



## BRCGS028: BRCGS Audit Result Appeal Process

---

Changes log:

Version no.	Date	Description
2	08/07/2019	New BRCGS logo and footer changed
2.1	10/06/2020	Document numbering convention changed



## 1. Objectives

BRCGS license approved third party Certification Bodies to audit against the relevant BRCGS Standard. The key aim of the BRCGS is to ensure integrity and consistency of the BRCGS Standards certification scheme for all users. This means that an audit should be carried out in the same way, irrespective of product type, country of production, Certification Body or auditor.

Rules and guidance are laid down detailing the responsibilities of the Certification Body and auditors, and adherence and understanding to those rules are monitored by the BRCGS Compliance team.

The BRCGS has as part of the certification process, defined requirements for Certification Bodies where audited sites may challenge or appeal the certification results. This may be to challenge the raising of specific non-conformities, the severity grading of specific non-conformities (eg critical, major, minor) or the allocation of the resulting certification decision.

## 2 Identified Non-conformities summarised at the audit closing meeting

During the audit non-conformities may be identified by the auditor. These will be documented and discussed at the closing meeting between the auditor and the site management. The objective of the closing meeting is to ensure that the issues surrounding the raising of the non-conformities are understood by the site that sufficient investigation, root cause analysis and correction may be put in place and subsequent evidence of close out supplied to the Certification Body to confirm the audit result. It is expected that discussion surrounding issues has occurred throughout the audit between the site and the auditor so that the closing meeting acts as a summary of these issues discussed.

It is common practice for Certification Bodies to ask the site to sign non-conformity documentation at the end of the audit to confirm that they have received and understood the issues.

The auditor may not make any comment on the likely outcome of the certification process at the closing meeting since all findings are subject to independent technical review by the Certification Body.

## 3 Appeal to the Certification Body

BRCGS028: BRCGS Audit Result Appeal Process	BRCGS
Version 2.1, 10/06/2020	Page 2 of 5



Disputes or concerns about the details of any non-conformities raised should be discussed with the Certification Body as soon as possible where they will clarify the basis on which the non-conformity was raised and the corrective action expected.

Where the matter cannot be resolved a formal appeal can be made to the Certification Body in the first instance. The must be made in writing, and at the very latest within 7 calendar days of receipt of the certification decision. The Certification Body shall have a documented procedure for the consideration and resolution of appeals which shall be available on request. The investigative procedure shall be independent of the individual auditor and certification manager. Appeals will be finalised within 30 calendar days of receipt. A full written response will be given after the completion of a full and thorough investigation into the appeal. In the event of an unsuccessful appeal, the Certification Body has the right to charge costs for conducting the appeal.

#### **4 Appeals to the BRCGS**

If the site still has concerns regarding the non-conformities raised or the way the appeal has been handled they may contact the Compliance Manager for BRCGS Standards at [enquiries@brcgs.com](mailto:enquiries@brcgs.com) or +44 (0) 207 854 8935.

The key information required to allow BRCGS to undertake arbitration is:

- Name and address of certificated site
- Name of certification body and date of audit
- Nature of the concern
- Details of appeal made and outcome

##### **4.1 Investigation by the BRCGS**

The nature of the grievance will be assessed by the Compliance Manager and the Certification Body will be contacted for information regarding the certification decision and its process.

The BRCGS will collate the information provided by the site and by the Certification Body and will give both an opportunity to comment before assessing whether:

- The Certification Body has breached any protocols in undertaking or reporting the certification decision
- The Certification Body has incorrectly interpreted a requirement in raising a non-conformity

BRCGS028: BRCGS Audit Result Appeal Process	BRCGS
Version 2.1, 10/06/2020	Page 3 of 5



- The Certification Body has incorrectly graded the non-conformity.

## 5 Arbitration

Where the complaint indicates a fault with the Certification Body process, the BRCGS will discuss and agree with them an appropriate course of action which may or may not affect the resulting certification decision of the site.

A summary of the investigation report and action taken by BRCGS and the Certification Body will be provided by the BRCGS to the person originally submitting the grievance within 30 calendar days of the original contact.

BRCGS028: BRCGS Audit Result Appeal Process	BRCGS
Version 2.1, 10/06/2020	Page 4 of 5



### Conclusion of Appeal

<b>Company Name</b>		<b>BRCGS Site Code</b>	
<b>Company Address</b>		<b>Received from</b>	
<b>Audited</b>		<b>CB contact</b>	
<b>Received</b>			
<b>BRCGS Decision Date:</b>			
<b>Ref:</b>	<b>Karen Betts BRCGS Compliance Manager</b>		

On receipt of the appeal, the BRCGS has assessed several aspects to ascertain whether:

- The Certification Body have incorrectly interpreted any requirements of the Standard in raising any aspect of the non-conformity.
- The Certification Body have incorrectly raised any aspect as a non-conformity when it is not.
- The Certification Body have incorrectly assessed the severity of the non-conformity (ie as a major non-conformity).

BRCGS conclusion: