



**COMPLAINTS HANDLING ANNUAL REPORT**  
**ACADEMIC YEAR SEPTEMBER 2019 – AUGUST 2020**

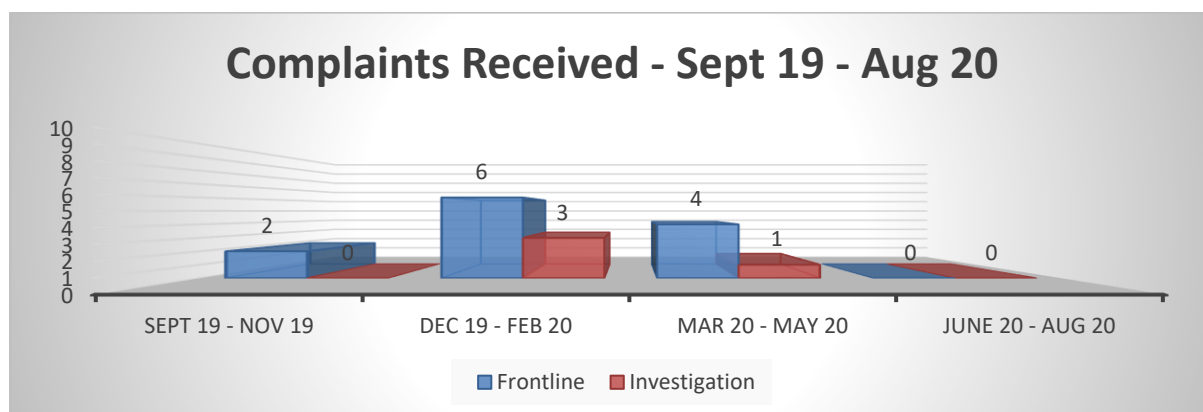
**1. Background**

In common with all other Scottish Higher Education Institutions, SRUC introduced a Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) in August 2013. The introduction and content of the CHP was driven by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). This report provides a summary and analysis of complaints handled by SRUC in the Academic Year 2019-2020, the seventh year of the CHP.

The CHP has two internal stages, Frontline resolution (Stage 1) and Investigation (Stage 2). The emphasis is on the prompt resolution of complaints at the point closest to their occurrence. After the Investigation stage has concluded a complainant, if still dissatisfied, can appeal externally to the SPSO.

**2. Annual Complaints Data**

**2.1 Number of Complaints**



Academic Year	Total number of complaints recorded	From members of the public	From or on behalf of students (includes applicants)
2019-2020	16	0	16

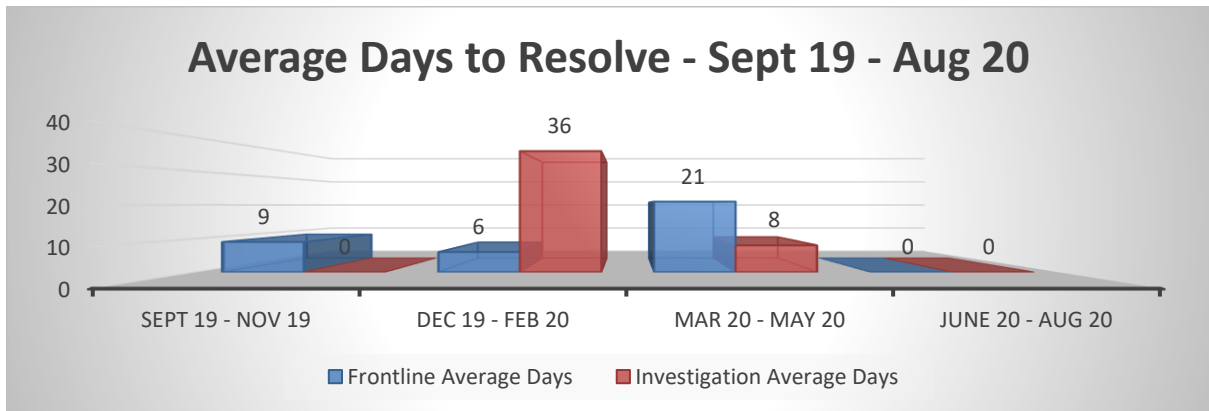
Complaints received from staff were referred for review under SRUC’s HR policies and procedures. Complaints in respect of commercial services, for example, those offered by SAC Consulting Veterinary Services, are not recorded in the CHP but are subject to separate procedures.



## 2.2 Time taken to deal with complaints

The SPSO target timescales for resolving complaints are 5 working days for Frontline Resolution and 20 working days for Investigation cases.

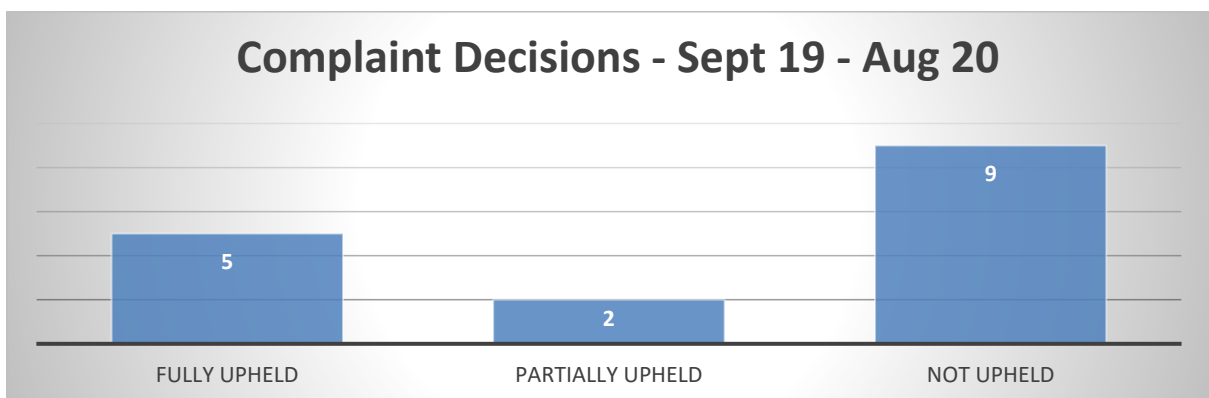
This chart sets out the average number of working days taken to resolve complaints.



The target dates for dealing with complaints were not achieved in the first three quarters of the year. The reasons for this appear to be related to the requirement for information to be obtained from more than one member of staff and the availability of required staff within the time limits imposed by the CHP for responding. There were no complaints received within the fourth quarter of the year.

## 2.3 Complaint Decisions

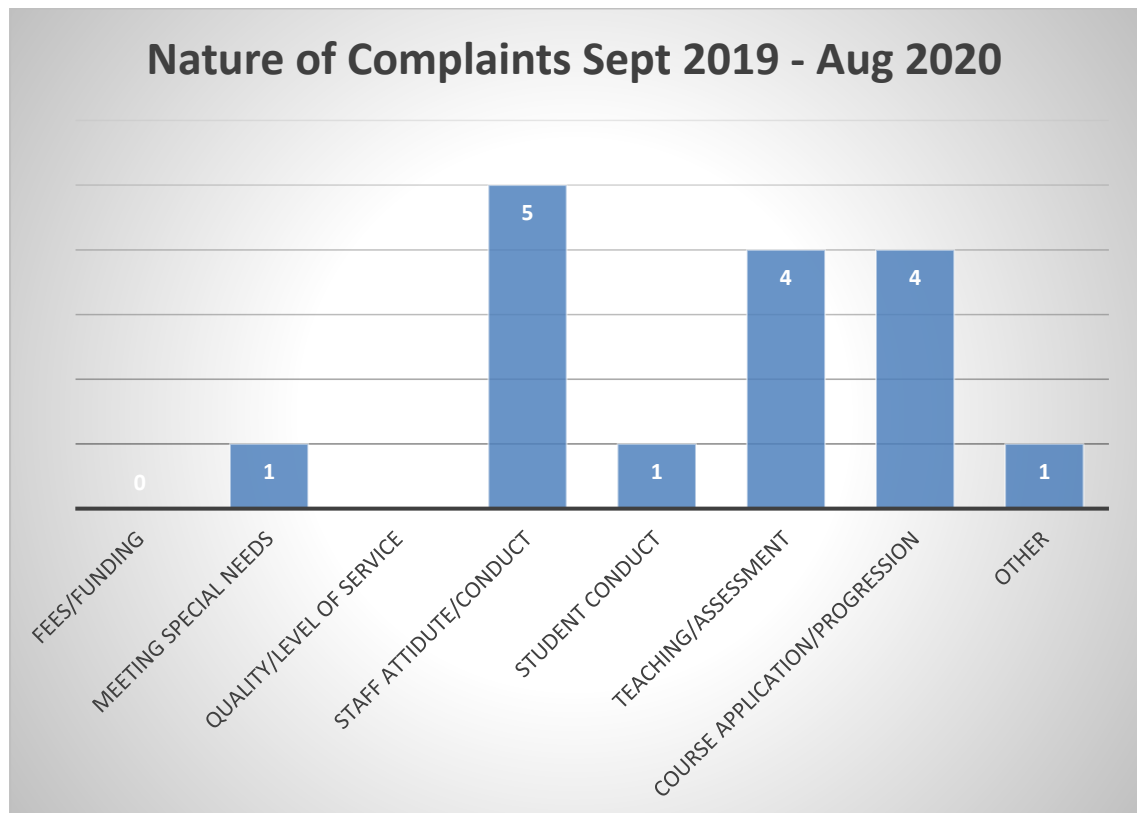
The following chart summarises the decisions made during the year.





## 2.4 Nature of Complaints

The complaints received during the academic year 2019-20 have all been made with the Academic Division. The following table sets out the category of complaints received.



## 3. Learning Points

The low level of complaints recorded makes it difficult to draw specific learning points from this year of operation of the CHP in respect of SRUC's service delivery. However, the low level of complaints recorded, and the geographic concentration of complaints indicates that there may be under-recording of complaints.

We hope to introduce a new Complaints Procedure next academic year. Staff will be trained on the new procedure and the reporting protocols.