Senate 12.03.2025
Paper Code: SE2025.42

Senate

Paper title	**Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office Annual Report**
Outcome requested	The Senate is asked to asked to consider the attached report outlining case data related to academic misconduct, appeals, complaints & disciplinary matters during the academic year 2024/25.
Points for Senate members to note and further information	The report provides details on themes and trends notable in 2024/25, including: • Continuation of the trend of academic misconduct case numbers stabilising after the coronavirus related peak, accompanied by continued shift in the nature of academic misconduct towards technology assisted misconduct. • Process improvement work in 2024 related to appeals processes are reflected in the timeliness despite continued increases in the volume of appeals received across all categories. • An increase in the number of formal complaints recorded, which could be attributed to process and record keeping enhancements rather than greater student dissatisfaction. • A modest decrease in the number of Report + Support submissions received did not translate to a reduction in the number of investigations, as the number of reports discontinued by reporting students reduced. • Notable increase in the number of requests for review made to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, accompanied by a decrease in the proportion that were found Justified.
Questions to consider	Senate is asked to consider the data contained in the report.
Regulatory/statutory reference points	1. QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education 2. Office of the Independent Adjudicator: The Good Practice Framework 3. Office for Students: Conditions of Registration – B2:Resources, support & student engagement; B4: Assessment and awards; C2: Student Complaints Scheme; and E6: Harassment and sexual misconduct.
Strategy and risk	Aligns with the Queen Mary Strategy 2030
Reporting/ consideration route	Consideration by EQSB (11/2/2025), Senate to consider.
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Sponsor	Jonathan Morgan, Chief Governance Officer

Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office

Annual Report 2024/25

Academic misconduct

Scope

1.1 This report covers cases of academic misconduct considered under the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy 2024/25.

1.2 During the 2024/25 academic year, the University introduced a substantially revised Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy, replacing the former Academic Misconduct Policy. This followed an extensive review led by the Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office. While many operational elements, such as definitions of misconduct and the staged approach to case handling, including the 2023/24 enhancements enabling Schools and Institutes to address more cases locally, remain consistent, the policy introduces several significant developments. These include the establishment of academic integrity principles and responsibilities, updated terminology to create a more supportive and educational tone, clearer guidance on research ethics issues within taught assessment contexts, and defined "normal" timeframes for each procedural stage. The policy also introduces a harmonised and renumbered set of outcomes, including new educational or training based requirements; adopts OIA aligned principles for addressing collusion; allows students to request a panel hearing at any stage; and expands panel membership to include AMOs and SEB/DEB Chairs.

2024/25 academic misconduct cases

1.3 There were 777 academic misconduct cases recorded at QMUL in 2024/25. Of these, 610 (78.5%) were referred to ACCO for consideration, and 167 (21.5%) were considered at the local School/Institute level. The total includes three PhD student cases referred to ACCO, representing an unusually high number for PhD level misconduct.

1.4 2024/25 is the third consecutive year where the incidence of academic misconduct has decreased, as outlined below.

Year	Cases	Annual change	Student body	As % of student body
2015/16	208	+34%	21,187	1.0%
2016/17	260	+25%	23,114	1.1%
2017/18	277	+7%	23,792	1.2%
2018/19	375	+35%	25,925	1.4%
2019/20	628	+67%	27.120	2.3%
2020/21	1,112	+77%	28, 715	3.9%
2021/22	1,440	+29%	32,207	4.5%
2022/23	1024	-29%	33,000	3.1%
2023/24	792	-23%	33,000	2.4%
2024/25	**777**	**-1.9%**	**33,000**	**2.3%**

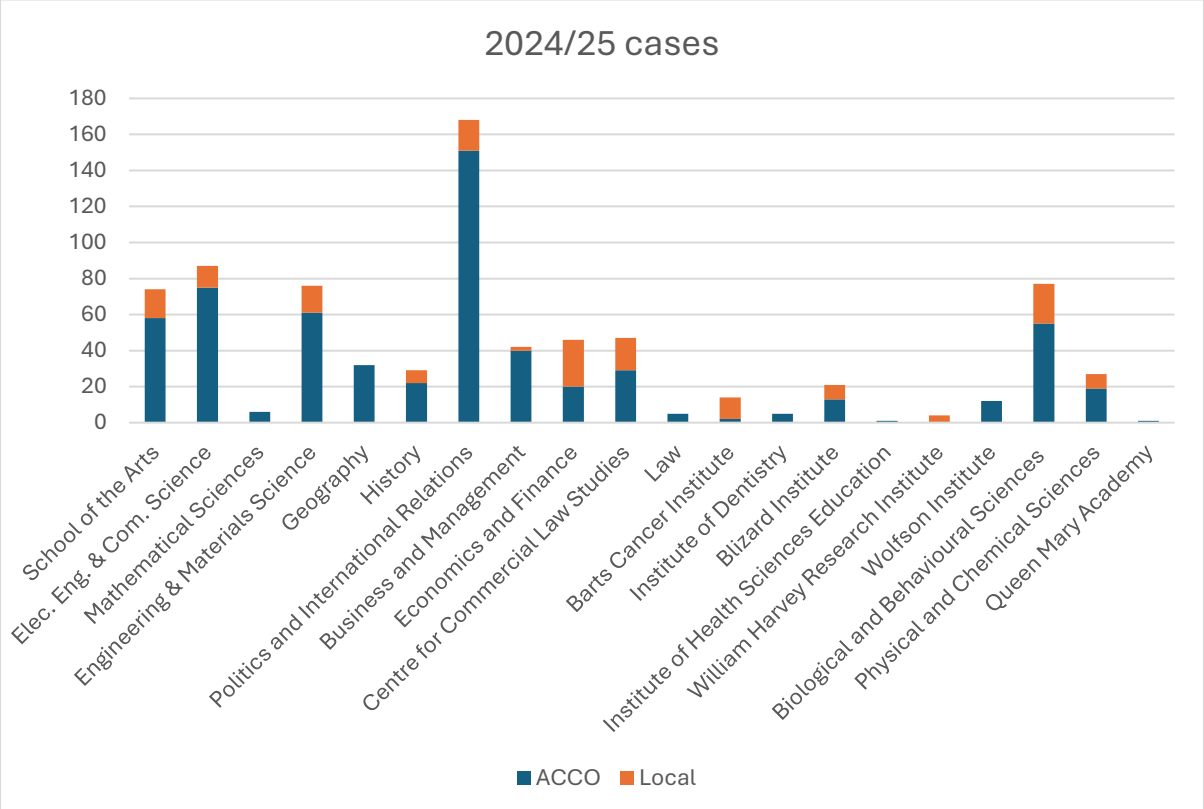
School/Institute

1.5 The table provides a breakdown of cases in 2024/25 by School/Institute.

School/Institute	Total number of 23/24 cases	ACCO	Local	Total	% ACCO	% of QMUL
School of the Arts	58*	58	16	74	78.4%	9.6%

Elec. Eng. & Com. Science	131	76***	12	88	86.2%	11.2%
Mathematical Sciences	22	6	0	6	100.0%	0.8%
Engineering & Materials Science	82	61	15	76	80.3%	9.8%
Geography	25	33***	0	33	100.0%	4.1%
History	22	22	7	29	75.9%	3.7%
Politics and International Relations	75	151	17	168	89.9%	21.7%
Business and Management	54	40	2	42	95.2%	5.4%
Economics and Finance	34	20	26	46	43.5%	5.9%
Centre for Commercial Law Studies	67	30***	18	48	61.7%	6.1%
Law	15	5	0	5	100.0%	0.6%
Barts Cancer Institute	10	2	12	14	14.3%	1.8%
Institute of Dentistry	23	5	0	5	100.0%	0.6%
Blizard Institute	11	13	8	21	61.9%	2.7%
Institute of Health Sciences Education	2	1	0	1	100.0%	0.1%
William Harvey Research Institute	17	0	4	4	0.0%	0.5%
Wolfson Institute	11	12	0	12	100.0%	1.6%
Biological and Behavioural Sciences	74	55	22	77	71.4%	9.9%
Physical and Chemical Sciences	27	19	8	27	70.4%	3.5%
Queen Mary Academy	0	1	0	1	100.0%	0.1%
					Average	
Grand Total	**761**	**610**	**167**	**777****	**76%**	

*This figure includes cases from the former School of English and Drama and the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film, which have since been merged into the School of the Arts.
** This figure does not include the 33 students referred for caution by the Exams Office.
*** This figure includes a PhD case.



Misconduct category

1.6 The academic misconduct cases for 2024/25 are related to the categories below. In 2024/25, the academic misconduct categories were updated to improve the specificity and detail of reporting. New categories were introduced, including *falsification or false reporting, unauthorised text manipulation, and third party*, to better capture the range of emerging misconduct. The previous category of ghostwriting was replaced with the broader third party involvement category to include other forms of unpermitted external support with assessments. Because of the changes to the categories, data from 2023/24 is comparable with only some of the new categories, and has therefore not been aligned across all categories in the table below.

1.7 The numbers highlight that the reduction in misconduct cases overall is specifically a reduction in plagiarism and collusion cases. This reduction in misconduct forms commonly involving text-matching is likely linked to the prevalence of software with paraphrasing tools. The table highlights that there has been a substantial increase in more serious forms of misconduct.

Category	2024/25 cases (2023/24)
Plagiarism	115 (247)
Collusion	183 (276)
Exam misconduct	35 (61)
Third Party	36 (20)*
Falsification or false reporting	115
Falsification or false reporting/Unauthorised text manipulation	88
Unauthorised text manipulation	105
Examination cautions	33 (31)
Other	100 (157)
Total	**810**

*This figure includes the 2023/24 category numbers for ghostwriting.

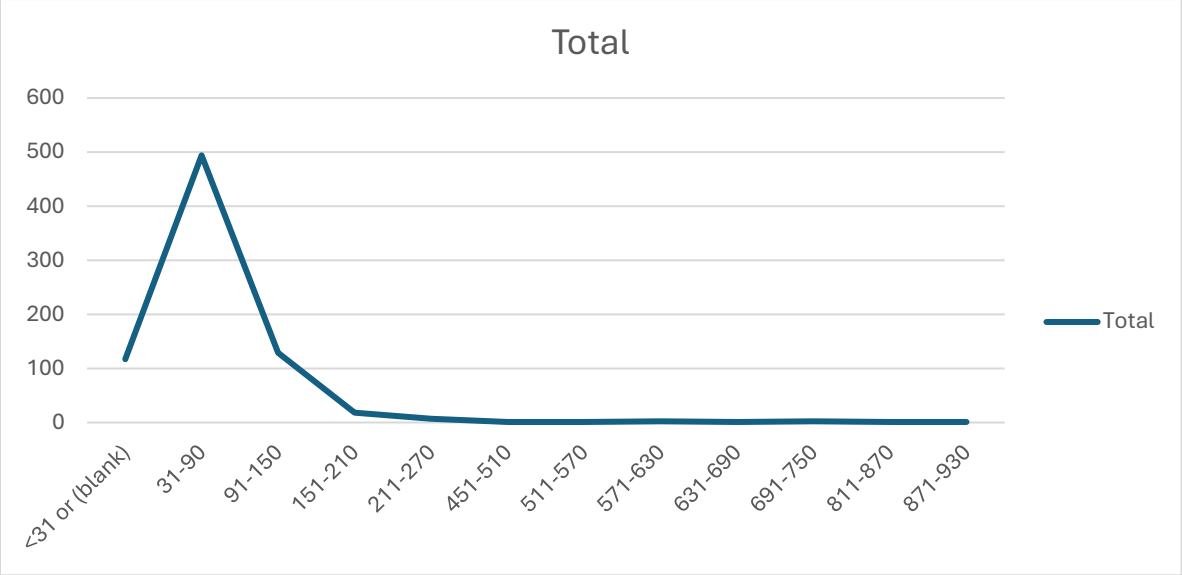
1.8 Although a new category of unauthorised text manipulation has been introduced to capture inappropriate use of artificial intelligence, the majority of cases recorded under “Other” and “Third Party” also related to the use of artificial intelligence.

Timeframes

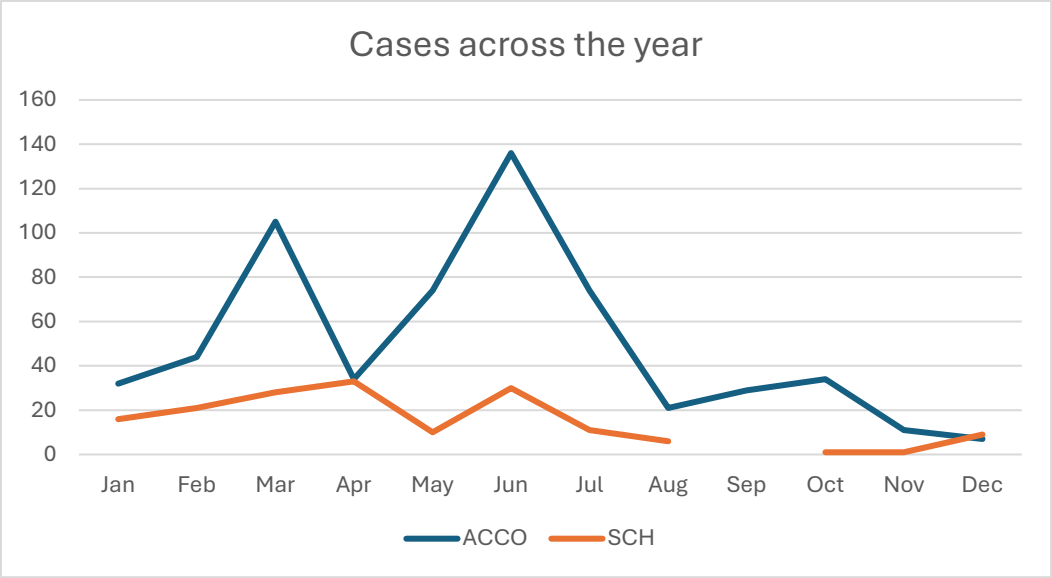
1.9 The graph below shows the time (in days) between the date of an assessment and the case being submitted.

1.10 The average number of days taken between assessment and submission of the academic misconduct case by the School/Institute was 73 days. This was an improvement on the average of 99 days in 2022/23 but is still a length of time that can lead to significant impact for student progression. There remains a substantial volume of cases being submitted more than three months after the assessment, with 163 (20%) cases taking longer than 90 days for the documentation to be presented.

1.11 The average was 73 days for Schools to submit a case to ACCO, but only 60 days to submit the case when it was considered by the School/Institute themselves.



1.12 The graph below shows the distribution of academic misconduct cases throughout the year. This suggests that cases managed by Schools/Institutes peak earlier in the year, with the highest volumes occurring between March and April, whereas cases referred to ACCO peak later, most notably in June.



1.13 The average time for an academic misconduct case to be completed once the case was presented was 38 days by ACCO and 32 days for School/Institutes. These average timeframes fall within the OIA Good Practice Framework expectations.

1.14 Previous years' completion times by ACCO were: 2023/24 (28), 2022/23 (43), 2020/21 (102), 2019/20 (76), 2018/19 (63) and 2017/18 (54). Data is not available for School/Institute turnaround times in previous years.

1.15 The average completion time for cases considered by a full panel was 69 days, while the completion time for cases considered by a Chair was 36 days. It is worth noting that the average time for panel cases in 2022/23 was 145 days, so the past two years reflect a significant improvement, despite the remaining gap.

1.16 Full panel hearings do require significantly more planning and resourcing than decisions by Chair alone, but ACCO remain committed to improving the timeframes for panel cases to

ensure students have a fair opportunity to exercise their procedural rights. The expansion of panel membership to include AMOs and SEB/DEB Chairs has supported this aim by increasing capacity and improving the efficiency of panel scheduling. In 2023/24, ACCO heard 52 cases by a full misconduct panel.

1.17 The average completion time for local misconduct cases by School/Institute is provided in the table below.

School	Av Turnaround
Business and Management	26
Elec. Eng. & Com. Science	27
Engineering & Materials Science	22
Politics and International Relations	16
Economics and Finance	21
Biological and Behavioural Sciences	80
Centre for Commercial Law Studies	22
Physical and Chemical Sciences	36
History	52
School of the Arts	29
Blizard Institute	17
Wolfson Institute	108
Barts Cancer Institute	18

Case outcomes

1.18 Overall, 92% of academic misconduct referrals made to ACCO were upheld.

1.19 Overall, 89% of cases considered locally by School/Institute were upheld.

1.20 The tables below show the outcomes of cases where misconduct was upheld in 2024/25.

Outcome	Plagiarism or collusion	Unauthorised text manipulation	Exam Misconduct	All other misconduct
formal reprimand (i)	5	1	3	4
undertake a specified educational activity of formative task				2
uncapped resubmission (iii)	16	12		5
capped resubmission (iv)	102	69	5	50
fail assessment with no right to resit (v)	4	2	5	2
module capped (vi)	1	3	0	1
fail module, capped retake (vii)	55	52	22	35
fail module with no right to resit (viii)	8	6	4	5
capping of whole academic year (ix)	2		1	
data affected by the misconduct be destroyed (x)				
rectify any material affected by the misconduct (xi)	2			
suspension (xii)				
Expulsion (xiii)	0		0	

1.21 The table below provides the details of case outcomes considered at School/Institute level.

Outcome	Plagiarism	Collusion	Other
formal Reprimand	5	7	4
undertake a specified educational activity of formative task	2	1	4
Uncapped resubmission	10	3	22
capped resubmission	16	20	22
Fail assessment, no right to resit	1	22	7

Academic Misconduct Appeals

1.22 In 2024/25, 84 Academic Misconduct Appeals were submitted (a reduction from 112 in 23/24).

1.23 This is a reduction from the 112 academic misconduct appeals received in 23/24. Although data from years prior to 23/24 previous years, anecdotal information suggested that 23/24 saw a significant increase in appeals about academic misconduct decisions. The reduction in 2024/25 may be a stabilisation following a rise in serious misconduct outcomes due to falsification cases related to AI misuse.

1.24 At the same time last year, 24 academic misconduct appeals remained pending. These have all been completed, and only 1 academic misconduct appeal from 2024/25 remains pending at this time.

1.25 The outcomes of academic misconduct appeals are outlined below:

Outcome	Appeals
Not upheld	66
Upheld	17
Pending	1
Grand Total	**84**

1.26 This means that 20% of academic misconduct appeals were upheld. In 2023/24 only 13% of academic misconduct appeals were upheld, so this highlights the need to continue enhancing engagement and procedures at the earlier stages of the academic misconduct process. In 2023/24 the majority of upheld appeals related to decisions reached by School/Institute (62%) but we are no longer able to report on the ratio of appeals related to School/central cases this year due to changes in the data available via AskQM.

Outreach & development

1.27 The new Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy came into effect for 2024/25. A significant piece of development work was undertaken with IT to align the MySIS workflow with these new changes.

1.28 A suite of Knowledge Articles for students explaining different aspects of the academic misconduct process and answering common questions were developed and released in April 2025. Articles related to the academic misconduct process have been viewed 2636 times.

1.29 A Sharepoint site for staff containing guidance documentation and templates to support those colleagues who deliver early investigation stages of the process and/or support students was made available to all School/Institute points of contact. This includes enhanced guidance about investigating the more complex forms of misconduct.

1.30 An eModule in Queen Mary's CPD platform on "AI & Academic Misconduct" was created by the Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office. The module was piloted in April 2025 with

representatives including Academic Misconduct Officers in Schools/Institutes, Misconduct Chairs, Directors of Education, SEB Chairs and Queen Mary Academy. Valuable feedback from the pilot was added to the eModule, which was released to all Queen Mary staff in August 2025. To date, 204 staff have enrolled in the module.

1.31 Monthly data returns on the volume and turnaround time for centrally considered academic misconduct cases are published with the Professional Services Service Level Indicator project, available here.

Appeals

Scope

2.1 Prior to 2024/25, appeals were considered under a single "Appeal Policy" relating to all forms of appeal. This was amended in 2023/24 to separate Academic Misconduct, Disciplinary and Fitness to Practise appeals which were incorporated into their respective policies. Further amendments in 2024/25 which created two separate policies; Academic Appeals Policy (academic decisions) and Administrative Appeals Policy (decisions related to enrolment, fees, bursaries, library, residences, or disability decisions).

2.2 These changes impact the ability to compare data year-on-year, so this report has included information about each separate appeal category, and a unified total of appeals that can be compared with previous iterations.

2023/24 Appeals carried forward

2.3 43 Appeals from the 2023/24 academic year remained outstanding at submission of the annual report for that academic year (January 2025). This represented 5% of appeals received in 2023/24 being carried forward to the next year, which was a significant reduction from 35% of appeals remaining outstanding at the same point in previous years.

2.4 These appeals have now been responded to.

2.5 Additionally, 31 Final Review cases were carried forward from 2023/24 into 2024/25; this was similar to the 33 Final Reviews carried forward from the previous year.

2024/25 Total Appeal cases

2.6 As noted above, policy changes mean that appeals are now categorised differently. However, given historic data has been recorded for all forms of appeals as a combined figure, the table below is included for consideration of the overall trend. More detailed data is provided in each section of this report about the appeals relevant to that category.

Year	Total appeals	Change	Student body	As % of student body
2014/15	309	(+13.0%)	18,905	1.6%
2015/16	318	+2.9%	21,187	1.5%
2016/17	460	+44.7%	23,114	2.0%
2017/18	483	+5.0%	23,792	2.0%
2018/19	492	+1.9%	25,925	1.9%
2019/20	283	-42.5%	27,120	1.0%
2020/21	431	+52.3%	28,715	1.5%
2021/22	769	+78.4%	32,207	2.4%
2022/23	869	+13%	33, 000	2.6%
2023/24	963*	11%	33,000	2.9%
2023/24	**1069**	**11%**	**33,000**	**3.2%**

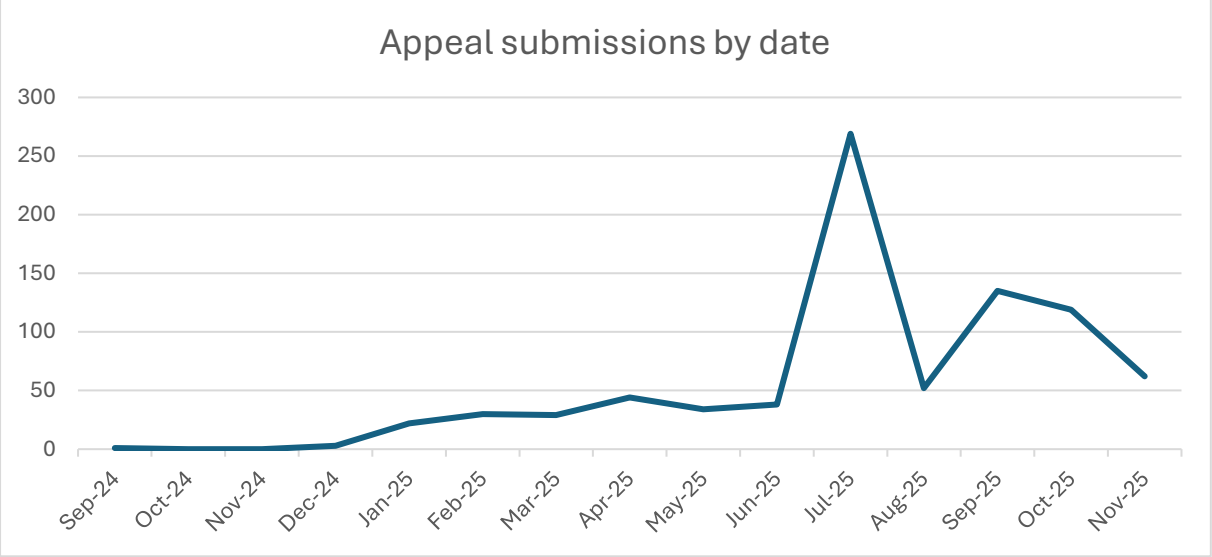
*2023/25 figure is a combination of Appeals Policy, Academic Misconduct, Disciplinary and Fitness to Practise Appeals.

**2024/25 figure is a combination of Academic Appeals, Administrative Appeals, Academic Misconduct, Disciplinary and Fitness to Practise Appeals.

Academic Appeals

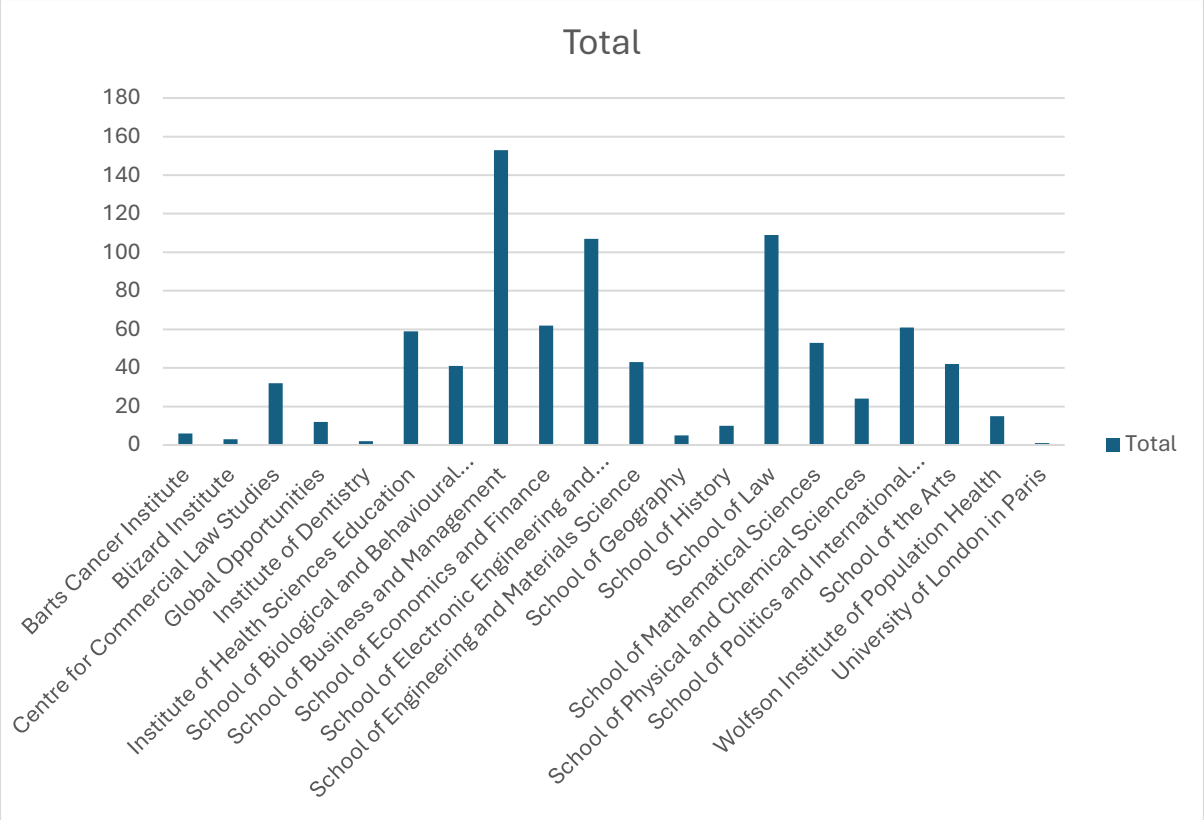
2.7 In 2024/25 there were 840 Academic Appeals received.

2.8 The table below shows the number of appeal submissions received by month. This reflects general trends, although the peak in July and August is more prominent than previous years.



Breakdown by school/institute

School/Institute	Appeals	**% of total**
Barts Cancer Institute	6	<1%
Blizard Institute	3	<1%
Centre for Commercial Law Studies	32	4%
Global Opportunities	12	1.5%
Institute of Dentistry	2	<1%
Institute of Health Sciences Education	59	7%
University of London in Paris	1	<1%
School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences	41	5%
School of Business and Management	153	18%
School of Economics and Finance	62	7%
School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science	107	13%
School of Engineering and Materials Science	43	5%
School of Geography	5	<1%
School of History	10	1%
School of Law	109	13%
School of Mathematical Sciences	53	6%
School of Physical and Chemical Sciences	24	3%
School of Politics and International Relations	61	7%
School of the Arts	42	5%
Wolfson Institute of Population Health	15	2%
Grand Total	840	**100%**



Grounds for appeal and outcomes

2.9 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals.

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage
Not Eligible	139	16%
Withdrawn	27	3%
Academic Judgement	100	12%
Out of Time	48	6%
Dismissed	392	47%
Upheld	125	15%
Pending	9	1%
Total	840	100%

2.10 Appeals which were determined to be not eligible most commonly relate to issues raised that do not (yet) fall within the scope of the appeals procedure. For example, complaints about results that are delayed; requests for more feedback or academic advice; concerns about extenuating circumstances claims, and; questions about the impact of result on progression. This is also commonly the case for appeals withdrawn by the student. A high number of these could indicate that students are not able to find the right sources of advice, information or feedback locally.

2.11 Although appeals on the basis of academic judgement are not eligible for consideration, where there are high proportions of appeals related to academic judgement this can indicate that students would benefit from improvements to feedback or clarity of marking criteria.

2.12 Although only 15% of all appeals were upheld, this was closer to 19% when accounting only for those appeals that did proceed to reach of a full outcome.

2.13 Of those appeals that were upheld, 60% based on extenuating circumstances, and 40% related to administrative or procedural issues.

2.14 The table below shows the issues raised in appeals that were upheld.

2.15 Pending cases: Only 9 cases (1%) remaining pending from 2024/25 at the time of writing. This continues the trend towards successful decrease in case backlogs from recent years, from 5% of cases still pending in 2023/24 and consistently around 35% of appeals outstanding in previous years.

School/Institute specific data

2.16 The appeal outcomes for each School/Institute are displayed below. Where a School/Institute has less than 5 appeals in total, percentages in each category are not calculated.

2.17 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for Barts Cancer Institute

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	2	33%	16%
Withdrawn	1	17%	3%
Dismissed	3	50%	47%
Total	6	100%	100%

2.18 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for Blizard Institute.

Outcome	Appeals	QM Average
Academic Judgement	1	12%
Upheld	2	15%
Total	3	100%

2.19 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for Centre for Commercial Law Studies.

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	2	6%	16%
Withdrawn	2	6%	3%
Academic Judgement	5	16%	12%
Out of Time	2	6%	6%
Dismissed	18	56%	47%
Upheld	2	6%	15%
Pending	1	3%	1%
Total	32	100%	100%

2.20 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for Institute of Dentistry

Outcome	Appeals	QM Average
Not Eligible	1	16%
Dismissed	1	47%
Total	4	100%

2.21 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for Institute of Health Sciences

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	4	7%	16%
Withdrawn	7	12%	3%
Academic Judgement	8	14%	12%
Out of Time	2	3%	6%

Dismissed	33	56%	47%
Upheld	4	7%	15%
Pending	1	1%	1%
Total	59	100%	100%

2.22 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	2	5%	16%
Withdrawn	1	2%	3%
Academic Judgement	4	10%	12%
Out of Time	1	2%	6%
Dismissed	24	59%	47%
Upheld	9	22%	15%
Total	41	100%	100%

2.23 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Business and Management

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	36	23%	16%
Withdrawn	2	1%	3%
Academic Judgement	13	8%	12%
Out of Time	10	7%	6%
Dismissed	70	46%	47%
Upheld	21	14%	15%
Pending	1	1%	1%
Total	153	100%	100%

2.24 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Economics & Finance

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	21	34%	16%
Withdrawn	1	1%	3%
Academic Judgement	2	3%	12%
Out of Time	5	8%	6%
Dismissed	27	44%	47%
Upheld	6	10%	15%
Total	62	100%	100%

2.25 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	12	11%	16%
Withdrawn	2	2%	3%
Academic Judgement	13	12%	12%
Out of Time	6	6%	6%
Dismissed	58	54%	47%
Upheld	16	15%	15%
Total	107	100%	100%

2.26 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Engineering and Materials Science

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	2	5%	16%
Withdrawn	1	2%	3%
Academic Judgement	3	7%	12%
Out of Time	4	9%	6%
Dismissed	22	51%	47%
Upheld	10	23%	15%
Pending	1	2%	1%
Total	43	100%	100%

2.27 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Geography

Outcome	Appeals	QM Average
Not Eligible	1	16%
Out of Time	1	6%
Dismissed	2	47%
Upheld	1	15%
Total	5	100%

2.28 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of History

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	3	30%	16%
Withdrawn	1	10%	3%
Academic Judgement	2	20%	12%
Out of Time	1	10%	6%
Dismissed	2	20%	47%
Upheld	1	10%	15%
Total	10	100%	100%

2.29 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Law

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	18	17%	16%
Withdrawn	1	1%	3%
Academic Judgement	37	34%	12%
Out of Time	4	4%	6%
Dismissed	40	37%	47%
Upheld	9	8%	15%
Total	109	100%	100%

2.30 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Mathematical Sciences

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	6	11%	16%
Withdrawn	1	2%	3%
Academic Judgement	3	6%	12%
Out of Time	7	13%	6%
Dismissed	25	47%	47%
Upheld	11	21%	15%

Pending	-		1%
Total	53	100%	100%

2.31 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Physical and Chemical Sciences

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	2	8%	16%
Withdrawn	1	4%	3%
Out of Time	3	13%	6%
Dismissed	11	46%	47%
Upheld	6	25%	15%
Pending	1	4%	1%
Total	24	100%	100%

2.32 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of Politics and International Relations

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	10	16%	16%
Withdrawn	2	3%	3%
Academic Judgement	5	8%	12%
Out of Time	1	2%	6%
Dismissed	28	46%	47%
Upheld	11	18%	15%
Pending	2	3%	1%
Total	61	100%	100%

2.33 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for School of the Arts

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	9	21%	16%
Withdrawn	2	5%	3%
Academic Judgement	3	7%	12%
Out of Time	1	2%	6%
Dismissed	12	29%	47%
Upheld	13	31%	15%
Pending	2	5%	1%
Total	42	100%	100%

2.34 The table below shows the outcomes of appeals for Wolfson Institute of Population Health

Outcome	Appeals	Percentage	QM Average
Not Eligible	4	27%	16%
Academic Judgement	1	7%	12%
Dismissed	9	60%	47%
Upheld	1	7%	15%
Total	15	100%	100%

2.35 University of London in Paris had one upheld appeal.

Final Review

2.36 Final Review is the second stage of the Academic Appeal process and constitutes the final decision of the University. Amendments to the Academic Appeals Policy in 2024/25

redefined the criteria for cases eligible for Final Review, with appeals considered under other procedures no longer referred to Final Review, and academic appeals which were found to be ineligible for consideration (for example, those based solely on academic judgement or not accompanied by supporting evidence) are no longer referred for Final Review.

2.37 Despite these changes, the number of Final Review requests continues to rise each year. The table below shows the trend in recent years.

Year	Final Review Requests Received
2020/21	33
2021/22	77
2022/23	63
2023/24	92
2024/25	**103**

2.38 In addition to the 103 Final Review requests received during 2024/25, there were also 32 Final Reviews from 2023/24 carried forward from the same point in the previous year. These have all been completed, in addition to those received in 2024/25.

2.39 Detailed data is not available for Final Review cases prior to April 2025 (when AskQM was implemented), but is available for the 65 Final Review cases received after AskQM was introduced. The data below therefore shows trends as a % based on the 65 cases where data is available.

2.40 The average turnaround time for Final Reviews in 2024/25 was 40 calendar days. This marks a radical improvement on the average of 130 days calculated in May 2024.

2.41 The table below shows trends in Final Review outcomes

Outcome	Final Reviews
Not upheld	76%
Upheld	11%
Pending	13%

Administrative Appeals

2.42 Administrative Appeals are the process for independent review of processes and decisions reached by other professional services departments across Queen Mary. There is only one stage to this appeal process, reflecting the fact that early stages of investigation and decision-making are normally completed by the process owning department.

2.43 The most common form of Administrative Appeal are those related to deregistration for failure to complete enrolment, or failure to meet fee payments, which account for the clear majority of cases. Other common forms of appeal include appeals against decisions related to bursaries or hardship funding allocations, and Residence Notice to Quit decisions.

2.44 Due to the impact of decisions which are considered under this process (eg. deregistration or eviction from Residences), all efforts are made to respond as soon as practicably possible to these cases. The average turnaround time for Administrative Appeals in 2024/25 was 9 calendar days.

2.45 The table below shows the volume of Administrative Appeals by outcome:

Outcome	Appeals
Not upheld	41

Resolved/Upheld	96
Grand Total	**137**

Outreach & development

2.46 Three of the top ten most viewed Knowledge Articles on AskQM are about appeals. “How can I appeal?” has been viewed 3,974 times since it was published in April 2025, with additional articles specifically about academic appeals viewed 2,426 times and administrative appeals 1,082 times. Further articles with more detailed information about the appeal processes have been viewed another 2030 times.

2.47 The success of these articles has demonstrated a need for clear guidance on appeals procedures, and we intended to increase the visibility of the articles in key touch points across the student journey.

2.48 In 2025 the Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office piloted offering drop in sessions for students to provide procedural advice about appeals and academic regulations. During the pilot, a member of the Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office was available at the AskQM Hub in Mile End Library for in-person advice and students were able book 15 minute sessions online. In July students attend in-person for 21 sessions, and booked 96 online advice sessions. From September – November, sessions were available online only, and a further 116 sessions were attended by students.

2.49 Although data is not available to assess the impact of these advice sessions on student appeals, anecdotally they were very well received by students and many issues were effectively resolved on the spot. Pending capacity, we aim to continue online advice in future results sessions.

Complaints

Scope

3.1 The Queen Mary Student Complaints Policy sets out that the first stage (Formal Complaint) is normally handled at the school/institute/service level, while the second stage (Complaint Review) is considered by the Appeals, Complaints, and Conduct Office (ACCO). Notwithstanding, Formal Complaints may be considered by ACCO where there is good reason that this is more appropriate than the School/Institute/Service.

Complaints in 2024/25

3.1 The table below sets out the number of Formal Complaints investigated for which records are held. Due to limitations with previous data collection and complaint submission methods, no data is held for complaints submitted directly to the School/Institute/Department prior to April 2025, this being the majority of the academic year. In April 2025, the introduction of AskQM created a single point of submission for Formal Complaints and ensuring accurate data collection. The data included below is therefore only a small portion of Formal Complaints during the 2024/25 academic year, however, it is worth noting that this significantly exceeds the number of complaints recorded by Schools/Institutes in 2023/24 (60), suggesting that previous record keeping and investigation procedures were not an accurate reflection of the concerns raised by students, or that the new process has increased accessibility to the complaints process for students.

School/Institute	Cases
Business and Management	1
Elec. Eng. & Com. Science	4
Engineering & Materials Science	0
Politics and International Relations	1
Economics and Finance	1
Mathematical Sciences	11
Centre for Commercial Law Studies	0
School of the Arts	1
History	0
Geography	0
Law	0
Blizard Institute	0
Institute of Dentistry	0
Institute of Health Sciences Education	6
Barts Cancer Institute	0
Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office*	50
Other Professional Services	4
Total	**79**

*Cases listed to Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office refer to complaints handled centrally, either because they involve issues cross multiple departments requiring a centrally coordinated approach, or there was other good reason for the Head of School to refer the matter to the Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office.

3.2 Themes in complaints: quality of educational experience or support provision, administration and clerical errors, conduct of staff/students (inc. bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct) and academic supervision.

3.3 Of the complaints where data is held about the outcomes, 31 were not upheld, 22 were partially upheld, 12 were resolved informally and 10 were upheld in full.

Complaint Reviews

3.4 The Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office received and considered 29 Complaint Reviews in 2024/25.

3.5 Nineteen Complaint Reviews were not upheld and 9 were upheld (in part or full).

3.6 A combination of practical remedies to support students and financial compensation was offered for upheld Complaint Reviews.

Outreach & development

3.7 The introduction of AskQM in April 2025 created a single point of submission for complaints, and consistent data collection. This has created an opportunity for enhancements across the complaints process which the Appeals Complaints & Conduct Office are in the process of implementing.

3.8 Complaints are referred to investigators with support and guidance from ACCO, and a new SharePoint site containing templates, guidance and exemplars is in development to better support staff assigned to investigate complaints.

3.9 Consistent and accurate advice is provided to students, facilitated by a new suite of 'Knowledge Articles' setting out expectations and guidance for students. New Knowledge Articles about complaints have reviewed 359 times in six months.

3.10 The centralised submission allows ACCO to triage compliant submissions to ensure they are within the scope of the complaints policy, accompanied by the necessary information. This resulted in a high number of "Formal Complaint" submissions being redirected to more suitable processes, such as academic appeals, fee status reviews or enrolment/fee issues.

3.11 The improved data collection creates opportunities to better monitor trends and respond proactively. This will also support risk monitoring and compliance activities.

3.12 In line with Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Good Practice recommendations, a complaints training module is in development by ACCO, which will allow asynchronous access to training for investigators. This responds to feedback about previous complaint workshops; investigators are often appointed on ad-hoc basis and waiting until a future workshop date contributes to delays in their investigation, so training needs to be available on demand.

Disciplinary misconduct

Scope

4.1 The Student Discipline Policy deals with issues of student behaviour.

4.2 The table below provides information about the disciplinary investigations conducted by ACCO. Data is not consistently recorded about disciplinary matters at School/Institute level, which it is noted rarely involve formal investigations or outcomes.

4.3 In addition to formal disciplinary investigations, the University proactively supports informal resolution of concerns about student conduct. This includes student reports about the conduct of another student where they do not wish to participate in a formal investigation but do want informal remedies, such as no contact agreements, facilitated conversations, and other protective measures such as reducing contact between the two parties. Other informal remedies include informal discussions and communications related to expectations of behaviours.

4.4 Referrals related to student conduct are received via Report + Support, email, AskQM enquiry and incident reports from other internal and external Professional Services (Security, Residences and police).

Report + Support

4.5 The Report + Support Annual Report contains full data on all reports received via the platform. The details below relate only to those reports which are referred to the Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office, as they relate to student matters requesting investigation or action – this includes reports made by a student, and reports made about students.

4.6 The Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office received 74 referrals via Report + Support during the 2024/25 academic year. This is compared to 97 in 2023/24, 50 in 2022/23 and 42 in 2021/22 and indicates a small decrease after a significant spike in reports following 7 October 2023, while continuing a longer term trend of increasing reports.

4.7 In 2024/25, reports were made by: 37 Undergraduate students, 20 Postgraduate Taught students, 7 Postgraduate Research students, 2 staff members, and 8 other connections (including famly, friends and visitors).

4.8 Of the reports referred to ACCO, the subject of the report was: a student in 49 cases, a professional services staff member in 11 cases, an academic staff member in 6 cases, and unknown or other connections to Queen Mary in 8 cases.

4.9 Every report is responded to by ACCO, and all reporting parties are given the opportunity to speak with a member of staff about their concerns and their options, regardless of the action taken.

4.10 The reports related to bullying/harassment (36), hate crime (16), sexual misconduct (9), stalking (1), relationship violence (2) and 10 other issues.

4.11 Actions arising from Report + Support referrals include: informal resolution (17), closure due to reporting party request or disengagement (24), no further action (8), and formal investigation (33) - either as student discipline or student complaints.

4.12 Although there were less reports overall in 2024/25, there were notable less reports withdrawn by reporting students or resulting in no further action (17 this year as opposed to 47 last year) which means that the overall number of investigations and actions taken forward were higher in 2024/25 than the year before. This reflects a positive trend in

increasing trust and confidence to engage with University procedures and resolution mechanisms.

Disciplinary actions

4.13 Twenty-seven disciplinary cases proceeded to full investigation by ACCO in 2024/25, which is the same as 2023/24.

Category	Sexual Misconduct	Harassment (inc. Discrimination)	Breach QMUL instructions	Other dishonesty
Number of cases	4	13	6	4

4.14 The Student Disciplinary Policy allows cases to be decided by Head of ACCO on conclusion of the investigation, or to be referred to Student Disciplinary Committee for serious cases.

4.15 In 2024/25, 27 cases were concluded following investigation, without a full Student Disciplinary Committee hearing. The outcome of these were: 6 cases dismissed, 6 formal warnings, 4 formal apologies, 3 restrictions on contacting another person, and 3 educational activities.

4.16 In 2024/25, 6 cases were referred to Student Disciplinary Committee. Of these, 3 cases were dismissed, two cases resulted in a decision not to take further action, and one student was expelled.

4.17 In addition to internal investigations by Queen Mary, precautionary measures may be taken under the Student Discipline Policy while a student is subject to ongoing investigation by police and/or criminal proceedings. In 2024/25, there were 8 actions taken pending police/criminal proceedings.

Disciplinary Appeals

4.18 Four disciplinary appeals were received in 2024/25, all were dismissed. For reference, all of these appeals related to disciplinary cases from 2023/24. No appeals were received in relation to 2024/25 disciplinary outcomes.

Outreach & development

4.19 The Office for Students has introduced a new Condition of Registration (Condition E6) on preventing and address sexual misconduct and harassment, which came into effect in August 2025.

4.20 A substantial review of the Student Discipline Policy was undertaken during 2024/25, with a new policy approved by Senate for implementation in 2024/25. This new policy strengthens Queen Mary's position in relation to compliance with the new Condition E6, while streamlining aspects of the disciplinary processes.

4.21 Condition E6 includes a requirement that all staff involved in investigations or decision-making related to harassment or sexual misconduct have undertaken appropriate specialist training. In response to this, training was provided by a sector-recognised expert to all full-time investigators in the Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office, Employee Relations Managers, and lead members of the Student Disciplinary Committee. Further training is anticipated to reach a wider pool of Student Disciplinary Committee members.

4.22 Condition E6 requires all new students to undertake mandatory training regarding sexual misconduct and harassment, which has been implemented by Student Life in 2025/26. Early anecdotal evidence suggests this appears to have increased the number of reports related

to harassment in the next academic year. It is also anticipated that a substantial number of actions may be required in relation to student failure to complete this mandatory task.

4.23 Condition E6 also requires Queen Mary to ensure that it maintains sufficient capacity and resourcing to effectively respond to and address reports in a timely and specialist manner. This is highlighted for the University's consideration, given that budgetary constraints have resulted in the Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Office operating with a substantially reduced staff capacity in the 2025 calendar year. Importantly, the two specialist Conduct & Complaint Officer posts that were added in 2023/24 Fixed-term basis in anticipation of the new Condition E6 have been discontinued. These roles were dedicated to leading complex investigations and supporting compliance with good practice guidance on independence supporting the perspectives of reporting and responding students. These responsibilities are now absorbed by colleagues within the existing casework team. The potential risk to OfS compliance is noted here for consideration by EQSB and Senate.

Professional Capability & Fitness to practise

5.1 Fitness to Practise cases relate only to qualifying medical and dental programmes, and specifically to whether a student's behaviour calls into question whether they would be a fit and proper practitioner. Cases are investigated under the Fitness to Practise and Professional Capability Regulations.

5.2 The Professional Capability Committee (PCC) investigates and hears initial or less serious concerns, and is conducted locally within the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.

5.3 There were 16 matters referred to the PCC in 2024/25, 13 for MBBS students, 2 for BDS students, and one PA student.

5.4 The reasons for referrals were: 6 professionalism concerns, 3 academic misconduct cases, 3 student disciplinary matters, 3 police disclosures, and one occupational health referral.

5.5 Of these PCC matters: none were referred on to Fitness to Practise Committee, 7 warnings were issued, 1 was issued undertakings, 4 cases were dismissed, and 3 were found to be low-level concerns only.

5.6 The Fitness to Practise Committee is the final stage, conducted at the institutional level by the ACCO, and hears serious concerns where a student's practise is believed to be impaired.

5.7 There were four fitness to practise cases heard during the 2024/25 academic year.

5.8 One Fitness to Practise case arose from disciplinary proceedings and three related to professionalism concerns.

5.9 One student was expelled from Queen Mary. Two students were set conditions, one of whom successfully completed their conditions. The second student set conditions did not satisfactorily complete their conditions and was subsequently referred for a second Fitness to Practise hearing, following which their registration on the registered programme was terminated but they were permitted to obtain an alternative award.

5.10 There were four Fitness to Practise Appeals considered in 2024/25. All were dismissed.

5.11 A significant process review of professional capability and fitness to practise was undertaken in 2024/25. A new Professional Capability & Fitness to Practise Policy replaces the previous Regulations for the 2025/26 academic year. This entails significant changes to the Professional Capability Committee procedures, with a greater emphasis on monitoring and addressing less serious concerns with early interventions, while the Fitness to Practise Committee will continue to hear cases in categories set out by the GMC and GDC as potential reasons for impairment.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

6.1 Queen Mary subscribes to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) student complaints scheme, in line with the Higher Education Act 2004. The OIA is an independent review body to which students have recourse should they be dissatisfied with the University's handling of any student case. The OIA's Good Practice Framework outlines principles and guidance that the University's procedures are expected to comply with.

6.2 The OIA report case data and statistics based on calendar year, rather than academic year. The information in this report relates to complaints referred to, and reviewed by, the OIA during the 2025 calendar year. These cases do not directly correspond with casework completed in 2024/25, as students may raise a case with the OIA up to one calendar year after the student completes all internal procedures at the University.

6.3 During 2024, the OIA received 91 requests from students to review the handling of their case by Queen Mary, which is a substantial increase from 68 in 2024.

6.4 The requests related to issues arising from: academic appeals (55), complaints (23), enrolment/fees (6), disciplinary (4) and academic misconduct (2).

6.5 The OIA has not reached a decision yet on 11 of these cases, which remain pending their review.

6.6 The OIA concluded that the student's complaints were not eligible and/or not justified in 65 cases.

6.7 The OIA found that the student's complaint was "Justified" in part or full in 4 cases; a decrease from 15 in 2024. Three of these related to academic appeals and one disciplinary.

6.8 Queen Mary reached informal resolution of 11 cases where a student contacted the OIA.

6.9 Where a case is found justified, in part of full, the University is required to offer remedies for the student, and may be required to undertake actions. A summary of the remedies and actions required is below:

a) An offer to reinvestigate the complaint and/or the appeal

b) Financial compensation

c) Ensure that all staff involved in disciplinary panels or investigations receive training.