

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

SPSO Q4 (JUL-SEPT) AND ANNUAL (2022/23) COMPLAINTS HANDLING UPDATE

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 (AQO) co-ordinates Scottish Public Services Ombudsman 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.

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

The number of complaints received in Quarter 4 has dropped slightly. The number of complaints received in 2022/23 were almost equal to that of 2021/22.

| Table 1: Complaints Handling Procedure Complaints Received, Quarter 4 (Jul – Sept) | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| | Q4 2021/22 | Q4 2022/23 |
| Stage One | 5 | 1 |
| Stage Two | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 5 | 2 |

| Table 2: Complaints Handling Procedure Complaints Received, Total of Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 (Oct – Sept) | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Q1-Q4 2021/22 | Q1-Q4 2022/23 |
| Stage One | 21 | 16 |
| Stage Two | 5 | 8 |
| Total | 26 | 24 |

RESPONSE TIMES

The Stage One complaint received in Quarter 4 was responded to on time and completed in two working days (against the target rate of 5 working days).

Across the year as a whole, 65% of Stage One Responses were completed on time and 29% were late and the average response time was 7.8 days.

25% of Stage Two responses were completed on time – and the average response time was 19 days (against the target of 20 days).

Where responses are delayed, the AQO and investigators endeavour to keep complainants up to date with revised timescales in line with requirements set out in the GSA Complaints Handling Procedure.

In comparison with last year, response times at Stage One and Stage Two have improved.

| Table 3: Complaint Response Times, Quarter 4 (Jul – Sept) | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| | Q4 2021/22 | Q4 2022/23 |
| Stage One On Time | 1 | 1 |
| Stage One Late | 4 | 0 |
| Stage Two On Time | 0 | 0 |
| Stage Two Late | 0 | 1 |

| Table 4: Complaint Response Times, Total of Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 (Oct - Sept) | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Q1-Q4 2021/22 | Q1-Q4 2022/23 |
| Stage One On Time | 11 | 11 |
| Stage One Late | 10 | 5 |
| Stage Two On Time | 0 | 2 |
| Stage Two Late | 5 | 3 |

COMPLAINT OUTCOMES

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman requires that GSA record all complaints as Upheld, Partially Upheld, Not Upheld, or Resolved. Resolution is defined as an outcome in which both GSA and the complainant agree an outcome without the need to determine whether a complaint is upheld or not.

The Stage 1 complaint received in Quarter 4 was resolved in two-working days.

| Table 5: Complaint Outcomes, Quarter 4 (Jul – Sept) | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| | Q4 2021/22 | Q4 2022/23 |
| Stage One Upheld | 1 | 0 |
| Stage One Partially Upheld | 0 | 0 |
| Stage One Not Upheld | 1 | 0 |
| Stage One Resolved | 2 | 1 |
| Stage Two Upheld | 0 | 0 |
| Stage Two Partially Upheld | 0 | 1 |
| Stage Two Not Upheld | 0 | 0 |
| Stage Two Resolved | 0 | 0 |

| Table 6: Complaint Outcomes, Total of Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 (Oct - Sept) | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Q1-Q4 2021/22 | Q1-Q4 2022/23 |
| Stage One Upheld | 1 | 1 |
| Stage One Partially Upheld | 3 | 2 |
| Stage One Not Upheld | 6 | 3 |
| Stage One Resolved | 10 | 10 |
| Stage Two Upheld | 2 | 1 |
| Stage Two Partially Upheld | 2 | 3 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Stage Two Not Upheld | 1 | 0 |
| Stage Two Resolved | 0 | 0 |

COMPLAINTS BY AREA

The following table sets out the areas in which complaints originated from Quarter 4 2022/23, the total for the year to date and the overall full-year total for the previous year.

If Heads of School or Professional Support require any further information about the complaints in their areas, this is available on request from the Academic Quality Office.

| Area | 2022/23 | | | | | 2021/22 |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Total | Total |
| School of Design | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| School of Fine Art | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| School of Simulation & Visualisation | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Mack. School of Architecture | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Innovation School | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Learning Resources/ Library Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Technical Support | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Academic Registry | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| Student Support & Development | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Research | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Estates | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Student Residences | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Open Studio | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| IT | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Finance | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 |
| GSA-wide | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Total | 9 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 22 | 27 |

COMPLAINT THEMES

To aid reflection and alignment, the Academic Quality Office categorises complaints according to National Student Survey headings. Additionally, a Dignity & Respect category has been 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.

The following table sets out the themes from Quarter 4 of 2022/23, the total for the year to date and the overall full-year total for the previous year. Themes with more than 10 in the year are highlighted.

The highest number of complaints in 2021/22 and 2022/23 related to Dignity & Respect.

| Theme | 2022/23 | | | | | 2021/22 |
|---------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Total | Total |
| Teaching | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Learning Opportunities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Assessment & Feedback | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Academic Support | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| Organisation & Management | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Learning Resources | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Learning Community | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Student Voice | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Dignity & Respect | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 11 |
| Sexual Misconduct | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0* |
| Other | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Total | 14 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 28 | 21 |

*Complaints relating to Sexual Misconduct were recorded with Dignity & Respect complaints prior to Quarter 1 2022/23 – as such comparative data for last year is not available.

2023/24 REPORTING

The complaint themes will be reviewed for the next Academic Session (2023/24) and the introduction of the Complaints, Appeals and Conduct Report will contextualise complaint themes within a five-year period.

Academic Quality Office
2nd October 2023