SPSO COMPLAINTS HANDING UPDATE: QUARTER 4 (JUN-AUG) 2019/20

The Glasgow School of Art is subject to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) Model Complaints Handling Procedure.

The Complaints Handling Procedure divides complaints into Stage One (for routine, frontline complaints) and Stage Two (for more complex complaints). Stage One complaints should be resolved within five working days. Stage Two complaints should be resolved within twenty working days. Following the outcome of an investigation at Stage Two, complainants can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman to review their complaint.

The Academic Quality Office co-ordinates SPSO complaints at GSA, linking closely with Schools and Professional Support areas. This includes logging incoming complaints, advising on process and liaising with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The Academic Quality Office will allocate complaints for investigation at Stage Two according to an approved list of investigators. Investigators will be agreed in conjunction with line managers.

REQUESTS RECEIVED

Compared with the previous year, there was a marked increase in Quarter 4 complaints. The year to-date comparison is also significantly higher.

Table 1: MCHP* Complaints Received, Quarter 4 (Jun - Aug)		
	2018/19	**2019/20**
Stage One	4	13
Stage Two	5	25
Total	**9**	**38**

*SPSO Model Complaints Handling Procedure

Table 2: Complaints Received, Total of Quarter 1 – 4 (Sept - Aug)		
	2018/19	**2019/20**
Stage One	27	63
Stage Two	14	66
Total	**41**	**129**

RESPONSE TIMES

Compared with the previous year, there is a marked increase in the proportion of late responses at both Stage One and Stage Two.

Table 3: Complaint Response Times, Quarter 4 (Jun – Aug)		
	2018/19	**2019/20**
Stage One On Time	2	5
Stage One Late	2	8
Stage Two On Time	4	4
Stage Two Late	1	21*

*Please note: Two complaints from this quarter remained under investigation at the time this report was published – although they are now late.

Table 4: Complaint Response Times, Total of Quarter 1 – 4 (Sept – Aug)		
	2018/19	**2019/20**
Stage One On Time	18	26
Stage One Late	9	37
Stage Two On Time	7	7
Stage Two Late	7	59*

*Please note: Four complaints from this quarter remained under investigation at the time this report was published – although they are now late.

Complaints by Area

The following table sets out the areas in which complaints originated from Quarters 1 to 4, the total for the year to date and the overall full-year total for the previous year. Areas with more than 5 complaints in a Quarter or more than 10 in a year are highlighted. Complaints originating in the School of Fine Art remain the highest over each period.

Table 5: Complaints by Area

Area	2019/20						2018/19
	Q1	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Total**		**Total**
School of Design	5	1	17	5	28		3
School of Fine Art	7	7	17	12	43		10
School of Simulation & Visualisation	0	1	12	0	13		1
Mack. School of Architecture	0	0	5	2	7		7
Innovation School	0	0	6	1	7		1
Learning Resources	0	0	0	0	0		2
Technical Support	1	0	0	0	1		0
Academic Registry	0	1	0	5	6		5
Student Support & Development	0	0	0	0	0		0
Research	0	0	0	0	0		0
Estates	0	0	1	0	1		2
Student Residences	2	2	2	8	14		6
Open Studio	0	1	0	0	1		2
IT	0	0	0	0	0		0
Finance	0	0	2	2	4		0
GSA-wide	0	0	0	2	2		0
Other	1	0	1	0	2		2
Total	**16**	**13**	**63**	**37**	**129**		**41**

Complaint Themes

To aid reflection and alignment, the Academic Quality Office categorises complaints according to National Student Survey headings. Additionally, Dignity & Respect, COVID 19, Industrial Action and Student Residences categories were added. Please note that where a complaint references more than one area this was recorded. Therefore, the overall theme count is higher than the number of complaints received. The current categories are:

- Teaching: e.g. courses are interesting, stimulating and challenging.

- Learning Opportunities e.g. opportunities to explore ideas/concepts in depth; to apply learning; and to draw on information/ideas from a wide range of topics.

- Assessment and Feedback e.g. transparency of marking criteria; fairness, timeliness and helpfulness of assessment/feedback.

- Academic Support e.g. contact/communication with academic and support staff; advice/guidance relating to courses, study choices etc.

- Organisation and Management e.g. organisation/smooth-running of courses, and communication of changes to courses/teaching/studio access.

- Learning Resources: e.g. access to and quality of studios/learning spaces; technical resources; library/archives; IT support etc.

- Learning Community: e.g. opportunities for student collaboration; sense of staff/student body community.

- Student Voice: e.g. student welfare; solicitation and value of student feedback.

- Dignity and Respect: e.g. misconduct; racism, and other related.

- COVID 19

- Industrial Action

- Student Residences

The following table sets out the themes from Quarters 1 to 4, and the total for the year to date. Themes with more than 5 complaints in a Quarter or more than 10 in the year are highlighted. COVID-19 complaints were the highest for the year. Learning Resource complaints were consistently high through the year – these related primarily to access to and quality of studio provision.

In addition to the themes listed below, there were also instances in Q4 2019/20 of complaints relating to student fee status; the GSA estate; and complaint handling.

Table 6: Complaint Themes

Theme	2019/20				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Teaching	0	1	2	3	6
Learning Opportunities	0	0	0	0	0
Assessment & Feedback	0	0	5	1	6
Academic Support	0	0	2	7	9
Organisation & Management	1	3	9	3	16
Learning Resources	7	5	10	8	30
Learning Community	1	1	2	3	7
Student Voice	3	2	2	0	7
Dignity & Respect	3	5	1	4	13
COVID-19	0	0	55	23	78
Industrial Action	0	2	18	8	28
Student Residences	2	0	2	5	9
Total	**17**	**19**	**108**	**65**	**209**

Academic Quality Office
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