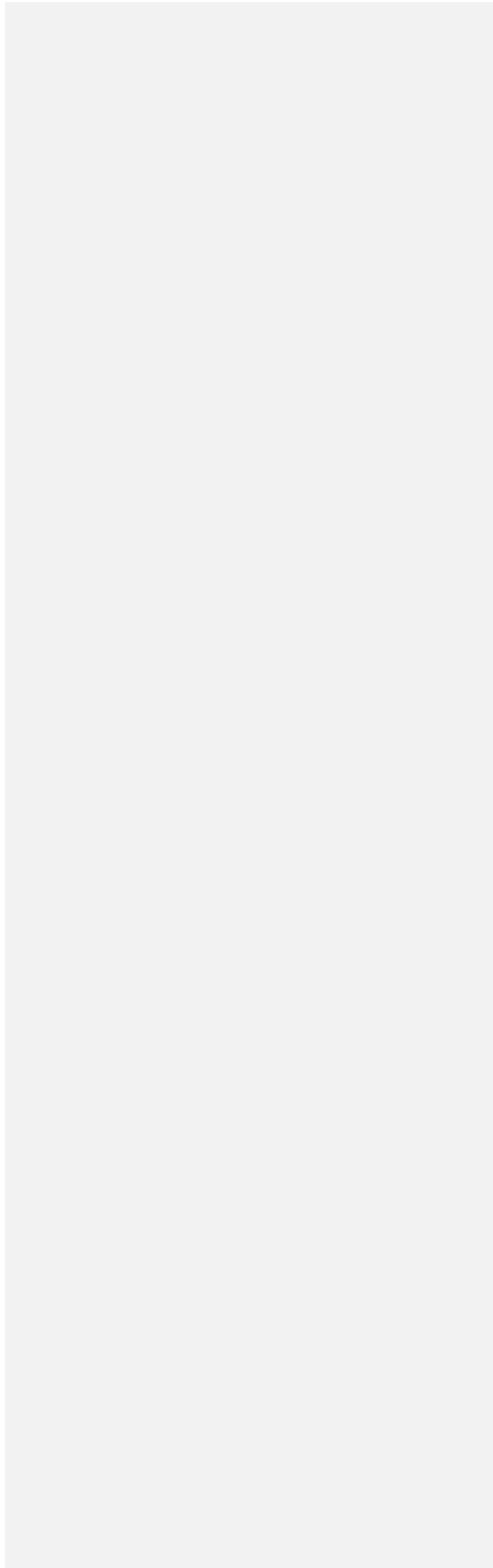
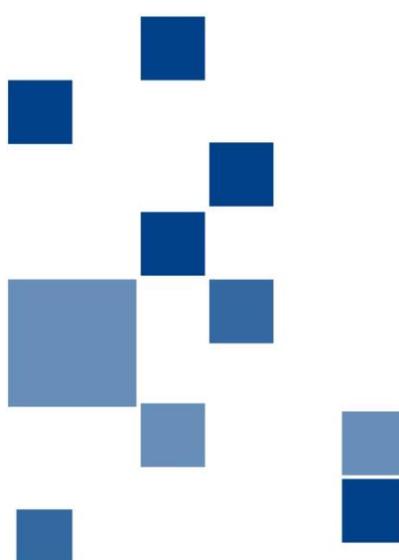


**Council
25 May 2023
Agenda item: 10
Report no: 20/2023
Appendix 1**



Complaints Performance 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

April 2023



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 We seek to provide excellent customer service across our organisation. Complaints are an opportunity to make improvements and learn from where we have fallen short.
- 1.2 We follow the model complaints handling procedure (CHP) developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). If complainants remain unsatisfied with our response once they have gone through our process, they can complain to the SPSO. The SPSO will then decide whether to open an investigation or not.
- 1.3 Our complaints handling procedure is on our [website](#).
- 1.4 In addition to this annual performance report, we publish a quarterly summary of performance on the complaints we receive, the actions we take and areas for improvement we have identified. We also report on our performance in responding to complaints in terms of timescales and process.
- 1.5 This report covers the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Some totals do not equal 100% due to rounding.

2. Performance summary

No.	Indicator	Performance April 2021 – March 2022	Performance April 2022 – March 2023	Comments on current performance
1.	Complaints received per 1,000 registrants	2.4	2.7	On 27th March 2023 there were 167,639 individual registrants on the Register. We received 453 complaints in 2022/23
2.	Percentage of complaints closed at stage one	96%	97%	We received 444 stage one complaints. 99% (439) of these were closed at stage one
3.	Percentage of complaints closed at stage two	4%	3%	We closed 13 complaints at stage two. This includes 5 complaints which were escalated from stage one to stage two
4.	Average working days to respond at stage one	2	1	Our agreed timescale to respond to a stage one complaint is five working days
5.	Average working days to respond at stage two	22	14	Our agreed timescale to respond to a stage two

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				complaint is 20 working days
6.	Stage one complaints closed within five working days	98%	99%	We closed 441 stage one complaints within five working days
7.	Stage two complaints closed within twenty working days	76%	93%	10 of the 13 stage two complaints were closed within 20 working days. Not all complaints received in 2022/23 received a response in the same year (as some were received at the end of March 2023)
8.	Stage one complaints with an extension	1%	1%	We extended the deadline in 3 stage one complaints
9.	Stage two complaints with an extension	18%	0%	We extended the deadline in 0 stage two complaints
10.	Proportion of complaints where complainant was satisfied	98%	100%	Due to reporting methods, this figure is indicative only. See para 2.7 for detail
11.	Stage one complaints upheld	5%	4%	15 stage one complaints were upheld
12.	Stage one complaints not upheld	25%	18%	81 stage one complaints were not upheld
13.	Stage one complaints partially upheld	4%	6%	28 stage one complaints were partially upheld
14.	Stage one complaints resolved	66%	72%	'Resolved' is an outcome introduced on 1 April 2021. 321 stage one complaints were resolved
15.	Stage two complaints upheld	18%	18%	2 stage two complaints were upheld
16.	Stage two complaints not upheld	76%	36%	5 stage two complaints were not upheld
17.	Stage two complaints partially upheld	6%	36%	5 stage two complaint was partially upheld

Commented [MA1]: What's the story with the rest of them? If they weren't upheld/ not upheld/partially upheld?

Commented [LS2R1]: 11, 12,13 and 14 cover the stage 1 complaints received 445 (one carried forward from pervious year)

Commented [AW3R1]: @Laura Shepherd can I delete this comment...and the one below

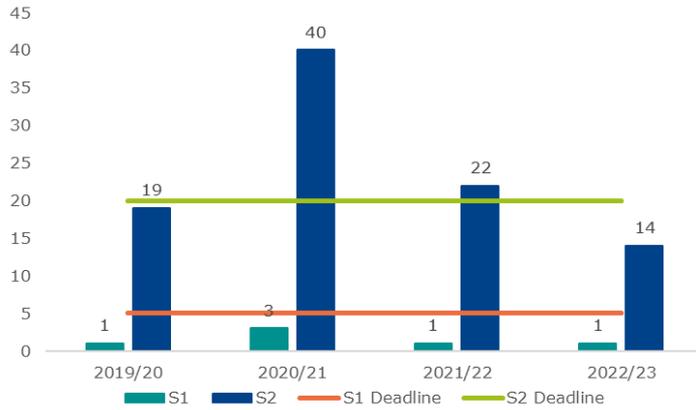
Commented [4R1]: Yes

Commented [MA5]: What happened to the other one?

Commented [LS6R5]: The other one will not yet be closed. They don't all necessary close in the same year if received at the end of the year

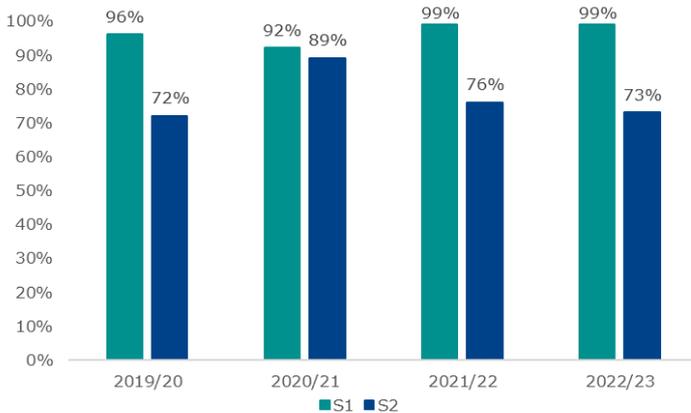
2.1 Our agreed timescales are to respond to stage one complaints within five working days, and stage two complaints within 20 working days. The following set of charts presents key information relating to our ability to respond within these timescales.

Figure 1: Average working days to respond to complaints



- 2.2 We have remained consistent with time to respond to a stage one complaint.
- 2.3 The number of stage one complaints upheld, not upheld and partially upheld has mostly been in line with the previous year's performance.
- 2.4 We have also improved our average time to respond to a stage two complaint from 22 to 14 working days.
- 2.5 The change in these averages is reflected in the percentage of complaints we respond to within the respective timescales, shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Percentage of complaints with response within timescale



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2.6 We responded to 99% of all stage one complaints within the agreed timescales, consistent with the previous year. Our ability to respond to stage two complaints within the allocated timescale decreased from 76% in 2021-2022 to 73% in 2022-2023.

2.7 We do not currently ask complainants how satisfied they are with the outcome or handling of their complaint. Recent changes to the way we record complaints at each stage of the procedure will allow us to more accurately define whether a customer was satisfied or not in the future.

3. What are these complaints about?

3.1 We received 453 complaints between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.

- 98% (444) were received at stage one of the CHP
- 2% (9) were received directly at stage two
- 1% (5) were stage two complaints escalated from a previous stage one complaint.

3.2 Over the same period, we responded to 458 complaints. Note that not all complaints received in 2022-2023 received a response in the same year (as some were received at the end of March 2023 and have not yet been responded to) and some responses were to complaints received in 2021-2022.

- 97% (444) were at stage one
- 3% (13) were at stage two.

3.3 Of the stage one complaints closed, most (286 complaints) were about one of our processes. Of those, the most frequent topics involved:

- 61 about the processing timescales
- 48 about the fees process (for example, requesting a refund)
- 40 about qualification requirements.
- 35 about our removal process

The comparatively high number of complaints about processes is expected given that these relate to areas of high-volume and high-impact work where we are in most contact with workers and stakeholders.

3.4 We can categorise the other complaints as follows:

- 89 about MySSSC (for example, the service not working as expected)
- 47 about communications (for example, the tone of our letters or the methods we used)
- 21 about customer service (for example, poor customer service or inaccurate information provided)

- 2 about our website
- 1 about events.

3.5 Of the stage two complaints closed, the most common categories are:

- 4 FTP processes
- 2 inaccurate information provided

4. What have we learned and what are we doing?

4.1 We always apologise when we get things wrong. Whether we uphold a complaint or not, we always look for ways to make improvements to our service and products.

4.2 Learning from complaints – case studies

What happened	How we resolved things
Applicant received an email advising their application had been rejected for not providing further information in time. Applicant expressed frustration at our processes and advised they followed all instructions provided so far.	We understood applicant lives with a learning disability and we explained what had happened and re-instated the application and assisted through to registration.
Registrant required town of employment on the Public Facing Register not to be visible on her registration and had notified us of this, but it had shown up again due to be dual registered.	We made a change to our process to automatically update new Registrations that town of employment should not be showing on any further registrations.
The complainant submitted a Member of the Public Referral to our Fitness to Practise department about a registered worker and wishes to complain about the delay in dealing with her complaint. The worker in question was removed from the Register while the complaint was still being considered.	We apologised for the delay in making a decision about the referral. We are reviewing our referrals to ensure that no others are delayed. We are also reviewing our systems and processes for possible improvements to prevent this from happening again in the future.
A registered worker has been advised that the qualification she holds does not meet the requirements for Residential Child Care Workers, despite the SQA advising her that this	We assessed the qualification and have received confirmation from the SQA that the qualification is equal to an HNC and therefore meets our requirements. The worker’s renewal

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qualification is equivalent to an HNC.	was processed and registered without a qualification condition.
We received a complaint from an employer that we failed to properly act on historic information about a worker's fitness to practice both when they applied for registration, and when they renewed their registration three years later. The worker had been employed and registered for five years before an investigation was opened into the historic allegations. The employer relied on the worker's SSSC registration as an indicator that they were fit to practise, and the delay in opening the investigation meant there was a risk to their organisational reputation.	We upheld this complaint and reassured the employer that we understand their concerns. We have recently undertaken significant work to upload all of our relevant historic information into an electronic format, and our procedures are now much more robust for checking for historic information when an application for registration is received. These factors combined have significantly reduced the risk of similar human errors going forward.
A registered worker has recently completed the first year of a BA in Early Childhood and it has now come to their attention that we do not accept this as a qualification meeting our requirements. The worker feels they have wasted time and money pursuing a qualification that will not help them to further their career. The worker said this qualification was accepted for registration until 2010. It is difficult to find any information on the website about why this is no longer accepted.	We entered into discussion with the worker to listen to their concerns and explain why this qualification is no longer accepted. The worker gave feedback that it is difficult to find information relating to qualifications on the SSSC website, and that courses no longer accepted should be highlighted clearly. The worker also gave feedback that there is a need for more online learning for Practitioners in Day Care of Children Services who wish to progress their career. These suggestions will be passed on as part of the future proofing work being undertaken by Qualifications and Standards.

