

SPSO COMPLAINTS HANDING UPDATE: QUARTER 1 (OCT-DEC) AND QUARTER 2 (JAN-MAR)

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.

Issues raised through the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland's Scottish Concerns Scheme are managed and reported through the office of the GSA Deputy Director Academic. Over the last calendar year GSA has been contacted by QAA Scotland regarding four discrete concerns relating to a number of issues including accessibility, industrial action and Covid-19. One of these is currently under review by QAA Scotland. Two have been investigated and concluded, and one was not taken forward beyond the initial screening stage of the Scottish Concerns screening process.

The remainder of the reporting cycle for 2020/21 will cover Q3 (Apr-Jun) and Q4 (Jul-Sept).

REQUESTS RECEIVED

Compared with the previous year, there was a marked increase in Quarter 2 complaints and a marked decrease in Quarter 1. The year to-date comparison is almost level.

Table 1: MCHP* Complaints Received, Quarter 2 (Jan - Mar)		
	2019/20	2020/21
Stage One	11	11
Stage Two	2	10
Total	13	21

*SPSO Model Complaints Handling Procedure

Table 2: MCHP Complaints Received, Quarter 1 (Oct - Dec)		
	2019/20	2020/21
Stage One	13	10
Stage Two	3	3
Total	16	13

Table 3: Complaints Received, Total of Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 (Oct - Mar)		
	2019/20	2020/21
Stage One	24	21
Stage Two	5	13
Total	29	34

RESPONSE TIMES

Compared with the previous year, the Stage 1 response times are almost level. The comparison for Stage 2 response times show a marked increase in late responses.

Table 4: Complaint Response Times, Quarter 2 (Jan – Mar)		
	2019/20	2020/21
Stage One On Time	5	7
Stage One Late	6	4
Stage Two On Time	0	1
Stage Two Late	2	9

Table 5: Complaint Response Times, Quarter 1 (Oct – Dec)		
	2019/20	2020/21
Stage One On Time	5	4
Stage One Late	8	6
Stage Two On Time	2	0
Stage Two Late	1	3

Table 6: Complaint Response Times, Total of Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 (Oct - Mar)		
	2019/20	2020/21
Stage One On Time	10	11
Stage One Late	14	10
Stage Two On Time	2	1
Stage Two Late	3	12

Complaints by Area

The following table sets out the areas in which complaints originated from Quarters 1 to 2, 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 were the highest over each period.

Table 7: Complaints by Area

Area	2020/21					2019/20
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Total
School of Design	0	1			1	28
School of Fine Art	4	8			12	43
School of Simulation & Visualisation	0	1			1	13
Mack. School of Architecture	1	1			2	7
Innovation School	0	2			2	7
Learning Resources	1	0			1	0
Technical Support	0	0			0	1
Academic Registry	0	2			2	6
Student Support & Development	0	0			0	0
Research	0	0			0	0
Estates	1	0			1	1
Student Residences	2	5			7	14
Open Studio	0	0			0	1
IT	0	0			0	0
Finance	0	1			1	4
GSA-wide	2	0			2	2
Other	2	0			2	2
Total	13	21			34	129

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 Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, the total for the year to date and the overall full-year total for the previous year. Themes with more than 5 complaints in a Quarter or more than 10 in a year are highlighted. COVID-19 complaints remain the highest over each period.

In addition to the complaints themes listed below, there were also single instances in Q1 and Q2 2020/21 of complaints relating to alleged racism; mental health; staff misconduct; and the GSA application process.

Table 8: Complaint Themes

Theme	2020/21					2019/20
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Total
Teaching	0	1			1	6
Learning Opportunities	1	2			3	0
Assessment & Feedback	1	2			3	6
Academic Support	1	1			2	9
Organisation & Management	1	3			4	16
Learning Resources	3	0			3	30
Learning Community	0	1			1	7
Student Voice	3	1			4	7
Dignity & Respect	2	1			3	13
COVID-19	11	10			21	78
Industrial Action	0	0			0	28
Student Residences	2	6			8	9
Total	23	27			50	209