



University
of Dundee

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SPSO 2017/2018

Date approved:

Monitoring & Advisory Group on Appeals, Complaints & Discipline Procedures – 9 May 2019

Senate – 22 May 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The University's Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) involves up to two stages for resolution of a complaint - Stage 1 (Frontline Resolution) to be handled within 5 working days and Stage 2 (Investigation) to be handled within 20 working days of receiving a complaint. Any person who remains dissatisfied following Stage 2 (Investigation) can take their complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) for consideration. Our CHP can be found at: <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/dca/complaints/>

The University also provides quarterly statistical information on their website at: <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/dca/monitoringstatistics/>

This annual report has been approved by the University's Monitoring and Advisory Group on Appeals, Complaints and Discipline Procedures and also the Senatus Academicus. It contains key performance indicators for the period 1 August 2017 – 31 July 2018.

If you have any questions regarding this report, or any other complaint matter, please email the following address:

complaintsresolution@dundee.ac.uk

Alternatively, please contact Karen Stulka, Academic and Corporate Governance (Legal), k.f.stulka@dundee.ac.uk on (01382) 384011.

2. COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

During 2017/18, the University received 61 complaints. Of these, 48 complaints were dealt with at stage 1 (frontline) and 13 complaints were dealt with at stage 2 (investigation). From the 13 complaints dealt with at stage 2, 6 complaints had been dealt with initially at stage 1. Charts 1 and 2 show the number and percentage of complaints handled each quarter at both frontline and investigation stages.

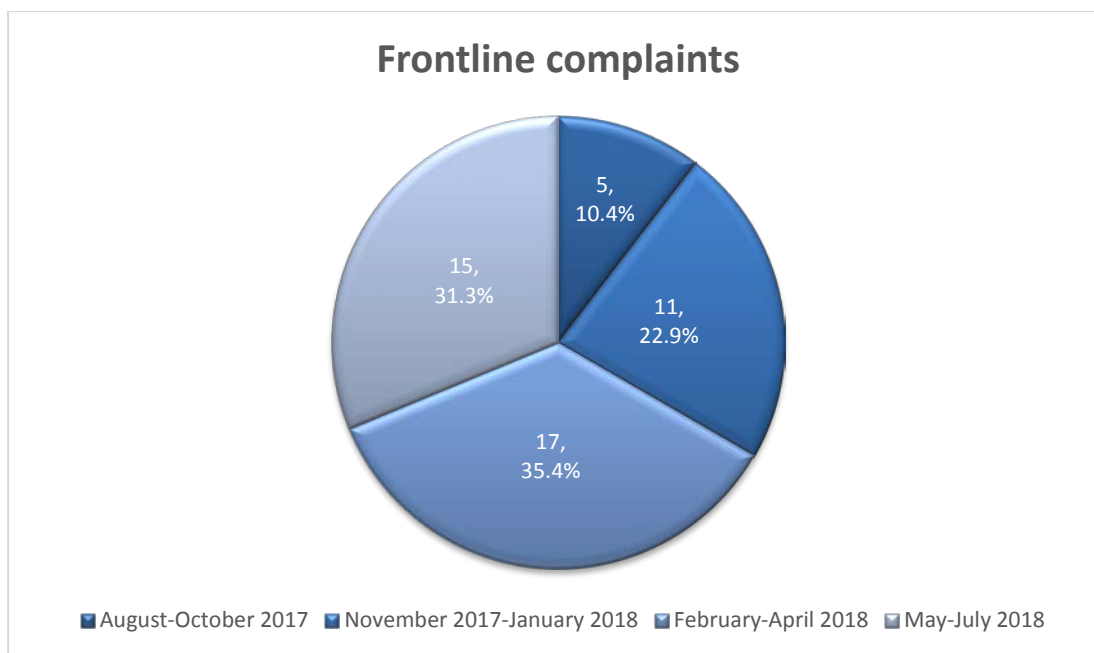


Chart 1 - Total number of stage 1 complaints received

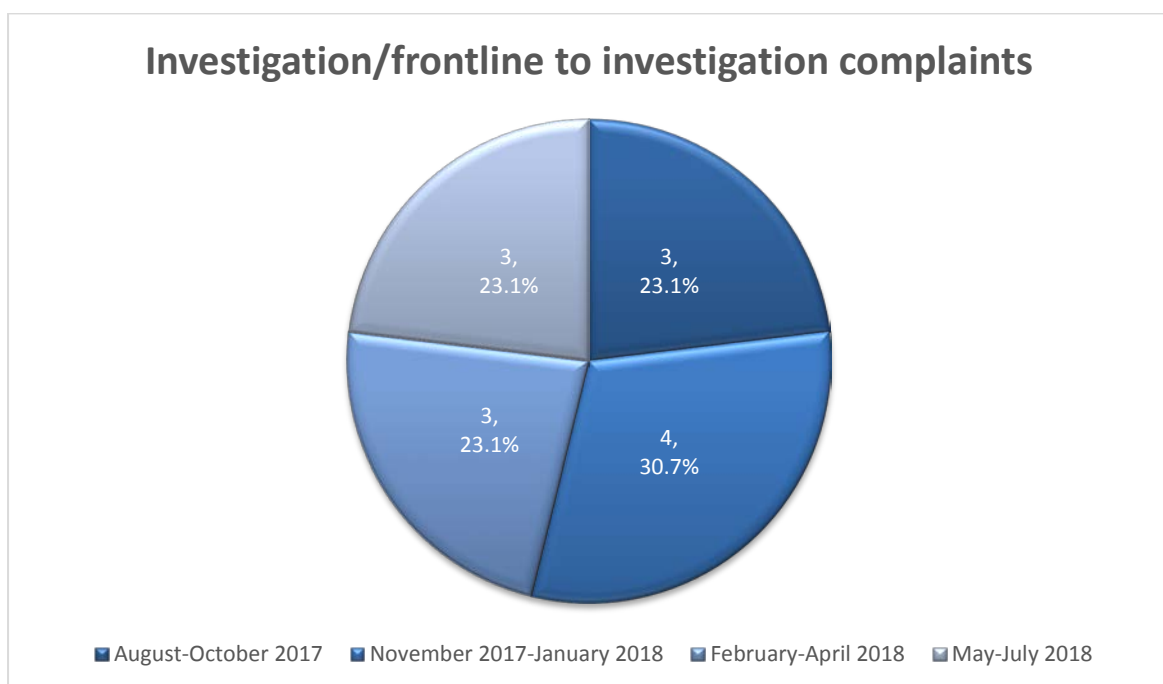


Chart 2 - Total number of stage 2 complaints received

The following table shows the number and percentage of complaints closed at frontline (within the 5 day timescale) and investigation (within the 20 day timescale).

Stage	Total complaints	Number closed within SPSO time limits	Percentage
Frontline (stage 1)	48	23	47.9% of stage 1 complaints
Investigation (stage 2)	13	5	38.5% of stage 2 complaints

3. AVERAGE TIME TAKEN TO RESOLVE A COMPLAINT

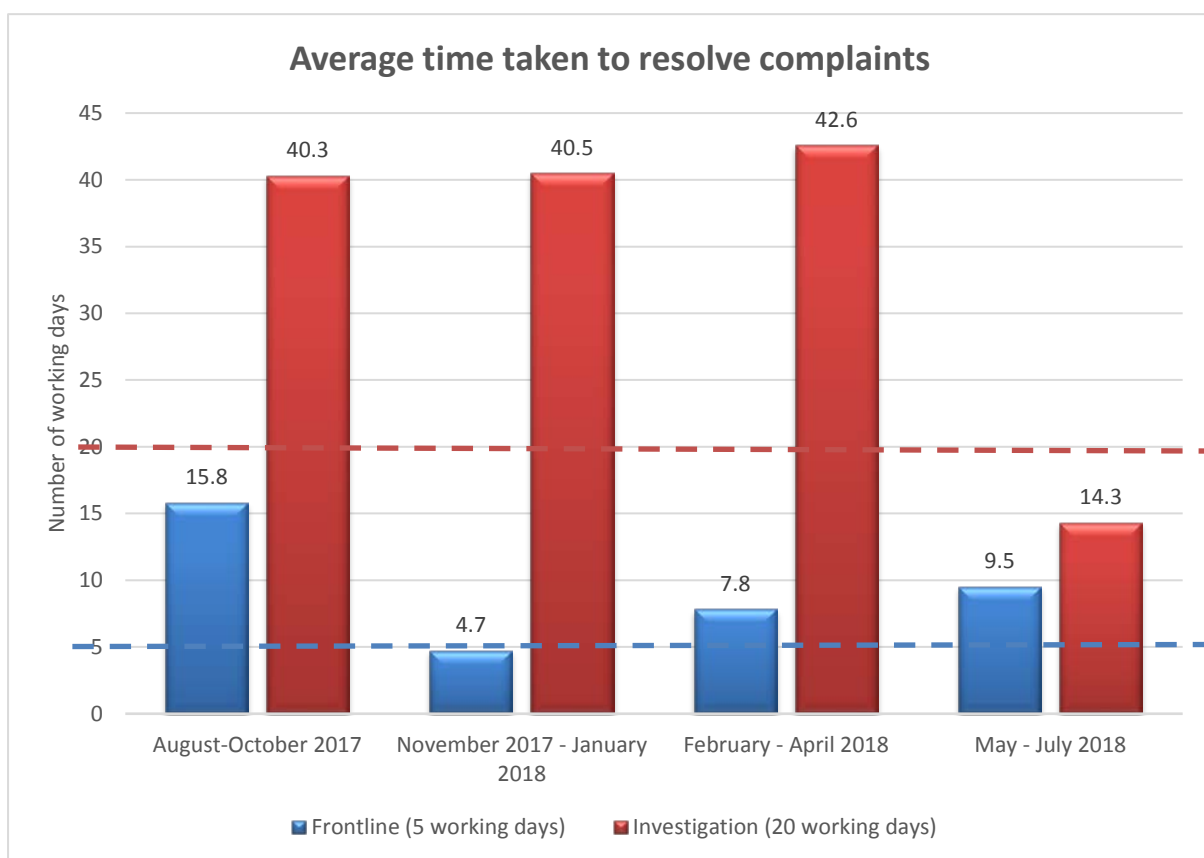


Chart 3 - Average time taken to resolve complaints

Average complaint periods were longer than normal due to staff annual leave, University summer vacation where students had left Dundee and were therefore unavailable to engage in the process, complaints from students at overseas partners and adverse weather conditions where many University staff members were unable to travel to work.

The following table shows the number and percentage of complaints where an extension to the frontline/investigation working day time limit had been authorised. In these cases, the complaints handler/investigator remained in contact with the complainant.

Stage	Number of complaints dealt with where an extension was authorised	Percentage
Frontline (stage 1)	3	6.25% of all stage 1 complaints
Investigation (stage 2)	5	38.5% of all stage 2 complaints

4. NATURE OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

Charts 4 and 5 show the nature of complaints received at each stage (including number and percentage). As can be seen, at stage 1, the largest number of complaints received are regarding teaching/assessment or staff/student conduct. This is not the case at stage 2 where the largest number of complaints were regarding University Policies, Procedures and Regulations or Admissions/Fee Status.

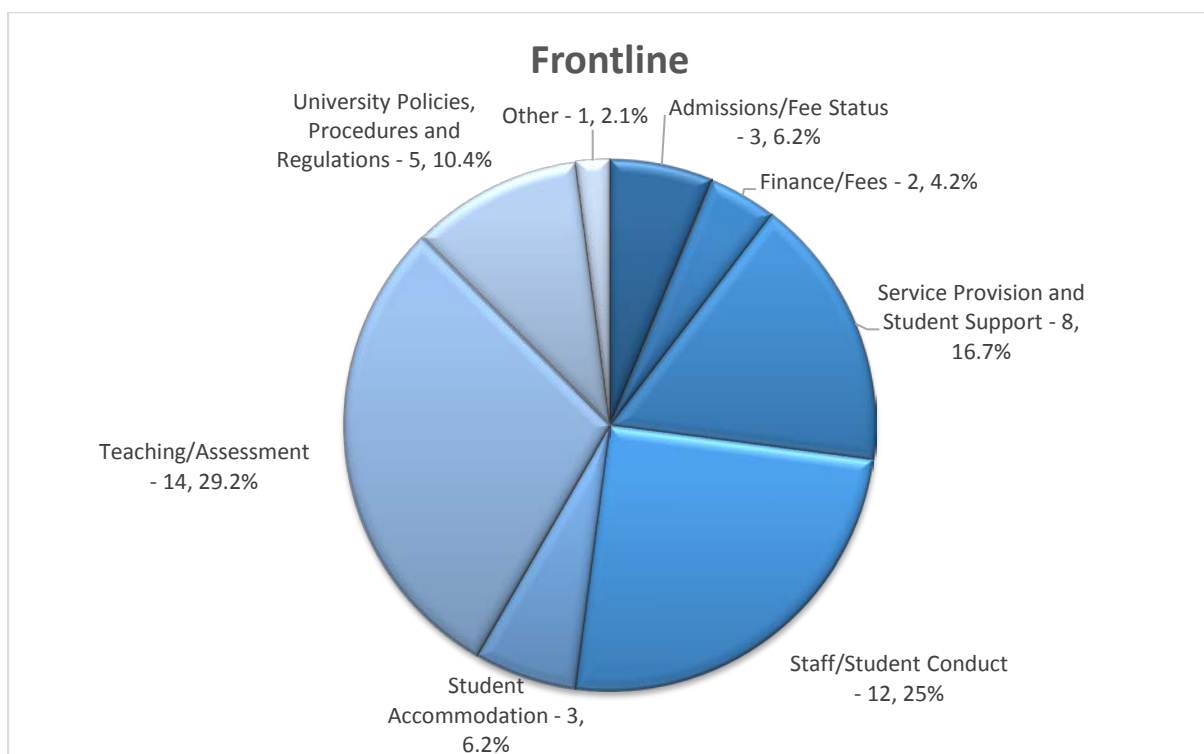


Chart 4 - Nature of complaints dealt with at stage 1

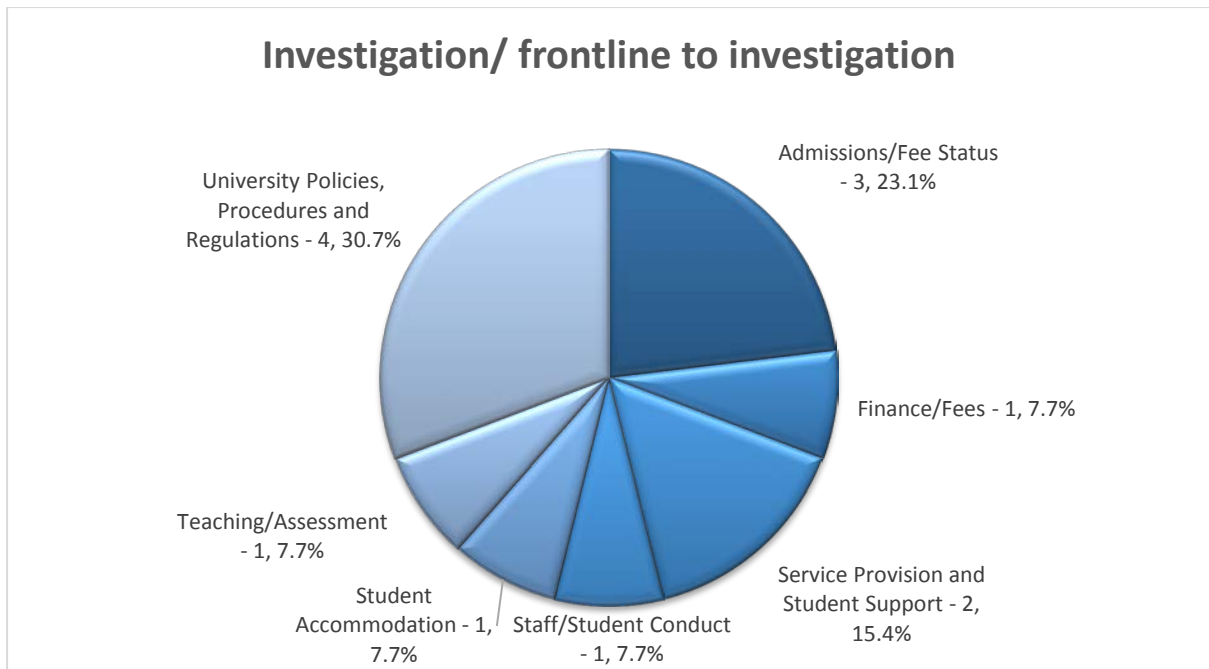


Chart 5 - Nature of complaints dealt with at stage 2

5. OUTCOME OF COMPLAINTS

Chart 6 shows the outcome of complaints at each stage. Where the outcome of a stage 1 complaint was not accepted, the complaint was assigned to one of our trained complaints investigators to consider under stage 2.

Although not indicated to the University following completion of stage 2 of their complaint, there were 4 complainants who remained dissatisfied and took their complaints to the SPSO.

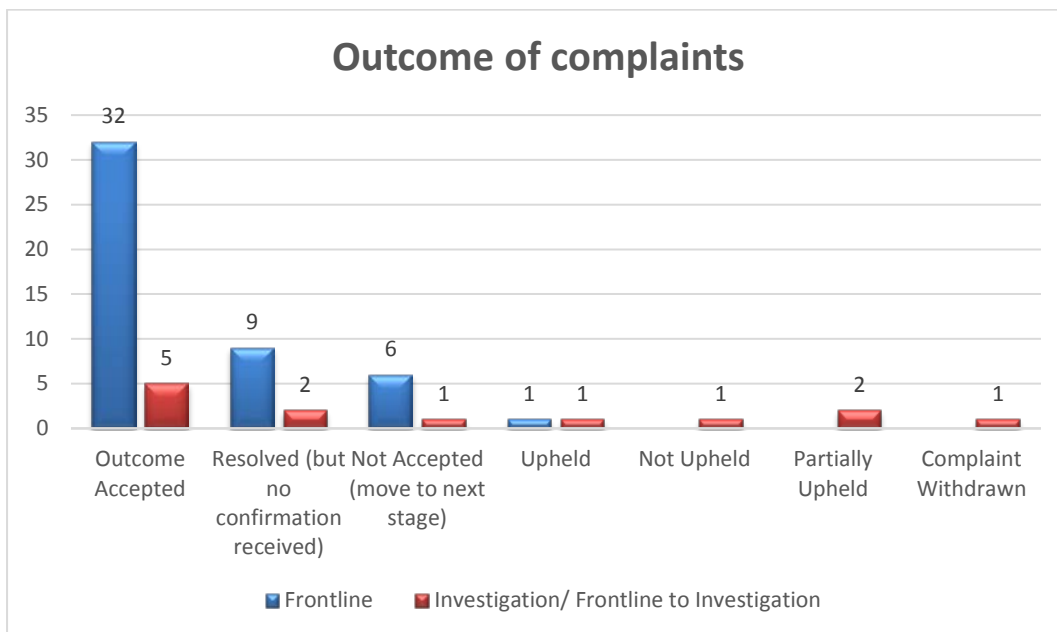


Chart 6 - Outcome of complaints

The following table shows the above data as percentages of the total complaints closed at each stage.

	Stage 1 - frontline (48 complaints)	Stage 2 - investigation (13 complaints)
Outcome Accepted	66.7%	38.4%
Resolved (no confirmation received)	18.8%	15.4%
Not Accepted	12.5%	7.7%
Upheld	2%	7.7%
Partially Upheld	N/A	15.4%
Not Upheld	N/A	7.7%
Withdrawn	N/A	7.7%

6. LESSONS LEARNED

In terms of the University's Vision we are committed to shaping our actions and decisions around a set of core values. These values are critical to our complaints handling process. They are to value people, to work together, to have integrity in what we do, to endeavour to make a difference and to have excellence at the heart of our interactions with others.

You Said	We Did
Concerns about length of time taken to send documents overseas	Administrative procedures to be reviewed regarding posting documents overseas
Complaints about inappropriate staff behaviour	Reminders sent to staff about the requirement for them to behave in a professional manner
Issues with rooms in Residences buildings - i.e. dampness and radiators not working	Recommendations made to introduce an inventory for residents along with a checklist to complete prior to moving in
Problems with people smoking outside Main Library	Established a clear no smoking area outside the building by painting yellow lines on the pavement
Issues with clarity on assessment of fee status	Website updated to ensure information clearer on how the University assesses fee status

Online application form not clear with regards to how payment of fees will be made

Recommendations made to School concerned to update online form by changing the wording of the particular question to ensure clarity for applicants

7. TRENDS

The chart below shows the number of complaints dealt with at stage 1, stage 2 and overall since the CHP was introduced in 2013. This year saw a rise in the number of complaints recorded. This could be attributed to the continued training of staff within Schools and Directorates on how the CHP operates and subsequent reporting of complaints.

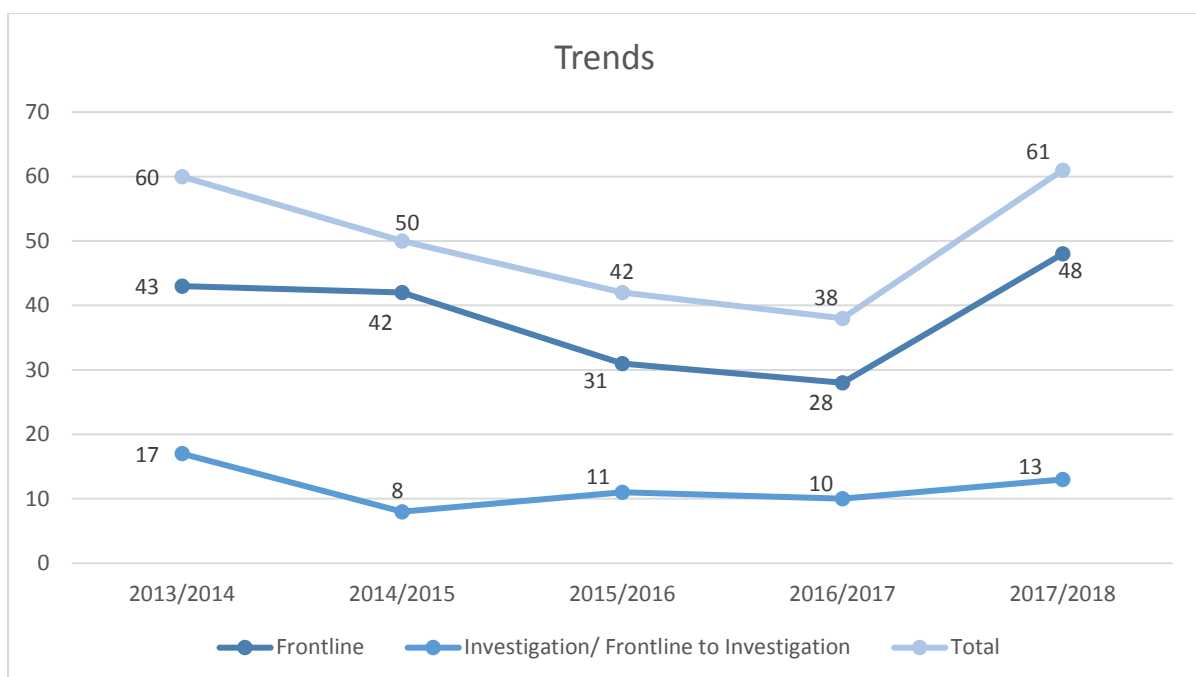


Chart 7 - Trends in number of complaints