



## REPORT TO ELT ON COMPLAINTS HANDLING

### ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/26: FIRST QUARTER

#### SEPTEMBER 2025 – NOVEMBER 2025

## 1. Background

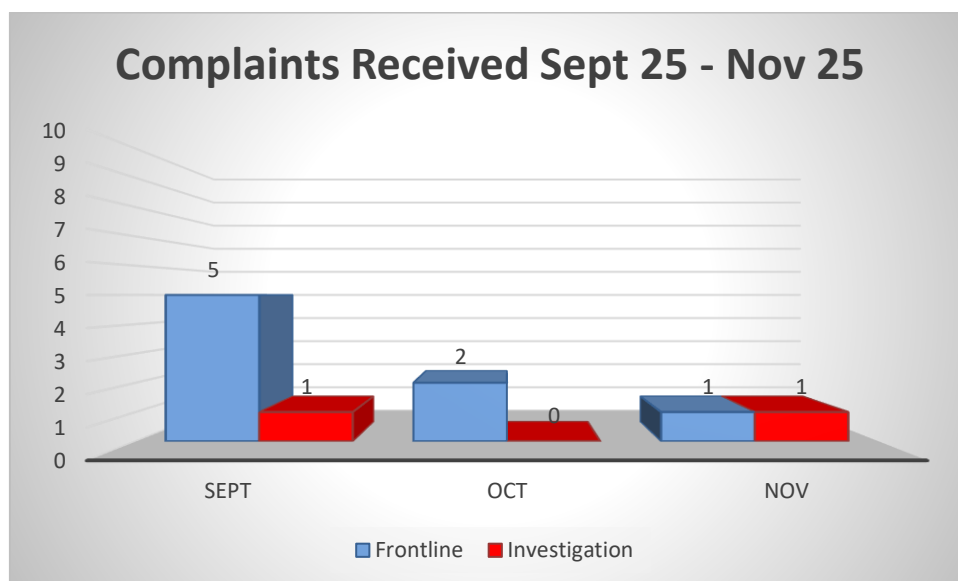
In common with all other Scottish Higher Education Institutions, SRUC introduced a Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) in August 2013. The introduction and content of the CHP was driven by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). An updated Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) was introduced by SPSO and implemented by SRUC in April 2021.

The updated procedure continues to use the two internal stages, Frontline Resolution (Stage 1) by the service provider and Investigation (Stage 2) by a neutral independent investigation officer. When these two internal stages have been completed the complainant, if not satisfied, can ask the SPSO to review the handling of the complaint.

The SPSO requires quarterly reporting on the numbers of complaints and that Universities carry out an analysis of the CHP including the type of complaints, length of time to respond and learning outcomes.

## 2. Quarterly Complaints Data

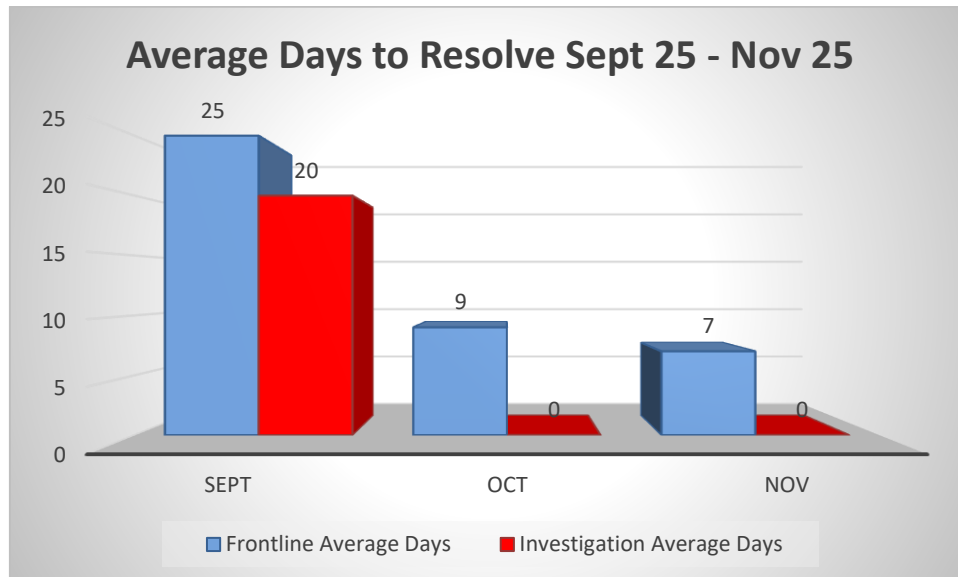
### 2.1 Number of Complaints Received this quarter



## 2.2 Time taken to deal with complaints

The SPSO target timescales for resolving complaints are 5 working days for Frontline Resolution and 20 working days for Investigation cases.

The following chart sets out the average number of working days taken to resolve complaints during this quarter.



## 2.3 Decisions made

- Of the eight Stage 1 complaints received this quarter
  - 1 was Upheld
  - 2 were Not Upheld
  - 3 were Partially Upheld
  - 2 were escalated to Stage 2
- The Stage 2 complaint received in September has been investigated and now closed – the outcome was partially upheld. The November complaint is still ongoing.

## 2.4 Nature of Complaints

The complaints received fell under the following categories

- Teaching and or Assessment including quality or quantity
- Quality or level of service provided
- University Policy, Procedures and or Administration
- Staff Attitude and or Conduct

### **3. Complaint Referred to SPSO**

No complaints have been referred to SPSO from this quarter. However, two complaints were investigated by SPSO from cases received during AY 2024/25. Both cases have now been investigated and closed. SPSO were content with our response and actions implemented as necessary.

### **4. Learning Points/Comments**

This quarter saw 10 complaints received, with higher numbers towards the start of the term.

Three Stage 1 complaints took longer than usual to investigate and close. One was due to staff illness/holidays and confirming information regarding an internal process. Two were longer due to a delayed response from the complainants as they did not want to settle their accounts until the candidates had been assessed by an external trainer.

Apart from the above, the number of complaints received to date does not allow any particular conclusions to be drawn in relation to the CHP.

December 2025