

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland: Annual Complaints Report 2014-15

Background

In line with the statutory requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) all Scottish universities were required to adopt a two-stage model Complaints Handling Procedure by 30 August 2013 and this was implemented following Academic Board approval. The Conservatoire's Complaints Handling Procedure is available here https://www.rcs.ac.uk/about_us/complaints/

Recording and Reporting

It is a requirement of the procedure that the Conservatoire records all complaints and reports quarterly to senior management and annually to the Academic Board on key performance information. Moving forward, the following quarterly reporting schedule to CSMT will be adhered to:

- January: Qu1 from 1 September to 30 November (inclusive)
April: Qu2 from 1 December to 28/29 February (inclusive)
July: Qu3 from 1 March to 31 May (inclusive)
October: Qu4 from 1 June to 31 August (inclusive)

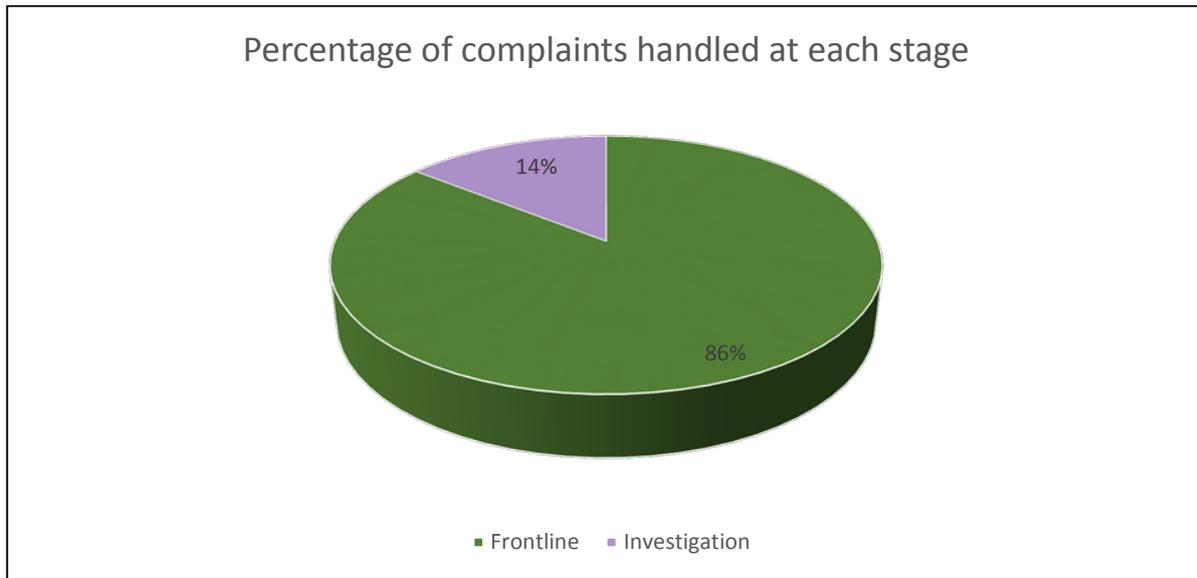
2014-15 Analysis

During the period 1 September 2014 to 31 August 2015, the Conservatoire received a total of 14 complaints. This is the same number as was received in 2013-14 although more were able to be resolved at Frontline this year. As last year in all 14 cases the complainants were satisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

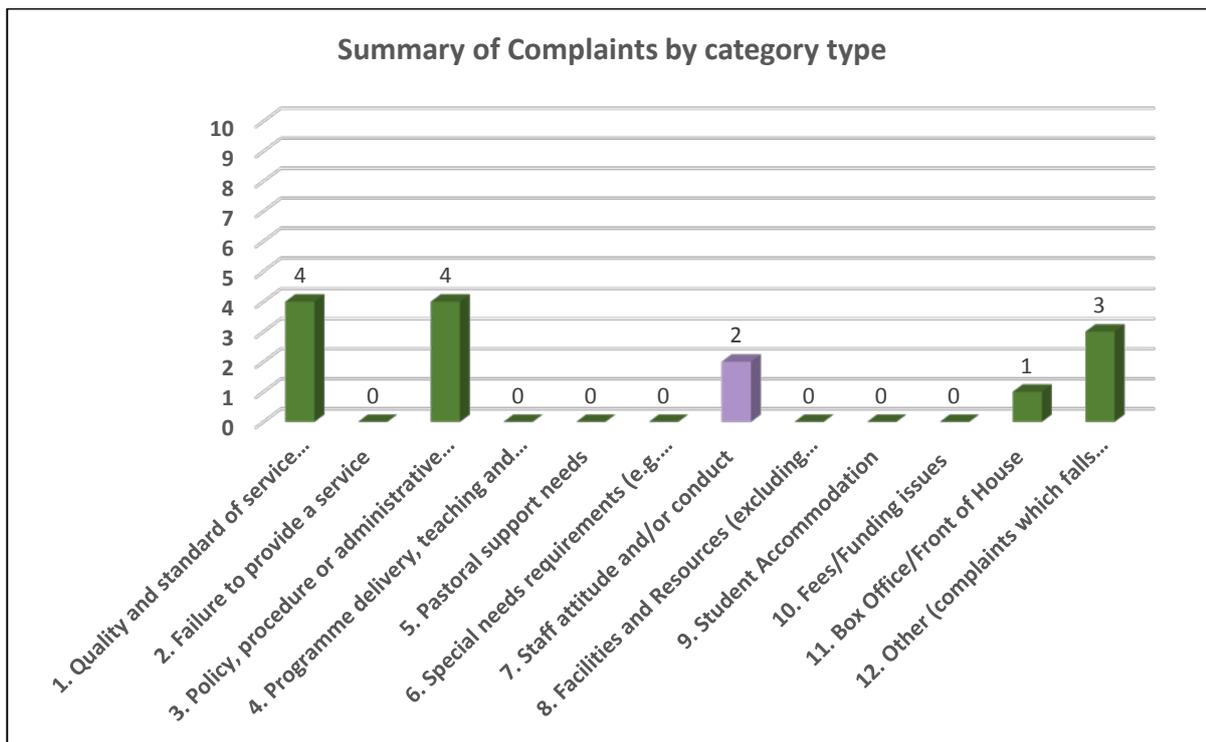
Total number of complaints received	14
Stage 1: Frontline	12
Number of complaints resolved at Stage 1	12
Number of complaints resolved within the 5 working days timeline	11
Number of complaints where an extension to the timeline has been authorised	1
Number of complaints upheld	9
Number of complaints not upheld	2
Number of complaints partially upheld	1
Number of complaints withdrawn	0
Stage 2: Investigation	2
Number of complaints resolved at Stage 2	2
Number of complaints resolved within the 20 working days timeline	1
Number of complaints where an extension to the timeline has been authorised	1
Number of complaints upheld	1
Number of complaints not upheld	0
Number of complaints partially upheld	1*
Number of complaints withdrawn	0

*1 substantive element upheld, 6 substantive elements not upheld

Number and %age of complaints considered at Stage 1 and Stage 2:



The following bar chart provides a summary of complaints by category type for the period:

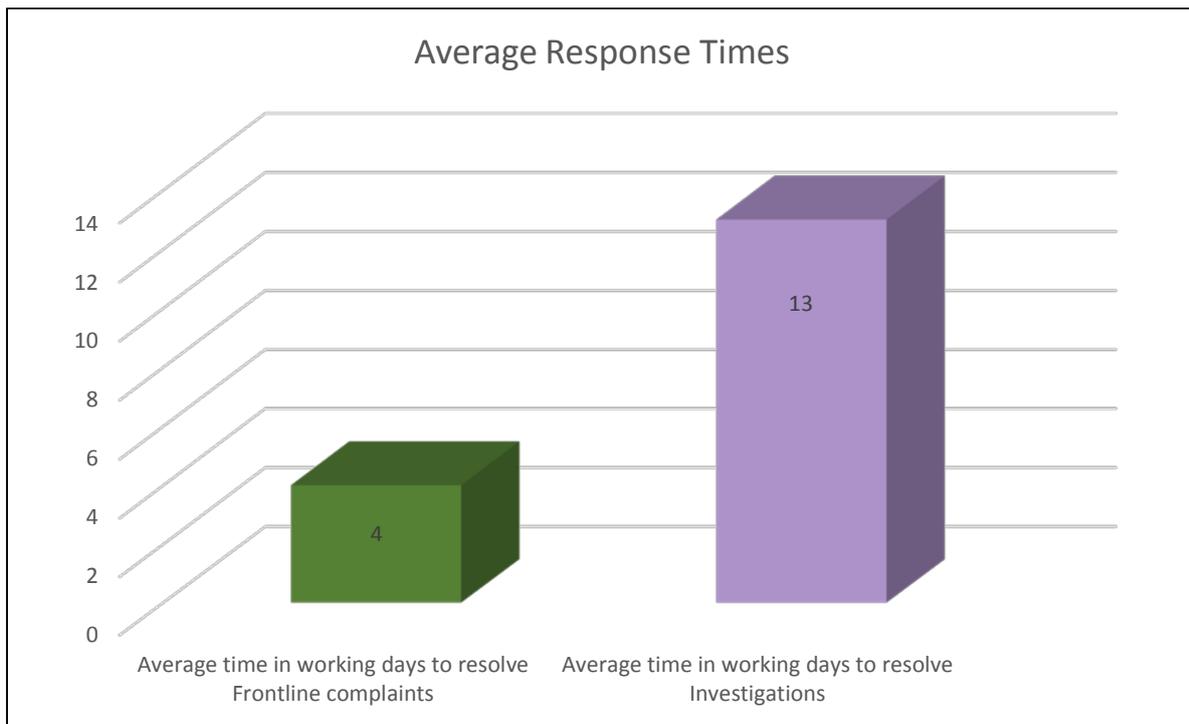


Complaint Response Times:

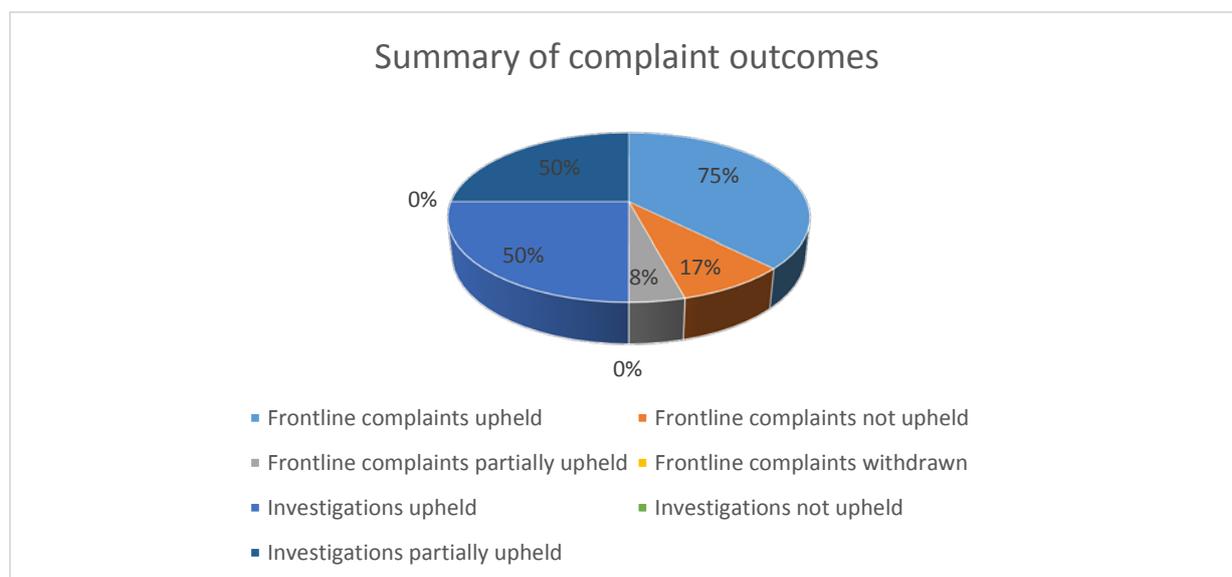
Stage 1: Frontline		as %age
Number of complaints resolved within the 5 working days timeline	11	92%
Number of complaints where an extension to the timeline has been authorised	1	8%
Stage 2: Investigation		
Number of complaints resolved within the 20 working days timeline	1	50%
Number of complaints where an extension to the timeline has been authorised	1	50%

Adherence to timelines

All complaints with the exception of one were completed to the complainants' satisfaction within the 5 or 20 working day timeline as specified in the CHP in academic year 2014-15. One frontline complaint took an additional day due to availability issues and this extension to the normal timescale was agreed with the complainant and resolved satisfactorily.



Summary of Complaint Outcomes:



Trends

A 14% increase in complaints resolved at Stage 12 (Frontline) was seen in 2014-15. As last year, the majority of complaints were received and dealt with at Frontline and, although the average time taken to resolve them increased slightly from 3 to 4 days, this was still within the required timescale.

The most frequent type of complaints recorded this year related to Quality and standard of service provision and Policy, procedure or administrative process. Complaints about Staff attitude and/or conduct have halved from 4 to 2.

Actions/Lessons learned

The Conservatoire recognises the value of the feedback obtained through complaints and remains committed to using this process to identify opportunities to improve the provision of services across the institution. The following areas have been earmarked for review or have already undergone review as a result of a complaint received during the reporting period:

- The clarification of handover procedures to Junior Conservatoire cover staff
- Revisions to the RCS's Admissions Policy (QAH8) which implement a process for the provision of feedback on receipt of a written request from the applicant, in line with the Data Protection Act
- That the policy and procedure for room bookings and room set-ups, particularly in relation to the communication of student contract requirements, should be reviewed and clearly articulated to PTHP staff
- That guidelines on line management communication between Heads of Department and PTHP staff members are reviewed and clarified
- That staff members receive training on dealing with sensitive personal information and learning support needs in a teaching environment as required

- That outside filming guidance and training is reviewed in respect of standards and expectations when engaging with the general public. Negotiating permissions in future with Council and similar organisations should cover how much notice should be given to the public and appropriate display of signage.