

UWS Complaints Handling Procedure Session 2019/20 - Annual Report

1. Introduction

This report provides brief details on how the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) dealt with its internal Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) for the academic session 2019/20 and provides statistics on the number of complaints considered under its CHP.

2. Reporting on Complaints

This is the 7th annual report on how UWS deals with complaints using the SPSO Complaints Handling procedure model. The report covers the period from 1st August 2019 to 31st July 2020. The diagrams on pages 6-10 provide the information in diagrammatic format.

3. Analysis of the information

3.1. Stage 1 complaints

In 2018/19, there were 57 Stage 1 complaints while in 2019/20, there were 17 (decrease of 70%).

The UWS CHP indicates that Stage 1 complaints should be completed within 5 days. In 2019/20, 82% of Stage 1 complaints were concluded within the 5 days, with the average time taken overall for completion of Stage 1 complaints being 6 days.

3.2 Stage 1 complaints - School/Department and Campus

The School or Department the complaint relates to	Campus	No. of Complaints
Commercial Services (Student Residences)	Paisley	1
School of BCI	Ayr	1
School of BCI	Lanarkshire	1
School of BCI	London	1
School of BCI	Paisley	2
School of CEPS	Paisley	1
School of ESS	Ayr	2
School of ESS	Lanarkshire	3
School of HLS	Dumfries	1
School of HLS	London	1
School of HLS	Paisley	3
TOTAL		17

3.3 Stage 2 Complaints

In session 2018/19, 10 Stage 2 complaints were undertaken – in comparison to 7 in 2019/20.

The UWS CHP indicates that Stage 2 complaints should be completed within 20 days, the average time taken to resolve a Stage 2 Complaint this year was 17 days (was 16 days in session 18/19).

3.4 Stage 2 complaints - School/Department and Campus

The School or Department the complaint relates to	Campus	No. of complaints
School of BCI	Paisley	3
School of ESS	Ayr	2
School of ESS	Paisley	1
School of HLS	London	1
TOTAL		7

4. Lessons learned as a result of the consideration of a complaint

In addition to resolution of individual complaints, it is important that UWS learns from each complaint, in order to minimise repeat complaints and to improve the services provided to our students and stakeholders. To achieve this, Schools, Departments and Stage 2 Investigation Officers are expected to provide 'lessons learned' information at both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the complaints process.

Occasionally, SPSO also requests that UWS address recommendations that have been made following consideration of complaints referred to them when the complainant has exhausted the UWS Complaints Handling Procedure.

The following examples of lessons learned during Session 2019/20 should be shared with all colleagues to ensure that the UWS student experience continues to improve:-

- Lecturer's conduct towards student in class – a School took action to remind all staff about the importance of their professional conduct in carrying out their role as academic staff at UWS.
- School online exam - the School took action to ensure measures were in place to minimise the risk of such a procedural issue in future assessment activity. (Problem accessing completed online assessment).
- Supervision – It was acknowledged that changes to supervision had been required due to staff changes - staff left the University through retiral and ill health - circumstances beyond the School's control.

5. SPSO decisions received during academic session 2019/20

UWS Process	UWS Session relating to case	Quarter decision received	SPSO Decision
Complaint	2019/20	May-Jul 2020	Not Investigated - academic judgement
Complaint	2017/18	Nov-Jan 2020	Not upheld

As you can see from the above information, no cases had been upheld by SPSO during this reporting period.

6. Conclusion

Again, this session, there is clear evidence from the day-to-day working with complaints that Schools and Departments have a better understanding of complaints and how to conclude them quickly and effectively. The University's Appeals & Academic Conduct Office is in regular contact with colleagues in Schools, Professional Services Departments and the Executive Team to ensure that all colleagues commit to resolving complaints as early as possible.

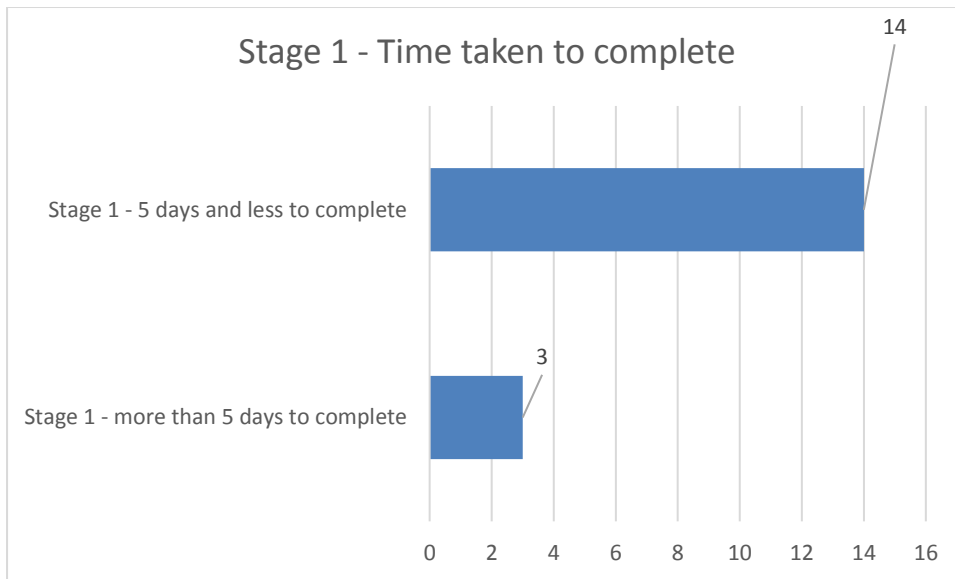
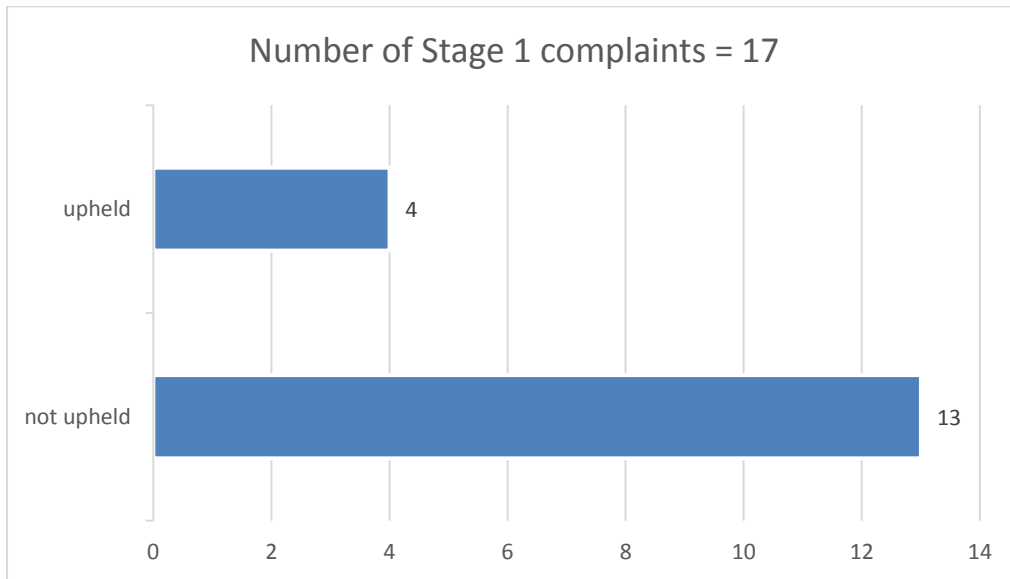
I would like to thank colleagues across the University for their support when handling complaints and look forward to working with them next Session.

Nina Anderson-Knox, Interim Head of Registry
Christine Davis, Appeals & Conduct Officer, Registry

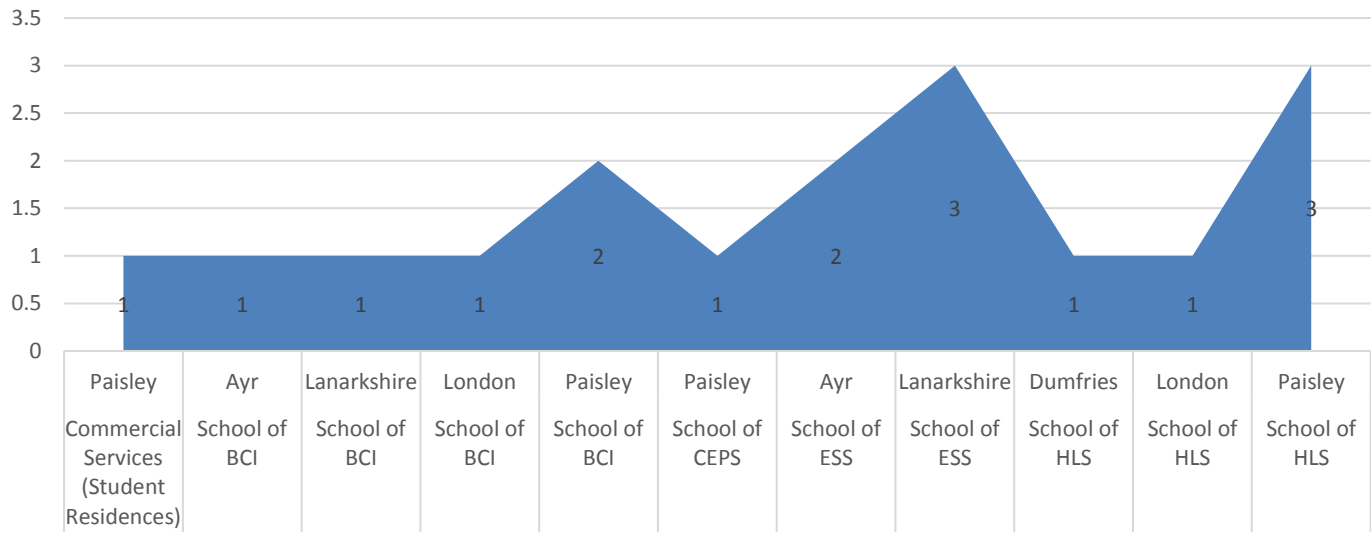
6th October 2020

COMPLAINTS RECORD 1st August 2019-31st July 2020

STAGE 1

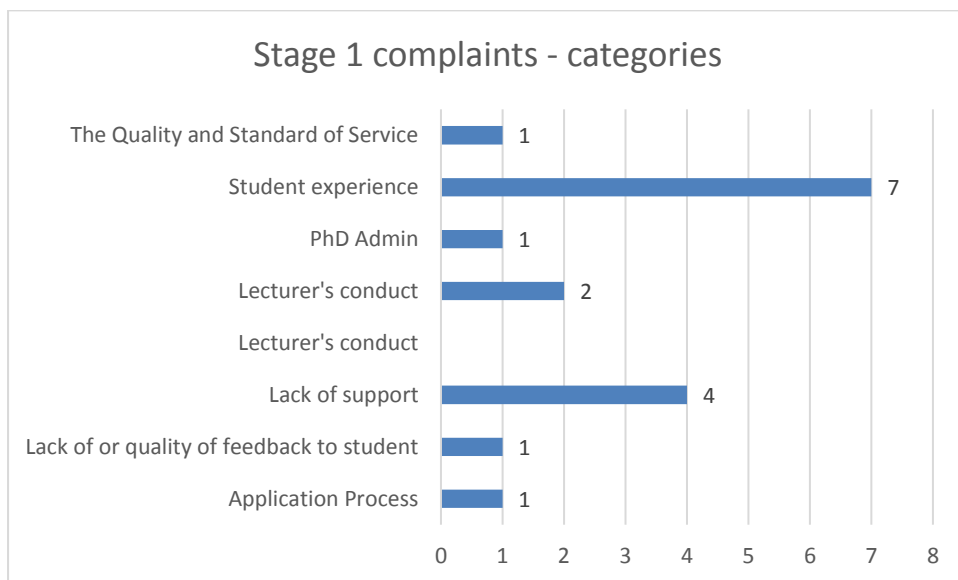


No. of Stage 1 Complaints by School/Department



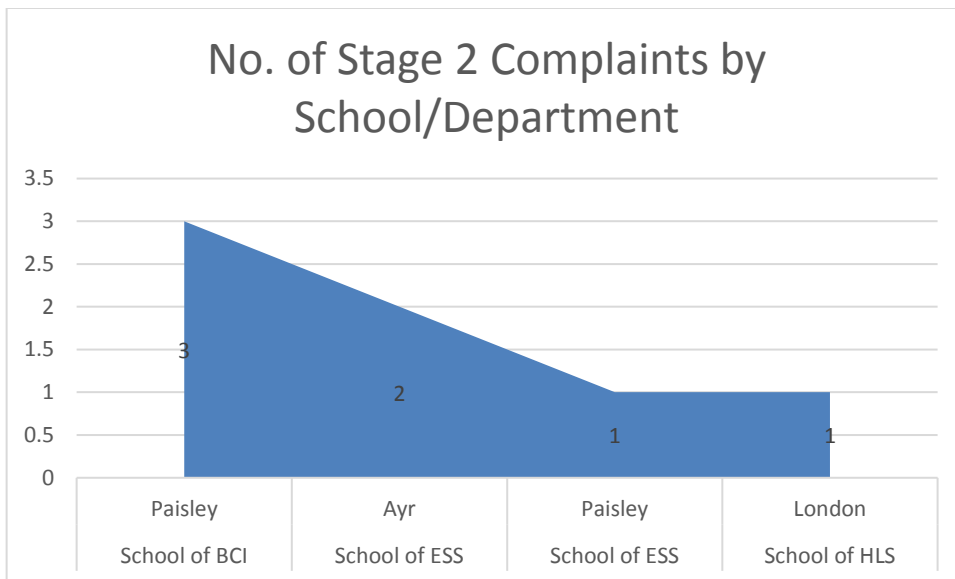
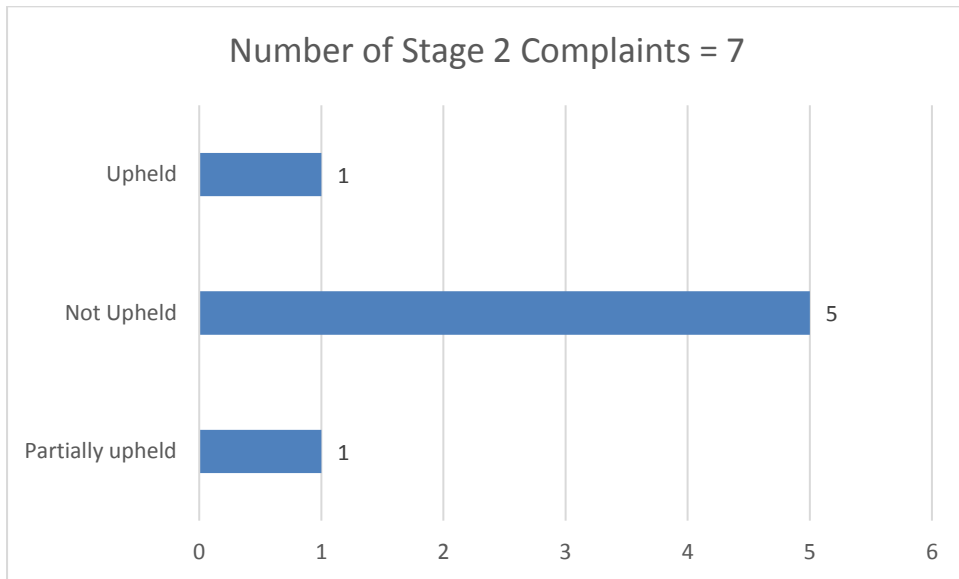
COMPLAINTS RECORD 1st August 2018-31st July 2019

STAGE 1 (cont'd)



COMPLAINTS RECORD 1st August 2018-31st July 2019

STAGE 2



Time taken to complete Stage 2

