

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

Complaints Handling Report, 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

Complaints received

Total number of complaints: 38

Stage 1: 26

Stage 2: 12 (11 direct + 1 escalated)

Complaints closed within deadlines

The timescale for responding to complaints is 5 working days at stage 1 and 20 working days at stage 2.

(A 'working day' is any day that is not a weekend or a public holiday.)

Stage 1: 22 complaints (85% of stage 1 complaints)

Stage 2: 5 complaints direct + 1 escalated (50% overall: 45% of stage 2 complaints received direct + 100% of escalated complaints)

Time taken

The average time taken to deal with complaints at stage 1 was 4.7 working days.

The average time taken to deal with complaints at stage 2 was 24.4 working days for the 8 complaints that were received direct within the reporting year that have been closed. It excludes the 3 complaints that remain pending.

The complaint that was escalated from stage 1 was responded to within 20 working days.

The main reason for delays was the unavailability of staff whose input was required to take forward investigations.

Outcomes

Resolved **24** (24 at stage 1*; 0 at stage 2)

Fully upheld: **0**

Partially upheld: **4** (1 at stage 1; 3 at stage 2)

Not upheld: **8** (2 at stage 1; 6 at stage 2)

Pending: **3** (0 at stage 1; 3 at stage 2)

* This includes 1 complaint from 2019-20 that was resolved in 2023-24.

Trends

- The total number of complaints in 2023-24 was similar to that for 2022-23 (37), but the balance between stage 1 and stage 2 complaints was reversed, with 15 and 22 respectively in 2022-23 and 26 and 12 respectively in 2023-24. The number of escalated complaints (1) remains low.

- We have continued to focus on resolving complaints, particularly at stage 1, by providing an explanation, clarification and/or an apology, where appropriate. We will continue to seek resolution wherever possible and monitor how this is achieved and recorded.
- Decisions taken relating to flags, badges and the lanyards worn by Scottish Parliamentary Service staff accounted for a large proportion of the complaints this year (almost 37% of the total). In contrast, complaints relating to symbols accounted for less than 11% of those in 2022-23.

Actions taken

As a result of complaints, we made or are making the following changes to our services and procedures:

- We increased the accessibility of live broadcasts of parliamentary business, firstly, by improving the information provided on how to enable live captions on third-party browsers and then by trialling live AI-generated captions for all Chamber business. Work is continuing to improve the captioning of live business.
- The Accessibility page on our website is now referred to in the visitor behaviour policy to make it easier for visitors to tell us in advance of any support needed.
- We have organised further staff training where appropriate.
- We are considering how information about the search procedures at the public entrance can be improved for visitors who are not fluent in English.
- We are reviewing our visitor behaviour policy and protest policy, taking into account learning and recommendations from complaint investigations.