



**Dumfries and
Galloway College**

One step ahead

COMPLAINTS HANDLING REPORT QUARTER 1, 23-24

Performance Team

November 2023

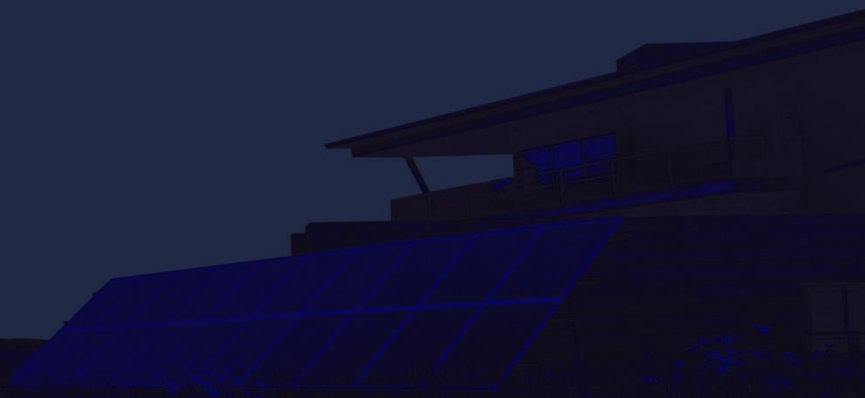


Table of Contents

Complaints Handling Report Quarter 1 2023–2024	2
1. The Purpose of the Report	2
2. Background to the Report	3
3. The Report	3
Key Observations	3
Indicator One: The total number of complaints received.....	3
Indicator Two: The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and 20 working days	4
Indicator Three: The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage.....	5
Indicator Four: The outcome of complaints at each stage	5
Learning from complaints: Service delivery improvements.....	6
Customer satisfaction with complaints process	7
SPSO (Scottish Public Services Ombudsman)	8

Complaints Handling Report Quarter 1 2023–2024

1. The Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to provide a summary of our quarter one performance in handling complaints effectively, resolving complaints in a timely manner and identifying areas for improvement when our service is found to be below expectation.

2. Background to the Report

The College is required to comply with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) complaints handling procedure and we are required to publish on a quarterly basis information on complaints outcomes and actions taken to improve services. The college must also publish an annual complaints performance report on its website in line with the SPSO's Model Complaints Handling Procedure and also as part of our duties under Freedom of Information legislation. This analysis includes statistics showing the volume and type of complaint as well as key performance details.

3. The Report

The report covers the period 1st August to 31st October 2023. In this period there were 12 frontline complaints (Stage 1) and 7 complaints requiring a full investigation (Stage 2). 2 complaints were escalated to Stage 2.

Key Observations

On comparison to Quarter 1 in Session 22-23 there has been an increase in the number of Stage 1 complaints and a decrease in the number Stage 2 complaints.

There were 7 Stage 1 complaints that were Course related. This can be attributed to the industrial action that took place, with resulting being delayed and awarding body certificates were not issued.

Two Stage 1 complaints were escalated during this quarter due to timescale. Issues with late submission of work, communication issues with complainants all contributed to the extended timescales required to address the complaints.

Indicator One: The total number of complaints received

Quantitative Indicator	
Number of complaints received	17
Number of complaints received per 100 population as a %	0.56

Breakdown of Complaints	Quantity
Stage 1 Number of complaints received	12
Stage 2 Number of complaints received	5
Stage 1 Number of complaints escalated to Stage 2	2

Breakdown of Complaint Categories	Quantity
Stage 1	
Customer Care	1
Applications, Admission, Progression	1
Course Related	7
Services	2
Facilities	1
Stage 2	
Customer Care	4
Applications, Admission, Progression	1
Escalated Complaints	
Course Related	2

Indicator Two: The number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of five and 20 working days

Quantitative Indicator	No.	%
Number of complaints closed in full at stage 1 within five working days as % of all stage 1 complaints responded to in full	8	67%
The number of complaints closed in full at stage 2 within 20 working days as % of all stage 2 complaints responded to in full *	3	60%
The number of complaints closed in full after escalation within 20 working days as % of all complaints responded to in full after escalation.	2	100%

*One Stage 2 complaint was open at the time of reporting

Two Stage 1 complaints were not closed off within the five working days. The nature of the complaints did not warrant escalation to Stage 2. For one of the complaints, due to communication issues with the complainant it took longer than the 5 days to resolve the issue raised. For the second complaint, from the initial information provided by the complainant the complaint was directed to more than one support area.

One Stage 2 complaint which was not closed off within the set timescale. This was due to the nature of the complaint which required additional time to investigate all the points raised by the complainant.

Indicator Three: The average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage

Quantitative Indicator	Average time in working days
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1	4.5
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2*	12
Average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation	10.5

* One Stage 2 complaint was open at the time of reporting

Response Times

The average time in working days to respond to complaints at Stage 1 was 4.5 days which is under the SPSO 5-day target. The average time in working days to respond to complaints at Stage 2 was 12 days, and for the escalated complaints 10.5 days, which are both under the SPSO 20-day target.

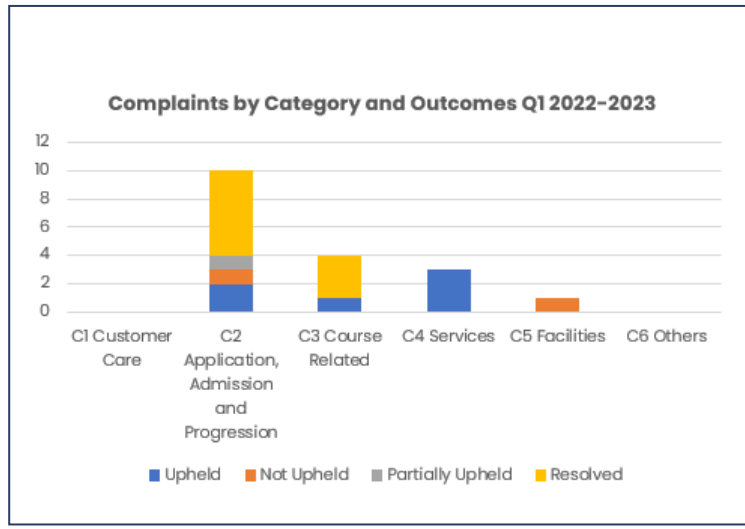
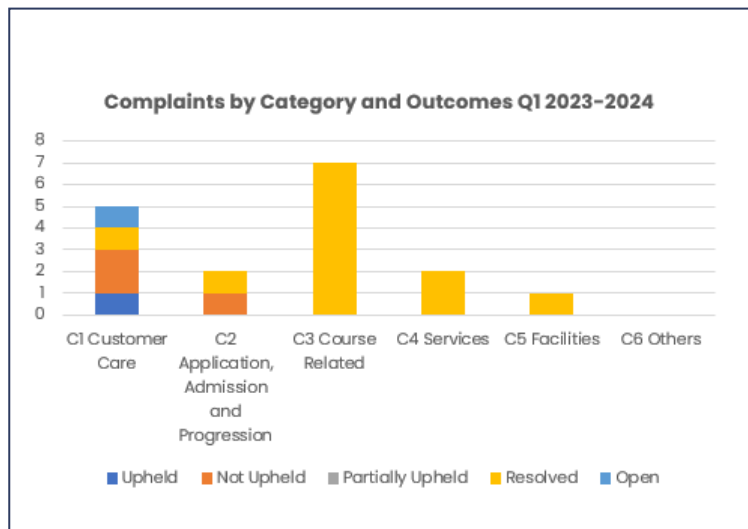
Indicator Four: The outcome of complaints at each stage

Quantitative Indicator	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Resolved**
Number of complaints as a % of all complaints closed at stage 1	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (100%)
Number of complaints as a % of all complaints closed at stage 2 *	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (60%)	1 (40%)
Number of complaints as a % of all complaints closed after escalation	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)

*One Stage 2 complaint was open at the time of reporting

**A complaint is resolved when both (the organisation) and the customer agree what action (if any) will be taken to provide full and final resolution for the customer, without making a decision about whether the complaint is upheld or not upheld

Complaint by Category and Outcomes Comparison Q1 23-24 v 22-23



The complaint categories are comparable:

Session	No. of Stage 1 complaints received Q1	No. of Stage 2 complaints received Q1	Complaint Categories		
			Stage 1	Stage 2	Escalated
2023-2024	12	5	~ Applications, Admission, Progression ~ Customer Care ~ Course Related ~ Services ~ Facilities	~ Applications, Admission, Progression ~ Customer Care ~ Course Related	~ Applications, Admission, Progression
2022-2023	8	12	~ Applications, Admission, Progression ~ Course Related ~ Services ~ Facilities	~ Applications, Admission, Progression ~ Course Related	~ Applications, Admission, Progression

Learning from complaints: Service delivery improvements

Service delivery improvements

By recording and analysing complaints data we can identify and address the causes of complaints and, where appropriate, identify training opportunities and introduce service improvements.

Following complaints received in Academic Year 2023-24, Quarter 1, service delivery will be improved in the following areas:

A student had experienced difficulties uploading a form via the Student Portal. Digital Services will monitor the Student Portal to ensure it is optimised correctly to ensure compatibility with varied mobile devices.

Catering provision: Free soup is now available at lunchtimes at both Campuses.

Customer satisfaction with complaints process

To ensure compliance with the College Complaints Handling Procedure we request feedback from complainants regarding their satisfaction with the service they received, and not the circumstances or outcome of their actual complaint. They are asked to evaluate the service considering the following points:

- Whether the complaints process was easy to access
- Whether they received a prompt acknowledgement of their complaint
- Whether they were dealt with courteously at all times
- Whether their complaint was thoroughly investigated
- Whether they received a fair and clear response and within an appropriate timescale

In Quarter 1, 2023-24 only 2 complainants (13%) provided feedback on their satisfaction of the service provided, their responses are indicated in the table below:

Complaint Handling Point	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I found the complaints process easy to access	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I received a prompt acknowledgement of my complaint	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I was dealt with courteously at all times	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I found my complaint was thoroughly investigated	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I received a fair and clear response to my complaint, within an appropriate timescale	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Complainants found the complaints process easy to access. Complaints can be made through various channels, Have your Say, LearnNet, and the College Website so is widely accessible for students.

The above responses demonstrate that the complainants were in agreement overall with the handling of their complaints.

The low response to the requests for feedback may be taken as a positive attribute in that complainants were satisfied with the complaints handling process and had no wish to evaluate or comment further.

SPSO (Scottish Public Services Ombudsman)

No complaints relating to Dumfries and Galloway College were submitted to SPSO during Quarter 1 of Session 2023-2024.

The Performance Team, November 2023