

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201304137, Ayrshire College  
**Sector:** further and higher education  
**Subject:** student discipline  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained to the college about the treatment he received when he tried to use a staff photocopier. The college then received complaints about him from staff and he was suspended pending an investigation. His case was referred to a disciplinary hearing. However, Mr C did not receive the letter asking him to attend the hearing. When the hearing took place, the college dismissed him. He said they did not follow their procedures because they did not tell him what the complaints against him were. He then appealed against the decision to dismiss him. His appeal was not upheld and he appealed to the principal that proper procedures had not been followed in the first appeal process.

In relation to the provision of information and support to Mr C, we found that, while the college could have responded more promptly in answering questions that Mr C raised with them, they took a reasonable and proportionate approach to his correspondence. We also found that they had provided him with appropriate means of support, though he had not always chosen to take this up.

We reviewed how the college applied their policies and procedures in handling the complaints and the appeal procedures. We found that they appropriately applied their complaints handling procedure in relation to Mr C's complaints. We noted that it was unfortunate that an important letter had gone missing, and we raised a concern that Mr C was potentially not provided with enough information ahead of a disciplinary hearing. However, overall we found the college had appropriately applied their managing student behaviour procedure in relation to the complaints raised by staff. We also found that Mr C's appeals against dismissal and against the appeal procedure were appropriately handled.