



REPORT TO ELT ON COMPLAINTS HANDLING
ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/26: SECOND QUARTER
DECEMBER 2025 – FEBRUARY 2026

1. Background

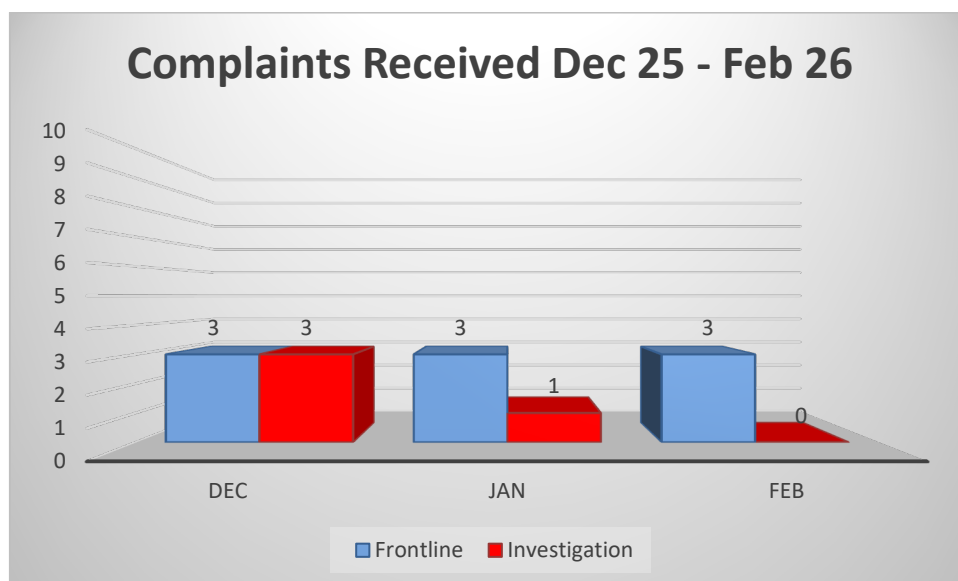
In common with all other Scottish Higher Education Institutions, SRUC introduced a Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) in August 2013. The introduction and content of the CHP was driven by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). An updated Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) was introduced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

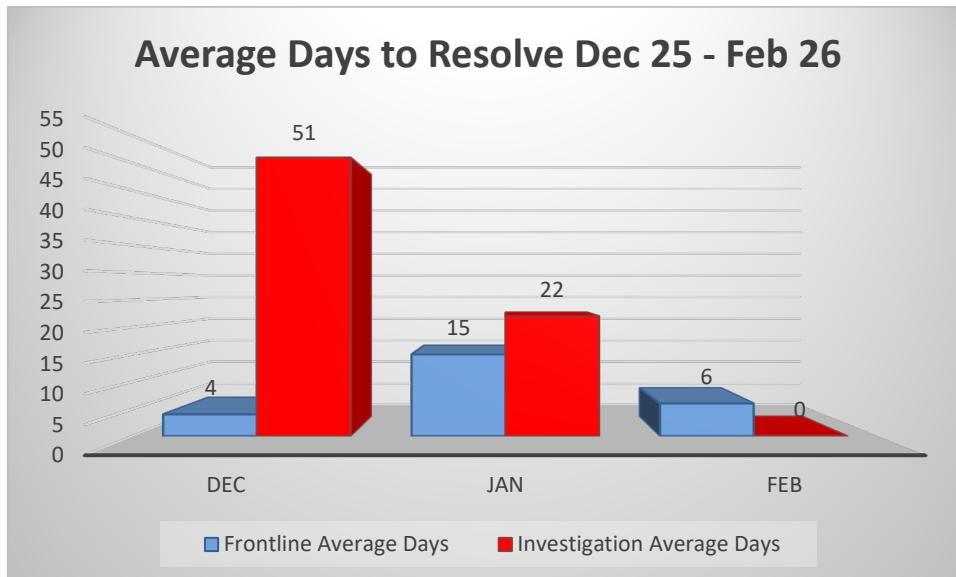
2.1 Number of Complaints Received this quarter



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 nine Stage 1 complaints received this quarter
 - 3 were Upheld
 - 2 were Not Upheld (1 escalated to a Stage 2)
 - 4 were Partially Upheld
- A total of four Stage 2 complaints were received during this quarter

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
- Meeting of special needs (e.g. provision for a disability)
- Pastoral Support (course tutor/advisor of studies)

3. Complaint Referred to SPSO

During the reporting quarter, one case was submitted directly to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). However, as the submission fell out with SPSO timescales, they determined that the application could not be considered and, consequently, concluded that no investigation could be undertaken.

4. Learning Points/Comments

This quarter saw 13 complaints received, with higher numbers towards the start of the term.

A couple of Stage 1 complaints took longer to resolve than usual. One due to a specific timeframe that the complainant could be contacted within which delayed communication and also partly due to additional information being gathered from other departments in order to fully answer the complaint.

One Stage 2 complaint took an exceptionally long time to resolve partly due to the winter break period but predominantly due to a delay in the complainant responding. A new Stage 2 investigator also required to be appointed due to a staffing change within SRUC.

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.

April 2026