the complainant and tell the person(s):
 - The details of the complaint;
 - That the complaint is being investigated and the process that applies (and give the complainant a copy of this policy and any other relevant policy);
 - The terms of reference;
 - What the investigation will involve (for example paper based evidence, interviews etc);
 - The expected timeframe for completing the investigation, which should always be reasonable but realistic, taking into account resources and a variety of other factors;
 - That they will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
- e. Investigators should inform complainants of any change to the timeframe so that expectations do not become confused or unrealistic;
- f. Conduct (and be seen to conduct) an investigation in a fair, objective and impartial manner;
- g. Disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest or perceptions of bias immediately after they become aware of them;
- h. Treat the investigation as confidential and do not discuss it with anyone except others involved in the investigation and then only on a strictly “need to know” basis;
- i. Make appropriate arrangements for the security and storage of all materials and evidence in relation to that investigation;
- j. Act within the limits of his or her authority and the terms of reference;
- k. Comply with any procedures prescribed by ISQua for investigating complaints including this policy;
- l. Ensure they comply with any applicable legal requirements in investigating complaints;
- m. Provide interviewees (regardless of whether they are the complainant, the person(s) against whom the complaint is made or assisting the investigation) all documents relevant to that person in advance of interview to allow time to consider the documents and make comment.
- n. Allow interviewees (regardless of whether they are the complainant, the person(s) against whom the complaint is made or assisting the inquiry) to be accompanied at any meeting by a friend or other support person. Complainants should be informed of this before interview;

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- o. Where the investigation involves the gathering of evidence:
- Pursue all relevant lines of inquiry;
 - Give everyone who may be affected a reasonable opportunity to tell their side of the story through interviews, comments on documents and the like. Make notes of the interviews and where possible, have the interviewee agree the meeting notes;
 - Be prepared to interview a person more than once in order to clarify their side of the story;
 - Interview witnesses independently of each other and take any other steps to minimise the risk of witnesses collaborating with each other;
 - Assess the evidence fairly and objectively. Wherever possible, try to corroborate evidence, especially where there are inconsistent versions about particular facts;
- p. When the investigation is completed, write a report that sets out:
- The terms of reference of the investigation;
 - Who made the complaint (unless it involves a protected disclosure);
 - What the complaint was about;
 - Who authorised the investigation;
 - Who was interviewed (unless it involves a protected disclosure) and what that they said;
 - A description of any documentary evidence reviewed;
 - Any other lines of inquiry pursued in the investigation;
 - What the findings are;
 - Any further line(s) of inquiry that may need to be pursued before any final determination can be made;
 - If applicable and appropriate, identify any systemic problems with ISQua processes that might come to light out of this investigation and recommend how these might be improved.
- q. In the case of a Delegated Officer, the report will be sent to the CEO. If the CEO conducts the investigation the report will be sent to the President.

If a complaint is made about a member of ISQua staff and the investigation finds that the complaint amounts to misconduct, the matter may then be dealt with in accordance with ISQua's Disciplinary Policy.

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