

## HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY COMPLAINTS ANNUAL SUMMARY 2016 – 2017

The following is a summary of the complaints recorded across the University (including Dubai and Malaysia campuses) for the period 1 September 2016 to 31 August 2017. The student population studying at Heriot-Watt University during 2016/17 totalled 28,825. The percentage of complaints recorded in relation to the total number of Heriot-Watt University students is 0.49%

### 1. Total number of Complaints Received

	2016/17	2015/16
<b>Total number of Complaints Received</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>95</b>
Number of complaints received from Students	131	89
Number of complaints received from Staff	3	2
Number of complaints received from Externals	8	4
Number of complaints considered at Stage 1	112	70
Number of complaints closed at Stage 1	103	66
Number of Stage 1 complaints escalated to Stage 2	8	4
Number of complaints considered at Stage 2	30	25
Number of complaints received directly at Stage 2	22	21

### 2. Complaint Response Times 2016/17

	No of Complaints Recorded 2016/17	% Completed within timescales 2016/17	% Completed within timescales 2015/16
<b>Stage 1</b>			
Stage 1 complaints completed within 5 working days	60	54%	60%
Stage 1 complaints completed within 10 working days	27	24%	21%
Stage 1 complaints completed over 10 working days (ie outwith SPSO deadline)	25	22%	19%
<b>Stage 2</b>			
Stage 2 Complaints completed within 20 working days	17	57%	42%
Stage 2 Complaints completed over 20 working days (ie outwith SPSO deadline)	13	43%	58%

### 3. Average time taken to resolve complaints

	2016/17
The average time in working days to resolve complaints at Stage 1	7 days
The average time in working days to resolve complaints at Stage 2	20 days

### Summary of Lessons Learned from Complaints 2016/2017

Heriot-Watt University recognises that valuable feedback is obtained through complaints and that it is important to continually review and make improvements where opportunities are identified. As a result of complaints received, the University has acted to make improvements in a number of areas. The following are examples of improvements, which have or are being made across the University:

- Following a complaint regarding early morning fire alarm tests, the Health & Safety guidelines were reviewed and distributed to relevant colleagues.
- Continued review and evaluation of support on how to deliver a better experience for distance learning students and how academic regulations could be changed to make it easier for all students to better manage their learning experience. A new student portal has been put in place, which will improve communications for all students.

- To endeavour to eliminate long response times and errors, progress has been made on how large volumes of emails are dealt with, and changes to application processes, to help offer a better service to applicants.
- Internal backup training reviewed to ensure processes run smoothly when colleagues are on leave or off ill.
- Information available to PhD students regarding how a School will consider an extension, and the impact on the payment of a stipend to be made clearer and more accessible.
- Managers have reminded their teams about the level of customer service care expected following complaints.
- Malaysia campus to liaise with the bank to find better ways of transferring student money without delays and additional costs incurred by campus transfer students. University finance systems to be reviewed to allow students to make payments for most services at their home campus in advance of travelling.
- At Recruitment Fairs/Open Days care should be taken around expectations of students securing campus accommodation during their first year.