

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201400855, Scottish Court Service  
**Sector:** Scottish Government and devolved administration  
**Subject:** complaints handling  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Miss C was party to legal proceedings. She complained to the Scottish Court Service (SCS) that she had not received within a reasonable timescale a copy of documents relating to the decisions taken at the proceedings. She then submitted a claim for compensation due to the consequences of the documents not being provided within a reasonable timescale. At the conclusion of this correspondence the SCS told her that her complaints had been considered under their complaints procedure. Miss C was dissatisfied with this and complained to us that the response to her complaints had not been reasonable.

Our investigation found that it was reasonable that there was some confusion about what Miss C wished the SCS to consider, given the context of her communication with them. However, because their complaints handling guidance highlighted the importance of clarifying matters with the complainant, and because Miss C had eventually made reasonably clear what she wished the SCS to consider, we upheld her complaint.

### Recommendations

We recommended that SCS:

- apologise to Miss C that they did not respond reasonably to her complaint; and
- highlight to all relevant staff the importance of clarifying the matters that a complainant wishes to be considered at all stages of the complaints handling process.