**Complaints Handling: 2023/24 Quarter 2 Report**

***It is a regulatory requirement that the University reports key performance information on complaints quarterly to senior officers (Executive Team) and annually to Court***.

1. The SPSO published a revised Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) in 2020 which the University formally implemented on 1 April 2021. A MyPlace site is available containing the training materials for the compulsory frontline training required, under the CHP, for all staff at 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. Annex A provides key performance information on the volume and types of complaints received during the second quarter of 2023/24 and on the resolution times achieved. Annex B looks at comparable data from the second quarter dating back to 2020/21. 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.
3. In March 2022, SPSO published a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which the University has been reporting on since 2022/23.
4. The quarterly reporting at Strathclyde already met most of the requirements except for the need to specify when a complaint was handled directly at investigation (stage 2) and when it was moved to investigation due to the complainant’s dissatisfaction with the frontline response. The new Complaints Sharepoint was launched on 1 February 2024 and that allows staff to log complaints directly at Stage 2 as well as making it easier to manage complaints through their cycle.
5. The University recorded 18 frontline complaints during the first quarter of 2023/24, a decrease of 54% compared with the second quarter of 2022/23. The main reason for the significant reduction is because of 18 complaints the University received about conditions of one specific engineering exam in the second quarter of 2022/23. The total complaints for this quarter are back at a level that we would normally expect. 16 of this quarters complaints were from students and two from members of the public. Complaints were received across all the faculties and Professional Services (Information Services, Estates and Student Experience) and the most frequent types of complaints recorded were those relating to:

* Teaching/Assessment (33%)
* University Policies and Procedures (16%)
* Facilities (16%)
* Academic Support (16%)

1. Teaching/Assessment complaints were spread across University Faculties and as is often the case at this time of year, related to exam conditions. Both Teaching/Assessment and Academic support complaints made reference to a lack of support, delays in feedback and grading of assessment although none of these were upheld, with three being partially upheld. There were 11 complaints in relation to staff conduct in the first quarter although only one was received in the 2nd quarter. We will continue to monitor these closely as the University continues to prioritise the safety, health and wellbeing of students on campus through initiatives such as Safe 360 and the Strathclyde Community Commitment.
2. With the above in mind, we organised for our solicitors Andersen and Strathearn to conduct training for our investigators with a specific focus on complaints against staff and particularly those that may require further HR involvement at the complaint’s conclusion. Two sessions have taken place with around 40 investigators attending and three more planned which we hope will be attended by around 60 more.
3. The average time taken to resolve frontline complaints decreased from 7.3 days in the previous quarter to 5.3 days with 64% of complaints closing within the 5 working day timescale target. The revised CHP requires frontline complaints to be closed on day 10 or moved to stage 2 and only one frontline complaint took over 10 days in the second quarter.
4. The average time taken to investigate complaints handled directly at stage 2 increased from 29.8 days to 39.3 days. There was a total of six complaints investigated directly at Stage 2, two of which were upheld and four partially upheld. Seven complaints were escalated to investigation by the complainant, with an average response time of 29.9 days, three of which were upheld, two partially upheld and 2 not upheld.
5. The below table breaks down the total number of complaints received in this quarter and the equivalent quarter in 2021/22.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Faculty | Q2 2023/24 | Q2 2022/23 | Change | % Change |
| HAAS | 3 | 2 | +1 | +33% |
| Engineering | 6 | 29 | -23 | -79% |
| Business | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Science | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 16 | 38 | -22 | -58% |

1. The significant reduction in Engineering complaints can be attributed to the complaints around exam conditions mentioned in point 5. The remaining Faculties recorded almost no change in numbers in comparison to quarter 2 in 2022/23.
2. Frontline complaints may be classified as ‘upheld’, ‘not upheld’ or ‘resolved’. The University continues to focus on frontline resolution and 16% of frontline complaints were resolved and that will continue to be a focus for this year.