CITY OF GLASGOW COLLEGE

Annual Complaint Handling Report

Academic Year 2025/26

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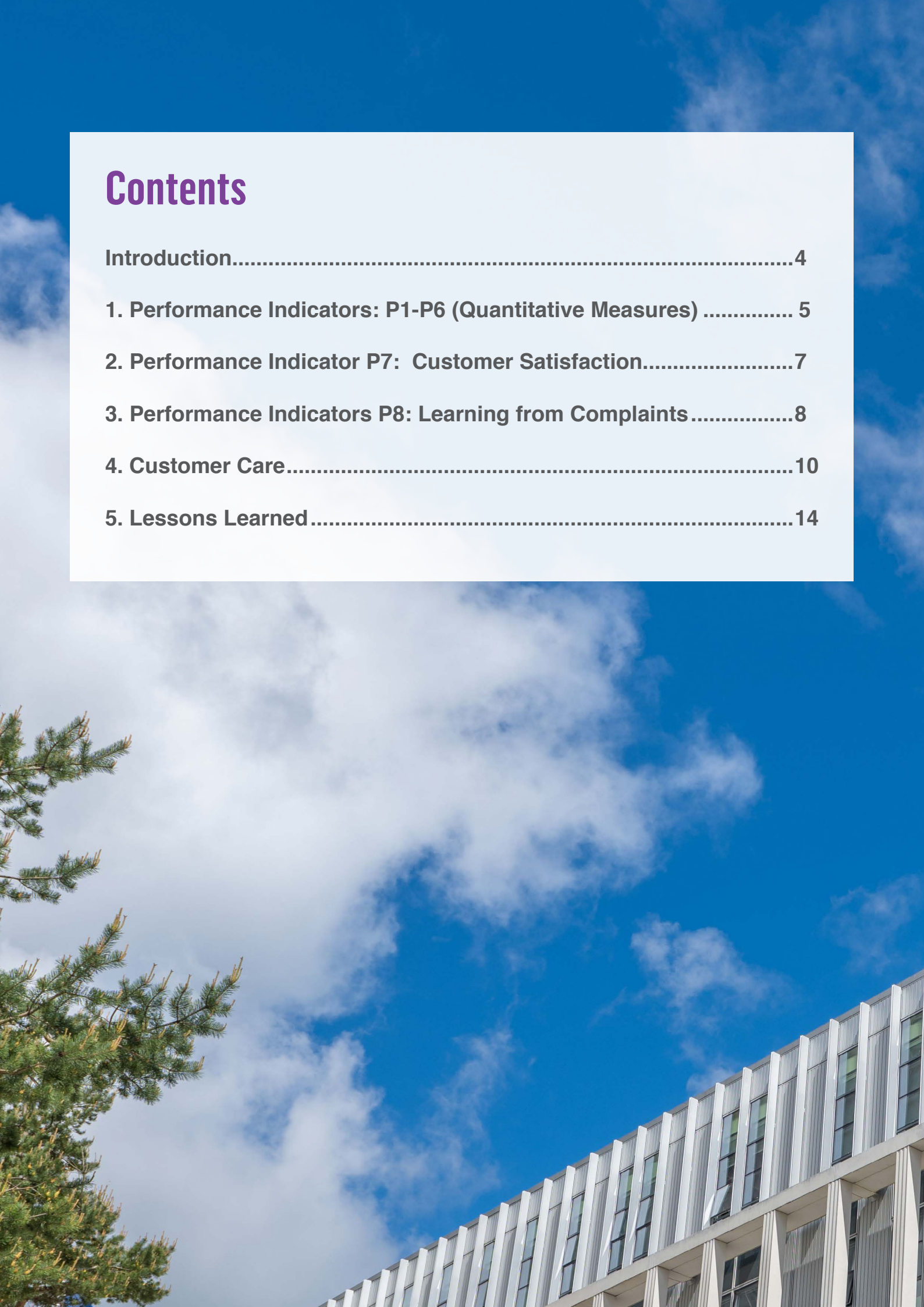


Introduction

Academic Year 2025-26

In setting an ambition for a 'student first culture', a measure of the College's effectiveness is the number and nature of complaints received from students.

In managing complaints, the College is required to comply with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) Complaints Handling Procedure and report annually on our performance.

As part of this analysis, we collect statistics on the volume and type of complaints, as well as their outcome and the time taken to process. Complaint reporting takes place quarterly and updates are given to relevant Committees, and an annual report is published on the College Website.

The College uses the Complaint Categories developed by the College Development Network's Complaint Handling Advisory Group, recording complaints in terms of: Customer Care; Applications; Admission and Progression; Course Related and Services Facilities.

Complaint outcomes adhere to four categories and in terms of whether they are:

- **Upheld (where the College is at fault)**
- **Not upheld (where the College is not at fault)**
- **Partially upheld (where some of the points of complaints are upheld and others are not)**
- **Resolved - A complaint is resolved when both the College and the stakeholder agree what action (if any) will be taken to provide full and final resolution, without making a decision about whether the complaint is upheld or not upheld.**

1. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: P1-P6

	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2024/25		2025/26	
1.0	**Total number of complaints received & complaints received per 100 population**				
	Number of complaints Received	84		80	
	Number of complaints Handled	62		60	
	College Population and Number of Complaints received per 100 population	25000	0.25	25000	0.24
2.0	**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	38	71.7%	41	73.2%
	Number of complaints closed at Stage 2 and % of total closed	14	26.4%	12	21.4%
	Number of complaints closed after Escalation and % of total closed	1	1.9%	3	5.4%
*	Open	9	0.0%	4	0.0%
3.0	**Number of Complaints upheld and not upheld at each stage as a % of complaints closed at that stage**				
	Stage 1				
	Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 1	0	0.0%	2	4.9%
	Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 1	12	31.6%	16	39.0%
	Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 1	1	2.6%	0	0.0%
	Number and % of complaints resolved at Stage 1	25	65.8%	24	59.5%
	Stage 2				
	Number and % of complaints upheld at Stage 2	2	14.3%	1	8.3%
	Number and % of complaints not upheld at Stage 2	7	50.0%	3	25.0%
	Number and % of complaints partially upheld at Stage 2	2	14.3%	5	41.7%
	Number and % of complaints resolved at Stage 2	3	21.4%	2	16.7%
	Escalated				
	Number and % of complaints upheld after Escalation	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Number and % of complaints not upheld after Escalation	1	100%	2	66.7%
	Number and % of complaints partially upheld after Escalation	1	0.0%	1	33.3%
	Number and % of complaints resolved after Escalation	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
4.0	**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	185	4.9	193	4.7
	Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints at Stage 2	300	21.4	272	22.7
	Total working days and average time in working days to close complaints after Escalation	40	40.0	71	23.7

* All 4 open complaints were suspended due to the academic staff summer break and will resume on 10th August 2026.

Stage 1 complaints often require little or no investigation and are attempted to be concluded by Performance staff within 5 working days.

Stage 2 complaints require investigation and are designated 20 working days to conclude. Escalated complaints refer to complaints that have been investigated at Stage 1, but the complainant remained unsatisfied, requiring further investigation at Stage 2.

	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2024/25		2025/26	
5.0	**Number and % of complaints closed within set timescale (S1=5 working days; S2=20 working days; Escalated = 20 working days)**				
	Number and % of Stage 1 complaints closed within 5 working days	33	86.6%	32	78.0%
	Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed within 5 working days	5	13.2%	10	24.2%
	Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 20 working days	6	42.9%	8	66.7%
	Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 20 working days	8	57.1%	4	33.3%
	Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 20 working days	0	0.0%	2	66.7%
	Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 20 working days	1	100.0%	1	33.3%
6.0	**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)	5	100.0%	9	90.0%
	Number and % of Stage 1 complaints not closed within 10 working days (extension)	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
	Number and % of Stage 2 complaints closed within 40 working days (extension)	6	75.0%	6	100.0%
	Number and % of Stage 2 complaints not closed within 40 working days (extension)	2	25.0%	0	0.0%
	Number and % of Escalated complaints closed within 40 working days (extension)	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
	Number and % of Escalated complaints not closed within 40 working days (extension)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Indicator	Key Observations
1.0	Overall, the number of complaints handled decreased by 3%, from 62 to 60. Complaints included in this report are those that have been investigated through the Complaint Handling Process. For AY25/26, an additional 22 complaints were received and immediately resolved without further handling.
2.0	The volume of complaints closed at Stage 1 (41) is slightly higher compared to last year (38). There was a slight decrease in the number of complaints closed at Stage 2, from 14 to 12 this year.
3.0	A small number (2) of the Stage 1 complaints were upheld, and the volume of Stage 1 complaints resolved within 5 days decreased very slightly from 25 to 24. Fewer Stage 2 complaints were upheld than last year.
4.0	More Stage 1 complaints were closed quicker in 25/26 – 4.7 working days compared to 4.9 working days in 24/25. There was a slight increase in the time taken to close Stage 2 complaints – 22.7 working days in 25/26 compared with 21.4 working days in 24/25. The time taken to resolve Escalated complaints increased, requiring a total of 71.0 working days in 25/26 up from 40.0 working days in 24/25.
5.0	More Stage 2 complaints were closed within 20 working days – up by 23.8% on last year. There was a slight increase in Stage 1 complaints requiring extensions. This is consistent with the increase in complexity of the complaints received.
6.0	There was a slight decrease in the number of Stage 1 complaints closed within 10 working days where an extension had been authorised but a comparable number of Stage 2 complaints where an extension had been authorised. Fewer Stage 2 complaints were closed within 40 working days where an extension had been authorised.

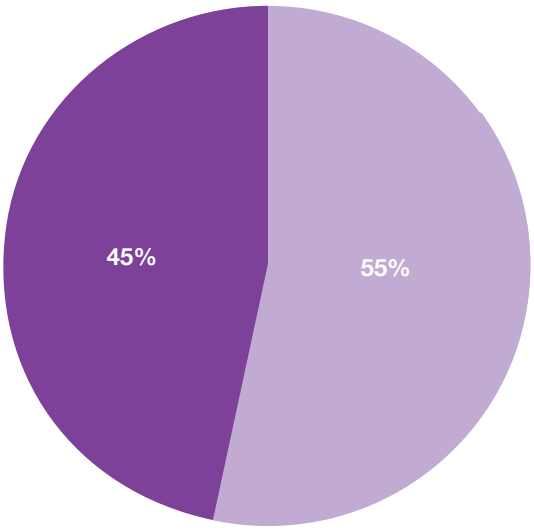
2. PERFORMANCE INDICATOR P7: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

ACCESSING THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The College aspires to maintain high standards of customer service, continuously seeking to improve our processes to provide a better service to students and stakeholders. In support of this we provide an online complaint portal, including a dedicated email address, to allow students and stakeholders to raise complaints. Complaint forms are also available in hard copy and electronic format and can be posted or emailed. Staff can also be emailed directly or contacted by phone.

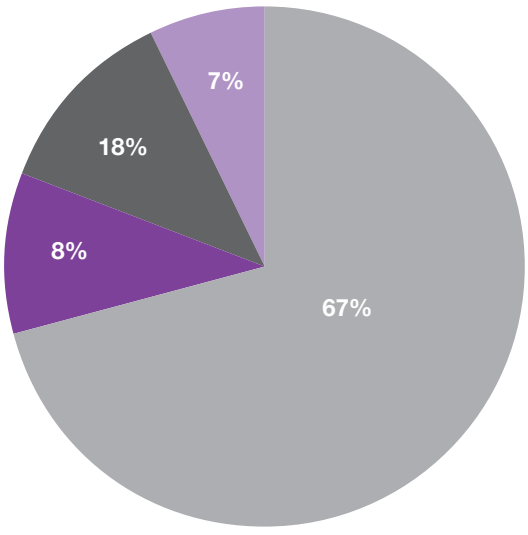
In terms of preferred methods of contact, complaint form by email was the most popular making up 55% of responses; 45% of complaints in 2025/26 were received via direct email to staff. No other methods of contact were received in 2025/26. All complainants are asked to provide feedback on their experience. Of those that left feedback, a slightly lower number were satisfied as were not satisfied with the handling of their complaint.

ACCESS ROUTE 2025/26



Email to staff	45%
Complaint by email	0%
Complaint form by email	55%
Phone	0%
Complaint by Portal	0%
In Person	0%
Enquiry	0%
Letter	0%
Other	0%

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK 2025/26



No Feedback	67%
Satisfied	8%
Dissatisfied	18%
Open	7%

3. PERFORMANCE INDICATOR P8: LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

COMPLAINT REPORTING

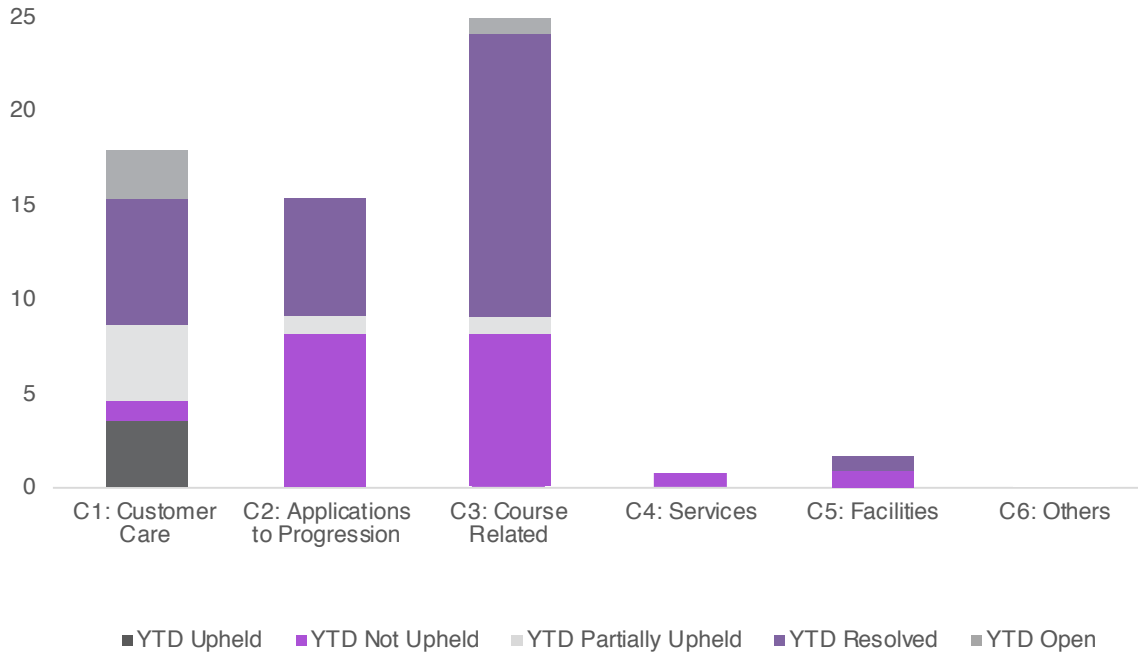
- **Quarterly reports** are prepared by the College Performance team for the purpose of review by the Senior Management Team, Executive Leadership Team and are published on the College website.
- This **annual report** is prepared for review by the College's committees to be approved for publication on the College website by the College Board.

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY CATEGORY AND COMPLAINT OUTCOMES

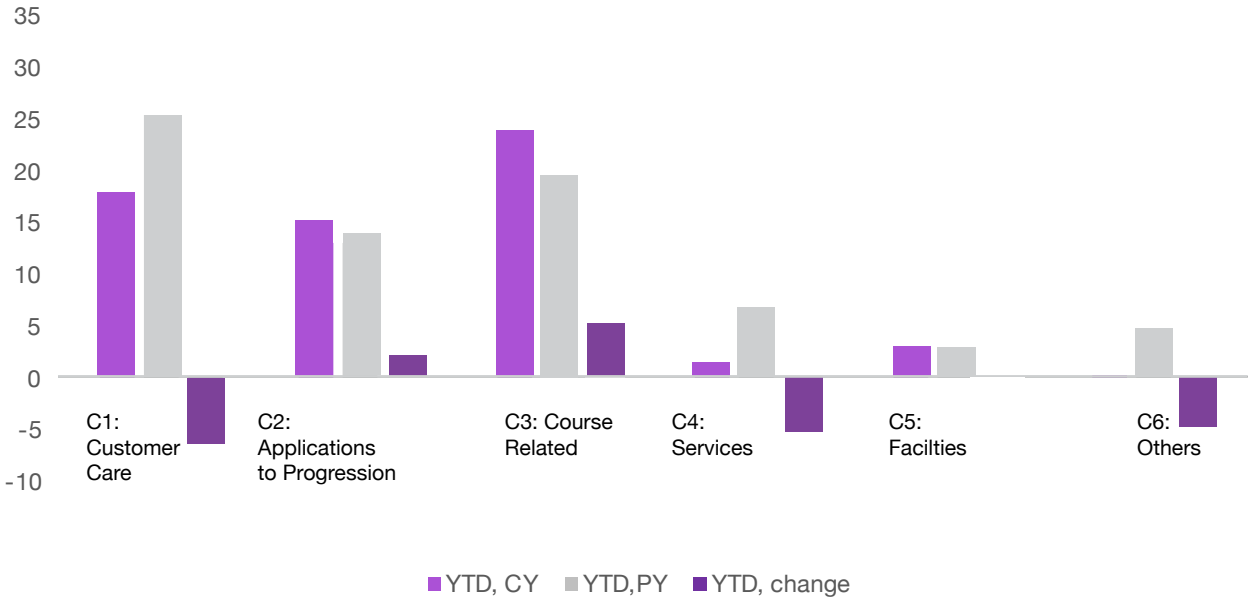
In reviewing the nature of complaints, the College has adopted the standardised Complaint Categories and Sub-Categories developed by the College Development Network's Complaint Handling Advisory Group.

Using these, we can categorise complaints as set out below:

COMPLAINT OUTCOMES BY CATEGORY 2025/26



COMPLAINT CATEGORIES 2025/26 vs 2024/25



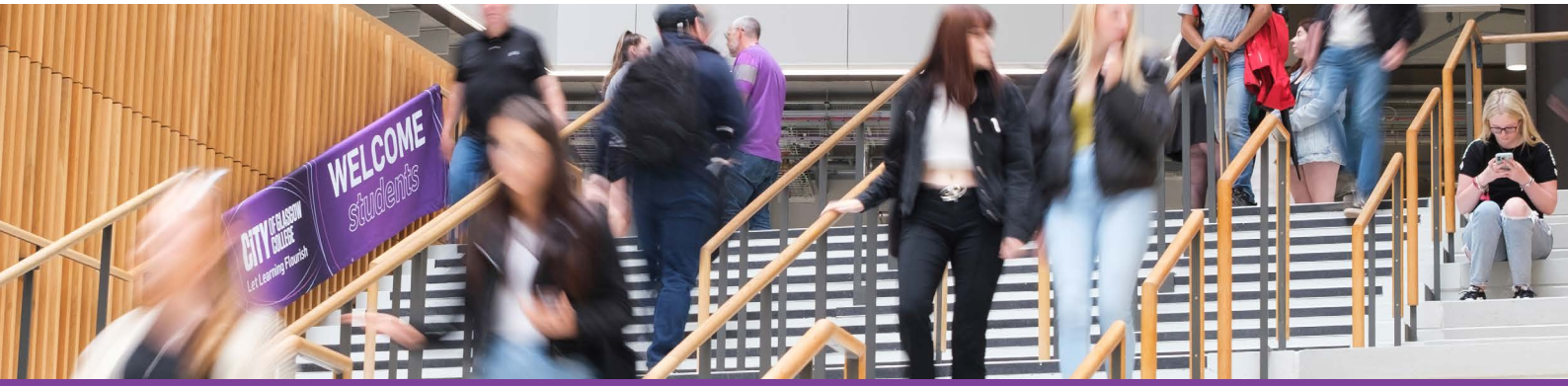
COMPLAINT OUTCOMES BY SUB-CATEGORY 2025/26

Complaint Category	AY25-26	AY24-25
Customer Care	18 (30%)	29 (47%)
Application Progression	15 (25%)	7 (11%)
Course Related	24 (40%)	19 (31%)
Services	1 (2%)	2 (3%)
Facilities	2 (3%)	2 (3%)
Other	0 (0%)	3 (5%)

COMPLAINT THEMES, LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS AND IMPROVEMENT TO SERVICES

In 2025/26 the College handled 60 complaints, which is 2 complaints fewer than the 62 complaints handled in 2024/25. This is also fewer than the 68 complaints handled in 2023/24.

Complaints were dispersed across the categories of Customer Care (30%), Applications to Progression (25%), Course Related (40%), Services (2%) and Facilities (3%). With fewer complaints handled in 2025/26 compared to 2024/25, the number of complaints has decreased or remained the same for most categories, except for Applications to Progression which has increased by 8 complaints and Course Related matters which increased by 5 complaints. The category with the greatest decrease is Customer Care, which received 18 complaints, down from 29 the previous year.



Below we have listed complaints where an action for improvement was identified, including all upheld and partially upheld complaints.

4. CUSTOMER CARE

A total of 18 Customer Care complaints were handled in 2025/26 compared with 29 the previous year. Staff Conduct received 18 complaints compared with 26 last year, Security received 0 complaints compared with 1 last year, Diversity and Equality received 0 complaints on par with last year, similarly Health & Safety received 0 complaints compared with 1 last year. Student Conduct received 0 complaints compared with 1 last year and Others received 0 complaints on a par with last year.

C1S06: Staff Conduct (18 complaints: 3 upheld /1 not upheld / 4 partially upheld / 7 resolved / 3 Open)

- A complaint related to alleged staff conduct from a lecturer. The complaint was upheld, the intention had not been to cause upset, but it was recognised that differing opinions occurred. Apologies were made and the lecturer reminded to be mindful of topics of conversations used in classes.
- A complaint was handled about a miscommunication of a student's results leading to a student gaining a place on the wrong level of course, then having to wait for this to be rectified due to a mistake made by a previous education provider, leading to the student unable to complete their enrolment. This complaint was upheld; an apology was given and the student was offered guaranteed entry in AY26/27.
- A complaint regarding safeguarding and the Equality Act, relating to the conduct of a member of staff. Complaint was upheld and recommendations were made to the relevant Curriculum Head to improve practice in relation to more systematic management of student support.
- A complaint related to alleged staff conduct by lecturer, in particular not preparing students properly for assignments. This complaint was partially upheld, an apology was given to the complainant, and recommendations for improvement shared with the department.
- Complaint handled regarding conflicting information being given about results. This complaint was resolved, the Curriculum Head explained reasons for conflicting information and agreed to meet with student to look at options for following year.
- A complaint regarding dubiety over a lecturer's teaching materials. This complaint was partially upheld; recommendations were made for the lecturer to work with colleagues on aligning teaching materials for the level of the course and its students.
- Complaint handled related to conduct of attendance meeting. This complaint was resolved and team were reminded to follow absence reporting procedures to ensure that students were aware of the meeting style.

APPLICATIONS TO PROGRESSION

A total of 15 complaints in relation to Applications and Progression were handled in 2025/26 which is an increase from 7 the previous year.

In the sub-category, Application, Admission, Interview, Enrolment, and Induction, 10 complaints were received this year compared to 4 last year. In the sub-category Progression, Articulation, Withdrawal, 4 complaints were received this year compared to 3 last year; 1 complaint was received in the sub-category Others, compared with 0 complaints last year. 0 complaints were received in the sub-category Marketing, on a par with last year.

C2S02: Applications, Admission, Interview, Enrolment & Induction (10 complaints: 5 not upheld / 5 resolved))

- A complaint handled in relation to student progression. Complaint was not upheld; application processes were not followed. Staff and students reminded of application process for progression.
- Complaint handled regarding communication received during waiting list process. Complaint was not upheld; communication was in line with other applicants; clearer communication was recommended.
- A complaint handled regarding equality of the application process. This complaint was not upheld; entry requirements were not met, staff recommended being clearer with applicants regarding the outcome of application decisions.
- Complaint handled in relation to applicable International Fees. This complaint was resolved; advise was sought from SAAS and SFC and decision was overturned.

- A complaint was handled regarding waiting lists for courses. Complaint was resolved; courses are very popular with high waiting lists each year but due to the availability of additional funding additional places were able to be added.

C2S03: Progression, Articulation, Withdrawal (4 complaints: 3 not upheld/ 1 resolved)

- A complaint regarding alleged unfair withdrawal from a course. Complaint was not upheld; warnings had been given and attendance had not improved. Staff reminded to adhere to absence procedures.

- Complaint handled relating to alleged lack of learning support leading to being unable to progress. This complaint was resolved; learner was offered place on more suitable course and staff were reminded to be mindful to advise students on appropriate courses.

C2S99: Other (1 complaint: 1 resolved)

- A complaint handled relating to not passing Level 1 course but being accepted to Level 2 and making payment for it, then later told this would not be suitable given they had failed Level 1. This complaint was resolved; refund arranged and suggestions offered about re-sitting Level 1/Resits.

COURSE RELATED

A total of 24 Course Related complaints were handled in 2025/26 an increase compared to the 19 handled in 2024/25.

Learning & Teaching related complaints deceased from 2 complaints to 0; similarly, Facilitated Learning & Support related complaints decreased from 5 complaints in 2024/25 to 2; also, Others received 1 complaint this year compared with 3 last year. Course Management related complaints increased largely from 8 complaints in 2024/25 to 18 in 2025/26. Assessment, Exams & Certification complaints increased slightly from 1 complaint in 2024/25 to 3 complaints in 2025/26.

C3S03: Course Management (18 complaints: 1 partially upheld/ 7 not upheld /9 resolved/ 1 open)

- A complaint was handled relating to course advertising. This complaint was partially upheld; wording of advert alluded to specific course elements which were not delivered. Teaching team updated course advertising.

- Complaint handled regarding limited teaching provision leading to inability to complete studies. This complaint was resolved and missed teaching was provided ensuring completion of studies.
- A complained was handled regarding short courses and procedure in relation to missing some of the duration of a short course. This complaint was not upheld; awarding body advice was sought and re-iterated.
- Complaint was handled in relation to Distance Learning and support offered. This complaint was resolved and measures put in place to ensure improved service and communication to manage expectations.
- A complaint was handled regarding coursework not being marked timely. This complaint was resolved and issues raised were addressed and recommendations were made for future courses.
- Complaint handled in regard to a delay in receiving grades from assessments. This complaint was resolved; timelines were provided to better manage expectations, and this will be provided in the future.

C3S04: Facilitated Learning & Support (2 complaints: 2 not upheld)

- Complaint handled in relation to alleged lack of support leading to unsuccessful results. This complaint was not upheld since all eligible support was offered.

C3S05: Assessment, Exams & Certification (3 complaints: 3 resolved)

A complaint was handled relating to certification. This complaint was resolved; result was incorrect; this was identified and rectified.

C3S99: Other (1 complaint: 1 resolved)

- Complaint handled regarding refund of fees following cancellation of course. This complaint was resolved and refund was issued.

SERVICES

For Services, 1 complaint was handled in 2025/26 compared to 3 complaints the previous year.

There were no Funding services or Finance and Learning Support related complaints in 2025/26. There was one Library/ Learning Technology related complaint and one complaint relating to the Provision of Learning Support.

C4S05: Library/ Learning Technology (1 complaint: 1 not upheld)

- A complaint handled regarding noise levels in quiet area of library. This complaint was not upheld, and students were reminded of the specific areas of the library for quiet study.

FACILITIES

This year 2 complaints were handled in the Facilities category, which is the same as last year.

Both complaints were in relation to Other Facilities related issues; similarly last year there was one complaint relating to Other Facilities related issues and one complaint related to Maintenance, Lifts and Car parking.

C5S99: Other (2 complaints: 1 not upheld/ 1 resolved)

- A complaint regarding bringing an e-bike on to the premises. This complaint was resolved and staff and students were reminded of the safety precautions taken for e-bikes given the associated fire risks.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

Complaints should be seen as one part of our understanding of the customer experience and alongside the annual audit of our Customer Service Excellence standard. By providing a complaint handling process, the College seeks to maximize the opportunities for students and stakeholders to share their experience of our service. Complaints, therefore, tell us something about the effectiveness of our services and the quality of the student experience. Handling complaints quickly and consistently is also important to the continued cohesion of College services. To improve services the College seeks to learn the lessons from upheld complaints.

We can summarise the complaints received this year as follows:

Theme	Complaints related to
Customer Care	Staff conduct, learning support issues, service provider issues
Applications, Admissions, Progression	Withdrawals of course, progression issues, lack of communication
Course Related	Learning and teaching (assessment issues, staff changes, communication) certification, lack of required additional support
Services	Library provision
Facilities	Cancellation of appointments, bike procedures

Opportunities for Improvement

For a number of years, the College has received complaints arising due to miscommunication over confirmed results, which, in turn, has impacted upon student progression. This year, the College addressed this through the introduction of Course Assessment Boards (CAB) which meant for the first time curriculum teams completed systematic moderation of results, ensuring students received an official transcript of their course outcomes.

In total, 363 of a possible 386 full-time courses held meetings (94%) and a total of 6988 students received their results report by 7 July.

CAB's are now a standard feature of the academic quality cycle and will take place at the end of each semester to ensure consistency in communication of student results.

This annual report is shared internally within the College, informing our annual review of academic quality and reported as part of the Scottish Funding Council's 2024 quality arrangements for Colleges and Universities - the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework.

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