## 1. PURPOSE

To ensure that complaints, negative feedback, appeals or disputes received from the Standards Association of Zimbabwe (SAZ) internal and external clients are dealt with completely, effectively and efficiently in order to take the necessary corrective action and to rectify any shortcomings in the Association's procedures and practices and prevent recurrence of the same.

## 2. SCOPE

This procedure covers all complaints, grievances and negative feedback from organizations or persons inside or outside the SAZ on matters arising from the Association's activities and is applicable to all SAZ Staff

## 3. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

3.0 BDM- BM – 07 Brand Manual

3.1 BDM – CCF F/2 – Customer Complaints and Negative Feedback Form

3.2 Complaints and negative feedback tracker

3.3 BDM – CCF F/3 – Dispute and Appeals

3.4 UP – CAP – 05 – Corrective Action Procedure

3.5 UP – CAP F/1 - Corrective Action Request Form

## 4. DEFINITIONS

4.0 **Complaint**–an expression of dissatisfaction relating to the actions or performance of the Association and or its certified clients.

4.1 **Complainant**-An organization or person who makes a complaint.

4.2 **Feedback**- this refers to a positive or negative reaction to service or performance for the purposes of continual improvement.

4.3 **Investigation** refers to formal or systematic examination of facts.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITY

5.0 The Head Marketing and Business Development has the overall responsibility of ensuring procedure is maintained and implemented within the Association

5.1 Heads of other Departments/Managers are responsible for implementing the procedure in their respective departments

5.2 All staff members are responsible for forwarding any complaints or negative feedback received to the marketing department

## 6. ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

### 6.0 General Rule

6.1 All complaints and negative feedback to the Association should be directed to the Head Marketing and Business Development who shall maintain a complaints and negative feedback tracker which all HODs shall have access to and ensure that all these are investigated and dealt with as per procedure.

6. 2 Complaints/Feedback received by another Division/Department shall be passed on to the Head Marketing and Business Development, promptly, who will arrange for it to be handled accordingly.6.3 Complaints/Feedback received verbally, telephonically, through digital platforms, during a discussion, meeting or in writing or when gathering customer feedback is essential to obtain as much information as possible, particularly details of the source of complainant, organization where applicable, address, telephone number and or proven facts, physical evidence such as samples of products and any other relevant information.

6.4 The Head of Marketing and Business Development is responsible for drawing the attention of the relevant Head of Department and /or the Director General to any complaints/Feedback that warrant their involvement through submission of the BDM- CCF- F2 and or BDM-CCF-F3.

6.5 The departmental heads shall be responsible for handling these complaints and providing appropriate answers to Head Marketing and Business Development for communication to the complainant.

6.6 Complaints which have possible legal implications must be referred to the Director General before any statement or correspondence is sent to the complainant.

6.7 Complaints/Feedback against SAZ staff members should be directed via the Head Marketing and Business Development to the Human Capital Manager who must deal with the complaint through the SAZ Code of Conduct.

6.8 All records pertaining to any customer complaint, or negative feedback, appeal or dispute must be kept for a period of not less than 3 years.

### 6.9 Procedure on receipt of complaint

6.9.1 Complaints shall be acknowledged to the client in writing within two working days from the date of receipt.

6.9.2 All complaints/Negative Feedback received will be recorded in the BDM-CCF-F2 which is kept by the Head Marketing and Business Development and statistical summary of all complaints will be discussed at the Departmental Heads Meeting.

6.9.3 All disputes and appeals received will be recorded in the BDM-CCF-F3 which is kept by the Head Marketing and Business Development and statistical summary of the these will be discussed at the Departmental Heads meeting.

6.9.4 All Heads of departments shall ensure that all complaints have been addressed as guided by the BDM-CCF-F2. The completed DBM-CCF-F2 form and supporting evidence of action(s) taken shall be forwarded to the Head Marketing and Business Development for the purposes of providing feedback to the complainant and closure process.

6.9.5 The Head Marketing and Business Development shall ensure that all complaints and feedback, requests for help, appeals or disputes be investigated in depth by assigning responsibility to investigate to relevant Head of Department depending with the nature of complaint.

6.9.6 All Open Complaints/ Negative Feedback received shall be circulated to relevant HODs Monthly A corrective action tracker shall be updated constantly, of which all HODs shall have access to all open and closed complaints for their departments as well as other departments.

### 6.10 Procedure to close a complaint

Each complaint/Feedback will receive a formal report on completion of the investigation. If after an initial examination of the problem, a lengthy investigation is anticipated i.e. longer than seven (7) working days; the complainant must be given an indication of when the final report will be ready. The complaint shall be closed within 21 working days.

In such cases an interim report from the investigating department must then be presented to the complainant indicating when the complaint will eventually be resolved.

Reports and letters relating the complaint will be signed by the relevant Departmental Head. Correspondence relating to complaints-with legal implications- will need to be signed by the Director General.

### 6.11 Appeals

The complainant is entitled to refer the matter to the Director General in the case where he/she feels that the complaint has not been adequately addressed. The Director General will involve the Department Head in the re-examination of the problem. The Director General will sign the resultant correspondence to the complainant. In the case where the complaints become a dispute and or an appeal, the whole issue is referred to the Executive Committee by the Director General, which shall attend to the issue and give its formal decision. Appeals shall

be recorded on the BDM -CCF/3 form and handed to the Head Marketing and Business Development.

In case of appeal against decisions made during other SAZ activities (such as certification decisions, laboratory testing, trainings), the appeal shall be expressed formally to the Head of Marketing and Business Development. The Head of Marketing and Business Development shall forward the issue to the Director General who shall set up an appeals committee to deal with the matter. Personnel who would have participated in the decision making shall not be part of the appeals committee to ensure that the issue is dealt with in an impartial manner.

**6.12 Follow up on Corrective actions.**

6.12.1 The Head of Marketing and Business Development shall follow up on all corrective actions identified by each department to assess if the said measures have been implemented.

6.12.2 The follow up shall be done by telephone, email or site visit.

6.12.3 It is the responsibility of the HODs to make sure that all corrective actions have been implemented.

**6.13 Dealing with matters that are reported at the courts of law**

Where SAZ is requested by the courts of law to supply confidential information relating to its clients, SAZ shall inform the client about the information that shall be provided.

**7. Records**

The following records shall be maintained in the implementation of this procedure

| **Record Name/ref Number** | Custodian | Location | Retention Period |
|---|---|---|---|
| BDM – CCF F/2 – Customer Complaints and Negative Feedback Form | Head of Marketing and Business Development | Office | 3 years |
| BDM – CCF F/3 - Appeals and Disputes Form | Head of Marketing and Business Development | Office | 3 years |
| Intermediate reports and or UP – CAP F/1 - Corrective Action Request Form | Head of Marketing and Business Development | Office | 3 years |
| Close out letter/report | Head of Marketing and Business Development | Office | 3 years |

**Revision History**

**03/01/23 Revision 0: New document**

**16/01/24 Revision 1:** Split MPR1 form to BDM- CCF-F/2 and BDM- CCF-F/3, Replaced Complaints Register with Complaints and Negative Feedback Tracker

**31/01/26 Revision 2**: Amended the complaints resolution period to 21 working Days, added the UP-CAP F/1 as an associated document