

# Commendations and Complaints Handling Report

Annual Report for Academic Year  
2021/22

# Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP)

The College has a robust Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) in place that mirrors the Model CHP endorsed by the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO). We value feedback received from learners and other stakeholders, and, as part of our continuous improvement culture, seek to learn from the feedback received and improve our processes, where appropriate to enhance the learner experience.

## Complaint Stages

### Stage 1: Frontline Response:

Complaints categorised as a Stage 1 complaint are usually for concerns raised that are straight forward to resolve and require little or no investigation. They can usually be resolved with an on-the-spot apology, explanation or other action to put the matter right. The timescale for responding to a Stage 1 complaint is usually provided in five working days or less, however this can be extended to ten days at peak periods throughout the academic year.

### Stage 2: Investigation:

A complaint is categorised as a Stage 2 complaint, where the complainant is not satisfied with the response at frontline, or where the complaint may be complex or multi faceted. When a Stage 2 complaint is received, we acknowledge the complaint within three working days and contact the complainant to clarify the points of concern and the outcome sought. The timescale for responding to Stage 2 complaints is twenty working days or less following a thorough investigation of the concerns raised.

In both instances, complainants will be advised in their response how to escalate their complaint, request a review, be signposted to the SPSO or other independent organisation for external review i.e. an exam body.

# Commendations and Complaints Received

## **Commendations:**

In Academic Year (AY) 2021/22, Glasgow Kelvin College received 6 commendations. This is a decrease on the previous AY 2020/21, where 36 commendations had been received.

In AY 2022/23, the College intends to publicise the Commendations scheme amongst staff and learners to ensure the exemplary contributions made by our staff on learner successes and to the College is acknowledged.

## **Complaints:**

In Academic Year 2021/22, Glasgow Kelvin College received 43 complaints, as a comparison, there were a total of 39 complaints received in academic year (AY) 2020/21.

### **Stage 1 Complaints:**

The response times for Stage 1 complaints, where a straightforward response was issued in line with the maximum 10-day timescale, was achieved 97% of the time.

### **Stage 2 Complaints:**

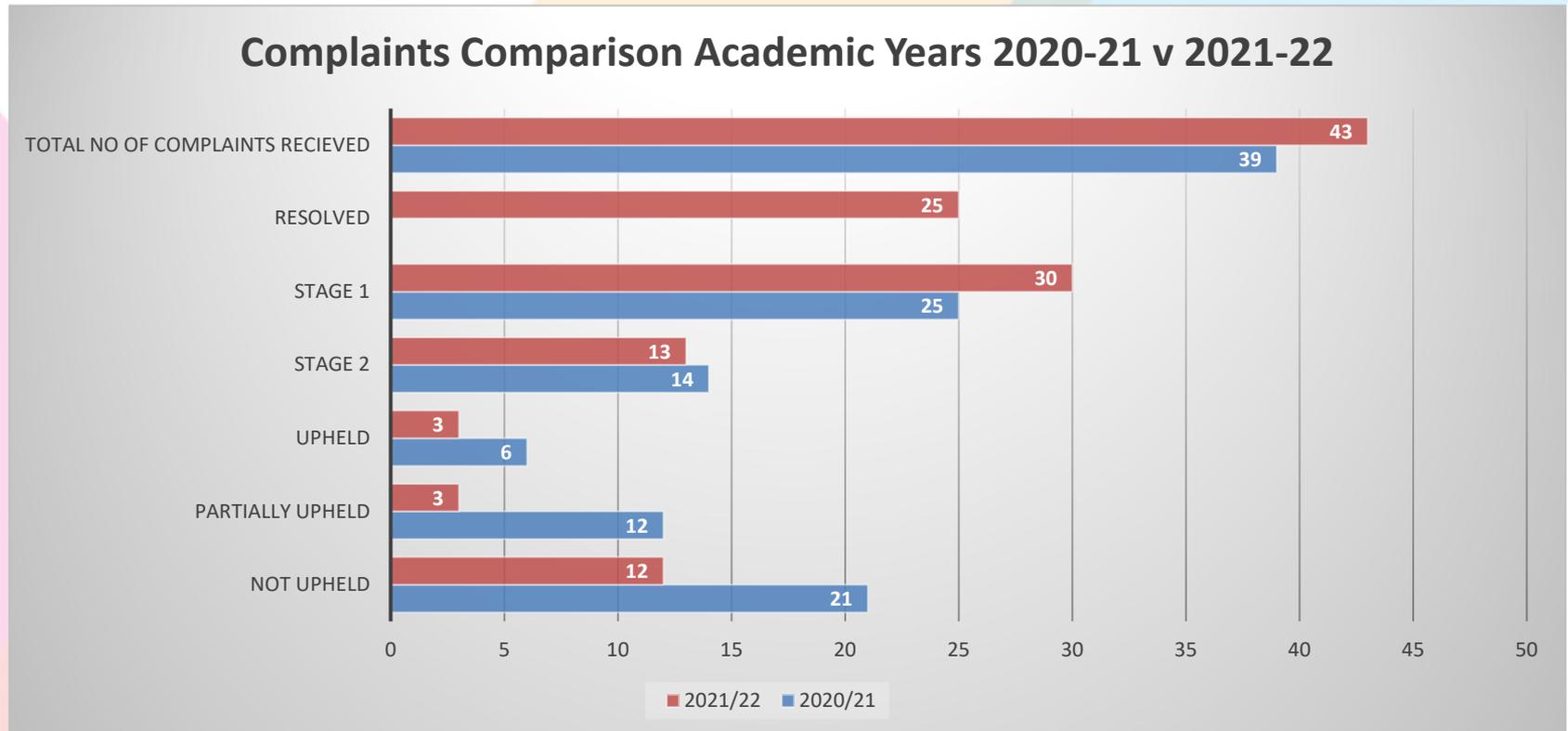
In relation to Stage 2 complaints, a response within the 20-day timescale was achieved 92% of the time.

Where responses have been delayed, this occurred due to the time period the complaints were received (academic holidays), therefore, liaison with key staff as part of investigations into the concerns raised could not take place. It should also be noted that timescales within the CHP does not take into account academic holidays.

As part of our CHP, complainants were informed of the delay and advised when to expect a response. Responses were issued timeously upon the return of the key staff members.

# Complaints Comparison

## Academic Years 2020/21 v 2021-22



Note – Resolved outcome was introduced in Session 2021-22 as per an SPSO recommendation. In some cases, we receive complaints that we may be able to achieve the outcome being sought by the person complaining without carrying out an investigation. We would always consider whether it would be in the public interest to carry out an investigation, even where a satisfactory outcome has been achieved for the individual who has complained.

# Key Performance Indicators

## 01 August 2021 – 31 July 2022

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		2021-22
<b>Total number of complaints received &amp; complaints received per 100 population</b>		%
Number of complaints Received	43	-
College Population and Number of Complaints received per 100 population	15503	0.3
<b>Number of complaints closed at each stage and as a % of all complaints closed</b>		
Number of complaints closed at Stage 1 and % of total closed	30	70
Number of complaints closed at Stage 2 and % of total closed	13	30
Number of complaints closed after Escalation and % of total closed	3	7
Open	0	-
<b>Number of complaints upheld, partially upheld, not upheld or resolved at each stage and as a % of complaints closed at that stage</b>		%
<b>Stage 1</b>		
Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 1	3	10
Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 1	1	3
Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 1	6	20
Number and % of complaints resolved at Stage 1	20	67
<b>Stage 2</b>		
Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 2	0	-
Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 2	2	15
Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 2	6	46
Number and % of complaints resolved at Stage 2	5	39

# Key Performance Indicators

## 01 August 2021 – 31 July 2022

<b>Escalated</b>		
Number and % of complaints upheld after Escalation	0	-
Number and % of complaints partially upheld after Escalation	1	33
Number and % of complaints not upheld after Escalation	2	67
<b>Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at each stage</b>		
Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 1	142	5
Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 2	214	15
Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints after Escalation	38	13
<b>Number and % of complaints closed within set timescales</b> <b>( S1=5 workings days; S2=20 working days; Escalated = 20 working days)</b>		%
Number and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 5 working days	26	87
Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed with 5 working days	4	13
Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 20 working days	12	
Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 20 working days	1	
Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 20 working days	3	
Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 20 working days	0	-
<b>Number and % of complaints closed at each stage where extensions have been authorised</b>		%
Number and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 10 working days ( extension)	4	13
Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed within 10 working days ( extension)	0	-
Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 40 working days ( extension)	1	8
Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 40 working days ( extension)	0	-
Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 40 working days ( extension)	0	-
Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 40 working days ( extension)	0	-

# Recommended Indicators

In this academic year, the SPSO published three new recommended performance indicators with a focus on access to the CHP, staff awareness of the CHP and complaints handling training, and customer satisfaction with the complaints process.

## **Raising Awareness:**

The College seeks to ensure that the CHP is as accessible as possible for our service users. Complaints can be made in person, online via email or contact form, a paper form at our campus receptions, and over the telephone. A handy guide to the CHP for learners has been created to simplify the process and is published alongside the CHP on our website. An area is also available on the MyKelvin app, allowing service users the opportunity to feedback any concerns via a contact form instantly. The College will continue to raise awareness of both the CHP and the Commendations scheme in AY 2022/23.

## **Staff Training in Complaint Handling:**

During AY 2021/22, staff training on the CHP was rolled out across all support teams. In addition, sessions were made available to all staff during staff development days on a block basis. Further training opportunities/awareness raising for staff will continue to be offered throughout AY 2022/23.

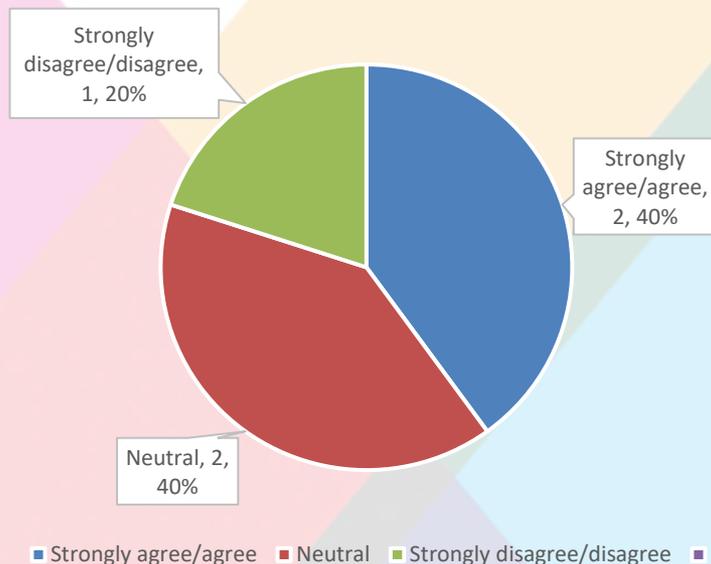
## **Customer Satisfaction with the Complaints Process:**

In response to this new recommended indicator, the College now reaches out to complainants after each quarter to gauge their satisfaction with the complaints process; this is done by issuing a survey to complainants. Surveys were issued to all 43 complainants (5 responses have been received as at 25 August 2022). A brief summary of the data received from the survey follows.

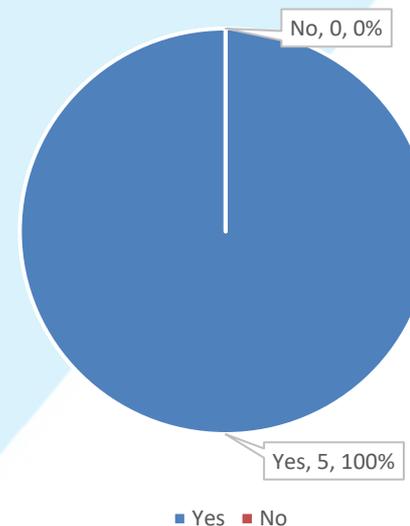
# Customer Satisfaction with the Complaints Process

Surveys were issued to all 43 complainants (5 responses only were received which has been detailed in the pie charts below.)

I found the Complaints Handling Procedure easy to access

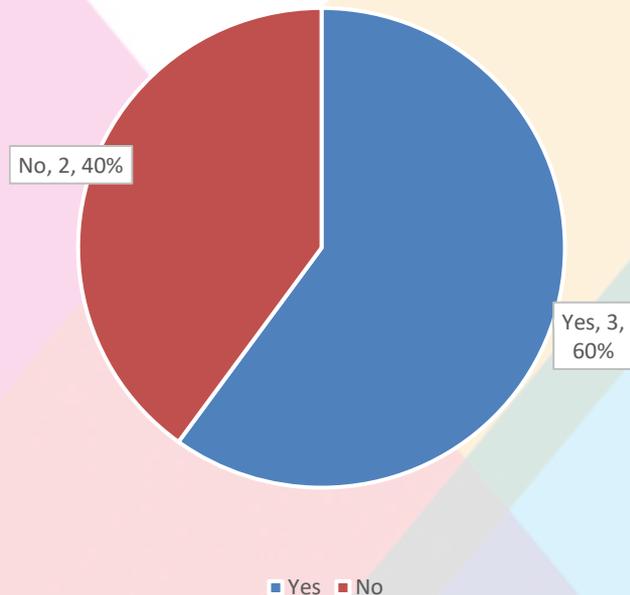


I received an acknowledgement within three working days

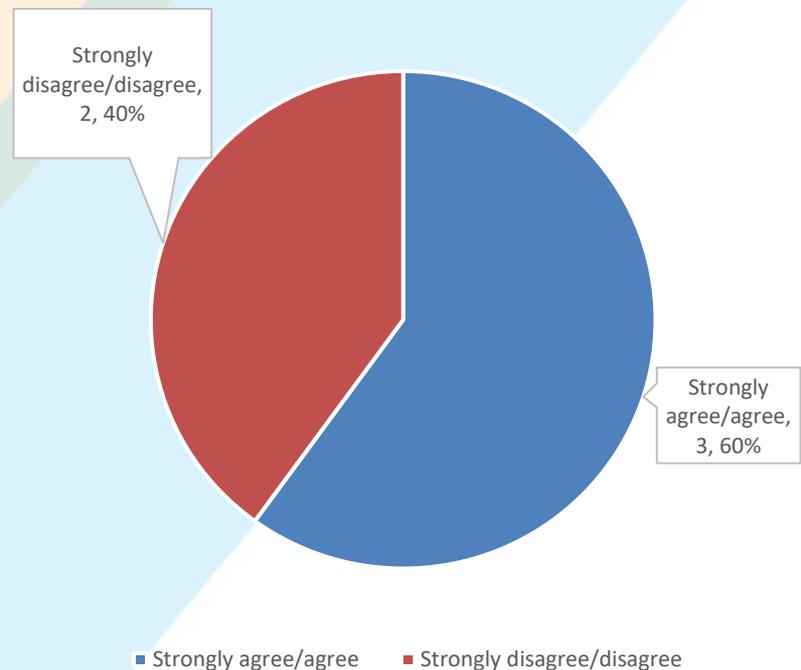


# Customer Satisfaction with the Complaints Process

I received a response within the appropriate timescales



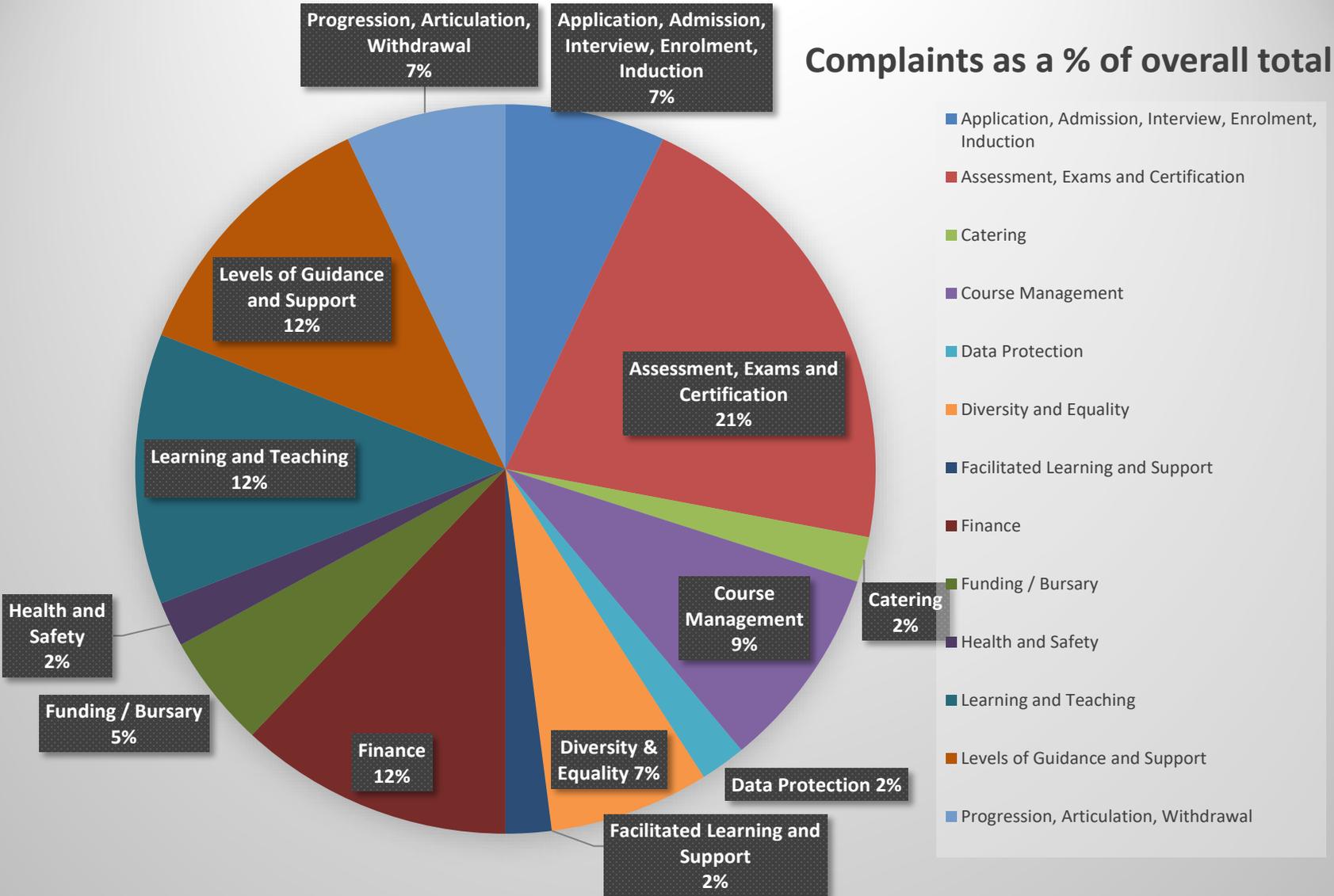
I received a clear response to my complaint



# Complaints Received by Category

Categories of Complaint	% of Overall Total	No. of Complaints Received
<b>C1: Customer Care</b>		
Data Protection	2	1
Diversity and Equality	7	3
Health and Safety	2	1
Levels of Guidance and Support	12	5
<b>C2: Applications to Progression</b>		
Application, Admission, Interview, Enrolment, Induction	7	3
Progression, Articulation, Withdrawal	7	3
<b>C3: Course Related</b>		
Assessment, Exams and Certification	21	9
Course Management	9	4
Facilitated Learning and Support	2	1
Learning and Teaching	12	5
<b>C4: Services</b>		
Finance	12	5
Funding/Bursary	5	2
<b>C5: Facilities</b>		
Catering	2	1
TOTAL	100	43

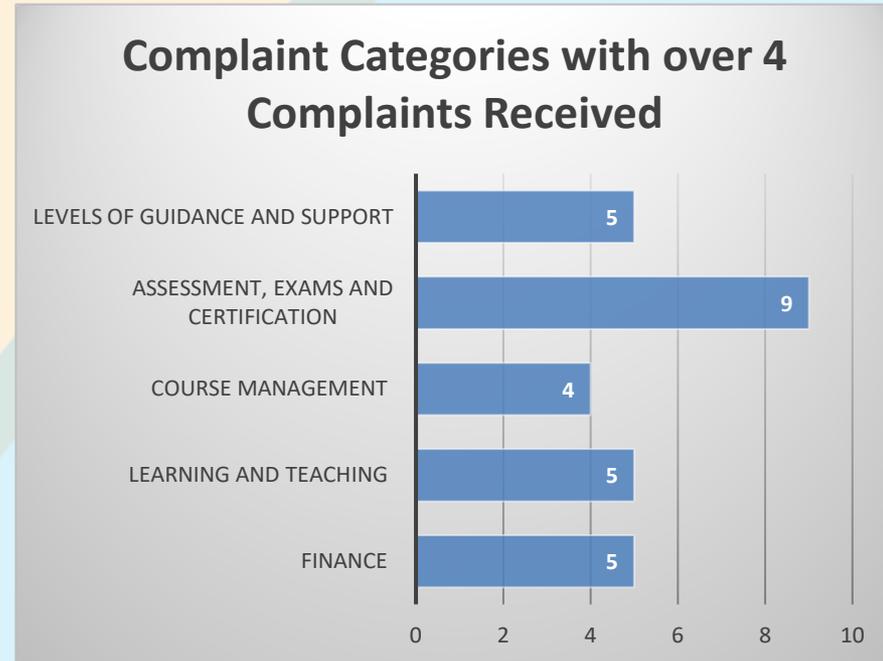
# Complaints as a % of overall total



# Complaint Categories

## Complaint Categories – with over Four Complaints Received

Categories of Complaint	No. of Complaints Received
Finance	5
Learning and Teaching	5
Course Management	4
Assessment, Exams and Certification	9
Levels of Guidance and Support	5



Further detail on complaints received in these categories is as follows:

# Complaint Categories

## **Finance (5)**

Complaints received in the finance category, related to learners being invoiced for fees and three requests for refunds for a commercial course/equipment. The learners invoiced for fees were not eligible for funding as per Government/SFC Policy, however, the Finance Team alongside the Student Support Services Team were able to support the learners by recommending alternative study options, such as, studying part time etc. In relation to the request for refund of fees, the learners had undertaken a considerable amount of learning on the course and in-line with the College Fees Policy, refunds were not issued. However, learners were offered alternative modes of attendance to enable them to continue with their course. In response to the request for a refund of equipment, the learner was issued with replacement kit. From the five complaints received in this category, three were not upheld and two were resolved.

## **Learning and Teaching (5)**

Four of the complaints received in this category were received from learners in the same class group of a commercial course who encountered disruption in its delivery, as a result of the restrictions imposed during Covid-19. Unfortunately, this was outwith the control of the College, however, the course team supported learners by adapting the delivery of the curriculum and altering modes of attendance for learners to complete their course. The College had advised applicants in marketing material of the potential disruption due to Covid-19 restrictions, prior to the learners enrolling. The fifth complaint received in this category related to the delivery of online units. The learner was offered the opportunity to attend on campus to complete. From the five complaints received in this category, two were partially upheld and three considered to be resolved.

# Complaint Categories

## **Course Management (4)**

Complaints raised in this category were received as a result of further Covid-19 disruption, i.e. staff absence, the delivery of units i.e. completing practical outcomes with the limitations on room occupancy etc. and an issue with attendance not being recorded for a learner who was attending via their employer. Course Teams recognised the impact of the disruption and adapted delivery of the curriculum where necessary and provided additional learning and support resources. The attendance issue was due to a system error and was resolved swiftly. The College has undertaken a continuous improvement project on how attendance is monitored/updated to improve this process for learners going forward. From the four complaints received in this category, one was not upheld and three were resolved.

## **Assessment, Exams and Certification (9)**

Seven of the complaints received in this category were from members of the same class group who had concerns about completing their course/receiving certification due to the disruption caused by industrial action. The College echoed their concerns and communicated the actions taken by the College to support the learners during the period the industrial action was taking place. The Vice Principal – Curriculum and Quality Enhancement also provided regular communications on the support available to all learners. The remaining two complaints in this category centred around the requirement to undertake units to achieve their qualification after a period of absence. Course Teams were able to provide the opportunity for learners to complete. In this category, seven complaints were resolved, one upheld and one not upheld.

# Complaint Categories

## **College Levels of Guidance and Support (5)**

Complaints received in this category centre around a perceived lack of support from members of College staff from across the College.

The College has a wide range of support available to learners including support from course tutor, timetabled guidance slots or access to support from the Student Support Services Team. Learners receive a faculty induction at the beginning of their learning journey and support services are widely promoted via email, MS Teams and posters around campus buildings. From the five complaints received, three were not upheld and two resolved.

# Learning from Complaints

The College values complaints received and uses the feedback from learners and stakeholders to identify learning and implement improvements to College processes. Where learning from complaints has been identified, the relevant faculty and service team managers have reviewed processes within their areas and, where appropriate, made changes. Also in this session, the College has undertaken continuous improvement projects to enhance the learner experience in the areas of issuing digital devices to learners, attendance, student funding and admissions.

Commendations and complaints data is shared at various College committees to identify trends and implement corrective measures where appropriate.

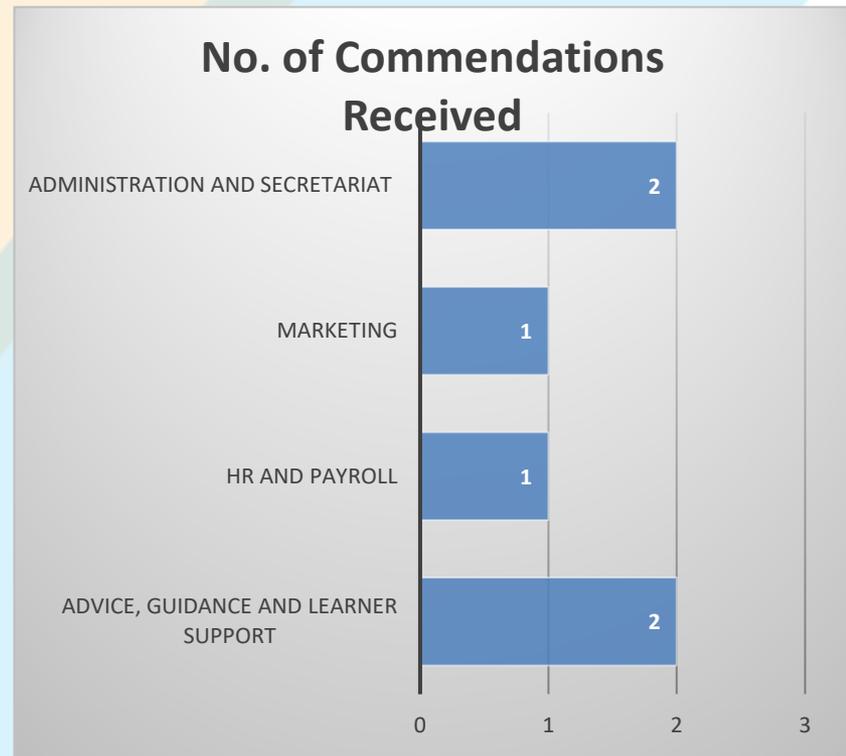
The College continues to maintain regular attendance throughout the academic year at the Complaints Handling Advisory Group meetings. These meetings are facilitated by the College Development Network, with members from across the Further Education sector considering best practice.

To ensure impartiality of complaint responses and compliance with SPSO Model Complaints Handling Procedure, a member of the Complaints Team signs off all responses under the direction of the Director of Corporate Services.

# Further Analysis – Commendations

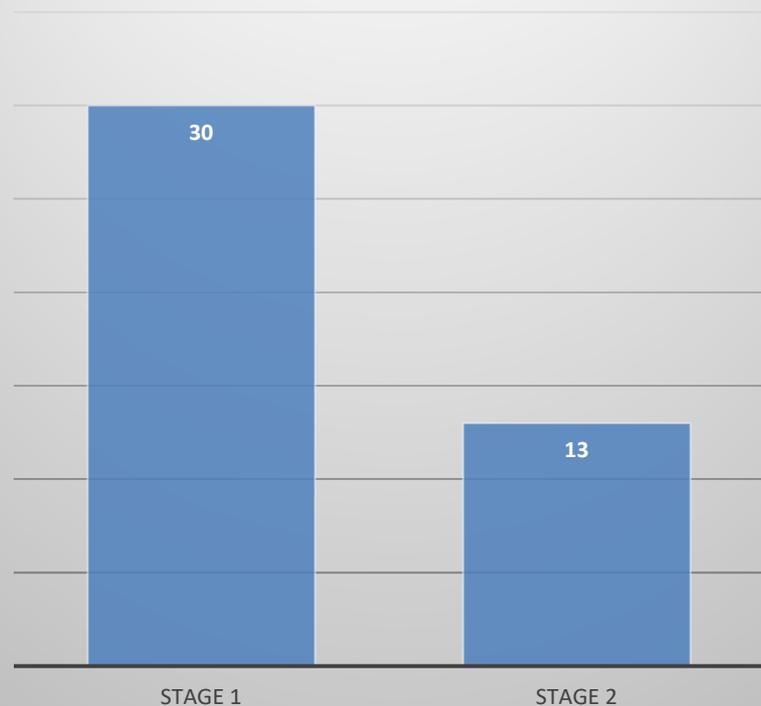
## Commendations Received – Dept Analysis

Department	No. of Commendations Received
Advice, Guidance and Learner Support	2
HR and Payroll	1
Marketing	1
Administration and Secretariat	2



# Further Analysis - Complaints

**Total No. of complaints  
Received by Stage - August  
2021 - July 2022**



**Complaint Outcomes**

