



COVER SHEET FOR PAPERS TO BE CONSIDERED BY EXECUTIVE TEAM

Q2 Complaints Handling Report 2024/25	
Date of Meeting:	18 March 2025
Purpose of Paper:	To report key performance information on complaints handling to the Executive Team (ET), including the volume and types of complaints recorded by the University during the second quarter of the academic year 2024/25.
Intended Outcome:	ET is invited to note the information provided, as required by the University's Complaints Handling Policy.
Paper Submitted by:	Wesley Rennison, Director of Strategy & Planning
Prior Committee Approvals:	N/A
Financial Implications:	None
Reserved Business:	No
Key Contact(s):	Chris Mochan, Complaints & Corporate Governance Officer Chris.Mochan@strath.ac.uk
Date of Production:	6 March 2025

Complaints Handling: 2024/25 Quarter 2 Report

Complaints Handling

1. In April 2021, the University formally implemented the SPSO's revised Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) in 2020. All staff at the University are able to access the compulsory frontline training required, under the CHP through MyPlace. This is a requirement for induction. These materials, along with additional guidance and templates, are also available to all staff on MyPlace for refresher training and ongoing reference. (<https://classes.myplace.strath.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=26168>)
2. It should be noted that Strategy and Planning are working with the Complaints Higher Education Forum to produce new complaints training for both frontline and investigations. It is expected that this will be ready to roll out in 2025.

Complaints Reporting

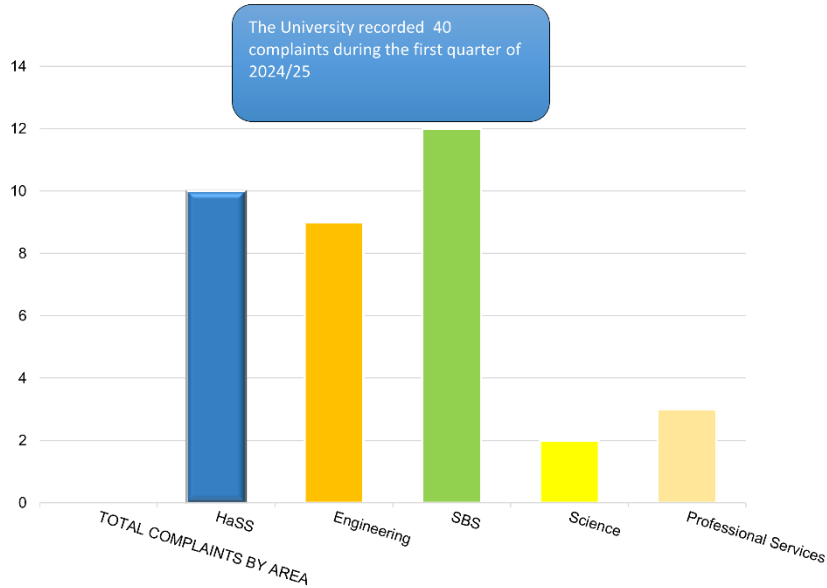
3. It is a regulatory requirement that the University reports key performance information on complaints quarterly to senior officers (Executive Team) and annually to Court. The new Complaints Sharepoint site, which was launched on 1 February 2024 allows reporting in line with the SPSO's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which the University has been reporting on since 2022/23.
4. Annex A provides key performance information on the volume and types of complaints received during the first quarter of 2024/25 and on the resolution times achieved. Annex B looks at comparable data from the first quarter dating back to 2021/22. Annex C provides qualitative information on some of the actions taken and/or recommendations made to deliver service improvement in response to complaints received by the University during the quarter.
5. The University recorded 40 complaints during the second quarter of 2024/25, a significant increase from the 18 recorded in the second quarter in 2023/24. 36 complaints were logged at the frontline stage and four were logged directly at investigation. 38 of those complaints were from students and two were from the member of the public. Complaints were received across all of the Faculties and Professional Services. The most frequent types of complaints recorded were those relating to:
 - Staff Attitude and/or Conduct (28%)
 - Teaching and/or Assessment (23%)
 - Academic Support (18%)
6. Staff Attitude and/or Conduct complaints were spread across University Faculties and Departments, with a number of different issues investigated. Three of the complaints were resolved and only one was taken forward to the Investigation stage and one upheld. Just under half of the Teaching and/or Assessment complaints related to omitted content within an apprenticeship programme and all of these were upheld with a number of changes implemented as a result. Academic Support complaints primarily concerned what complainants felt was a lack of support from their relevant departments, however none of these were upheld and only one was escalated to investigation.
7. The average time taken to resolve frontline complaints increased from 6.9 days in the previous quarter to 14.2 days, with 25% of complaints closing within the 5 working day timescale target, down from 28% in the second. That significant jump in average response time is as a result of a frontline complaint being unable to be completed due to a staff member being signed off sick.

8. The average time taken to investigate complaints handled directly at stage 2 decreased from 64.4 days to 40.7 days. Although this represents a significant decrease, the average time was again impacted by a placement complaint which was delayed by the schools own complaints process.
9. Four complaints were dealt with directly at the Investigation stage and eight were escalated to investigation by the complainant. Of those completed across all investigations, five were partially upheld and four not upheld.
10. The below table breaks down the total number of complaints received in this quarter and the equivalent quarter in 2023/24.

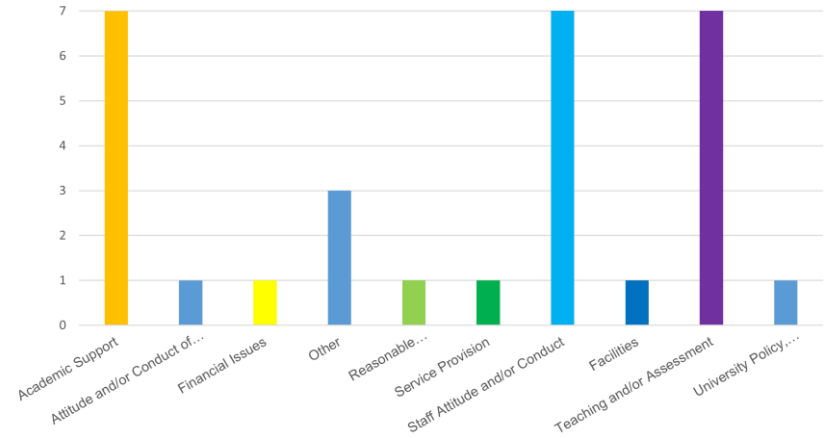
Faculty	Q2 2024/25	Q2 2023/24	Change
HAAS	10	3	+7
Engineering	9	6	+3
Business	12	6	+6
Science	2	1	+1
Total	33	16	+17

11. The number of complaints for each Faculty rose in comparison with the same time last year and it is unusual to have as many complaints in the second quarter, primarily owing to the fact the University closes over Christmas. The second quarter did see a significant increase in the three areas highlighted in point 5.
12. The University received notification from the SPSO that it had received complaints from two students following their exhaustion of the University complaints process, although neither were taken forward by the SPSO.
13. Frontline complaints may be classified as 'upheld', 'not upheld' or 'resolved'. 19% of frontline complaints were resolved which is an increase of 5% on the previous quarter.

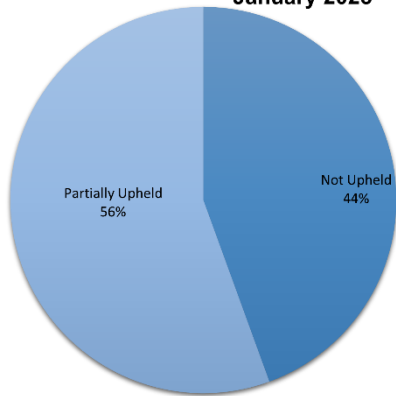
Complaints Received by Area November 2024 - January 2025



Complaints Received, by Category - November 2024 - January 2025



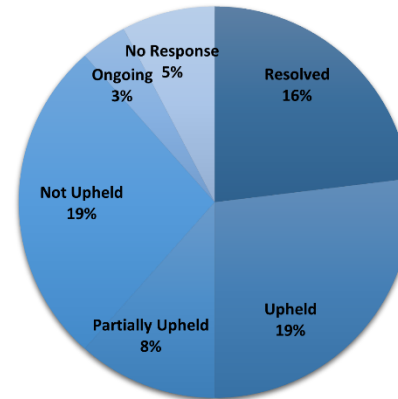
Direct Investigation (Stage 2) Outcomes - November 2024 - January 2025



Average investigation = 40.7 working days

three of the seven complaints handled directly at Investigation, were responded to within twenty days.

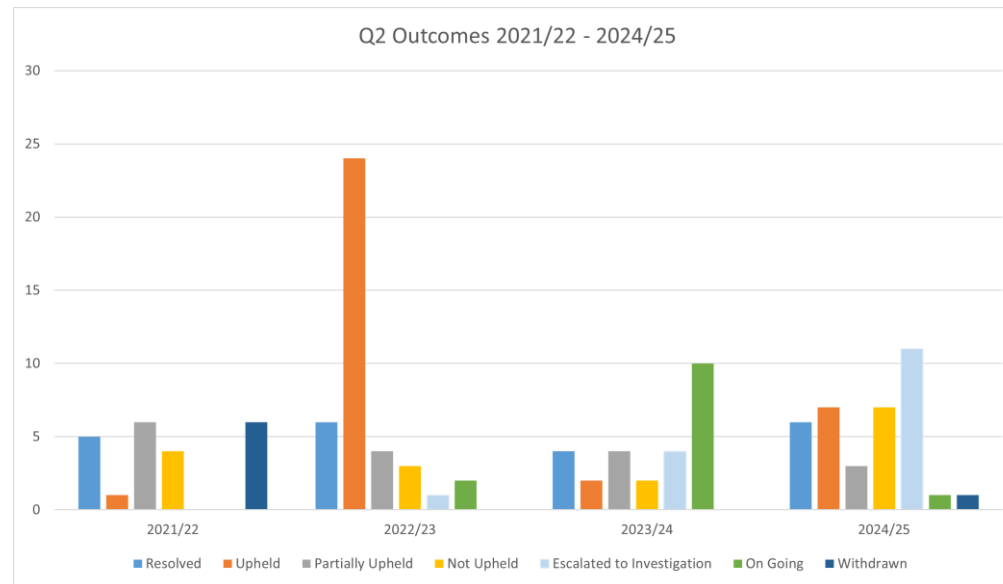
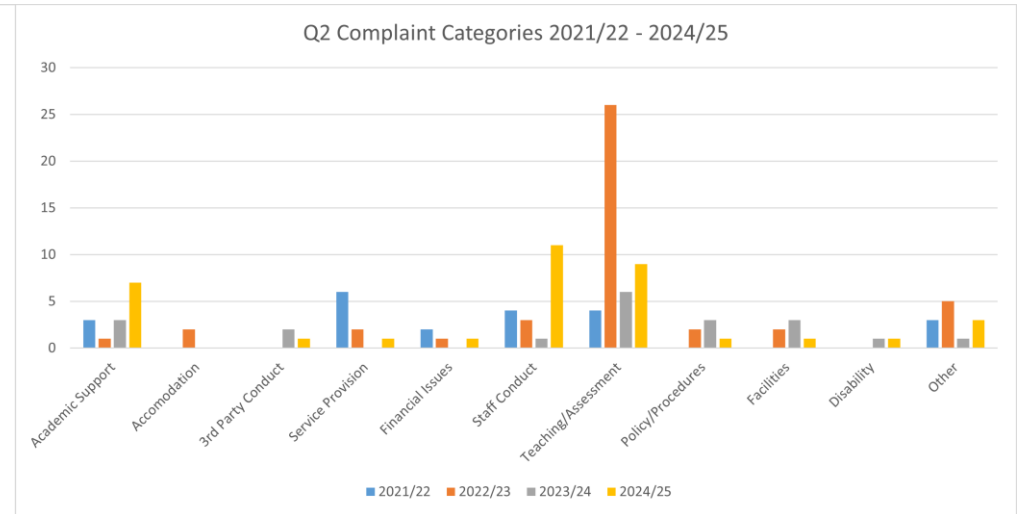
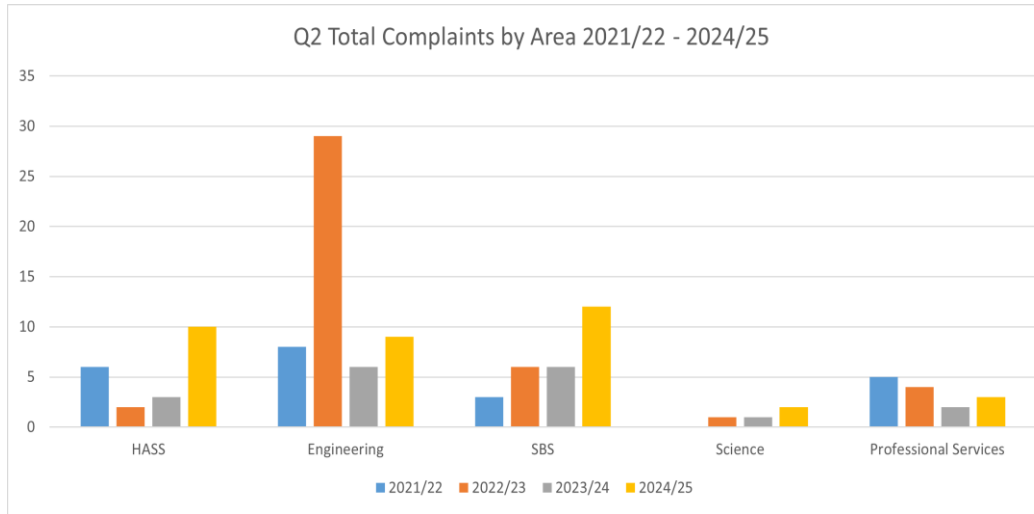
Frontline Resolution (Stage 1) - November 2024 - January 2025



25% of complaints closed at the Frontline stage were handled within 5 working days.

Average resolution time for complaints resolved at Frontline = 14.2 working days.

ANNEX B



Learning from Complaints – Examples from 1 May 2024 – 31 July 2024

Complaint Category	Complainant	Complaint Summary	Outcome	Learning
Staff Attitude and/or Conduct	Student	Unhappy with an interaction they had with the student helpdesk	Upheld	Ensure that all new helpdesk staff receive training to better handle a range of situations, including those involving sensitive issues. To strengthen links between the Student Experience Helpdesk and the Disability and Wellbeing Service to improve access to support and ensure staff can provide accurate advice or signposting.
Service Provision	Student	A delay in making reasonable adjustments and when the student tried to contact Disability and Wellbeing to chase this up, they had difficulty contacting them.	Upheld	A review of the provisional adjustment process took place, and a further review of temporary administration cover would take place and would include looking at increasing telephone cover capacity.
Service Provision and Teaching and/or assessment	Student	Complaint was from a distance learning student about the late access they were given to module content and some of the content was out of date.	Partially Upheld	Implement adequate succession planning for staff taking over as class registrar or delivering new classes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This approach will help mitigate stress for staff and ensure optimal delivery for students. • Identify key staff members and clearly define their roles and responsibilities. • Create a supportive environment for staff. • Provide and signpost training opportunities for staff regarding class design and delivery on MyPlace.
Service Provision and Reasonable Adjustment	Student	Complaint centred around a lack of support and Disability and Wellbeing in making adjustments for the students learning.	Partially Upheld	Recommended that the department should review provision for supporting disabled students to ensure that all staff members are aware of how to access advice from a designated disability contact person. If adjustments are put in place over and above those indicated in provisional adjustment recommendations from D&W, we recommend that these be immediately communicated to the student concerned. It was also recommended that a review considers whether additional support should be provided specifically to distance learning students.