



# **Annual Stakeholder Feedback Report**

**Quality Department**

**AY2021-22**

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## 1. Update on Actions for the 2021-22 Session

Person Responsible	Action	Deadline	Outcome
Senior Quality Co-ordinator	Design and develop the complaints refresher course.	End of AY 21-22.	Incomplete. This action will be moved to the 2023-24 session as there were alternative priorities in lieu of the SQC going on maternity leave.
Senior Quality Co-ordinator & Quality Administrator	Design and develop the online compliments form. Ensure staff are encouraged to log compliments in the run up to the winter and summer breaks.	End of August 2021.	Complete. Used for the 22-23 session.

## 2. Complaints Performance Indicators for Q1-Q4

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 Executive Team.

A summary of the complaints key performance indicators are detailed in the table below for academic year 2021-22.

### Compliance with Complaint Response Deadlines

The complexity of a complaint will determine the category it is assigned and the timescale the college has to respond. The categories are as follows:

**Stage 1 - Frontline:** the college has five working days to respond from the date the college receives the complaint. A five day extension can be applied if required. This category includes escalated complaints, as they were first received at stage 1.

**Stage 2 - Investigation:** the college has 20 working days to respond from the date the college receives the complaint. With the agreement of the complainant, the response deadline can be extended if required.

Quarter	Number of Frontline complaints received	Number of Investigation complaints received	Number of Frontline responses within deadline	Number of Investigation responses within deadline	Number of Frontline responses missing deadline	Number of Investigation responses missing deadline
Aug-Oct	21*	6**	21 (100%)	6 (100%)	0	0
Nov-Jan	16***	2****	16 (100%)	2 (100%)	0	0
Feb-Apr	26*****	1	25 (96%)	1 (100%)	1 (4%)	0
May-July	18*****	0	16 (100%)	N/A	0	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>78 (99%) *****</b>	<b>9 (100%)</b>	<b>1 (1%)</b>	<b>0</b>

\*Figure includes one escalation and four extensions

\*\* Figure includes three investigation extensions

\*\*\* Figure includes one escalation and two extensions

\*\*\*\* Figure includes one investigation extension

\*\*\*\*\* Figure includes two escalations and three extensions

\*\*\*\*\* Figure includes two escalations and two extensions.

\*\*\*\*\*As of the 18th August, there are two open escalated complaints from the 2021-22 session.

### Annual Comparison of Deadline Compliance

Year	Number of Frontline complaints received	Number of Investigation complaints received	Number of Frontline responses within deadline	Number of Investigation responses within deadline	Number of Frontline responses missing deadline	Number of Investigation responses missing deadline
2019-2020	31	10	31 (100%)	10 (100%)	0	0
2020-2021	50	5	50 (100%)	5 (100%)	0	0
2021-2022	<b>81</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>78 (99%)*</b>	<b>9 (100%)</b>	<b>1 (1%)</b>	<b>0</b>

\*Two complaints are currently open and so the deadline compliance is yet to be determined.

The college has seen a significant increase in the number of complaints received in the 2021-22 session, with frontline complaints up by 31 and investigations up by 4 compared to the last academic year.

One extension in quarter 3 missed the response deadline by five working days due to staff annual leave. Although this is disappointing, compliance with deadlines is still high at 99% which the team hope to increase back to 100% for the 2022-23 academic year.

### Quarterly Complaint Outcomes

With the introduction of the 'resolved' category, there are now four complaint outcomes:

1. Upheld
2. Not upheld
3. Partially upheld and
4. Resolved

There are no changes to the scope of the original three outcomes. It is worth noting that, where some points of a complaint are upheld but others are not, this is reported as partially upheld.

A complaint is resolved when both the college and the complainant agree what action (if any) will be taken to provide full and final resolution for the complainant, without making a decision about whether the complaint is upheld or not.

Quarter	Number of complaints	Number upheld	Number partially upheld	Number not upheld	Number resolved
Aug-Oct	27	9	12	6	0
Nov-Jan	18	2	10	5	1
Feb-Apr	27	11	10	6	0
May-July	18	7	6	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>90*</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>

\*Two complaints are currently open and so the complaint outcome is yet to be determined.

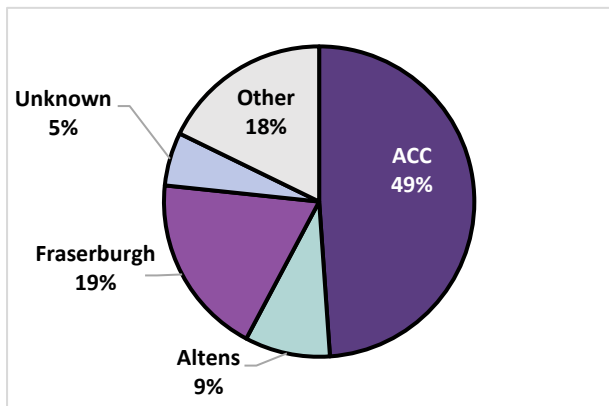
### Annual Comparison of Complaint Outcomes

Year	Number of complaints	Number upheld	Number partially upheld	Number not upheld	Number resolved
2019-2020*	41	20	14	9	N/A
2020-2021	55	16	23	11	4
2021-2022	90**	29	38	19	2

\*A complex complaint handled in AY2019-20 required different outcomes for separate elements of the complaint. Two were upheld, one was partially upheld. This accounts for the higher number of outcomes than number of complaints.

\*\*Two complaints are currently open and so the complaint outcome is yet to be determined.

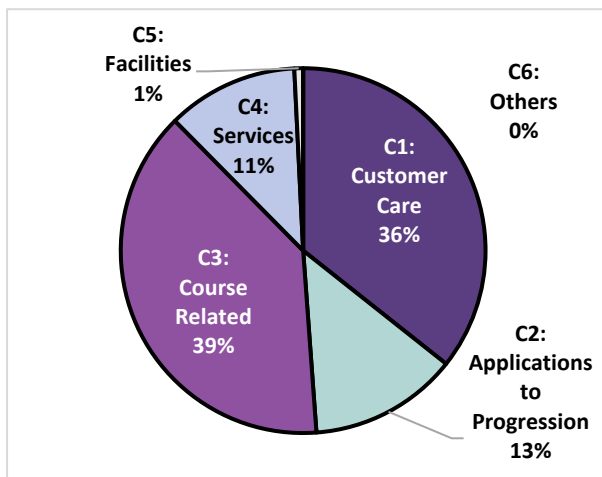
## Complaints Origin Summary



The Aberdeen City Campus (ACC) received the highest number of complaints (44). This coincides with the high stakeholder population at this campus.

In comparison, the Altens campus received eight complaints, Fraserburgh received 17 and other college locations received 16. The campus origin of five complaints was unknown.

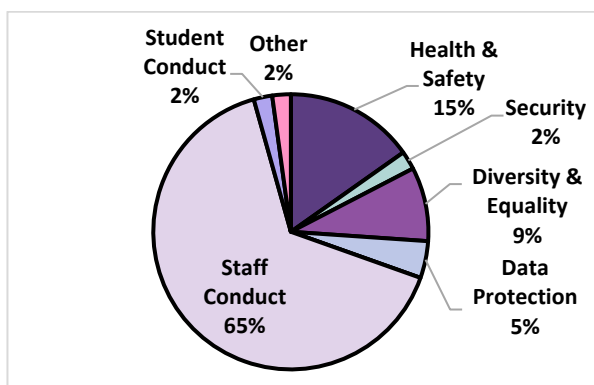
## Category Summary



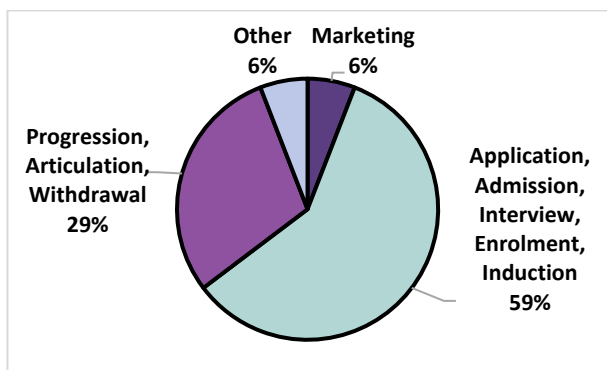
Upon receipt of a complaint, the quality department review and highlight the key points of dissatisfaction, apply the relevant category/categories and issue the complaint to the appropriate complaint handler. The appropriate timescale will also be applied, frontline or investigation.

A summary of the category breakdown for the 90 complaints received in this academic year is available in the pie chart to the left.

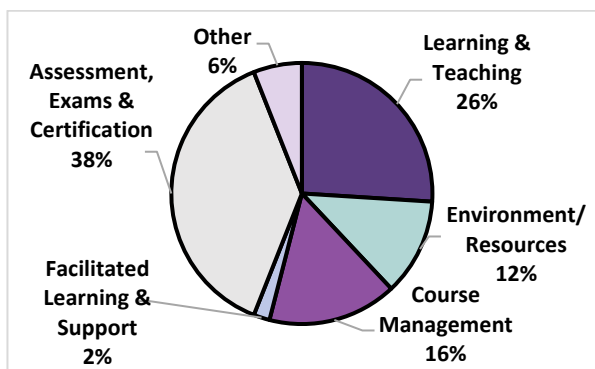
Each category can be broken down into related sub-categories, a summary of which is displayed below.



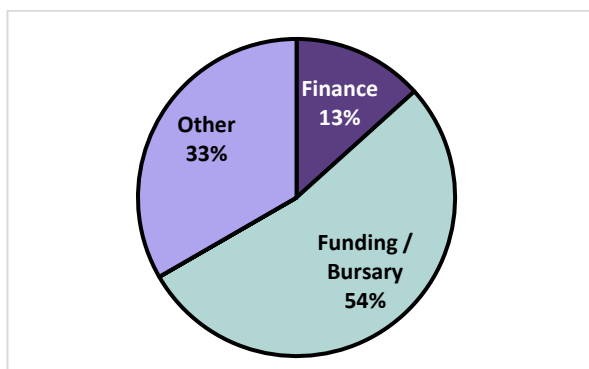
C1: Customer Care	
Health & Safety	7
Security	1
Diversity & Equality	4
Data Protection	2
Environmental	0
Staff Conduct	30
Student Conduct	1
Other	1



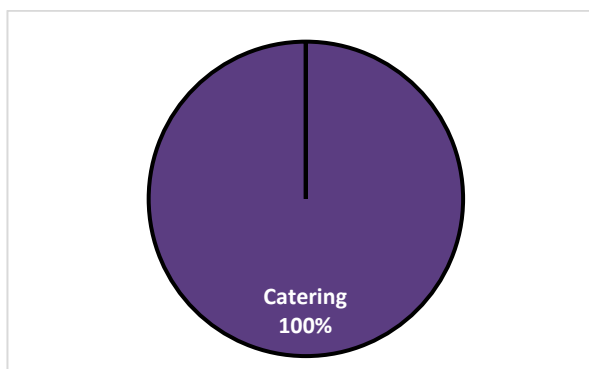
C2: Applications to Progression	
Marketing	1
Application, Admission, Interview, Enrolment, Induction	10
Progression, Articulation, Withdrawal	5
Other	1



C3: Course Related	
Learning & Teaching	13
Environment / Resources	6
Course Management	8
Facilitated Learning & Support	1
Assessment, Exams & Certification	19
Other	3



C4: Services	
Finance	2
Funding / Bursary	8
Student Records	0
Providing Learning Support	0
Library / Learning Technology	0
Quality etc.	0
Other	5



C5: Facilities	
Catering	1
Student Accommodation	0
Maintenance, Lifts, Car Parking	0
Other	0

### Withdrawn Complaints Summary

This academic session, nine expressions of dissatisfaction were logged as complaints but were later withdrawn. All of the withdrawn complaints were deemed to be best suited to be dealt with under more relevant people services processes.

### 3. Impact on Service Delivery

Upon closing a complaint, the quality department 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. On a quarterly basis, the quality department publish examples of lessons learned and actions taken on the college website, to share the learning from complaints within the organisation. The below are examples of lessons and actions from 2021-22 that highlight the value of stakeholder feedback.

#### *Improving communication with the curriculum over the summer break.*

A complaint highlighted difficulties contacting staff to discuss unit and course completion over the summer break. The curriculum team has reflected and in the future will ensure clear information outlining who to direct course queries to over the summer period and when they can expect a response is accessible to students prior to the summer.

#### *Improving the communication of changes to courses as a result of COVID-19 measures.*

Complaints were received in regards to the communication of changes to a course as a result of COVID-19 measures. The curriculum teams must ensure students are directly informed of changes to their course as a result of COVID-19 measures. Curriculum Managers will ensure future decisions which impact course content and the award achieved by students are clearly communicated to students through Blackboard and through class representatives.

#### *Improving communications about devices for BYOD courses.*

A complaint was raised regarding a lack of clarity about the availability of and eligibility for laptops for BYOD courses. The relevant department has reflected on the college communication to students about bursary and devices. Future communications will be more explicit and will encourage students to enquire about eligibility before personally purchasing a device.

#### *Improving the storage of student portfolio pieces.*

Complaints were received in regards to issues with students portfolio work. The relevant department identified the following lessons for future practice:

- Protocol assessors must be managed and supported more effectively;



- As a matter of urgency the department will implement e-portfolio's rather than paper copies;
- Reinforcing to assessors and verifiers that physical portfolios should not be transferred without a clear trail of the movements and an acknowledgement from the recipient.

#### *Improving communication around student withdrawal.*

A complaint was received following the withdrawal of a student. The student was unaware that they were withdrawn and that they had not been on track for success. It was highlighted to the curriculum team the importance of logging discussions around progress and success with class groups. To ensure all students understand their progress towards achieving their award, all relevant staff have been reminded that regular feedback sessions must happen with all students. If a student does not respond, a progress update should be issued via email to ensure clear communication is provided.

#### *Improving communication and the quality of teaching on a course.*

A complaint was received regarding the teaching, organisation and communication of one course. The teaching team discussed the professional standards, expectations and actions to deliver the best experience for the students. In response, the Curriculum Manager has taken the lead on organising the course and is regularly meeting with the teaching team and students. The opportunities to discuss the course regularly will allow for the progress of the actions to be monitored to best support the cohort.

#### *Improving the college response to adverse weather conditions.*

A complaint was received regarding a perceived delay in responding to adverse weather conditions. Since the logging of the complaint, the college has undertaken a review of the Severe Weather Conditions procedure. The key findings was shared with the complainant to offer assurance for any future occasions where college-run travel amendments are required.

#### *Improving communication around application and induction.*

A complaint was received regarding the delayed communication around the application and subsequent enrolment of a student. In addition, the student's experience of the on campus induction and initial handling of their complaint did not meet their expectations. The actions that have been raised in response to this complaint focus on the need to maintain appropriate standards of customer service, complete checks prior to the withdrawal of students and to discuss with curriculum staff the arrangements for organising comprehensive campus tours.

#### *Improving a college procedure.*

A complaint was received regarding the process of informing next of kin in the event of an injury on campus. As a result of the lessons learned from this complaint, the college has updated its procedure and informed the relevant teams of the changes. In addition, the

guidelines will be reviewed regularly and discussed within academic teams to ensure they are followed and understood.

*Improving customer service and communication.*

A complaint was received regarding the handling of a request to improve study conditions for a student. In addition, there were delays in responding to the request which meant the student experience was impacted longer than necessary. Upon reviewing the complaint, actions were put in place to improve information sharing, to improve the quality of out of office responses, to include management contact details, and to improve staff understanding of roles and responsibilities in the college department.

*Improving arrangements for class cover during strike action.*

A lack of class cover resulted in a cohort of day-release apprentices having spare time on campus with no scheduled learning at a time where their place of employment was very busy. On investigation, the complaint investigator agreed that where class cover is not arranged, suitable guidance should be provided to ensure students can progress with their learning. The two teams involved learned that where a team services a class for another team, the servicing team will take responsibility for covering classes and providing work to the students. As an action, the appropriate team manager has agreed to take a more proactive approach to class cover. This should improve the future service received by students.

*Improving the accessibility of the online complaints form on the college website.*

One complainant advised that they found the online complaint form difficult to complete when logging a separate complaint. In their response, the Quality department offered advice on the range of methods through which stakeholders can log a complaint. In addition, they advised that the scope of the search function on the NESCol website has been improved to ensure relevant details about complaint submission methods is clearer for stakeholders.

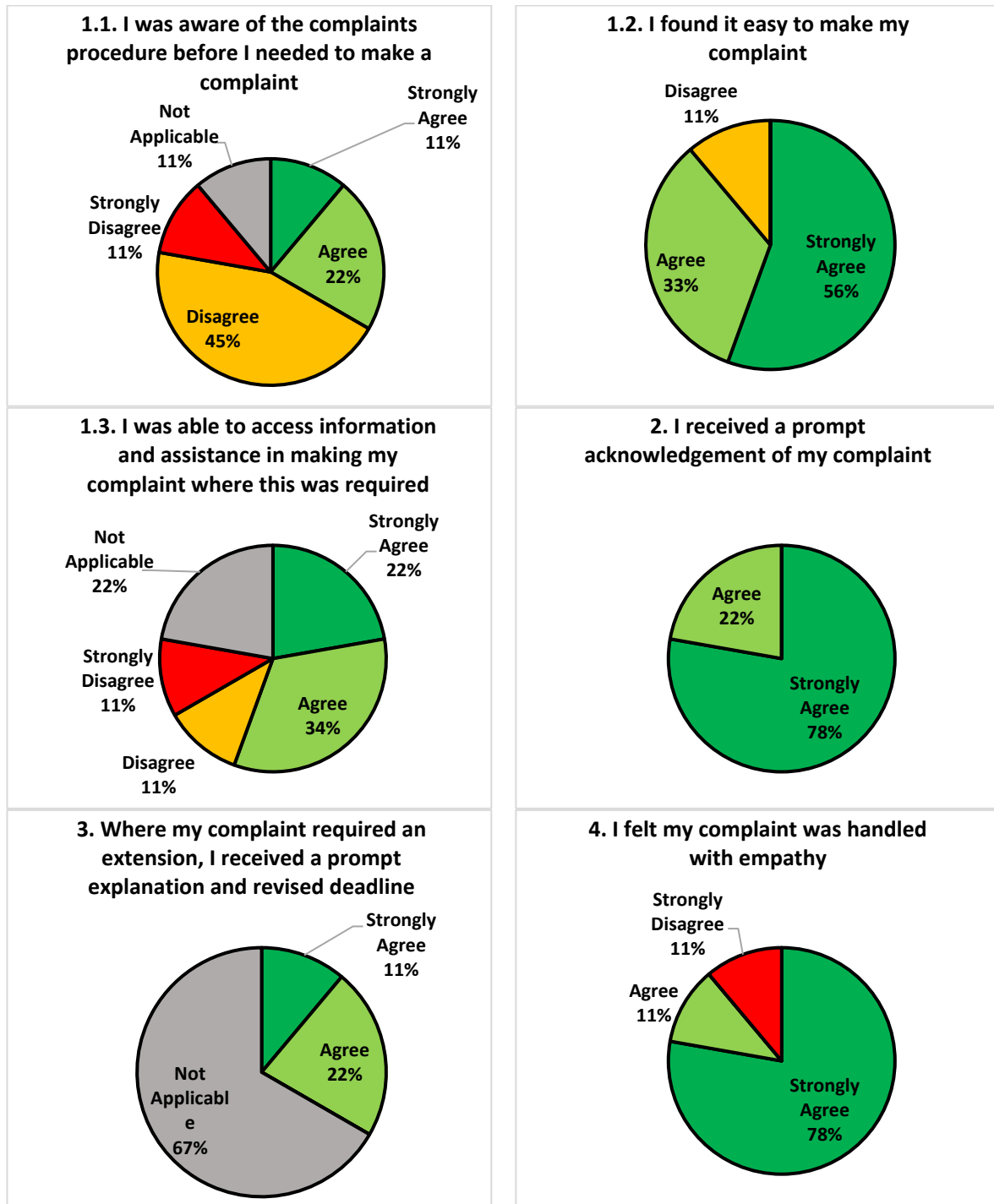
*Improving course organisation and certification for an evening class.*

Two complaints were received in relation to issues with the organisation, communication and certification of an evening class. During the investigation, the complaint handler expressed gratitude at the issues being brought to the attention of the college so the relevant teams can review their processes. An apology was offered to the complainants. In response to the content of the complaint, the appropriate member/s of staff will receive the opportunity to review what has happened and highlight where suitable interventions could have been made. This should ensure that there is not a repeat of the issues experienced by the complainants.

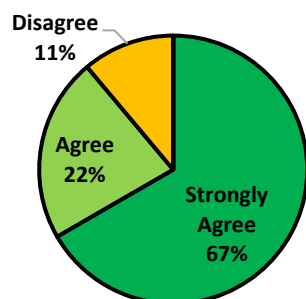
#### 4. Complaints Process Questionnaire Feedback

The Quality department received nine responses to the complaints handling feedback questionnaire, distributed to each complainant upon receipt of a response.

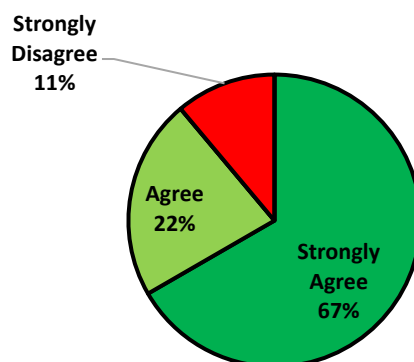
A summary of the question responses is detailed in the pie charts below.



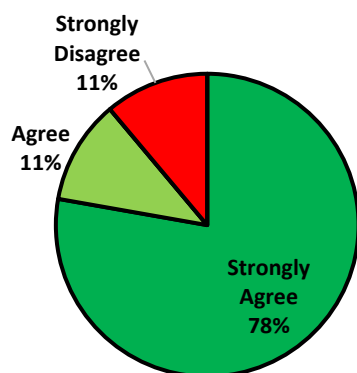
**5. I received a response to my complaint within the specified timescale in the complaints handling procedure**



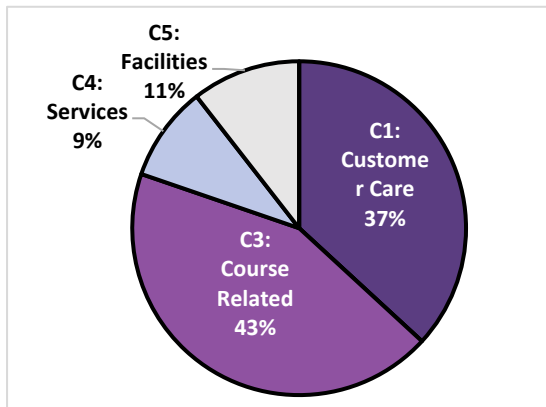
**6.1. I received a clear response to my complaint**



**6.2. I was dealt with courteously at all times**



## 5. Compliments and Thank You's



During the 2021-22 academic year the Quality department were notified of 65 compliments and thank you's that have been made in relation to various teams across the college.

Of the compliments made, the majority were in relation to positive experiences of learning and teaching (24) or highlighting the professionalism and support of how NESCol staff have conducted themselves (21).

Some examples of the compliments received are available below:

*"Dear staff and students at Gate 63, I just wanted to thank you all on behalf of the Aberdeen Italian Circle for the excellent lunch you served us today. Our members and friends were delighted and praised all the dishes that you prepared. From chefs to waiters, they have all done a fantastic job, so please extend our thanks to each and everyone in the team"*

*"Good afternoon xxx, thank you for your swift reply. Your help is much appreciated and thank you for giving me all the information I require to proceed. I thought you would like to know that your response was 4 days faster than the enquiry I made to Aberdeen University about one of their courses! Thank you once again for your help."*

*"Many thanks on the very quick marking/posting of results - it is always incredibly appreciated. I am elated to have passed the module so well and I simply wanted to send this email as a thanks for your teachings. I find your passion for the subject as well as your willingness to run through every single step meticulously really helps us out and I hope that you get the recognition you deserve for the amazing job you do."*

## 6. Appendix 1 – Annual KPI Summary Table & Comparison to Previous AY Data

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE INDICATORS		2021-22		2020-21	
1.0	Total number of complaints received & complaints received per 100 population	No.	%	No.	%
1.1	Number of complaints Received	90	100.0%	55	100.0%
1.2/1a	College Population and Number of Complaints received per 100 population	22861	0.4	15352	0.4
2.0	Number of complaints closed at each stage and as a % of all complaints closed	No.	%	No.	%
2.1/2a	Number of complaints closed at Stage 1 and % of total closed	75	83.3%	47	85.5%
2.2/2b	Number of complaints closed at Stage 2 and % of total closed	9	10.0%	5	9.1%
2.3/2c	Number of complaints closed after Escalation and % of total closed	4	4.4%	3	5.5%
2.4	Open	2	2.2%	0	0.0%
3.0	Number of complaints resolved, upheld, partially upheld and not upheld at each stage and as a % of complaints closed at that stage				
3.0	Stage 1	No.	%	No.	%
3.1/3a	Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 1	26	34.7%	13	27.7%
	Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 1	30	40.0%	20	42.6%
3.3/3c	Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 1	17	22.7%	10	21.3%
	Number and % of complaints resolved at Stage 1	2	2.7%	4	8.5%
3.0	Stage 2	No.	%	No.	%
3.4/3d	Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 2	3	33.3%	2	40.0%
	Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 2	6	66.7%	2	40.0%
3.6/3f	Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 2	0	0.0%	1	20.0%
	Number and % of complaints resolved at Stage 2	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
3.0	Escalated	No.	%	No.	%
3.7/3g	Number and % of complaints upheld after Escalation	0	0.0%	1	33.3%
	Number and % of complaints partially upheld after Escalation	2	50.0%	1	33.3%
3.9/3i	Number and % of complaints not upheld after Escalation	2	50.0%	1	33.3%

	Number and % of complaints resolved after Escalation	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at each stage</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>No.</b>
4.1/4a	Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 1	343	4.6	180	3.8
4.2	Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 2	217	24.1	75	15.0
4b	Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints after Escalation	68	17.0	45	15.0
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Number and % of complaints closed within set timecales ( S1=5 workings days; S2=20 working days ; Escalated = 20 working days)</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
5.1/5a	Number and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 5 working days	64	85.3%	43	91.5%
5.2/5b	Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed with 5 working days	11	14.7%	4	8.5%
5.3/5c	Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 20 working days	5	55.6%	5	100.0%
5.4/5d	Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 20 working days	4	44.4%	0	0.0%
5.5/5e	Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 20 working days	4	100.0%	3	100.0%
5.6/5f	Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 20 working days	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Number and % of complaints closed at each stage where extensions have been authorised</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
6.1/6a	Number and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 10 working days (extension)	10	90.9%	4	100.0%
6.2/6b	Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed within 10 working days (extension)	1	9.1%	0	0.0%
6.3/6c	Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 40 working days (extension)	4	100.0%	0	0.0%
6.4/6d	Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 40 working days (extension)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
6.5/6e	Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 40 working days (extension)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
6.6/6f	Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 40 working days (extension)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%