

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

SESSION 2014/15: FIRST QUARTER DATA (September - November 2014)

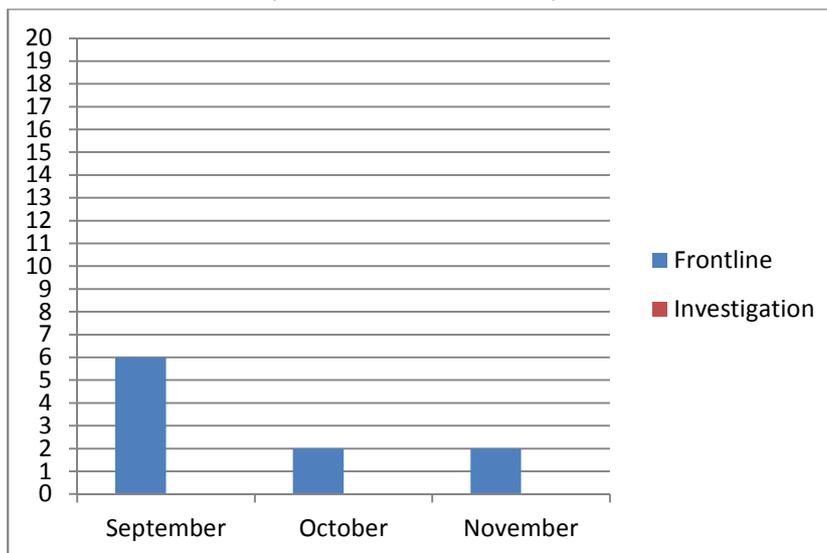
A. BACKGROUND

The Ombudsman requires the University to report on the numbers of complaints for each quarter arising under the Complaints Handling Procedure (“CHP”),¹ including those under both the Frontline and the Investigation parts of this procedure; average duration; trends; case studies; and changes/improvements made. This information is presented below.

B. COMPLAINTS DATA FOR QUARTER

1. Number of Complaints

Total numbers of complaints for the current quarter is shown in the chart below.



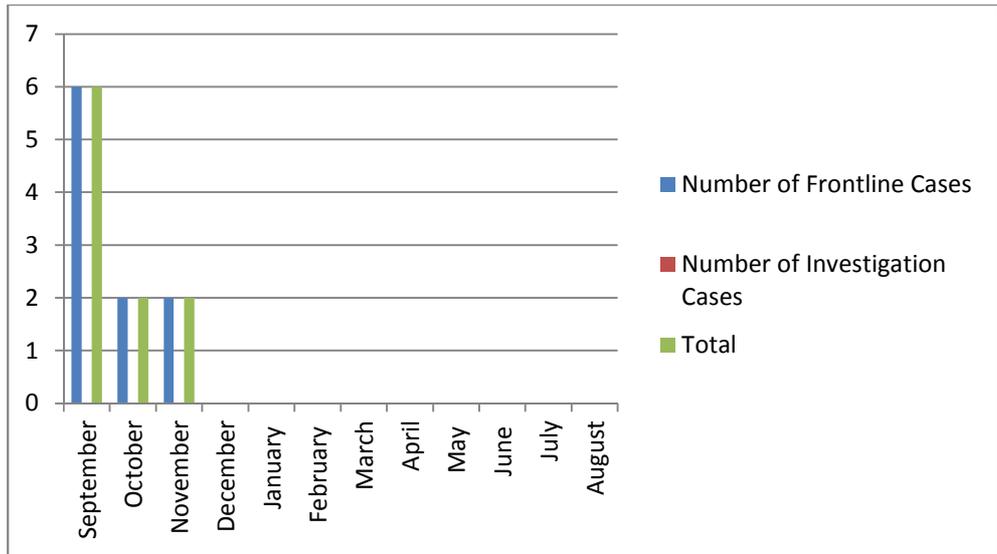
The total number and percentage of complaints for this quarter by type of procedure is shown in the table below.

Number of frontline complaints received for quarter	10
Number of complaint investigations received for quarter	0
Total number of complaints received for quarter	10
Number of complaints received from public	0

¹ This complaints procedure was introduced at the end of August 2013.

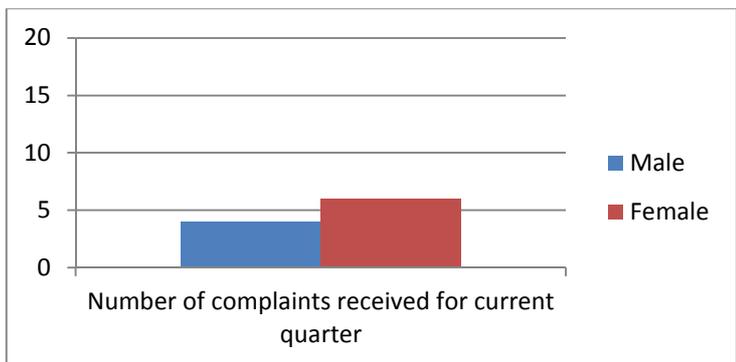
Number of complaints received from students ²	10
Frontline complaints as a percentage of total	100%
Complaint investigations as a percentage of total	0%

Comparison of relative numbers of Frontline and Investigation Cases respectively by month for whole year



As expected, the number of Frontline complaints exceeds those for Investigations. The CHP lays emphasis upon the quick resolution of complaints at the point where they arise, in preference to lengthy investigations, although some complaints may either start at the Investigation stage (if complex or sensitive) or may proceed to Investigation after Frontline Resolution if the complainant is still dissatisfied. There is no automatic progression from Frontline to Investigation.

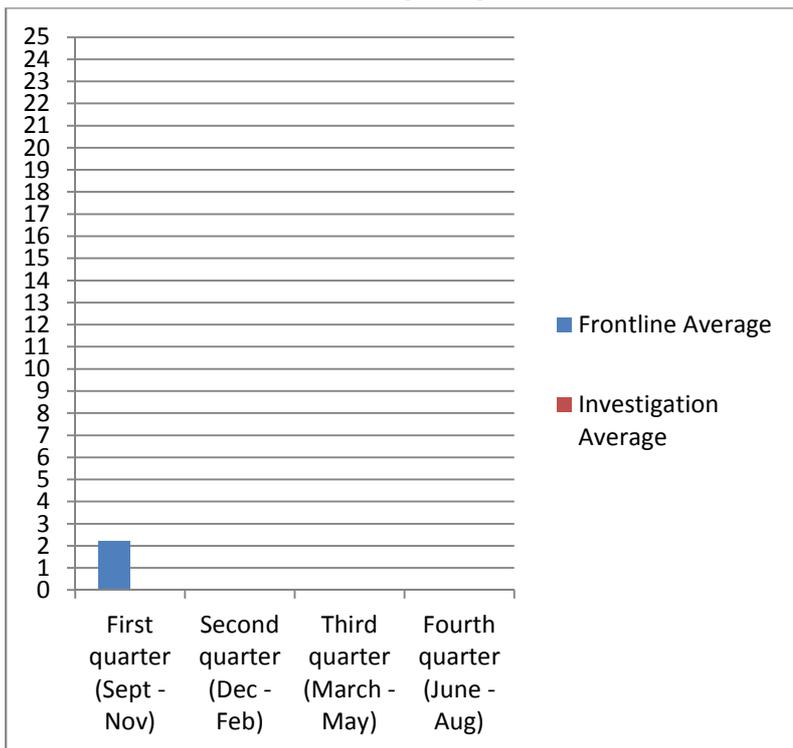
Gender of complainants



² Includes Applicants

2. Time taken to resolve

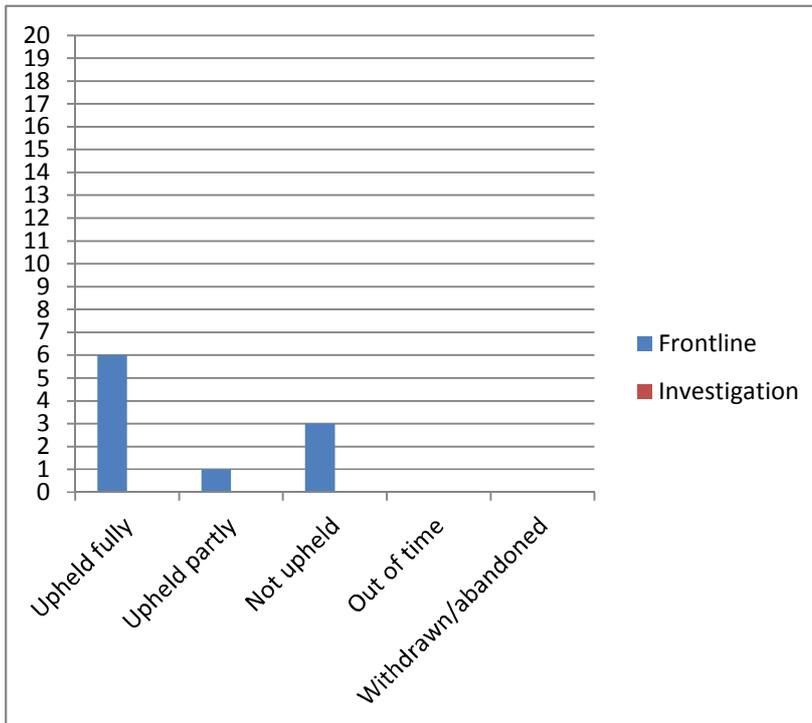
The chart below shows the average length of time to deal with complaints in working days.



The targets for dealing with complaints, set down by the SPSO, are 5 working days for Frontline Resolution, and 20 working days for Complaint Investigation cases (which by nature are more complex). The average figures for Frontline Resolution cases are well within the SPSO's targets. Normally, durations for Investigation cases are much nearer to their target maximum period. However, these figures are as one would expect, given the emphasis in the CHP on rapid resolution of complaints at the Frontline Resolution stage. Inevitably, investigation cases will take considerably longer, because investigating officers may have considerable amounts of University regulations, correspondence, records to review, and interviews to undertake.

3. Complaint Decisions

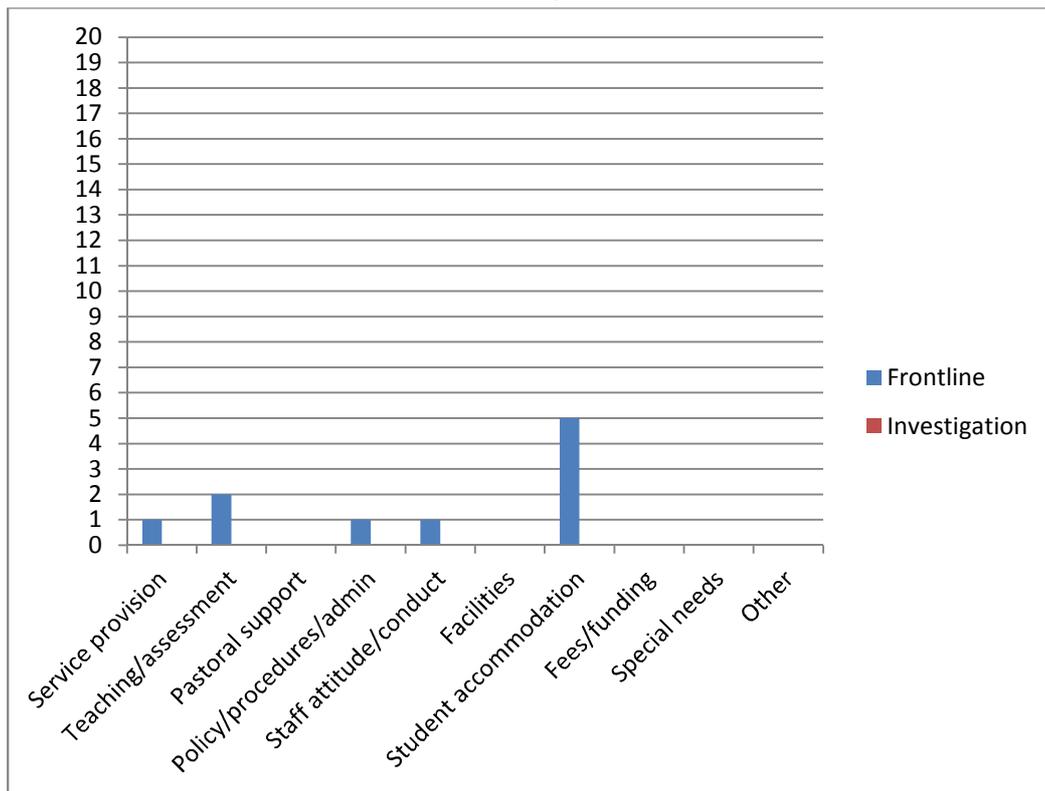
The chart below shows the complaint decisions reached for this quarter.



There is a reasonable distribution of outcome across upheld fully; partly, and not upheld. These numbers are too low to draw meaningful conclusions, but no particular causes for concern have emerged.

4. Nature of Complaints

The chart below shows the nature of the complaints made.



The figures above show a wide variation across categories.

C. TRENDS AND ACTION TAKEN

No significant trends or causes for concern are displayed by the above figures, which represent a reduction in frontline complaints compared with the previous quarter, but an increase (of one case) in investigation cases. Not all complaints were upheld, and little or no systematic organisational learning arises from this quarter's complaints.
