



PUBLICATION SCHEME REPORT ON COMPLAINTS HANDLING

SESSION 2015/16: FIRST QUARTER DATA (1 September – 30 November 2015)

Introduction

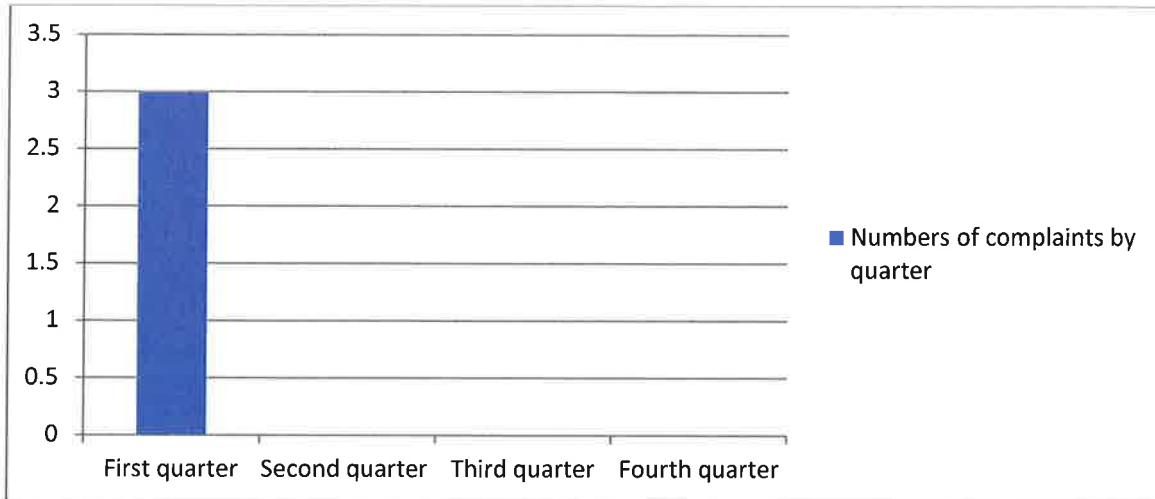
The Ombudsman requires Scottish Universities to report on a variety of Key Performance Indicators, which have been considered in detail by the Scottish Universities' Complaints Forum and also by the Universities' Scotland Secretaries' Group.

The University's Complaints Handling Procedure ("CHP") emphasizes the quick resolution of complaints, at the point nearest to wherever they arise within the University. This is in preference to lengthy investigations. However, some complaints may either commence at the Investigation stage (if complex, time-consuming, or sensitive) or alternatively may proceed to stage 2 investigation after stage 1 frontline resolution (if the complainant is still dissatisfied; in effect as an internal appeal). Under the CHP, there is no automatic progression from stage 1 frontline resolution to stage 2 investigation, although this is possible if a complaint is dissatisfied after completion of stage 1 frontline resolution.

Arising from a complaint investigation in a previous quarter, one individual subsequently made a complaint to the SPSO (there is a normal time-limit of 6 months for complainants to do so). However, the SPSO considered that the complaint had already been investigated; no concerns arose for them arising from that investigation and its outcome, and that all actions arising had already been taken by the University. The SPSO therefore declined to take any action.

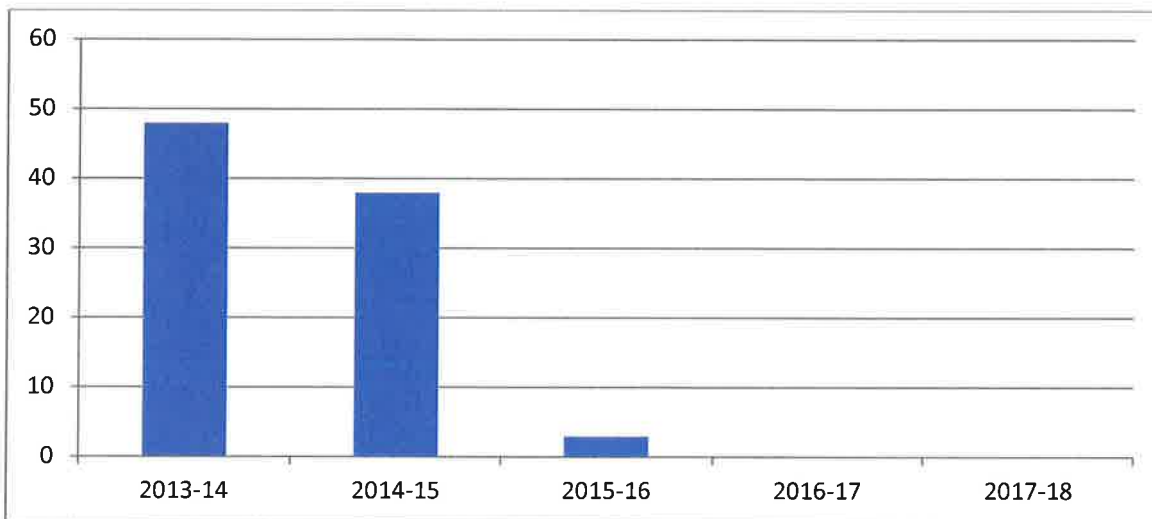
Note: in this report where figures less than 5 occur, neither numbers, nor (where the numbers involved are less than 10) percentages, have been included as a matter of policy. This applies where (i) arithmetic distortions in percentages/trends due to low numbers may occur and/or (ii) where there is a risk of identification of any individuals' personal data (and/ or sensitive personal data) under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Number of complaints recorded in the current year by quarter (totals received):



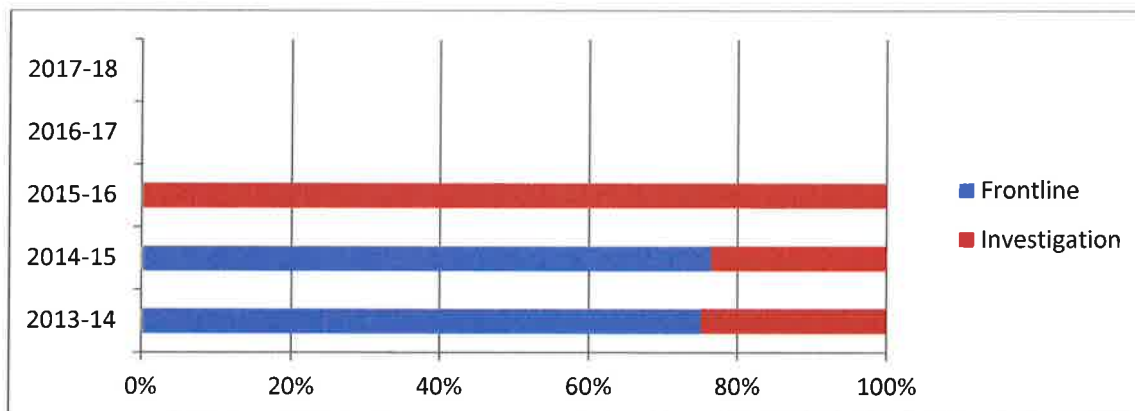
Note: first quarter refers to September – November; second quarter refers to December – February; third quarter refers to March – May, and Fourth quarter refers to June – August.

Total numbers of complaints recorded by academic year:



Note: data for the current year are cumulative, updated each quarter, but will not be complete until the complaints year has ended (at the end of August). Prior to Autumn 2013, a different complaints procedure was in operation: data prior to Autumn 2013 are not comparable, and are not shown for that reason.

Frontline or investigation procedure: proportion of total complaints by year (%):



Note: data are cumulative for the current year (updated each quarter) but will not be complete until the end of the last quarter, in August.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's view is that Universities should address as many complaints as possible at stage 1 frontline resolution (this is the reason why the above percentages are provided). Frontline resolution is therefore performed wherever possible; this involves the complaint being addressed at the point in the University nearest to where it arose.

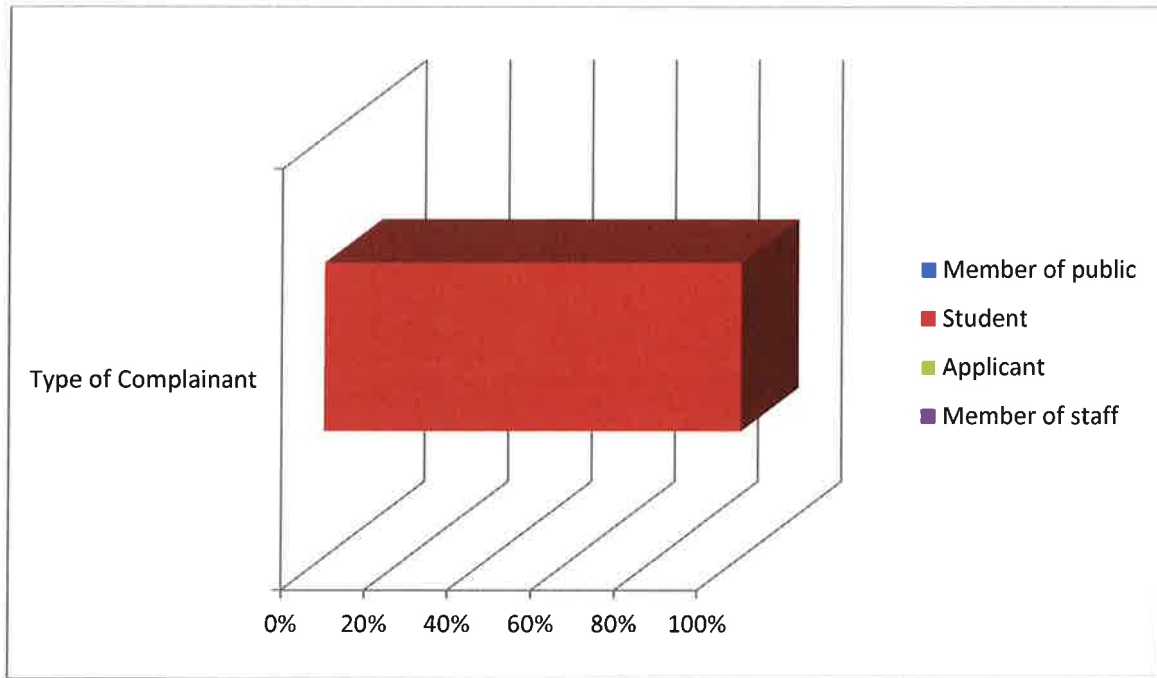
However, some complaints are too complex and/or lengthy to be considered as frontline resolution ones within the Ombudsman's strict 5 working day target time-limit for this category of complaint. Any breach of this deadline requires to be authorised, recorded and reported on, even if the subject matter of the complaint is too lengthy and/or complex to be completed within that time-limit. However, such cases may be dealt with as complaint investigations (stage 2), for which a 20 working day target time-limit applies. The University's CHP envisages that a complaint may commence as an investigation, i.e. at stage 2.

Number and percentage of frontline resolution and investigations complaints closed within target time-limit (5 and 20 working days respectively): by month for current year.

Month	Total number of Frontline Complaints closed	Frontline Complaints closed as percentage of total complaints	FL cases closed within SPSO target as % of total number of FL complaints closed. (Target 5 w/days)	Total number of Investigations closed	Investigations: closed as percentage of total complaints	Investigation cases closed within SPSO target as % of total number of Investigations closed. (Target 20 w/days)
September				1	100%	100%
October				1	100%	100%
November				1	100%	100%
December						
January						
February						
March						
April						
May						
June						
July						
August						

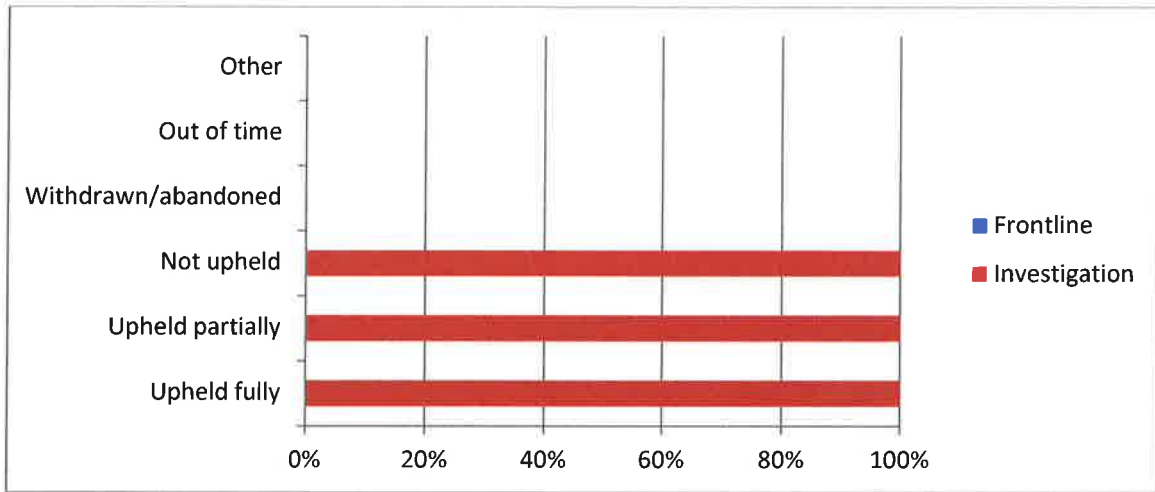
Note: complaints arising from members of staff are normally dealt with under the Grievance Procedure operated by HR, so these data are not recorded here.

Type of complainant for current year to date (cumulative; %):



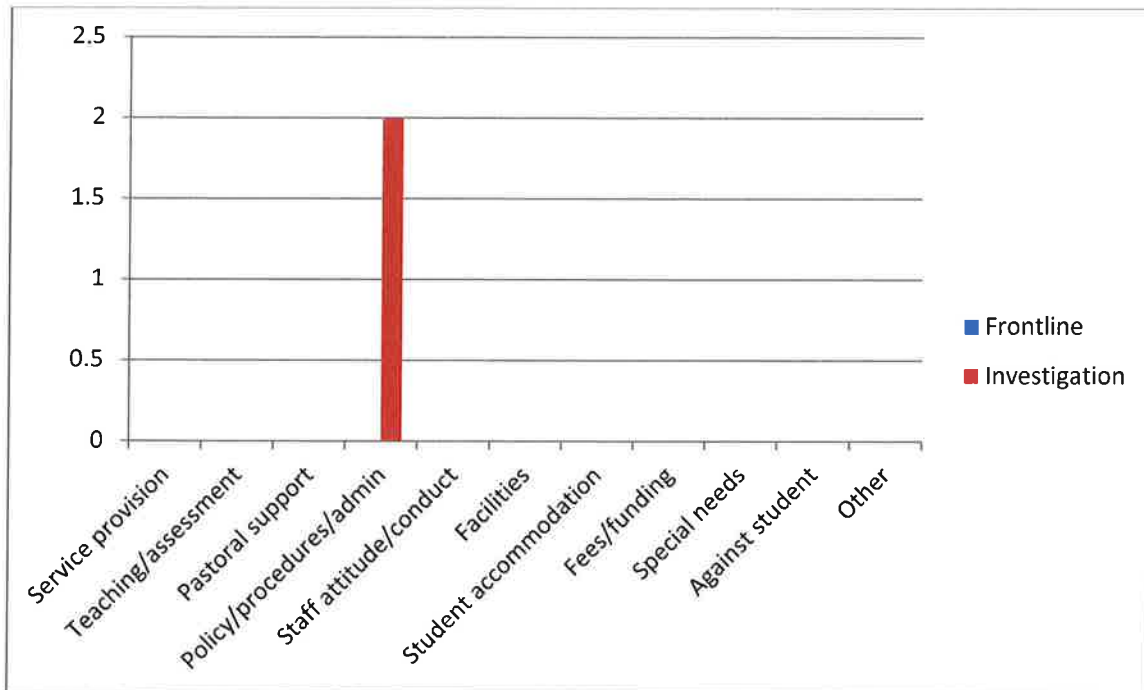
Note: data are cumulative for the current year (updated each quarter) but will not be complete until the end of the last quarter, in August.

Outcome of complaints for current year to date by frontline or investigation (cumulative; %):



Note: data are cumulative for the current year (updated each quarter) but will not be complete until the end of the last quarter, in August. 'Other' includes referral to another procedure (e.g. disciplinary grievance etc).

Category of the complaints made in the current year to date by frontline or investigation (cumulative; numbers).



Note: data are cumulative for the current year (updated each quarter) but will not be complete until the end of the last quarter, in August. Note: some information has been redacted to avoid identification.