

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201203023, Scottish Court Service  
**Sector:** Scottish Government and devolved administration  
**Subject:** policy/administration  
**Outcome:** some upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C was in contact with the sheriff court about divorce proceedings. He complained to us that the court failed to provide him with an adequate service in relation to those proceedings. In particular, Mr C said his written communications were not passed to the sheriff for appropriate consideration prior to reaching a decision on the divorce proceedings. In addition, Mr C complained that the sheriff court failed to investigate his complaint appropriately.

Our consideration of Mr C's complaint was restricted to looking at the court's administrative handling of his communications. When our investigation reviewed the evidence, it was clear there were several administrative failings in handling correspondence. These included not passing Mr C's written submissions to the sheriff for consideration; not responding to requests for information; and not advising Mr C of the outcome of his divorce within an appropriate timescale. The sheriff court, and the Scottish Court Service (SCS), acknowledged and accepted the failings identified in Mr C's complaint, and because of this we upheld Mr C's complaint although we did not find it necessary to make any recommendations as they had already taken appropriate action.

We did not agree with Mr C that the sheriff court failed to investigate his complaint appropriately. We were satisfied that the issues he raised in his complaint were considered, investigated and responded to appropriately by both the court and the SCS.