



Complaints Handling Report

Quarter 2 - Academic Year 2019-20

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Introduction

North East Scotland College (NESCol) is committed to ensuring all clients and customers receive the best possible service. The College monitors stakeholder complaint feedback and ensures any lessons learned are actioned to improve its services. Reports measuring the College's complaints handling performance will be published online quarterly and issued to the Senior Executive Team.

NESCol complaints handling procedures are subject to regular review and alteration as required. This could be as a result of stakeholder experiences, internal changes or external initiatives. The College is a member of the sector Complaints Handling Advisory Group, operating with the College Development Network (CDN) and in association with the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO).

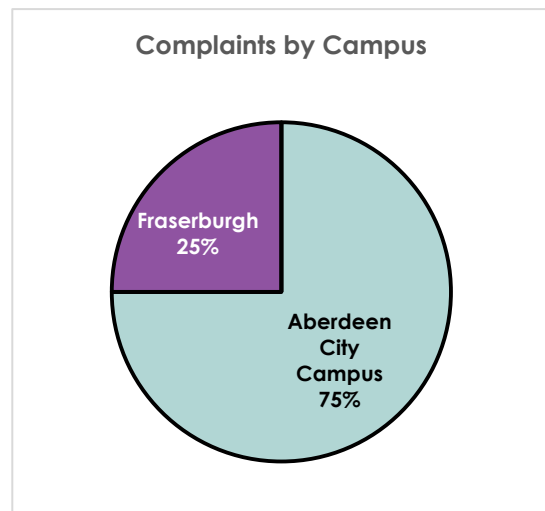
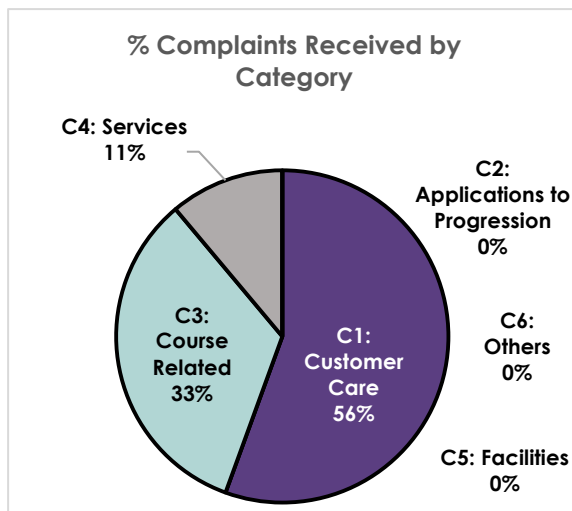
NESCol is an equal opportunities College therefore all complaints are administered in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018, The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Quarterly Trends

For this quarter, NESCol received 8 complaints. The majority of complaints made relate to a college course (C3) or customer care (C1). Common themes regarding the cause of complaints are:

- Temperatures within classrooms
- Information in regards to funding

The pie chart to the left shows the percentage of complaints received for each complaint category. The pie chart to the right shows a breakdown of the percentage of complaints received this quarter for each campus. The Aberdeen City (6) and Fraserburgh (2) campuses received all the Q2 complaints. This corresponds with the higher student populations attending courses at these sites.



Impact on Service Delivery

Upon closing a complaint, the quality team request details of any lessons learned or actions for completion (where applicable) from the relevant departments. The feedback received from stakeholders through the complaints process can alter our service delivery and highlight areas for improvement in order to better our practices. The below example/s from this quarter highlights the value of stakeholder feedback.

Complaints regarding the temperature of classrooms in the south block of Aberdeen City Campus.

Two people submitted complaints regarding the temperature of classrooms in the south block. The concern was that the windows let too much draft in and therefore the temperate of the rooms were uncomfortably low. The Hard Services Manager has advised that a seal will be applied to the windows in the highlighted rooms to reduce the cold air from outside affecting the temperature. In addition, checks of all relevant radiators have been arranged to ensure they are functioning correctly.

Complaint regarding the conflicting information provided to students regarding a competition.

A complaint was submitted by a student who had received information in regards to entering an external competition via the College. Once entered into the competition, the student was informed they would not receive funding to assist with the trip. A full investigation was conducted by the Head of Faculty, which identified a lack of information from the competition organisers. The findings confirmed that the students were unable to enter via the college. A solution was found to ensure the students could still enter the competition. In addition, the Head of Faculty ensured that all staff (including Protocol National agency lecturers) were informed of the Health and Safety aspect of organising a trip external to the college. All staff are now aware of the policies and procedures that need to be adhered to.

Complaint regarding the clarity of a key college procedure.

A complaint was submitted to the college by a student in relation to a key college procedure. The complaint highlighted a perceived lack of transparency and detail. The appropriate department Director investigated the complaint and has since began a robust review of the procedure. This should ensure that staff have comprehensive guidance and training to support the process.

Further Education Complaints Performance Indicators – Definitions

The following definitions for stage 1, stage 2, and escalated should be consistently applied throughout all indicators.

Stage 1

This means those responded to at stage 1 (frontline resolution). This does not include those escalated from stage 1 to stage 2. These will be counted in the escalated complaints. This includes those where the extended timeline (i.e. + additional 5 working days) was used.

Stage 2

This means those responded to at stage 2 (investigation). This includes those where the extended timeline (i.e. + additional 20 working days) was used.

This refers to those complaints considered directly at stage 2 for the following reasons:

- * straight away by complainant (this refers to customers who did not wish to be dealt with at stage 1 and wished to go straight to stage 2)
- * straight away by the College, or within a day or so after due consideration (i.e. College recognised complex, serious, high risk nature of the complaint and felt it was not suitable to be considered at stage 1)

Escalated

This means those escalated from stage 1 to stage 2.

This refers to those complaints where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the frontline resolution and have requested that their case be escalated to stage 2 for investigation.

This includes those complaints where escalation was required because frontline resolution timescales were not met (i.e. 11 working days or more). Therefore automatic escalation rules apply.

Population

This figure will represent the total student population. For example the number of matriculated students at an agreed date.

The College, when reporting on the complaints handling KPIs for each quarter, adheres to the above definitions to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Complaints Handling Key Performance Indicators – Quarter 2

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE INDICATORS	Q2	
Total no. of complaints received & complaints received per 100 population	No.	%
Number of complaints Received	8	100.0%
College Population and Number of Complaints received per 100 population	15025	0.1
Number of complaints closed at each stage and as a % of all complaints closed	No.	%
Number of complaints closed at Stage 1 and % of total closed	7	87.5%
Number of complaints closed at Stage 2 and % of total closed	1	12.5%
Number of complaints closed after Escalation and % of total closed	0	0.0%
Open	0	0.0%
Number of complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld at each stage and as a % of complaints closed at that stage		
Stage 1	No.	%
Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 1	5	71.4%
Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 1	1	14.3%
Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 1	1	14.3%
Stage 2	No.	%
Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 2	0	0.0%
Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 2	1	100%
Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 2	0	0.0%
Escalated	No.	%
Number and % of complaints upheld after Escalation	0	0.0%
Number and % of complaints partially upheld after Escalation	0	0.0%
Number and % of complaints not upheld after Escalation	0	0.0%
Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at each stage	Total	Average
Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 1	19	2.72
Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 2	9	9
Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints after Escalation	0	0
Number and % of complaints closed within set timescales (S1=5 workings days; S2=20 working days ; Escalated = 20 working days)	No.	%
No. and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 5 working days	7	100.0%
No. and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed with 5 working days	0	0.0%
No. and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 20 working days	1	100.0%
No. and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 20 working days	0	0.0%
No. and % of Escalated complaints closed within 20 working days	0	0.0%
No. and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 20 working days	0	0.0%

Escalation and Extension Rationale

In this quarter, there was no need to extend the deadline for any of the frontline or investigation complaints.

There were no frontline complaints which required escalation to an investigation in this quarter.

Complaints Handling Feedback Questionnaire

Following the receipt of a response to their complaint, complainants are sent a complaints handling questionnaire so they can indicate their satisfaction with the different components of the complaints process.

This is monitored on a regular basis and the quality team review feedback received in relation to the handling process. This can influence future practice and alterations to the procedure followed.