

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland: Annual Complaints Report 2015-16

Background

The Conservatoire's Complaints Handling Procedure is available here https://www.rcs.ac.uk/about_us/complaints/ and is conducted in line with the statutory requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The procedure provides a quick, simple and streamlined process with a strong focus on early resolution by empowered and trained staff and involves up to two stages:

Stage 1 Frontline Resolution seeks to resolve straightforward complaints swiftly and effectively at the point at which the complaint is made, or as close to that point as possible

Stage 2 Investigation is appropriate where a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a frontline resolution, or where this is not an appropriate route due to the complexity or seriousness of the case

Recording and Reporting

The Conservatoire records all complaints and reports quarterly to senior management and annually to the Board of Governors on key performance information, in accordance with SPSO requirements.

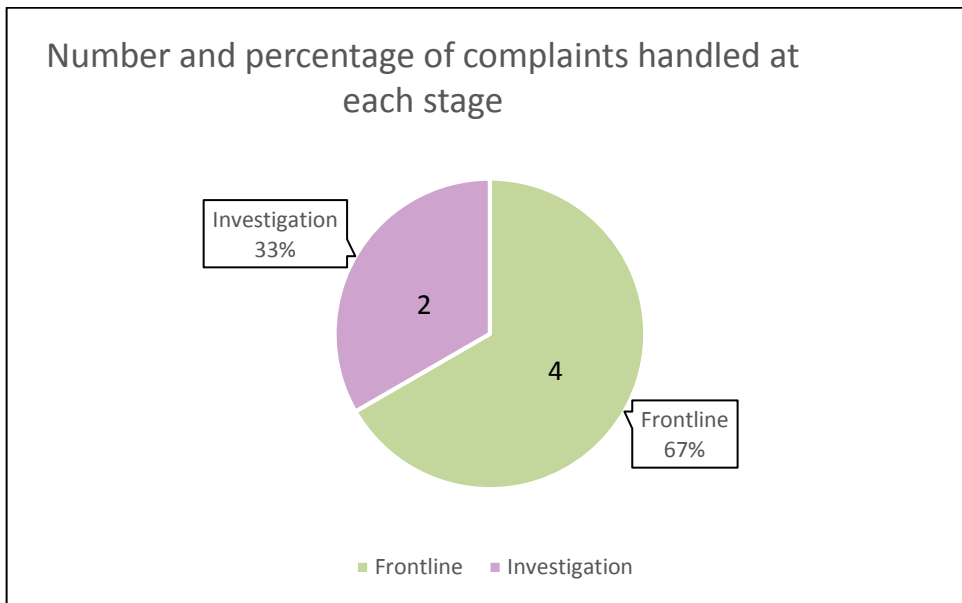
Analysis

During the period 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 the Conservatoire received a total of 6 complaints, only one of which was upheld.

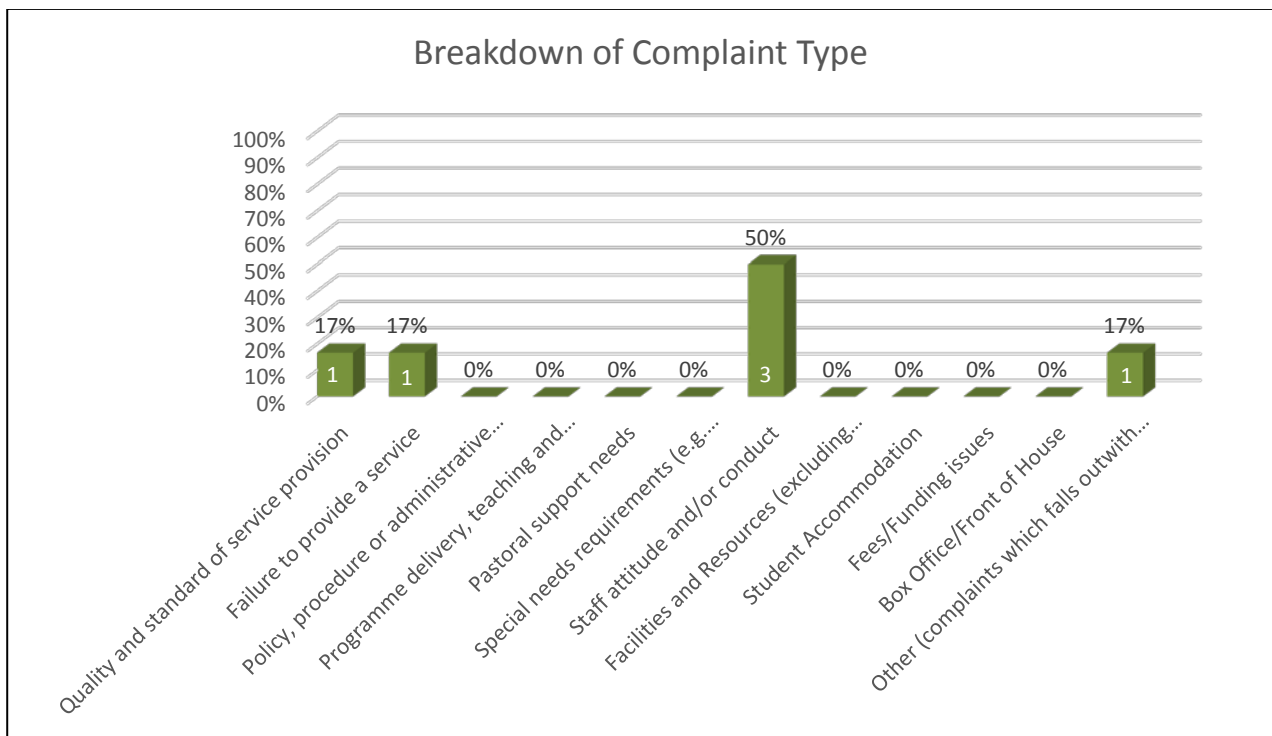
Total number of complaints received	6
Stage 1: Frontline	4
Number of complaints resolved at Stage 1	4
Number of complaints resolved within the 5 working days timeline	3
Number of complaints where an extension to the timeline has been authorised	1
Number of complaints upheld	0
Number of complaints not upheld	2
Number of complaints partially upheld	1*
Number of complaints withdrawn	1
Stage 2: Investigation	2
Number of complaints resolved at Stage 2	2
Number of complaints resolved within the 20 working days timeline	2
Number of complaints where an extension to the timeline has been authorised	0
Number of complaints upheld	1
Number of complaints not upheld	1
Number of complaints partially upheld	0
Number of complaints withdrawn	0

**1 element upheld, 2 elements not upheld*

Number of complaints considered at Stage 1 and Stage 2:



The following bar chart provides a summary of complaints for the period by category type:

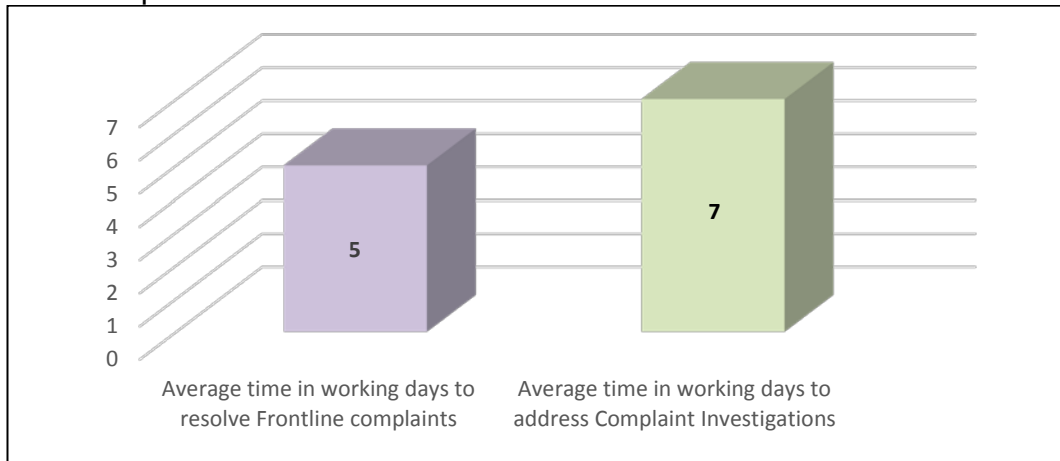


Complaint Response Times:

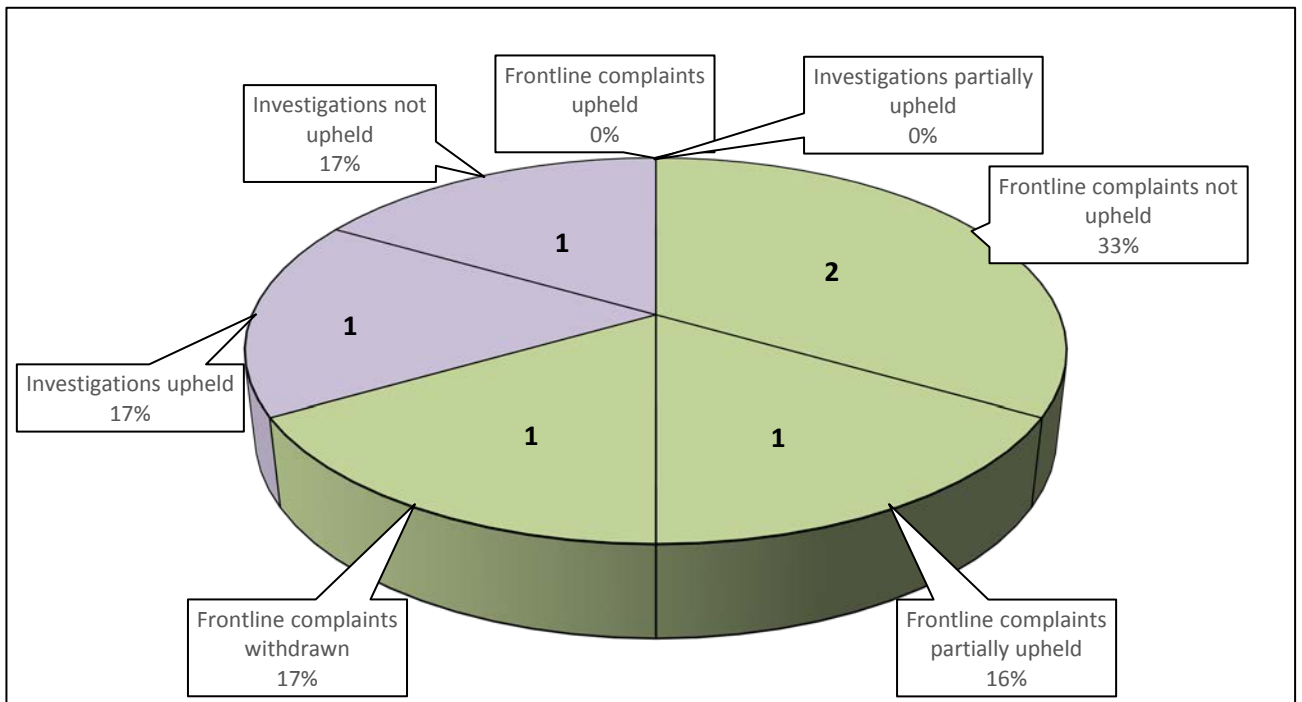
Stage 1: Frontline			as %age
Number of complaints resolved within the 5 working days timeline	3		75%
Number of complaints where an extension to the timeline has been authorised	1		25%
Stage 2: Investigation			
Number of complaints resolved within the 20 working days timeline	2		100%
Number of complaints where an extension to the timeline has been authorised	0		-

Adherence to timelines:

Five complaints were processed in accordance with prescribed timescales. The timescale for 1 complaint was, with the agreement of the complainant, extended by two days to accommodate the Programme Head’s availability. This complaint was subsequently withdrawn when the candidate was upgraded from the reserve list and the offer of a place was made.



Summary of complaint outcomes:



Trends

The total number of complaints has more than halved since the Conservatoire adopted the procedure in September 2013.

Session 2013-14:

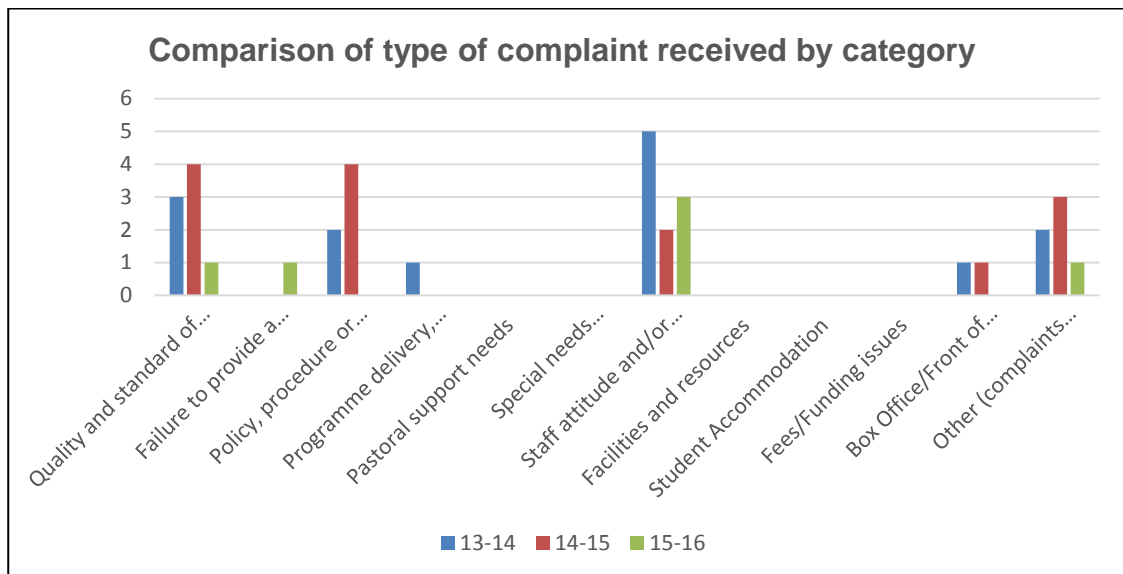
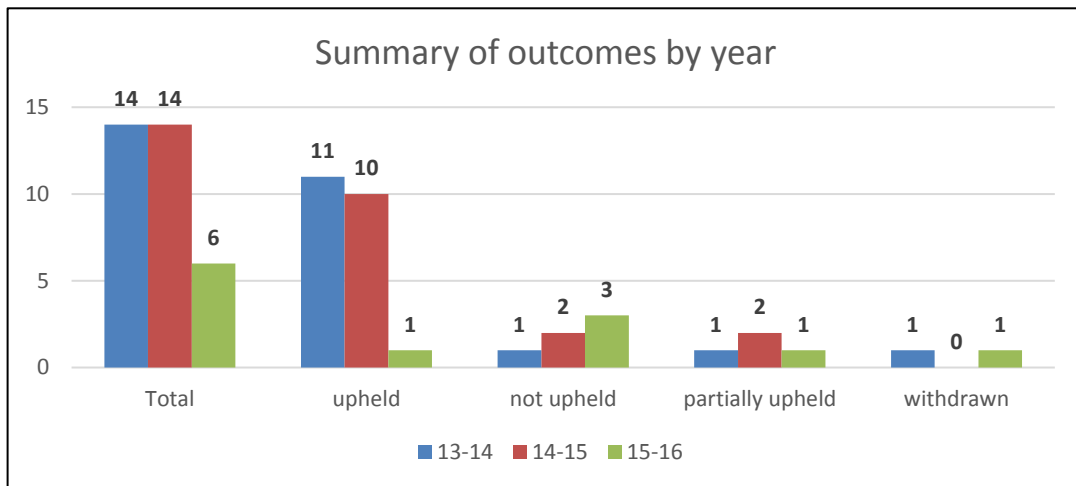
Total 14
Frontline 10
Investigations 4

Session 2014-15:

Total 14
Frontline 12
Investigations 2

Session 2015-16:

Total 6
Frontline 4
Investigations 2



In 2015-16, as in previous years, the majority of complaints were received and resolved satisfactorily at Stage 1 frontline.

The total number of complaints in Session 2015-16 was less than half the number received in previous years but it should be noted that half of the total last year related to staff attitude and/or conduct which is the highest percentage of the total since the introduction of the CHP.

Actions/Lessons learned

The Conservatoire remains committed to using this process to identify opportunities to improve the provision of services across the institution and recognises the value of

the feedback obtained through complaints. The following areas have been earmarked for review or have already undergone review as a result of a complaint received during the reporting period:

- Recommendations have been made, principally around communications and staff training and development needs
- Decisions with regard to the reimbursement of Junior Conservatoire fees would be made in writing before revised payment schedules are issued in order to avoid misunderstanding or miscommunication
- The implementation of Decision Desk for auditions will facilitate all programme team members' access to submitted material