

Complaints Handling Procedure Quarterly Report

Introduction

This is the fourth Complaints Handling Procedure Quarterly Report for the 2016-17 Academic Year. The report examines data relating to complaints received within the period 1 May – 31 July 2017. Glasgow Clyde College regards an expression of dissatisfaction as an opportunity to review and amend practice where appropriate, therefore data analysis and attention to themes helps us to monitor and improve our services.

Performance Indicators 1 May – 31 July 2017

| Total number of complaints received and complaints received per 100 population | | |
|---|-----------|--------|
| Number of complaints Received | 65 | |
| College Population and Number of Complaints received per 100 population | 12006 | 0.5 |
| Number of complaints closed at each stage and as a % of all complaints closed | | |
| Number of complaints closed at Stage 1 and % of total closed | 59 | 90.8% |
| Number of complaints closed at Stage 2 and % of total closed | 4 | 6.2% |
| Number of complaints closed after Escalation and % of total closed | 2 | 3.1% |
| Open | 0 | 0.0% |
| No. of complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld at each stage of complaints closed at that stage | | |
| Stage 1 | | |
| Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 1 | 52 | 88.1% |
| Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 1 | 7 | 11.9% |
| Stage 2 | | |
| Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 2 | 1 | 25.0% |
| Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 2 | 3 | 75.0% |
| Escalated | | |
| Number and % of complaints upheld after Escalation | 0 | 0.0% |
| Number and % of complaints not upheld after Escalation | 2 | 100.0% |

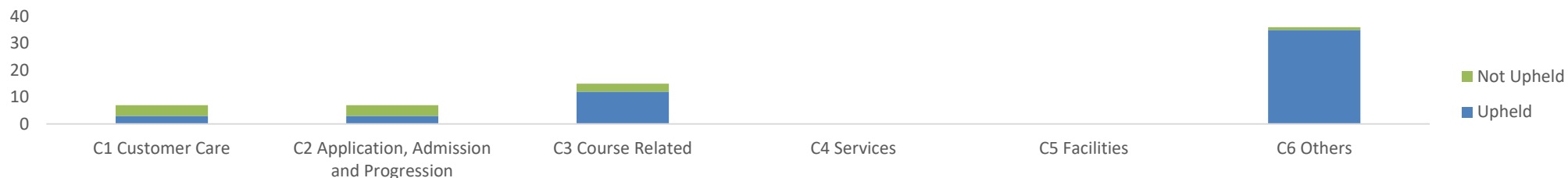
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Performance Indicators 1 May – 31 July 2017 continued

| Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at each stage | | |
|---|-----|--------|
| Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 1 | 157 | 2.7 |
| Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 2 | 39 | 9.7 |
| Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints after Escalation | 24 | 12.0 |
| Number / % complaints closed within set timescales (S1=5 working days; S2=20 working days ; Escalated = 20 working days) | | |
| Number and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 5 working days | 56 | 94.9% |
| Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed with 5 working days | 3 | 5.1% |
| Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 20 working days | 4 | 100.0% |
| Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 20 working days | 0 | 0.0% |
| Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 20 working days | 1 | 50.0% |
| Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 20 working days | 1 | 50.0% |
| Number and % of complaints closed at each stage where extensions have been authorised | | |
| Number and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 10 working days (extension) | 3 | 100.0% |
| Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed within 10 working days (extension) | 0 | 0.0% |
| Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 40 working days (extension) | 0 | 0.0% |
| Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 40 working days (extension) | 0 | 0.0% |
| Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 40 working days (extension) | 1 | 100.0% |
| Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 40 working days (extension) | 0 | 0.0% |

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Complaints by Category with Themes and Lessons Learned



The majority of complaints received during Quarter 4 were in the 'Others' category and 35 of the 36 complaints related to teaching staff industrial action and how it might impact upon student learning and preparedness to pass assessments. All complainants were reassured that the College would put in place suitable arrangements to support them during the period of industrial action, with libraries and other support facilities remaining open during the strike days. In addition, an extra two weeks of teaching was arranged at the end of the final block to ensure that those who felt they had fallen behind were able to catch up.

There were 12 complaints upheld in the Course Related category, eight of those regarding the removal of essential resources from a workshop three weeks prior to the end of the course. Investigation established that the room being used for the evening leisure class was 'cleared up' by the owning department, and larger pieces of machinery were removed by accident. As soon as the error was discovered, arrangements were made to urgently reinstate required machinery and complainants were offered a partial refund, as appropriate. One student was unhappy with the time taken to mark an assessment and it was agreed that feedback should have been provided sooner. An apology was offered and the work marked forthwith. Similarly, another student was dissatisfied with the length of time taken to mark an assessment, as it was hindering his award certification. The matter was remedied without delay and the student result was updated. One complainant (employer) was unhappy with late cancellation of a course and lack of notification regarding this. It was agreed that as well as emailing the student, the College should have made direct contact with the employer to advise of the course cancellation. Procedures within the department have since been updated to ensure that employers, as well as students are notified of any significant amendments to courses. The remaining complainant was dissatisfied that an examination had been rescheduled at the last minute without notifying him. It transpired that the exam only student was undertaking the assessment along with a taught class group, and although the main class group were notified of the change of exam time, an administrative oversight meant that the complainant was not included in the notification email. An apology was provided and a refund was given. In addition, the complainant was offered a free resit at the next occurrence of the exam and the opportunity to join the next class group to 'refresh' the materials, at no cost.

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Complaints by Category with Themes and Lessons Learned continued

There were three complaints upheld in the Customer Care category, all in relation to staff conduct. In each case, it was established that staff should have handled situations more considerately. In all instances an apology was offered and appropriate action was taken to resolve the communication difficulties, including identification of a requirement for customer service training.

There were three complaints upheld in the Application, Admissions and Progression category. One complainant was unhappy that a course was still being advertised on the College website, despite all available places being accepted by other applicants already. An apology was given and the complainant was offered the option of a full time waiting list place, or alternatively a guaranteed part time evening position. A further complaint was received on the same theme and it was established that there had been a problem with internal communications leading to the course not being closed in a timely manner on the College website. The complainant was offered an apology and staff involved have since been reminded about accepted practice for closing applications. The third complainant was unhappy not to be offered a place on his preferred course, and following investigation it was established that reasonable adjustments had not been made. The applicant was subsequently offered a place on the course. Following this issue, staff within the department were provided with training on reasonable adjustments and how to keep effective guidance records for students.

Customer Satisfaction

Post response surveys were emailed to complainants approximately ten days after their complaint was closed, and of those sent, only two complainants responded.

One of the two respondents was aware of the College Complaints Handling Procedure before making their complaint and one of the two found it easy to access the information they required to make their complaint. One of the two respondents indicated that they were unable to get help from College staff to make their complaint; whilst the other did not require assistance. Both however agreed it was easy to make a complaint.

Both complainants also agreed that their complaint had been taken seriously, but neither felt their complaint had been properly investigated. One complainant (whose complaint related to how industrial action may impact his son's studies) felt that the response he received did not address the issues raised commenting that *'the reply whilst somewhat reassuring was largely generic and not specific enough to reassure me that my son's coursework was going to be completed to the necessary level to progress to his second year at the appropriate level for University access. My son was kept in the dark at times during his course and certain elements were missed out without adequate explanation and sounded to me quite disorganised at times'*.

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Customer Satisfaction continued

One complainant was satisfied that the response they received addressed the issues detailed within their complaint, however the other complainant did not feel that the issues she raised were addressed commenting that *'I was disappointed that my complaint was handled by the same person who did not deal with the issue in the first place...there were several discrepancies and unanswered questions. I do not feel satisfied with the outcome and would like more detailed answers to my original question'*.

Both complainants were happy with the time taken to investigate and respond to their complaint, and agreed that they had been dealt with courteously at all times during the complaint process.