

Customer relations framework

Aligned with SGS Quality Management System principles and ISO 9001:2015 customer-related requirements.

1 Purpose

This document sets out the global baseline through which SGS manages customer relations across its network. It is aligned with the principles of ISO 9001:2015, in particular Clauses 8.2 (requirements for products and services) and 9.1.2 (customer satisfaction), and is implemented through global and local quality, customer service and feedback processes. This framework is intended to ensure that SGS captures and acts on customer feedback systematically, handles complaints consistently and transparently, and supports accessible service delivery for all customer groups. It defines minimum global expectations and may be supplemented by local procedures and practices.

2 Scope

For Group reporting purposes, this framework should be supported, where relevant, by local examples demonstrating implementation in practice.

This framework applies to:

- All SGS business units, divisions, and subsidiaries globally
- All employees, contractors, and third parties acting on behalf of SGS who interact with customers
- All stages of the customer relationship lifecycle, from initial enquiry to post-service follow-up

3 Key definitions

Term	Definition
Customer	Any organization or individual that receives or requests SGS services.
Customer Feedback	Any communication from a customer regarding their experience with SGS services, or personnel, including positive comments and suggestions for improvement.
Complaint	Any expression of dissatisfaction by a customer, whether justified or not, relating to SGS services, or the complaint-handling process itself.
Vulnerable Customer	A customer whose circumstances may limit their ability to fully engage with standard service channels, including elderly persons, persons with disabilities, or those with language barriers.
Customer Satisfaction	The degree to which a customer's stated and implied needs and expectations have been fulfilled, as defined in ISO 9001:2015.
QMS	Quality Management System, as defined and operated in accordance with ISO 9001:2015.

4 Customer support and feedback channels

SGS communicates with customers through multiple accessible channels to facilitate the exchange of information, obtain feedback, and handle enquiries and complaints. The following channels are available:

Channel	Details & Availability
Online form submission	Online contact forms are available on both corporate and local websites and are used by prospects and customers to submit enquiries, service requests, feedback and complaints. In addition, direct email contact is available in many countries for customer support and follow-up.
Chatbot and live chat	Chatbots are used mainly for first-level customer support and to direct users to the appropriate contact channel. They are available on the corporate website and on some local websites to guide customers and route enquiries efficiently. Some local customer service teams support a live chat option during opening hours.
Social media	Our social media channels are actively monitored. Complaints and feedback received through our main accounts are handled by our global customer engagement team together with the local SGS teams to provide a prompt response and efficient resolution.
Dedicated customer service phone line	Dedicated customer service phone numbers are available in many countries. These are managed locally and are used to handle customer enquiries, provide support, and support issue resolution. Enquiries are handled by a local customer service team, which also receives enquiries submitted via the main contact form and chatbot.
Customer portals	Some of our services are supported by customer portals, where customers can submit requests, track their orders and manage their accounts.
In-person meetings & site visits	In-person customer interactions typically take place at local offices, laboratories, inspection sites, or directly at customer locations. These interactions are mainly related to service delivery, account management, and issue resolution, and are handled locally depending on services and geography.
Customer satisfaction surveys	SGS runs a customer satisfaction program, requesting feedback from its customers, acting on conclusions and measuring results year on year. The customer satisfaction score is one of SGS key strategic targets.
Procedure documents	For transparency, SGS also publishes its complaints and feedback procedures on its website.

5 Customer feedback and continuous improvement process

SGS is committed to using customer feedback as a primary input to the continuous improvement of its services.

5.1 Feedback collection

Customer satisfaction and Net Promoter Score (NPS) surveys are deployed at defined points in the customer lifecycle, including following service delivery and/or key contract milestones. Customer feedback collected through surveys and relevant interaction channels is recorded centrally in the applicable CRM and/or Voice of the Customer tools. Certain affiliates also organize focus groups and customer advisory panels for strategic service lines.

5.2 Feedback analysis and escalation

Feedback is consolidated in the Voice of the Customer (VoC) dashboard, reviewed in detail by affiliates, and analyzed by the Global Voice of Customer team to identify trends, required actions and escalation needs. Feedback is categorized as follows:

Category	Action
Positive Feedback	Logged, shared with relevant teams for recognition, and used to identify best practices for replication.
Suggestions for Improvement	Reviewed by the relevant service or product team. Considered for future action plans.
Recurring Themes	Aggregated trends are analyzed and reported to relevant affiliate, business line and/or functional leadership for action.
Negative Feedback	Negative feedback triggers an alert to the relevant point of contact. The case is logged, acknowledged to the customer, assigned to the relevant service or product team, and the customer is contacted within 48 hours with initial next steps and, where possible, an expected resolution timeline.

5.3 Integration into service development

Customer feedback is a formal input into SGS's service improvement and service development processes, with traceability from customer input to action planning and implementation, through the following mechanisms:

- Customer Insight Reports: summaries of feedback themes are distributed to and reviewed by relevant affiliate and business leadership
- New Service Development: Customer requirements identified through feedback are channeled into the new service development process, with traceability maintained from customer input to service launch
- Voice of the Customer (VoC) Program: A structured program involving customer surveys the outputs of which directly inform SGS's strategic planning and service portfolio review

6 Accessible customer service for disabled and elderly customers

SGS seeks to make its customer service accessible to all, including elderly customers and customers with disabilities. The global baseline below is implemented through local practices adapted to applicable laws, available infrastructure, the nature of the service and local customer needs.

6.1 Communication adjustments

Where requested and operationally feasible, written communications can be adapted, including larger-print or simplified formats. SGS aims for customer-facing digital content and portals to follow recognized accessibility principles, including WCAG-based standards where applicable. Local examples of formally assessed compliance may be provided separately. Customers may request communications in alternative formats (e.g., audio, simplified language) by contacting their account manager or the customer service hotline.

Where available locally, relay or equivalent support services may be used for customers with hearing or speech impairments.

6.2 Service delivery adjustments

Extended response time windows available upon request for customers who require additional time to review documents or prepare for meetings.

In-person or assisted support may be offered where digital channels present a barrier or where a customer indicates a preference for this format. Relevant customer-facing employees are expected to communicate appropriately and respectfully with elderly customers and customers with disabilities; local teams may supplement this with specific guidance or training.

6.3 Physical accessibility

Client-facing SGS offices and laboratories are expected to comply with applicable local physical accessibility requirements. Virtual meeting options can be offered where travel or physical attendance presents a barrier.

7 Complaint handling and resolution process

SGS operates a structured and transparent complaint handling process, described in the Complaints, Disputes and Appeals Policy and Process and, where applicable, supporting local procedures. At a minimum, the process includes:

- Logging and acknowledgement of receipt of complaints
- Assignment to an appropriate owner for investigation
- Communication to the customer of next steps and expected resolution timing
- Monitoring through to closure and communication of outcome
- Analysis of complaint trends to support corrective and preventive action

Where complaint handling processes form part of certified SGS quality management systems, they are subject to independent external audit under ISO 9001. Supporting examples of externally audited entities or processes may be referenced separately in public disclosures. The process is described in the [Complaints, Disputes and Appeals Policy and Process](#).

8 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Global voice of customer team	Coordination of the Voice of Customer program globally, including analytics, reporting and insight escalation.
Global marketing managers	Support customer satisfaction survey design, segmentation and insight communication, in coordination with business and quality teams.
Affiliate coordinators, customer services, quality specialists	Day-to-day oversight of the Voice of Customer program and complaint handling processes within their affiliate.
Account managers and sales teams	Primary customer relationship owners, responsible for proactive feedback collection and escalation into the relevant complaint or service resolution process.

9 Framework review and version control

This framework is subject to annual review or earlier if triggered by:

- Significant changes in applicable legislation or ISO standards
- A material increase in complaint volumes or systemic service failures
- Feedback from internal or external audits
- Changes to SGS's service portfolio or organizational structure

All amendments are subject to approval by the document owner and communicated to relevant stakeholders prior to implementation. Version history is maintained in the SGS document management system.

Annex 1 – Illustrative local implementation example

Customer relations practices in SGS UK:

- Customer feedback integration into service improvement:

In SGS UK, customer feedback is integrated across the customer lifecycle. Surveys are issued at key stages, beginning with the enquiry phase and initial customer contact, typically within five working days. In addition, a sample of customers is contacted by telephone to gather more detailed feedback on their early engagement experience. The results are consolidated and shared with the relevant business lines to support feedback review, lessons learned and follow-up actions.

- Accessibility or service adaptation measures for elderly or disabled customers

In relation to accessibility and service adaptation measures for elderly or disabled customers, SGS UK operates within the applicable UK legal framework, including the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 and the Equality Act 2010, or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland, as applicable. Given the predominantly business-to-business nature of the UK operations and the limited use of public-facing walk-in services, these requirements currently have limited direct application to customer interactions. Nevertheless, SGS UK complies with applicable legislation and confirms that service adaptations can be made where needed.

- Complaint handling processes subject to external audit within certified entities

Complaint handling processes within SGS UK are embedded in local workflows and supported by documented quality management systems, relevant IT tools, and monitoring and reporting mechanisms. These processes cover the full service cycle, from pre-service quality controls through to post-service review, and are subject to both internal oversight and external audit where required under applicable accredited or certified frameworks.