

# SADCAS CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

<b>Prepared by:</b> Task Force	<b>Approved by:</b> CEO	<b>Approval Date:</b> 2022-10-28 <b>Effective Date:</b> 2022-10-28
--------------------------------	-------------------------	---

## Table of Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF THE CHARTER.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>WHO WE ARE.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Profile .....	3
2.3	Vision .....	3
2.4	Mission .....	3
2.5	Values .....	3
<b>3.</b>	<b>OUR SERVICES.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>OUR SERVICE COMMITMENT &amp; GUARANTEE.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>OUR CUSTOMERS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>OUR SERVICE STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
6.1	Telephone etiquette for incoming calls.....	5
6.2	Telephone etiquette for outgoing calls .....	6
6.3	Etiquette for receiving visitors .....	6
6.4	Etiquette for email handling.....	6
6.5	Handling of enquiries/ service requests.....	7
6.6	Customer feedback/complaints .....	7
<b>7.</b>	<b>OUR ACCOUNTABILITY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>CUSTOMER RIGHTS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>OUR SERVICE TURNAROUND TIMES.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>HANDLING OF CUSTOMER FEEDBACK .....</b>	<b>8</b>
10.1	Positive feedback.....	8
10.2	Negative feedback (Complaints) .....	8
10.3	Appeals .....	9
<b>11.</b>	<b>CONTACT US .....</b>	<b>11</b>

1. **PURPOSE OF THE CHARTER**

This Customer Service Charter outlines the standards of service you should expect in your interaction with the Southern African Development Community Accreditation Services (SADCAS). The adoption of the Charter constitutes an undertaking by the organization to provide accreditation services of high standard in line with best practice, relevant laws, rules and guidelines. The charter outlines our commitments and responsibilities and also specifies your obligations in order to enable us uphold our service commitments on time.

It also provides the steps for expressing yourselves in the event that you are dissatisfied with our service delivery. This charter is a living document and will be revised as and when there are changes in the business environment. This customer service charter provides our service commitment to you and should not be construed to be a legally binding document.

2. **WHO WE ARE**

**Profile**

SADCAS is a multi-economy accreditation body established in terms of Article 15 B of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade with the primary purpose of ensuring that conformity assessment service providers (Calibration/Testing/Medical laboratories, Certification and Inspection Bodies) operating in those SADC Member States which do not have national accreditation bodies are subject to an oversight by an authoritative body. By assuring technical competence, SADCAS plays an important role in facilitating regional integration and in the protection of health, safety and the environment thus contribute towards the achievement of the SADC ultimate goal of achieving economic growth, alleviating poverty and enhancing the standard and quality of the life of its people.

SADCAS is incorporated in Botswana under the Botswana Companies Act Ch. 42:01 as a non-profit limited company. SADCAS is recognized by the SADC Council of Ministers as a subsidiary organization of SADC hence an agency of SADC. SADCAS has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SADC. This MoU serves as the basis for recognition of SADCAS by SADC Member States as a multi-economy accreditation body. The MOU is reviewed from time to time to take into account any changes that may develop. SADCAS Headquarters are situated in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.1 **Vision**

SADCAS vision is to be a sustainable accreditation body at the cutting edge of credible accreditation service delivery.

2.2 **Mission**

SADCAS mission is to provide credible, cost effective, accreditation services for SADC Member States aimed at supporting trade, enhance the protection of consumers and the environment, and improve the competitiveness of SADC products and services in both the voluntary and regulatory areas.

2.3 **Values**

**Table 1 – SADCAS Core Values**

<b>Excellence</b>	We strive for excellence in service delivery.
<b>Impartiality</b>	We are organized and operate so as to safeguard objectivity and impartiality of our services.
<b>Transparency</b>	We are dedicated to provide complete transparency in our work by communicating effectively with our clients.
<b>Non-discrimination</b>	We treat our clients fairly and in an equitable manner.
<b>Integrity</b>	We act with honesty and integrity.
<b>Innovation</b>	We generate new ideas and utilize creative approaches to problems for continuous improvement.
<b>Diversity</b>	We respect the diversity of our clients and ensure balance of interest in representation.

**3. OUR SERVICES**

SADCAS provides accreditation services and training in accreditation associated activities.

SADCAS offers accreditation schemes for:

- Calibration laboratories in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025 (CLAS);
- Legal Metrology in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025 (LMAS);
- Testing laboratories in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025 (TLAS);
- Veterinary laboratories in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025(VLAS);
- Medical laboratories in accordance with ISO 15189 (MLAS);
- Management systems certification bodies in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021 (CBAS-MS);
- Inspection bodies in accordance with ISO/IEC 17020 (IBAS);

SADCAS will broaden its scope of accreditation as needs arise. All SADCAS accreditation schemes are operated in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011 and the applicable ILAC and IAF Mandatory Documents.

SADCAS is signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the African Accreditation Cooperation's (AFRAC) Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) for Testing (ISO/IEC 17025) and Calibration (ISO/IEC 17025), Inspection (ISO/IEC 17020 and Medical (ISO 15189). SADCAS is also signatory to the AFRAC MRA and IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement under the Main Scope Management Systems (ISO/IEC 17021-1) Sub-scopes:

- Quality Management Systems ISO/IEC 17021-3 (ISO 9001).
- Environmental Management Systems ISO/IEC 17021-2 (ISO 14001).
- Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems ISO/IEC TS 17021-10 (ISO 45001).
- Food Safety Management Systems ISO/TS 22003 (ISO 22000)

SADCAS offers training on accreditation related courses. SADCAS training courses are registered by the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA). Training courses can be conducted in-house or as open courses and online and face to face. The training courses are conducted on behalf of SADCAS by a pool of qualified and registered trainers. The courses are designed to create awareness on the benefits and importance of accreditation and to promote an understanding of the requirements of the key accreditation standards. SADCAS training activities shall not conflict with SADCAS role as an accreditation body.

#### 4. **OUR SERVICE COMMITMENT & GUARANTEE**

We are committed to meeting and exceeding our customers' expectations which are:

- Clean and comfortable offices, with clear signage and current, relevant information on display.
- Timely response to service enquiries/ requests.
- Professionalism in appearance and conduct.
- Provision of feedback and raise complaints against poor service.
- Courtesy and respect, diligence, honesty, integrity and fairness.
- Assurance of confidentiality.
- Access to clear, accurate and relevant information.
- Feedback and continuous updates.
- Knowledgeable, skilled and committed staff.
- Accessibility (physical, telephonic, email, website and social media).
- Dedicated customer/visitor facilities (clear signage, parking space, reception area, meeting rooms, etc.).

#### 5. **OUR CUSTOMERS**

- Conformity Assessment Bodies
- Government Bodies
- Regulators
- Interested parties

#### 6. **OUR SERVICE STANDARDS**

##### 6.1 **Telephone etiquette for incoming calls**

- We will be accessible by telephone during working hours.
- Response to all incoming calls will be within 3 rings.
- We will introduce our organization and ourselves to the caller.
- We will take responsibility for the calls we answer by handling the service request/enquiry, transferring it or taking messages on behalf of others.
- When transferring a call, we will inform the customer of the need to transfer the call and request them to hold the line for not more than 5 seconds. We will refer back to the caller

if we are not able to transfer the call immediately and ask them to keep holding or call them back later.

- We will inform the officer on the other end that a call is being transferred and briefly give them the caller's details.
- We will be responsible for calls to our colleagues in shared work areas by answering their calls to our extensions and assisting the caller ourselves or transferring/deferring the call.
- When taking messages on behalf of our colleagues, we will get all the critical details of the caller and immediately pass the message by email or by calling the intended recipient.
- We will adhere to professional conduct when handling incoming calls (use of proper business language, clarity in speech, courtesy).
- We will end all calls by thanking the caller and ensuring that they are satisfied with the assistance given.

#### 6.2 **Telephone etiquette for outgoing calls**

- We will introduce our organization and ourselves to the recipient and request for the right office/officer to take the call.
- We will inform the recipient about the purpose of the call.
- We will adhere to professional conduct when handling outgoing calls (use of proper business language, clarity in speech, courtesy).
- We will end all calls by thanking the recipient for taking our call.
- 

#### 6.3 **Etiquette for receiving visitors**

- We will assist all visitors promptly on a first come basis.
- We will greet the customer in proper business language and introduce ourselves by name and function/role.
- We will ask the visitor how we can assist them and assist them or refer them.
- When referring visitors, we will usher them in person where possible to the relevant office or clearly direct them to the next office by informing them of the name and role of the officer they are referred to and where to find them.
- We will inform the officer receiving the customer beforehand to expect and receive the customer at various entry points.
- We will inform our visitors in advance, about any unexpected delays in assisting them.

#### 6.4 **Etiquette for email handling**

- We will acknowledge receipt of all emails without undue delay.
- Where a staff member is not at work for more than 1 day, an automated email response will be availed to redirect emails accordingly.
- We will start our email responses by greeting the sender professionally.
- We will thank the sender for the email and inform them of how we will assist them.
- We will attach our email signatures at all times.

6.5 **Handling of enquiries/ service requests**

- We have dedicated platforms where customers can place their enquiries (email, telephone, websites. etc.).
- We will acknowledge service requests within 24 hours
- Where SADCAS is unable to assist, we will advise the customer accordingly and where necessary refer them to the relevant authority.

6.6 **Customer feedback/complaints**

- We have platforms for customers to place their feedback or complaints
- Once a complaint/feedback is received, acknowledgment of receipt of the complaint will be within 7 days.
- The customer will be updated on the progress of the complaint as applicable

7 **OUR ACCOUNTABILITY**

We undertake to:

- Monitor our performance against the standards set out in this Charter
- Be open to feedback on our performance, and suggestions for improvement from our clients and the public and make adjustments to our programs and services based on information received.
- Publish information showing levels of satisfaction with our programs and services.
- Provide explanations and solutions when our services do not meet acceptable standards of quality, timeliness or accuracy.
- Formally review the standards set out in this Charter as necessary and make modifications where appropriate in light of our clients' comments and in response to ongoing changes.

8. **CUSTOMER RIGHTS**

**As our customer, you have the right;**

- To be served with respect, professionally and timely;
- To complain if you are unhappy with our service;
- To customer information, confidentiality and privacy; and
- To access our facilities and services in a manner that meets your needs.

9. **OUR SERVICE TURNAROUND TIMES**

Table 2: Service Turnaround Times

Indicator	Turnaround times
Training	Training Certificates shall be issued within 3 weeks after completion of training course
	Training Report where required, shall be issued within 3 weeks after completion of training course

<b>Accreditation</b>	Completeness check file review undertaken within one (1) week after receipt of application
	Quotation issued within one (1) week after complete set of documents have been received
	Document Review undertaken (1) week after receipt of application fee
	Document Review Report issued 5 weeks after receipt of application fee
	Clearance of corrective actions by Assessment teams within 3 months after Assessment
	Re-assessments undertaken 6 months prior to the expiry of the certificate of accreditation.
	Periodic assessments undertaken not more than 12 months after accreditation, thereafter annually
<b>Enquiries</b>	Handled within a week of receipt of enquiry
<b>Customer satisfaction</b>	100% rated overall satisfaction between good and excellent
<b>Nonconformities</b>	Implement proposed corrective action within 4 months for internal audit findings, and within 1 month for nonconformities identified from customer feedback or other sources.
<b>Complaints</b>	Confirm receipt of complaint within a week of registering the complaint
	Send confirmation of receipt of complaint within a week of registering the complaint.
	Notify about the outcome of the investigation within a week of concluding the complaint.
<b>Appeals</b>	Appeals on accreditation decisions shall be in writing and shall be forwarded to the CEO within three (3) months of the cause of appeal.
	Appeals should be satisfactorily resolved and appropriate action taken within 4 months of receiving the appeal.

## 10. HANDLING OF CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

### 10.1 Positive feedback

All positive feedback on SADCAS activities, personnel, assessors /technical experts shall be directed to the Quality Manager who in turn shall note it. Where feedback is on SADCAS personnel, then the respective staff and head of department/unit shall be informed.

### 10.2 Negative feedback (Complaints)

Complaints concerning SADCAS services, personnel, assessors/technical experts can be received by any member of staff. Once received the complaint shall be directed to the Quality Manager who shall gather and verify all necessary information to decide on the validity of the complaint then register on SADCAS F 86 if deemed valid. Should the Quality Manager decide that the complaint is not valid then the complainant shall be notified accordingly and shall be advised of the reasons



thereof. All complaints relating to an organization accredited by SADCAS shall first be referred to the accredited organization. Only when the accredited organization has not resolved the complaint shall the matter be referred to SADCAS. Complaints which have not been resolved through the SADCAS complaints handling system are classified as disputes and shall be brought to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer for resolution. The customer feedback procedure (SADCAS AP 08) is publicly available on SADCAS website [www.sadcas.org](http://www.sadcas.org).

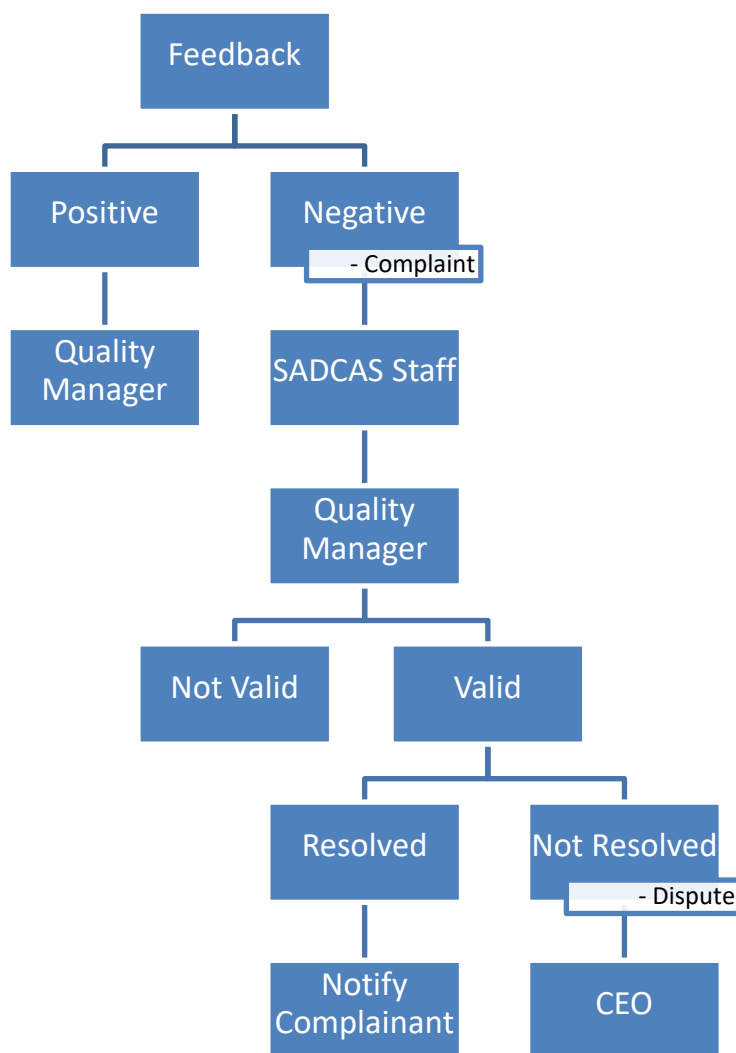


Figure 1: Customer Feedback

10.3 **Appeals**

Appeals from organizations on accreditation decisions shall be in writing and shall be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer within three (3) months of the course of appeal. Appeals shall be in writing and validated before being registered, investigated and resolved. Appeals shall be handled

by the Appeals Committee in a timely manner. Throughout the investigation of an appeal, all decisions made prior to the appeal, stand.

Appeals should be satisfactorily resolved and appropriate action taken within 4 months of receiving the appeal. Where not possible, the Chief Executive Officer shall track the progress and liaise regularly with the appellant regarding the progress of the appeal until such time as it has been resolved. The judgment of the Appeals Committee shall be communicated to the appellant within two (2) weeks of judgment. The appeals procedure (SADCAS AP 08) is publicly available on SADCAS website [www.sadcas.org](http://www.sadcas.org)

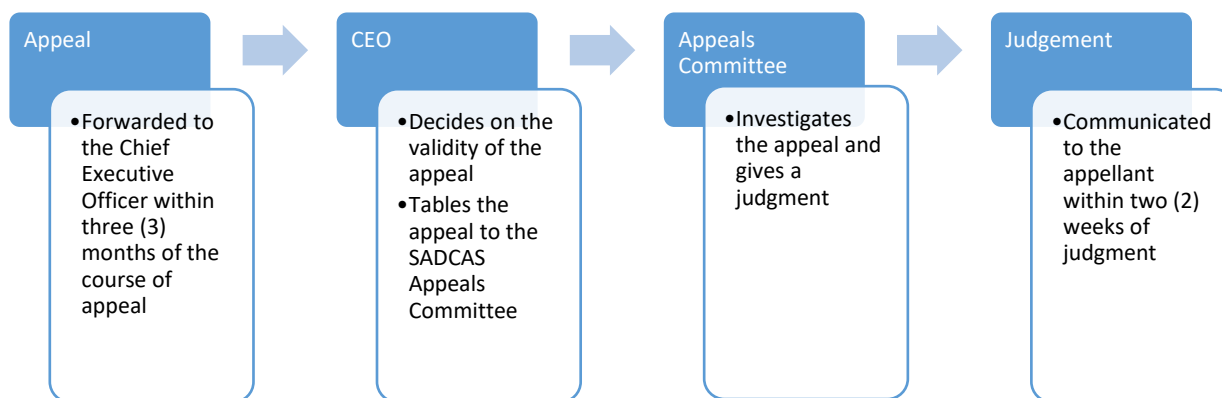


Figure 2: Appeals Process

An appeal received after the stipulated period shall be referred to the SADCAS Chief Executive Officer who shall decide whether or not to process it. Should the Chief Executive Officer decide not to process the appeal then the appellant shall be notified accordingly and shall be advised of reasons for not carrying out the appeal within four (4) weeks from the date of receipt of appeal

**11. CONTACT US**

**SADCAS website**

- www.sadcas.org

**Physical Address**

- Plot 50369, Unit 3A
- Second Floor, Tholo Office Park,
- Fairgrounds,
- Gaborone, Botswana

**Postal Address**

- Private Bag 00320, Gaborone, Botswana.

**Contact Details**

- T +267 3132909 / 3132910.
- M +267 71250042
- F +267 3132922
- E info@sadcas.org

**Operating Hours**

- Weekdays: Open 8:00am to 5:00pm
- Weekends: Closed

**12 REFERENCES**

- SADCAS AP 08 - Customer Feedback Handling Procedure
- SADCAS PM 01 - SADCAS Policy Manual
- SADCAS PM 02 Part 1 - SADCAS Training Services Manual
- SADCAS AD 01 - Contact Details for Communicating with Clients

**APPENDIX - AMENDMENT RECORD**

Revision status	Change			Approved by	Effective Date
	Page No.	Clause	Description of change		
Issue 1			-	CEO	2022-10-28