

COMPLAINTS HANDLING ANNUAL REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR SEPTEMBER 2021 – AUGUST 2022

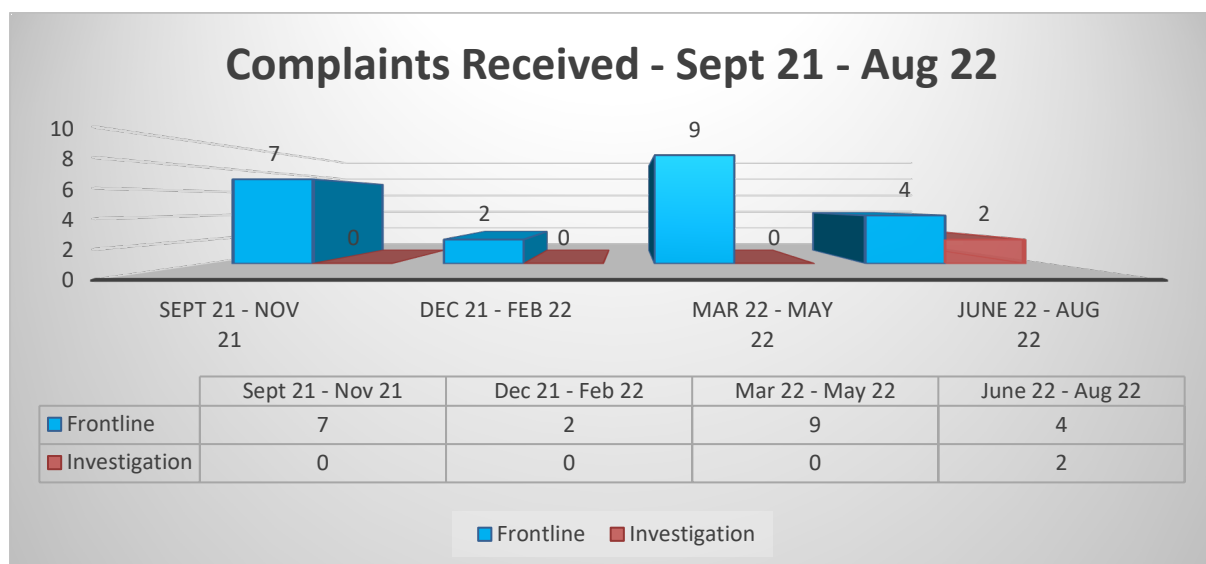
1. Background

In common with all other Scottish Higher and Further 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. This report provides a summary and analysis of complaints handled by SRUC in the Academic Year 2021-2022, the ninth year of the CHP/MCHP.

The updated MCHP procedure continues to use two internal stages, Frontline Resolution (Stage 1) by the service provider and Investigation (Stage 2) by a neutral independent investigation officer. The emphasis is on the prompt resolution of complaints at the point closest to their occurrence. After the Investigation stage has concluded a complainant, if still dissatisfied, can appeal externally to the SPSO.

2. Annual Complaints Data

2.1 Number of Complaints



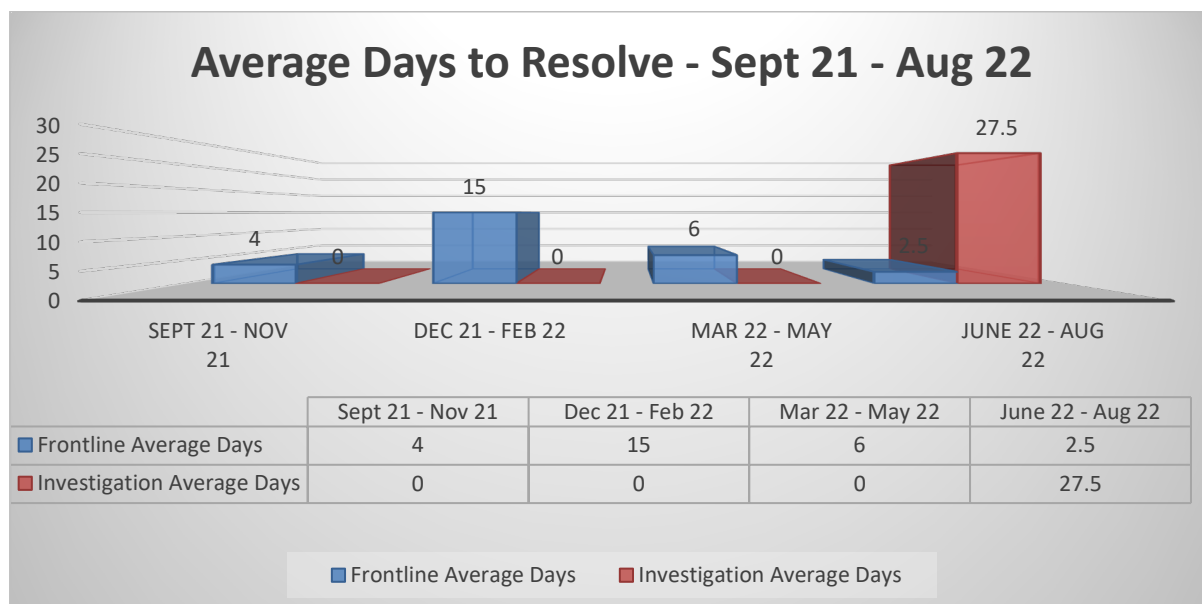
Academic Year	Total number of complaints recorded	From members of the public	From or on behalf of students (includes applicants)
2021-2022	24	2	21

Complaints received from staff were referred for review under SRUC's HR policies and procedures. Complaints in respect of commercial services, for example, related to services offered by SAC Commercial are not recorded in the CHP but are subject to separate procedures.

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. It is not always possible to deal with complaints within these time scales due to holidays, illness or occasionally because a complaint is complex and involves liaising with a number of individuals.

This chart sets out the average number of working days taken to resolve complaints.

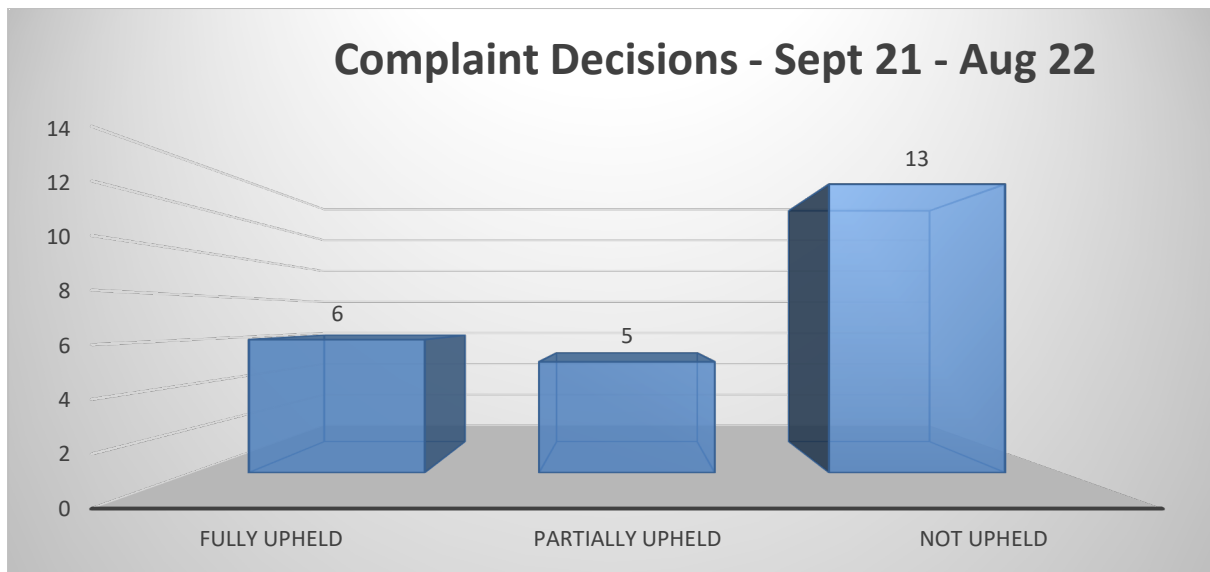


The target dates for dealing with Stage 2 complaints were not achieved in both of the cases this year. In one of the cases the reason for this was the need to collate the information required from various members of staff during the full investigations within the time limits imposed by the CHP for responding. In the other Stage 2 complaint, the complainant had a long period of illness and was unable continue with the complaint for some time.

The majority of Stage 1 complaints met the required target dates, and holiday breaks were the main reason for those front line resolution that did not meet the target of five days.

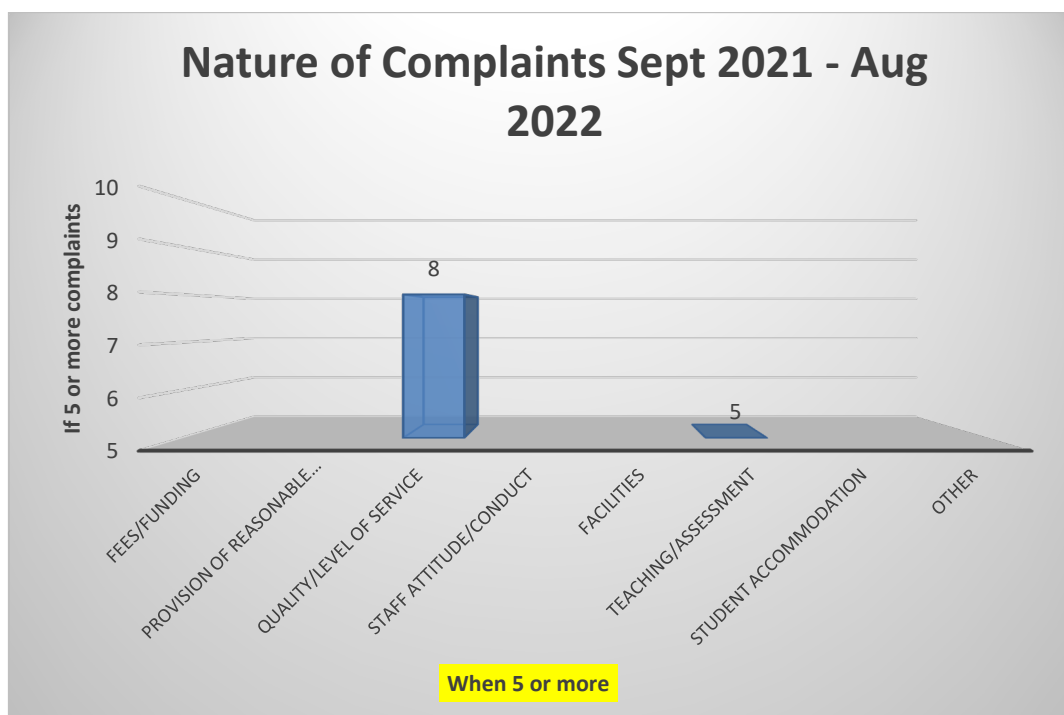
2.3 Complaint Decisions

The following chart summarises the decisions made during the year.



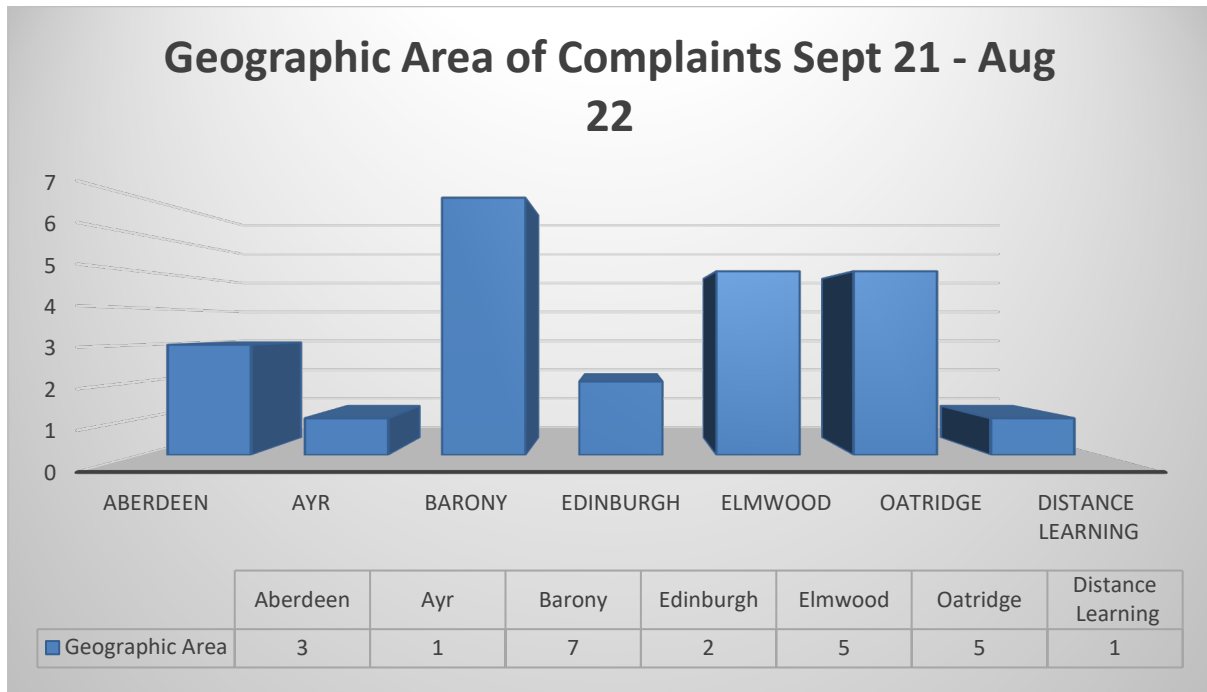
2.4 Nature of Complaints

Of the complaints received during the academic year 2021-22 most have been made with the Academic Division. The following graph sets out the category of complaints received, where complaints received have numbered over 5. Due to the requirement of publishing complaints data, in line with many other organisations, we are not publishing data less than 5 so that individual cases cannot be identified. Column titles indicate areas where less than 5 complaints were received.



2.5 Geographical area of complaints received

SRUC currently deliver from six locations across Scotland and also run Distance Learning Courses. The graph below shows the geographic locations of where complaints originated from.



3. Learning Points

The low level of complaints recorded makes it difficult to draw specific learning points from this year of operation of the CHP in respect of SRUC's service delivery. However, the low level of complaints recorded, and the geographic concentration of complaints indicates that there may be under-recording of complaints.

1 November 2022