

## THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

ACADEMIC COUNCIL: 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024

### SPSO COMPLAINTS HANDLING UPDATE: QUARTER 4 (JULY-SEPT) 2023/24

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

The CHP 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 20 working days. Following the outcome of an investigation at Stage Two, complainants can ask the SPSO to review their complaint.

The Academic Quality Office (AQO) coordinates SPSO complaints at GSA, linking closely with Schools and Professional Support areas. This includes logging incoming complaints, advising on process and liaising with the SPSO. The AQO 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

Compared with the previous year, there has been a significant increase in Stage One complaints in Quarter 4. Stage 2 complaints have remained at a similar level to the previous year.

	Q4 2022/23	Q4 2023/24
Stage One	1	9
Stage Two	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>

	Q1-Q4 2022/23	Q1-Q4 2023/24
Stage One	17	17
Stage Two	8	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>

#### RESPONSE TIMES

One Stage One complaint was late, the rest were responded to on time in Quarter 4 (2023/24) which is within the target of five working days.

All Stage Two complaints were completed on time, against a target of 20 working days, in Quarter 4 (2023/24). 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 CHP.

	Q4 2022/23	Q4 2023/24
Stage One On Time	1	8
Stage One Late	0	1

Stage Two On Time	1	3
Stage Two Late	0	0

Table 4: Complaint Response Times, Total of Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 (Oct 23- Sept 24)		
	Q1-Q4 2022/23	Q1-Q4 2023/24
Stage One On Time	11	15
Stage One Late	5	2
Stage Two On Time	3	7
Stage Two Late	2	3

### COMPLAINT OUTCOMES

The SPSO 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.

Table 5: Complaint Outcomes, Quarter 4 (July-Sept)		
	Q4 2022/23	Q4 2023/24
Stage One Upheld	0	1
Stage One Partially Upheld	1	1
Stage One Not Upheld	0	2
Stage One Resolved	1	4*
Stage Two Upheld	0	0
Stage Two Partially Upheld	0	0
Stage Two Not Upheld	0	1
Stage Two Resolved	0	1**

\* One complaint was referred for Stage 2 investigation as the outcome.

\*\*The resolved complaint at Stage 2 was dealt with under the Student Conduct Policy and Misconduct Procedure.

### COMPLAINTS BY AREA

The following table sets out the areas in which complaints originated, the total for the year to date and the overall full-year total for the previous year.

If Heads of School or Professional Support areas require any further information about the complaints in their areas, the AQO will be happy to provide it.

Table 6: Complaints by Area						
Area	2023/24					2022/23
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Total
School of Design	1	2	0	5	8	3
School of Fine Art	1	2	1	0	4	2
School of Innovation and Technology	0	0	0	1	1	1
Mack. School of Architecture	0	0	0	2	2	2
Innovation School	0	0	0	0	0	3
Learning Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0
Technical Support	0	0	0	0	0	0

Academic Registry	0	0	0	1	1	2
Student Support & Development	0	0	0	1	1	1
Research	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estates	1	1	0	2	4	0
Student Residences	0	0	0	0	0	2
Open Studio	0	0	0	0	0	0
IT	0	1	0	0	1	0
Finance	0	0	1	0	0	3
GSA-wide	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other	0	2	0	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>

## COMPLAINT THEMES

The revised themes reflect changes to the National Student Survey (NSS) questionnaire and themes from recent complaints. The introduction of 12 more themes from Q2 2023/24 is intended to make reporting more precise and account for complaint trends year on year. Please note that where a complaint references more than one area, this is recorded. Therefore, the overall theme count is higher than the number of complaints received.

The following table sets out the themes and the total for the year to date and the overall full-year total for the previous year. Themes with more than five complaints in a quarter or more than ten in the year are highlighted.

Theme	2023/24					2022/23
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Total
Academic- organisation and management	0	0	1	2	3	0
Academic Support	1	2	0	1	4	5
Accommodation	0	0	0	2	2	0
Administration, Organisation and Management	0	1	1	1	3	2
Dignity & Respect	0	1	0		2	9
Disciplinary Matters (Academic)	0	1	0		1	0
Disciplinary Matters (Non-Academic)	0	0	0	1	1	0
Extenuating/ exceptional circumstances	0	0	0		0	0
Financial Complaints	0	0	0		0	0
Industrial Action	0	0	0		0	0
Learning Community	0	0	0		0	0
Learning Opportunities	0	1	0		1	0
Learning Resources	0	2	0		2	2
Marking & Assessment	0	1	0		1	3
Mental wellbeing	0	0	1		1	0
Organisation & Management	0	1	0	1	1	0
Other	2	2	0	1	5	5
Procedural irregularities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual Misconduct	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Misconduct	0	0	0	0	0	0

Student Misconduct	0	<b>0</b>	0	3	3		0
Student Voice	0	<b>0</b>	0	0	0		2
Teaching	0	<b>0</b>	0	0	0		0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>30</b>		<b>28</b>

**Academic Quality Office**  
**9<sup>th</sup> September 2024**