

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) Complaints Handling 2025-26, Quarter 1 (1 April-30 June 2025)

Complaints received

Total number of complaints received: 28

Stage 1: 26

Stage 2: 2 (0 received direct and 2 escalated)

Outcomes

Resolved	18 (18 at stage 1; 0 at stage 2)*
Fully upheld:	0
Partially upheld:	2 (1 at stage 1; 1 at stage 2)
Not upheld:	2 (1 at stage 1; 1 at stage 2)
Not pursued:	0
Pending:	1 (1 at stage 1; 0 at stage 2)

Actions taken

Resolved, 18 complaints at stage 1:

- 16 complaints about the SPCB's interim decision on changes to toilet facilities: We provided information to clarify the changes made, the reasons for doing so and the consultation that would inform phase 2.
- 1 complaint about the lack of signage for the gender-neutral toilets in the Parliament building and the need to update the exhibition content: We updated signage and English maps and will take the complainant's feedback into consideration when revising our exhibition content.
- 1 complaint about the handling of correspondence addressed to Alison Johnstone MSP: The Office of the Presiding Officer will work with the MSP office to improve communications with people who contact the MSP office on matters concerning the SPCB or Chamber duties, including considering improvements to information on the website and in email acknowledgements.

* We also attempted (unsuccessfully) to resolve 5 stage 1 complaints:

- 4 about the SPCB's interim decision on changes to toilet facilities
- 1 about perceived political bias in parliamentary communications

Fully upheld, 1 stage 2 complaint

- A complaint from Quarter 4 of 2024-25 about the way a visitor was treated during a search when entering the Parliament building: We undertook to ensure that staff training includes considering the impact of the search on the person being searched.

Partially upheld, 5 complaints: 1 stage 1 complaint and 4 stage 2 complaints

- 1 anonymous stage 1 complaint about (a) conflicting information being given to a member of the public (b) inaccuracy in the information given and (c) lack of

transparency in the information available to the public: The element relating to inconsistency was upheld; the other elements were not upheld.

- 1 escalated stage 2 complaint about the inadequacy of the handling of a stage 1 complaint: It was recommended that the 'Complain about an MSP' section of the website should be updated to clarify the role of the Presiding Officer in relation to complaints against MSPs under section 8 of the Code of Conduct.
- 2 duplicate stage 2 complaints (one via an MSP) from Quarter 4 of 2024-25 about the removal of a 'Women's Rights Network Scotland' T-shirt worn under a cardigan: We explained that the slogan on the T-shirt could reasonably be interpreted as political but the person should have been given the opportunity to cover up the T-shirt and this did not happen.
- 1 stage 2 complaint from Quarter 4 of 2024-25 about a search and inconsistency in the approach taken with badges on different occasions: We apologised and the Head of Security was asked to determine an approach to badges and ensure staff are aware and apply it consistently.

Not upheld, 4 complaints: 1 stage 1 complaint and 3 stage 2 complaints

- 1 stage 1 complaint about delays to responses and incivility: We apologised for the delays and did not uphold the element about incivility. (The complaint was subsequently escalated.)
- 1 escalated stage 2 complaint about political bias in communications. While the complaint was not upheld, the specific example cited will be examined as a case study, with any learning being used to inform the review of the Parliament's Communications Strategy. We will write to the complainant following the outcome of the review.
- 1 stage 2 complaint from Quarter 4 of 2024-25 about frisking and confiscation of property: We explained security screening procedures and advised that policies are applied consistently across all visitors.
- 1 stage 2 complaint from Quarter 4 of 2024-25 about confiscation of a scarf/flag: We explained about the [Visitor Behaviour Policy](#) and [Protest Policy](#) and that the officer made a reasonable judgement in the circumstances. We also explained that the scarf was kept safe to be returned to its owner after their visit.

Pending, 1 stage 1 complaint about:

- subtitles when Gaelic and Scots were spoken during parliamentary business