

SPSO decision report

Case: 201508268, Edinburgh College
Sector: further and higher education
Subject: communication staff attitude dignity and confidentiality
Outcome: some upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C was a student at the college. She complained about the behaviour of a member of teaching staff towards her. She also said that the staff member failed to provide agreed reasonable adjustments, that they scheduled some assessments in an inappropriate location and destroyed some of her assessment work. Mrs C also complained that the college's handling of her complaint was inadequate.

We found that there was no independent evidence to support Mrs C's account of the staff member's behaviour; although this did not mean we did not believe her. However, given the lack of evidence, we could not reach a finding on this and, therefore, we could not uphold this aspect of her complaint. There was evidence to show that the staff member failed to provide agreed reasonable adjustments and scheduled some assessments in an inappropriate location, and we upheld these complaints.

We did not find that the staff member destroyed some of Mrs C's assessment work; rather, the college only retained Mrs C's work for as long as was required by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. In addition, we were satisfied that the college's handling of Mrs C's complaint was reasonable in the circumstances. We did not uphold these aspects of Mrs C's complaint.

As the staff member had left the college, we did not make recommendations about their actions, as this would have no effect. The college have reminded staff of what constitutes inappropriate practice and to follow college procedure at all times. We were satisfied that the college have taken responsibility for what happened, and that their actions provide an assurance that this should not happen to another student.