Exploring education and training to improve our understanding of social service career pathways

May 2019

Contents

1.   Introduction

We hold a significant amount of data about the social service workforce in our role as regulator. We are responsible for registering workers, regulating education and training and publishing official statistics about the workforce so we can offer a unique perspective on understanding entry routes and career progression within the sector.

This paper focuses on education and training because of the role it plays in supporting entry and career progression. It can also be a useful way to promote social service careers by demonstrating there is the potential to develop skills and knowledge which can increase job opportunities. This could be particularly appealing to people looking to work in a sector that can support them to undertake personal and career development.

In collaboration with our partners[1], we have been gathering and analysing a range of data to improve our understanding of current entry routes and career progression in social services. We intend to create a conversation about our findings so clear proposals to improve career development opportunities can be made.

This is a longitudinal piece of work and we intend to expand our collaborative and explorative approach with the sector to enhance the process and ultimately the usefulness of the findings.

More information about the workforce data, information and intelligence we publish can be found at our Workforce Data website https://data.sssc.uk.com/

1.2 Background and policy context

In December 2017, the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) jointly published part two of the National Health and Social Care Workforce Plan: a framework for improving workforce planning in social care (Workforce Plan). The purpose of the Workforce Plan is to enable better local and national workforce planning to support improvements in service delivery and redesign.

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[1] Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Funding Council and the Scottish Qualifications Authority

One of the recommendations in the Workforce Plan focuses on entry and progression opportunities. These opportunities are important in developing a sustainable workforce which is highly skilled, confident and flexible. They create the potential for more rewarding careers for social service workers and improved outcomes for the people they support.

Workforce Plan Recommendation six

To develop proposals for enhanced career pathways within social care, recognising the context of the developing multidisciplinary, integrated workforce environment. The third and independent sectors, as employers of the great majority of the social care workforce, will be essential partners in this work.

Consideration will be given to:

- improving entry routes and pathways into the sector, recognising current progress and initiatives such as foundation, modern and graduate apprenticeships
- exploring how career pathways between health and social care can be further developed
- work being developed under Part 1 of the National Workforce Plan, such as a review of learner and student support across the health and social care workforce and promotion of careers in schools.

2.   Key findings

We identified the following key findings.

- There has been a reduction in the number of enrolments for Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) at SCQF level 6 (formerly known as level 2).
- There will be an increased demand for SVQ provision, particularly at SCQF level 6, over the next few years and ensuring there is sufficient capacity needs to be a priority.
- The age profile of those undertaking modern apprenticeships (MAs) in the Social Services (Children and Young People) frameworks is younger than those in the Social Services and Healthcare frameworks.
- Approximately 70% of total SVQ enrolments are in the Social Services and Healthcare framework, reflecting the larger size of the social care workforce.
- MA enrolments account for around a quarter of all SVQs.
- The Social Services (Children and Young People) frameworks currently make up more than 50% of MA enrolments however those working in this part of the sector make up just over a quarter (28%) of the total social service workforce.
- There appears to be wider use of MAs as a training route in children and young people's services. This may reflect strong demand for training in this part of the sector, strengthened by the Scottish Government's pledge to increase funded entitlement of early learning and childcare.
- 70% of SVQs are delivered by training providers. 30% are delivered by colleges.
- Higher National Certificates (HNCs) accounted for 22% of enrolments for social services programmes in colleges. SVQs accounted for 24.6% of social services programmes in colleges.
- We need to work with partners to better understand how funding is being accessed and used by individuals and employers in the sector.

3. Methodology

The data sets we have looked at are very diverse in terms of the depth and level of information they contain so we have used an inquiry approach to understand some of the relationships between the data we and others hold. Working in this way has been the first step for us to define a system in which career entry and progression opportunities in social services can best be analysed and understood.

The main sources of evidence underpinning this paper are from the:

- Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards (FISSS) Modern Apprenticeship Online (MAO) system
- Scottish Funding Council (SFC)
- Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
- Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

Work focused on completing analysis of existing data sets relevant to education and training provision where it has been possible to do so. We adopted this approach to help us identify what current data can tell us and identify any gaps.

To start we looked at the profile of people taking part in social services education and training as well as the range of programmes available nationally.

There are roles in the sector such as care home for adult manager in which people may hold other regulated qualifications (for example BSc Adult Nursing). These qualifications are not covered here but there are brief references when applicable. Provision which covers National Qualifications and foundation apprenticeships offered to young people in secondary education is also not covered in this phase of the work.

Contextual information

Before the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, Scotland had a history of developing qualifications to support the confidence, professionalism and career development of social service workers in a variety of settings.

The Act created the SSSC as professional regulator for the workforce. In partnership with employers, SSSC created a function-based register with mandatory qualifications matched to job role. So, registration led to increased demand for social service qualifications, particularly SVQs.

When registration was introduced, it was estimated that around 80% of the social services workforce did not have a work-based qualification. By September 2017, when the 100,000th person joined the register, 58% of registered workers held the qualification(s) required for their role. All other registrants (some who may have held a qualification but required to gain another due to promotion or moving to a new setting) were working towards this.

Qualifications, along with a commitment to ongoing training and learning, help reassure the public that social services are delivered by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

Reporting by SQA Accreditation show that social service SVQs are among their highest performing qualifications in Scotland.[2] Modern apprenticeships in social services likewise are consistently among the most popular of all MA frameworks.[3] The sector therefore makes a large contribution to upskilling people of all ages and backgrounds in Scotland and increasing their opportunities to gain formal credit for knowledge, skills and values developed in the workplace.

While this contribution should be celebrated, including the important role social service employers have played, it is recognised we must create a better shared understanding of how qualifications influence entry to roles, how they influence people's perception of the sector as a career of choice and if they have an impact on the retention of social service workers.

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[2] SQA Quarterly and Annual Statistics Reports
https://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Research_and_Statistics/Quarterly_and_Annual_Statistics_Reports
[3] Modern Apprenticeships Official Statistics https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/publications-statistics/statistics/modern-apprenticeships
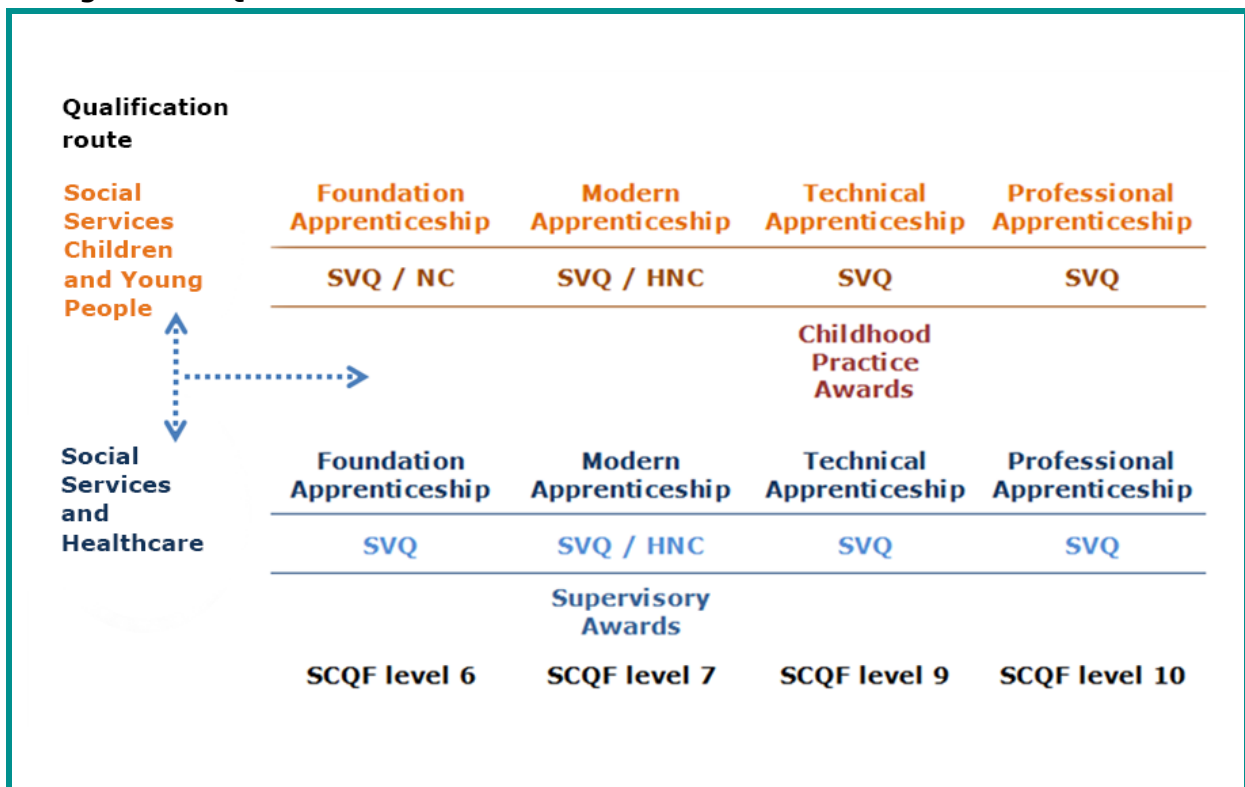
4. Training and education

4.1 Qualifications overview

There are a range of qualifications recognised in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) which can be undertaken by people who have different roles in the social service sector. The SSSC register can show us that most people gain qualifications once they enter work.

The diagram below shows a brief outline of the principal qualifications frameworks designed for those working in the sector, one for those working across social care and health and the other for children and young people services.

Diagram 1: Qualification routes

Qualification route				
Social Services Children and Young People	**Foundation Apprenticeship**	**Modern Apprenticeship**	**Technical Apprenticeship**	**Professional Apprenticeship**
	SVQ / NC	SVQ / HNC	SVQ	SVQ
			Childhood Practice Awards	
Social Services and Healthcare	**Foundation Apprenticeship**	**Modern Apprenticeship**	**Technical Apprenticeship**	**Professional Apprenticeship**
	SVQ	SVQ / HNC	SVQ	SVQ
		Supervisory Awards		
	SCQF level 6	SCQF level 7	SCQF level 9	SCQF level 10

National Occupational Standards (NOS) are statements of the standards of performance individuals must achieve alongside underpinning knowledge and understanding. NOS for the social service sector inform the development of qualifications and form the basis of those qualifications which meet registration requirements.

Qualifications include degrees, professional development awards (PDAs), modern apprenticeships (MAs), Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and Higher National Certificates (HNCs).

Routes include learning in work (SVQ), apprenticeships, college courses, and universities.

There are many qualifications listed in the SCQF database related to social service practice including a large number of Professional Development Awards (PDAs) and bespoke programmes delivered in localities or by named employers. We have not included all of these in our inquiry. We have however identified 27 national social service qualifications which have been designed to prepare learners for practice in regulated care services in Scotland. These can be seen in Appendix 1. These qualifications are delivered by colleges and training providers and lead to an SQA award certificate. Appendix 1 includes the principal qualifications from diagram 1 (those which meet registration requirements) and more qualifications designed for other purposes, for example as access or articulation routes to other programmes of learning.

Identifying these national qualifications helped us analyse Scottish Funding Council data about social service education provision in colleges. This is discussed later in this section.

4.2   Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)

> SVQs are certificates of vocational education in Scotland and available to people of all ages. SVQs are developed by Sector Skills Councils, in partnership with industry and awarding bodies and are made up of units derived from the NOS.

The main type of qualification in the sector is SVQs. These are generally provided by training providers (including those established by employers) and colleges. Our research indicates that most SVQ provision is delivered by training providers.[4]

There are two main SVQ frameworks in the sector, one for those working in social services and healthcare (with people of all ages, but primarily with adults) and the other for those working with children and young

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[4] This includes organisations just providing training and care providers who run their own SVQ assessment centre.

people (including day care of children, and residential childcare). These are:

- SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6, 7 or 9
- SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 6, 7 or 9

The following information is based on quarterly data received from SQA.

The average number of SVQ enrolments each year for the six-year period (2012-18) was almost 10,500. This is however lower than for the previous six years (2006-11) where the average was 12,500[5]. SVQs at SCQF level 7 (formerly known as SVQ level 3) have seen growth from 2012-18 but SVQs at SCQF level 6 (formerly known as SVQ level 2) numbers have dropped. The rationalisation of qualification frameworks to more streamlined versions might account for some of this decrease as well as the fact that the workforce is becoming more qualified[6] (Appendix 2).

Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) Part Time Fee Grant is available to people undertaking social service qualifications at SCQF levels 7-10. This would not include SVQs at SCQF level 6. The absence of an equivalent funding source may be a contributing factor in the lower numbers and we need to explore this further[7].

With the expected rise in demand for the SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6 as a result of the registration of workers in

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[5] SSSC (2016) SVQs in the Scottish social service sector 2012-14, Dundee, SSSC
(page 22) https://data.sssc.uk.com/images/publications/svq/SVQsReport_2012-2014_v2.0.pdf
[6] The number of registrations with a qualification condition has grown alongside increased registration numbers.
[7] The Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) assesses and provides financial support to eligible individuals who are undertaking higher education course in the UK such as an HNC or degree. Funding type differs for full time or part time study. Those studying full time will have fees paid by SAAS if they meet eligibility criteria (eg residence requirements). Generally, social service workers who are studying while working will access the part time fee grant (PTFG, referred to earlier). All universities and colleges in Scotland are registered with SAAS, however training providers must register individually so the learner/employer should check this. SVQs in Social Services and Healthcare and Children and Young People (SCQF Level 7 and above), HNCs in Childhood Practice and Social Services (part time study) and the PDA Childhood Practice (SCQF Levels 8 and 9) can attract funding providing other eligibility criteria are met. It should be noted that the PTFG calculates funding based on a percentage of 120 credits (a full year at university) so funding for a social service qualification may not meet the full cost. For example, an SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7 can cost between £1000 and £1600 but will typically attract less than £900 of funding (depending on which specific units were studied, as they carry different credit values).

housing support and care at home services there should be an increase in SVQ enrolments providing there is enough training provision available[8].

Chart 1: SVQ enrolment numbers
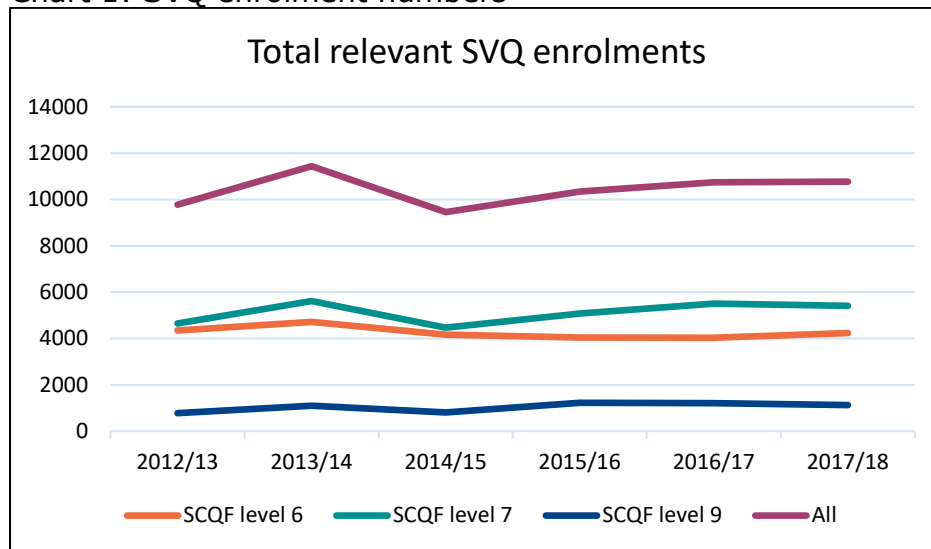
Source: SQA

Although there has been some variation in the numbers of SVQs each year, the overall share between the SVQ Social Services and Healthcare and SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) frameworks has stayed roughly constant. It is also in keeping with the number of people working in adult services and children services (Appendix 3).

For more information on SVQs including probable demand please refer to the report SVQs in the Scottish Social Service Sector 2017/18

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[8] This SVQ is the benchmark (minimum) requirement for these registration categories however workers or employers may elect for the SVQ at SCQF level 7 if more suited to responsibilities. The anticipated increase in enrolments is related to workers without a registrable qualification. Some workers will already have qualifications when they register.

4.3 Apprenticeships

SSSC develops and manages social service apprenticeship frameworks in Scotland. Apprenticeships provide an access route into the sector[9] plus opportunities for existing social service workers to gain further qualifications to support career development. The four types are:

- Foundation Apprenticeships at SCQF level 6
- Modern Apprenticeships at SCQF level 6 or 7
- Technical Apprenticeships at SCQF level 9
- Professional Apprenticeship at SCQF level 10.

A graduate apprenticeship in early learning and childcare will be piloted in 2019.

The primary qualification within each apprenticeship is an SVQ. Foundation apprenticeships include four SVQ units and can therefore support progression to the full award in employment, or progression to an SCQF level 7 qualification.

Certificated core skills (modern apprenticeships) and career skills (technical and professional apprenticeships) are included. SVQs and core/career skills are certificated by an awarding body (SQA) and an apprenticeship certificate is also issued by the SSSC.

MAs can be viewed as mechanisms to incentivise entry into the workforce by offering people the chance of paid employment linked with the opportunity to train. They can also be used to incentivise retention by supporting career development, for example a technical apprenticeship is an option for an experienced worker with aspirations to gain a supervisory or management role.

Skills Development Scotland provide a contribution towards training costs to the training provider.[10]

Available MA frameworks for the social service sector are noted in Appendix 4 and framework documents can be viewed at www.sssc.uk.com/careers-and-education/modern-apprenticeships

More information on apprenticeships is available from the Skills Development Scotland website.

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[9] Apprentices are all in employment. Foundation apprenticeship students however remain in full time education but are encouraged to progress to the workplace or further education upon completion.
[10] Individuals and employers can also provide funding.

A number of providers are registered with the SSSC to deliver MAs (Table 1). Some of these will be organisations that only provide training while others are local authorities or large private and voluntary social service providers who train their own staff.

Table 1: Modern apprenticeship providers

SCQF level	Number of approved providers	Number with candidates
SCQF level 6 (level 2)	161	108
SCQF level 7 (level 3)	166	113
SCQF level 9 and 10 (level 4)	111	65

Source: SSSC/FISSS

We looked at a six-year period from 2012-18 and the total number of MA enrolments has been subject to some slight fluctuations with the average number of enrolments just over 2,500 per annum. Across the period MAs have accounted for 26% of all SVQ enrolments in both frameworks. The proportion of MAs to SVQs has been reasonably constant ranging in value between 24.0% and 27.5% (Appendix 5).

When we looked at MA enrolments by framework it was interesting to note that the Social Services (Children and Young People) enrolments made up over 50%. Whereas they account for only 25% of all social service SVQ enrolments (Appendix 6).

While this share of MA enrolments is not in keeping with the make-up of the social services sector it has to some extent reflected the demand for training from childcare services in recent years. Those working in children and young people services have been required to register with the SSSC earlier than most workers in social care services (primarily adult) and this is likely to have been a factor. The Scottish Government's pledge to increase funded entitlement in early learning and childcare may also account for continued demand.

> **Modern apprenticeship case example**
>
> 'When I left school, I got a modern apprenticeship with Glasgow City Council working with older adults and I achieved my Modern Apprenticeship in SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 6.
>
> During my apprenticeship I realised that I did not want to pursue a career in working with older adults. Fortunately, the team which manages the modern apprenticeships got a placement for me working with adults who have a learning disability and that has worked out really well. I started as an apprentice but within a few weeks of moving there I was offered a permanent post and I am now doing my SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7.
>
> I love my job and doing my apprenticeship and having so much support has given me opportunities I might never have had. I have gained a lot of skills and learned so much. This has come from training courses I have been able to attend as well as getting advice and support from my colleagues. I have grown in confidence and I am very much part of the team. I feel the work that I do is so rewarding as I am helping others have a better quality of life. Each day is different and I have a work programme to follow which allows me to do different activities with different service users each day, so I never get bored.'
>
> Gemma, Support Worker

4.3.1 Age and gender profile

Over 20% of the Social Services and Healthcare MA enrolments were people over 25 years of age. This compares to fewer than 10% in the Social Services (Children and Young People) framework. This greater demand for MAs for the over-25s in the Social Services and Healthcare framework is due at least in part to the different age profile of the workforce in children and adult services ([Appendix 7]).

Over recent years, policy has put priority on supporting opportunities for young people to address youth unemployment[11]. This might account for the higher level of young people making up MA enrolments particularly as

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[11] Scottish Government (2014) Developing the young workforce: Scotland's youth employment strategy https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-young-workforce-scotlands-youth-employment-strategy/
 15 to 24 learner journey review programme of work https://www.gov.scot/policies/young-people-training-employment/15-24-learner-journey-review/

younger people have typically attracted more MA funding. Funding will be explored further later.

Given we anticipate an increase in demand for training stemming from the mandatory registration of workers in housing support and care at home services, this is likely to lead to increased demand for SVQs at SCQF level 6 (formerly known as SVQ level 2) and in particular for a cohort of people over the age of 25.

Currently over 85% of MA enrolments are people aged 24 and under, yet historical data held by the SSSC shows the opposite was true in the past with the majority of Social Services and Healthcare apprentices being over 25 years of age. Despite the SCQF level 6 qualification being the minimum requirement for registration there is also likely to be a rise in the SCQF level 7 qualifications as employers and workers often choose to undertake this level due to the complexity and demands of some jobs.

There is a higher percentage of women undertaking MAs in both social services frameworks compared to men. This is similar to the profile of the workforce which is 85% female.[12] As MAs can be used as a means to train the existing workforce this could offer some explanation for this. Implementing any initiatives which seek to tackle gender imbalances in the sector could also impact on targeting and recruiting people into the sector.

More information on SVQs and MAs in the Scottish Social Service Sector can be found on our Workforce Data website https://data.sssc.uk.com/.

4.4   Colleges

Colleges deliver a range of academic and vocational courses to people over the age of 16 often through flexible mechanisms such as day release, evening and part time study. Colleges often focus on supporting entry by school leavers and older learners, people with additional support needs or the socio-economically disadvantaged.

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[12] SSSC (2018) Scottish Social Service Sector: Report on 2017 Workforce Data
(https://data.sssc.uk.com/images/WDR/WDR2017.pdf

Higher National Qualifications

Higher National Qualifications such as Higher National Certificates (HNC) and Higher National Diplomas (HND) are designed to meet the needs of employers. They are generally offered by colleges and are practice based. A number of these courses can offer a route to progress to undergraduate degree programmes which could offer opportunities in social work and health.

Using data from the Scottish Funding Council we looked at the enrolments to colleges for social service related courses for the academic year 2016/17 (Appendix 8). Just over 1,000 separate courses were identified with over 13,000 enrolments. Course titles did not always appear in the same manner across colleges, but we classified them, where possible, according to their national group award title for analysis.[13] Some programmes were bespoke to a particular college so were kept separate.

The variance in titling conventions for national group awards made analysis of data more complicated. If this variance in naming is apparent in external marketing this could be confusing to learners and reduce the impact of raising awareness of national career pathways for those looking to access education. It would be helpful for education providers to standardise naming of national group awards in reporting.

In colleges, Higher National Certificates (HNC) accounted for 22% of enrolments in all relevant courses, while SVQs accounted for 24.6%. National Certificates (NCs) accounted for a further 24% and National Qualifications (NQs) for 5.5%. These four course types together accounted for just over three-quarters (76.1%) of all relevant enrolments in colleges. This suggests there are only a small number of bespoke awards being undertaken and that national group awards make up the bulk of provision.

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[13] We have re-organised and relabelled the titles using the list of national awards we identified (Appendix 8) to make these meaningful for analysis and reporting.

4.4.1 Profile

Almost 50% of enrolments for colleges were for people aged 24 or under. Chart 2 looks specifically at the age profiles of those enrolling on the two relevant HNCs. The two profiles are different with around 60% of HNC Childhood Practice students being under 24 while 60% were older than 25 for the HNC Social Services.

Chart 2: HNC enrolments by age
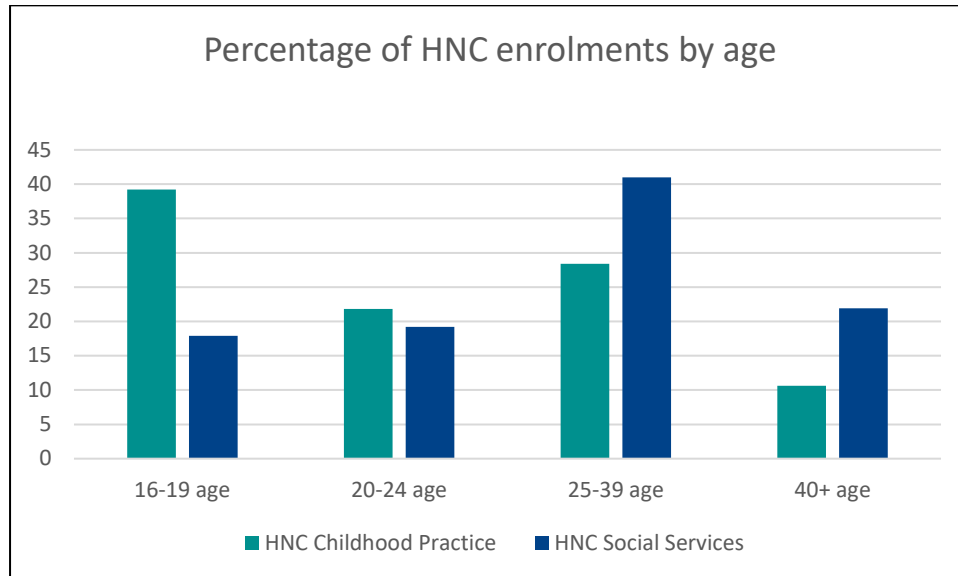
Source: SFC

Again, as highlighted in the MAs section, the trend is for younger people to take up training and employment focused on children and young people and an older age group focus on adults. Anecdotally, adult service employers tell us they prefer to recruit workers who are older and have life experience. We need to understand why this might be happening and what attracts and appeals to different groups. Having a more detailed understanding could help us develop measures to support entry into education and employment across age groups. There might also be merits in ensuring these measures are suitably flexible to help people transfer to other roles.

In the types of courses available we noticed there was some geographical variation in enrolments, for example, the north provides proportionately very few Childhood Practice or Social Services HNCs. However, they provide a far greater proportion of the SVQs at SCQF level 7 (formerly level 3) than would be expected. It is not clear why there is this variation, but it might be able to tell us something helpful about chosen entry

routes, for example, it might be based on local employer and commissioning requirements ([Appendix 9](#)).

The geographical spread of training provided outside of colleges is not known and could also be a factor in influencing the shape of college provision.

The qualifications noted above have been developed to support flexible entry and progression. For example, SVQs require learners to be employed in a role that will support them to meet the evidence requirements. Evidence can be collected in a number of ways including reflective writing, observations and interviews. For SVQs there are no specified entry requirements which means people with a diverse range of experience (but not necessarily formal academic experience) could access this route and gain credit for the knowledge and skills they hold. As seen earlier in diagram 1 there are linear progression routes from SCQF level 6 to 10, plus opportunities to move across frameworks (supported with common units in some SVQs which enable recognition of prior learning).

4.5   Observations

Undertaking training and learning towards a qualification can be daunting for people who have not had a good experience in formal education, or who may wish to change jobs and career. Highlighting the opportunities available to these groups and the potential support to gain a qualification might benefit recruitment campaigns. For example, the SSSC worked with others including Workers' Educational Association (WEA), to develop a directory of local, national and online resources which can help people to develop their literacy, confidence in the English language and other communication skills. This can be found at http://learn.sssc.uk.com/communication/

The SQA also provides a range of guidance to support equal access to assessment. This could include providing assistance during an assessment or changing assessment arrangements.[14]

The main impetus behind gaining qualifications is that workers develop and get recognition for the skills and knowledge they need to provide high quality support.

The most recent joint SSSC and Care Inspectorate report on staff vacancies within the sector indicates the most commonly reported

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[14] Scottish Qualifications Authority (2013) Guidance on Reasonable Adjustments in Regulated Qualifications https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Reasonable-Adjustments-for-SVQs.pdf

reasons for vacancies in the sector were that there were too few applicants with experience (58%), too few applicants in general (57%) and too few qualified applicants (50%).[15] So it would seem the provision of training and education is vital to upskilling and increasing the potential supply of workers.

Presenting the opportunities for education and training to support career development could be an action to prioritise. Workers can enhance their skills through a wide range of taught, self-directed and practice-based learning. In addition to the qualifications noted in this report, there are a range of professional development awards (PDA). We intend to look more closely at the PDA provision in the future.

4.6   Higher education

Studying at university to degree level is a requirement for some jobs in the sector. This includes social workers (approx 10,000), managers of day care of children's services[16] (approx 3,000), nurses[17] (approx 6,500), teachers (approx 2,000) and occupational therapists (approx 500). These account for around 22,000 people working in the sector or about 11% of the total workforce. There are flexible routes available for people to access these degree programmes, for example entry to the Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Childhood Practice is by recognition of prior learning (RPL) where a practice award such as an SVQ or HNC is held. This was one of the first degrees in Scotland based on a work-based learning path. Recognising the experience people have gained in their career and through work-based learning could be considered for other qualifications as a way of widening access. Having clear routes for entry and articulation to support progression into some of the above roles is increasingly vital to make sure that demand from the expansion of early learning and childcare can be met.

4.6.1 Social work

To work as a social worker in Scotland you need to register with the SSSC. Social workers can only register if they hold an entitling social work

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[15] SSSC and Care Inspectorate (2019) Staff Vacancies in the Care Sector.
https://data.sssc.uk.com/images/StaffVacancies/Staff-vacancies-in-care-services-2017.pdf
[16] For Day Care of Children Service Managers, the management qualification can be achieved in different ways including the BA in Childhood Practice or a 360 credit, SCQF level 9 Professional Development Award in Childhood Practice delivered by some colleges and training providers.
[17] The SSSC contributes each year to the Government led planning on student nurses.

qualification. There are several undergraduate or postgraduate social work programmes available in Scottish universities. There have been historical difficulties in recruiting and retaining practising social workers and various measures have been implemented to increase the number of people undertaking social work training.

Please refer to the separate Report on the demand for social workers available at https://data.sssc.uk.com/

4.7   Funding and resources

Access to learning and training opportunities can be challenging for some parts of the workforce because of several factors, such as time requirements, cost and geographical issues, particularly in rural and remote areas. It is however essential that new and existing employees undertake training and learning, not only as part of the criteria for registration or post registration training and learning (PRTL), but because it supports them to develop skills and knowledge that will help them provide better support to people using services. Employers also have a duty to support their workers training and learning in the SSSC Codes of Practice.

There is a range of funding and support measures available to enable people to access education, training and qualifications. These measures have specific criteria for allocating funds and are aimed at both individuals and employers.

This means the funding landscape can seem complex with various funding arrangements, each with different eligibility criteria and reporting requirements. This can make it challenging for individuals and employers to understand and apply.

Earlier in the report we mentioned MA funding. Skills Development Scotland provide a financial contribution towards training costs for employees undertaking apprenticeships. How much depends on the age of the apprentice, the type and level of training they are undertaking. The rates for apprentices aged 16 to 24 differ from those aged over 25 as Table 2 illustrates. Contribution rates increased in April 2019 for a number of frameworks. Importantly, funding for SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6 for people over 25 years was introduced

(funding at this level was previously unavailable).[18] It will be interesting to monitor if these significant increases impact on MA demand.

Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) Part Time Fee Grant is available to people undertaking social service qualifications at SCQF levels 7-10. See earlier discussion about this on page 11.

Information about funding sources is also available at the SSSC website.

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[18]More funding for social service and healthcare apprenticeships
http://ssscnews.uk.com/2019/03/04/apprenticeship-funding/

Table 2: Modern apprenticeship contribution rates for 2019-20 (Effective from 1 April 2019) [19]

Framework	Ages 16-19				
	SCQF 5	SCQF 6	SCQF 7	SCQF 8	SCQF 9/10
Care Services Leadership & Management Professional					£3,300
Childhood Practice Technical					£3,300
Social Services (Children & Young People)			£5,500		
Social Services (Children & Young People) Technical					£3,800
Social Services and Healthcare		£2,700	£4,200		
Social Services and Healthcare Technical					£3,300

Framework	Ages 20-24						
	SCQF 5	SCQF 6	SCQF 7	SCQF 8	SCQF 9	SCQF 10	SCQF 11
Care Services Leadership & Management Professional						£1,750	
Childhood Practice Technical						£1,750	
Social Services (Children & Young People)			£2,700				
Social Services (Children & Young People) Technical					£1,750		
Social Services and Healthcare		£1,450	£2,700				
Social Services and Healthcare Technical					£1,750		

May 2019

Modern apprenticeship contribution rates for 2019-20 (Effective from 1 April 2019)

Framework	Age 25 and over						
	SCQF 5	SCQF 6	SCQF 7	SCQF 8	SCQF 9	SCQF 10	SCQF 11
Care Services Leadership & Management Professional						£1,500	
Childhood Practice Technical						£1,500	
Social Services (Children & Young People)			£1,700				
Social Services (Children & Young People) Technical					£1,500		
Social Services and Healthcare		£1,000	£1,700				
Social Services and Healthcare Technical					£1,500		

The average age of the social service workforce, like Scotland's workforce, is over 40. MA contribution rates, because they are generally higher for younger people, may disincentivise employers and training providers from offering apprenticeships to people over 25 (either as a route to employment, or upskilling for existing employees). There is also an impact on efforts to support the progression (and potential retention) of experienced workers over the age of 25. Contribution rates for technical and professional apprenticeships are higher for younger people and this is an advantage for developing young workers, passionate about building a career in the sector. However, there will be cases where gaining supervisory and managerial responsibilities (necessary for entering technical and professional apprenticeships) is more likely for those who are over 25 because they will have had more time to build up experience in the workplace.

The Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) provides employers with funding for training so staff can develop new or improved skills. In 2018-19, £10 million was made available by the Scottish Government to all modern apprenticeship levy-paying employers[20] and each employer is able to access up to £15,000.[21] The FWDF and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)[22]may be particularly beneficial in addressing skills gaps and training needs of the older workforce.

Social service qualifications are primarily gained while in employment. The sector attracts workers of all ages, not just first time entrants, so it's vital that qualifications and funding are available to everyone.

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[20] The apprenticeship levy is a compulsory tax on employers to help fund the development and delivery of apprenticeships, with the aim of improving the quality and quantity of those available. Employers fall into one of two groups: levy payers and non-levy payers. A levy payer is an employer (public, private and third sector) with a pay bill of more than £3 million each year.

[21] The funding is allocated directly to FE colleges to work with employers directly.

[22] For those who wish to gain further work-related qualifications, Skills Development Scotland can provide Individual Training Accounts which pay eligible individuals £200 to undertake learning opportunities. ITAs are aimed at those seeking employment and those who are currently in low paid work and looking to develop their skills. Please note, at the time of writing the ITA fund was on hold due to application threshold being met.

5. Summary and next steps

At the heart of this work is the focus on building an understanding of what current data sources can tell us about how people enter and progress within social services. We are aware that we need to validate and understand the factors behind some of our findings in greater detail so we can sensibly suggest changes that will make an impact.

As highlighted there is a significant amount of learning and development taking place in the social service sector and there are established qualification routes in place to support entry and career progression.

We've identified that to meet increased demand for qualifications we need to look at the capacity of learning provision. We also need to look more closely at the profile of who is accessing training and education to see if we can build a clearer picture on what this might tell us about provision.

As we have focused on enrolments it will be useful for future work to explore data on completions and where possible the destinations of those completing qualifications, particularly those undertaking qualifications prior to employment, such as HNCs.

Our work also indicates that we need to better understand the funding environment and find out more about how it is being accessed and used by individuals and employers in the sector.

We propose the following recommendations.

- Continue to promote funding opportunities and work with partners to understand how the FWDF and other sources can be best used to support social services education and training.
- Share case studies and approaches being adopted by employers and training providers to access and deliver education and training.
- Review/undertake research into the use of funding made available to employers and students.
- Promote standardisation of social service qualification titles with learning providers.
- Explore and raise awareness of resources and opportunities to support the recognition of prior learning.
- Undertake further analysis to explore:
  - the profile and geography of SVQ and MA provision
  - completion rates, which might offer insight into how people progress through qualifications.

Bibliography

SSSC (2018) Scottish Social Service Sector: Report on 2017 Workforce Data

SSSC (2019) SVQs in the Scottish social service sector 2017-18

SSSC and Care Inspectorate (2019) Staff Vacancies in the Care Sector

Appendix 1: Nationally available social service related qualifications in Scotland[23]

SCQF level 4

NQ/ National 4 Care	C712 74
Skills for Work: Early Learning and Childcare National 4	C782 74

SCQF level 5

NQ / National 5 Care	C812 75
NC Child, Health and Social Care	G8XP 45
Skills for Work: Early Learning and Childcare National 5	C783 75

SCQF level 6

Higher Care	C812 76
Higher Childcare and Development	C814 76
NPA Social Services (Children and Young People)	GL79 46
Foundation Apprenticeship Social Services (Children and Young People)	GL7A 46
SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People)	GH5V 22
SVQ Play work	G8WE 22
NC Early Education and Childcare	G8K1 46
Skills for Work Health and Social Care	C245 76
NPA Social Services and Healthcare*	GL3W 46
Foundation Apprenticeship Social Services and Healthcare	GL52 46
SVQ Social Services and Healthcare	GH5Y 22
NC Health and Social Care	G8K3 46

SCQF level 7

SVQ Social Services and Healthcare	GH60 23
SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People)	GH5W 23
HNC Childhood Practice	GK9T 15
HNC Social Services	GK89 15
SVQ Play work	GD1V 23

SCQF level 8

HND Childhood Practice	GN0R 16
PDA Childhood Practice	GM93 48

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[23] This list includes the principle qualifications from diagram 1 (which meet registration requirements) and more qualifications designed for other purposes, eg as an access route

Appendix 1 Continued: Nationally available social service related qualifications in Scotland

SCQF level 9

SVQ Social Services and Healthcare	GH61 24 SVQ
Social Services (Children and Young People)	GH5X 24

SCQF level 10

SVQ Care Services Leadership and Management	GJ9V 24

Appendix 2: SVQ enrolments 2012-18 by type and SCQF level

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	% change
Social Services and Healthcare							
SCQF level 6 (level 2)	4160	4402	3953	3882	3828	4082	-1.9
SCQF level 7 (level 3)	2349	2987	2279	2777	2967	2798	19.1
SCQF level 9 (level 4)	519	608	558	887	819	710	36.8
Total	**7028**	**7997**	**6790**	**7546**	**7614**	**7590**	**8.00**
Social Services (Children and Young People)							
SCQF level 6 (level 2)	184	315	218	156	206	153	-16.8
SCQF level 7 (level 3)	2302	2630	2190	2307	2541	2610	13.4
SCQF level 9 (level 4)	260	495	258	339	387	422	62.3
Total	**2746**	**3440**	**2666**	**2802**	**3134**	**3185**	**16.0**
All frameworks							
SCQF level 6 (level 2)	4344	4717	4171	4038	4034	4235	-2.5
SCQF level 7 (level 3)	4651	5617	4469	5084	5508	5408	16.3
SCQF level 9 (level 4)	779	1103	816	1226	1206	1132	45.3
Total	**9774**	**11437**	**9456**	**10348**	**10748**	**10775**	**10.2**

Source: SQA

Appendix 3: SVQ framework enrolments as percentage of the total enrolments

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Social Services and Healthcare	71.9	69.9	71.8	72.9	70.8	70.4
Social Services (Children and Young People)	28.1	30.1	28.2	27.1	29.2	29.6
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: SQA

Appendix 4: Modern apprenticeship frameworks available in Scotland

Social Services and Healthcare
Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6
Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7
Social Services and Healthcare level 2
Social Services and Healthcare level 3
Social Services and Healthcare Technical level 4
Social Services and Healthcare Technical SCQF Level 9

Social Services (Children and Young People)
Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 7
Social Services (Children and Young People) level 3
Social Services (Children and Young People) Technical SCQF level 9 (also known as level 4)

Care Services Leadership Management
Care Services Leadership Management Professional SCQF level 10 (also known as level 4)

Appendix 5: Number of MA enrolments 2012-18 as percentage of all SVQs

	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
Total enrolments	2679	3067	2273	2640	2605	2955
Total enrolments as % of total SVQ enrolments	27.4	26.8	24.0	25.5	24.2	27.5

Source: SSSC/FISSS

Appendix 6: MA enrolments by framework and as % of all SVQ enrolments 2012-18

	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
Social Services and Healthcare MA enrolments	1,553	1,737	1,064	1,190	1,202	1,318
Social Services (Children and Young People) MA enrolments	1,126	1,330	1,209	1,450	1,403	1,637
Social Services and Healthcare MA enrolments as % of total MA enrolments	58.0	56.6	46.8	45.1	46.1	44.6
Social Service (Children and Young People) MA enrolments as % of total MA enrolments	42.0	43.4	53.2	54.9	53.9	55.4

Source: SSSC/FISSS

Appendix 7: MA enrolments 2016-17 by age cohort (%)

Social Services and Healthcare	<16	16-19	20-24	25+
Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6*	0.0	45.6	52.8	1.5
Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7**	0.0	13.7	59.1	27.2
Social Services and Healthcare level 2*	0.0	43.	56.	0.0
Social Services and Healthcare level 3**	0.0	12.7	43.1	44.1
Social Services and Healthcare Technical level 4	0.0	0.0	6.	93.5
Social Services and Healthcare Technical SCQF level 9	0.0	0.0	7.5	92.5
Care Services Leadership Management Professional level 4	0.0	0.0	14.3	85.7
Care Services Leadership Management Professional SCQF level 10	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	**0.**	**29.0**	**50.6**	**20.5**
Social Services (Children and Young People)	**<16**	**16-19**	**20-24**	**25+**
Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 7**	0.0	78.2	16.1	5.
Social Services (Children and Young People) level 3**	1.5	69.9	20.3	8.3
Social Services (Children and Young People) Technical level 4	0.0	0.0	32.	67.9
Social Services (Children and Young People) Technical SCQF level 9	0.0	4.8	39.7	55.6
Total	**0.1**	**72.6**	**17.9**	**9.4**
Overall total	**0.1**	**52.4**	**33.0**	**14.5**

Source: SSSC/FISSS

* Please note that level 2 and SCQF 6 are the same, but recorded separately due to change in titling of qualification

** Please note that level 3 and SCQF 7 are the same, but recorded separately due to change in titling of qualification

Appendix 8: Classified courses by number and enrolments 2016-17

Classified courses	SCQF level	No. of courses	No. enrolled	% of all relevant enrolments
National group awards				
National 4 or National 5 Care	4 or 5[24]	29	500	3.8
Skills for Work: Early Learning and Childcare National 4 or National 5	4 or 5	80	986	7.5
NC Child, Health and Social Care	5	32	581	4.3
NC Early Education and Childcare*	6	78	1223	9.2
NC Health and Social Care	6	78	1352	10.2
SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6*	6	98	1009	7.6
SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 6 *	6	22	133	1
SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7*	7	80	836	6.3
SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 7 *	7	80	785	5.9
HNC Childhood Practice*	7	90	1,537	11.6
HNC Social Services*	7	97	1,372	10.4
PDA Health and Social Care Supervision*	7	12	147	1.1
HND Childhood Practice **	8	4	48	0.4
PDA Childhood Practice ***	8 or 9	28	268	2
SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 9*	9	31	173	1.3
SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 9 *	9	63	171	1.3
SVQ Care Services Leadership and Management at SCQF level 10*	10	9	38	0.3

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[24] Figures in red show uncertainty over correct SCQF level. This is because the SCQF level was not recorded in original data.

Classified courses	SCQF level	No. of courses	No. enrolled	% of all relevant enrolments
Further information required[25]				
Skills for work care		4	19	0.1
SVQ Social Services CYP		3	3	0
NC Childcare and Playwork		4	46	0.3
Introduction to Care / Health and Social Care		11	130	1
Introduction to Childcare		10	184	1.4
Uncategorised		37	481	3.8
NQ Childcare and/or Playwork		7	164	1.2
NQ Men in Childcare		3	23	0.2
NQ Values in Care		3	35	0.3
Certificate in Principles of Dementia *****	NCFE level 2/3	4	99	0.7
Certificate in Understanding Autism *****	NCFE level 2/3	6	876	6.6
Grand Total		**1,003**	**13,219**	**100**

Source: SFC

* May be used for particular categories of registration.

** HND Childhood Practice not designed for registration, but students will ordinarily hold HNC or SVQ at SCQF level 7

*** PDA at SCQF level 8 used as route to PDA at SCQF level 9; PDA at SCQF level 9 meets requirements for Manager of Day Care of Children Service.

**** We require further information about these awards to correctly classify them.

***** These professional development courses appear to be delivered online, likely for existing social service workers.

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[25] The items listed here appear in the data but we did not have enough information to classify them further. There were a range of introductory courses which we have grouped under Introduction to Care and Introduction to Childcare. The content of these courses (including title and level) may differ according to location.

Appendix 9: Enrolments in courses by Social Services Learning Network area (%)[26]

	% North	% West	% South-East	% Tayforth
Uncategorised	6.6	46.3	36.8	10.3
Certificate in Principles of Dementia *****	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Certificate in Understanding Autism *****	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
HNC Childhood Practice*	4.3	58.9	18.2	18.7
HNC Social Services*	3.1	56.0	18.0	22.9
HND Childhood Practice **	0.0	41.7	58.3	0.0
Introduction to Care / Health and Social Care	55.4	33.8	0.0	10.8
Introduction to Childcare	20.7	39.1	0.0	40.2
NC Child, Health and Social Care	50.3	12.0	0.0	37.7
NC Childcare and/or Playwork	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
NC Early Education and Childcare *	9.1	53.9	7.6	29.5
NC Education and Childcare	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
NC Health and Social Care	26.2	33.5	19.1	21.3
NC Social Care	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
NQ Childcare and/or Playwork	14.0	62.8	9.8	13.4
NQ in Care	3.2	61.5	30.1	5.1
NQ Men in Childcare	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
NQ Social Care	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
NQ Values in Care	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
PDA Childhood Practice ***	3.7	70.9	9.0	16.4
PDA Health and Social Care Supervision*	0.0	19.0	55.8	25.2

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[26] The course titles in this appendix have not been classified by us to the same extent as in appendix 8. Some titles may be incorrect or refer to earlier iterations of awards.

May 2019

	% North	% West	% South-East	% Tayforth
– Skills for Work: Early Learning and Childcare National 4 or National 5	27.7	62.6	4.7	5.1
Skills for Work Care	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
SVQ 2 Health and Social Care	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6*	18.0	15.7	37.9	28.3
SVQ 2 Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 6 *	5.3	34.6	54.1	6.0
SVQ 3 Health and Social Care	0.0	0.0	7.7	92.3
SVQ 3 Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7*	22.1	7.3	32.8	37.8
SVQ 3 Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 7 *	28.9	30.4	26.9	13.8
SVQ 4 Leadership and Management (Care)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
SVQ 4 Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 9*	0.6	34.7	48.6	16.2
SVQ 4 Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 9 *	0.0	22.8	53.8	23.4
SVQ Social Services Children and Young People	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Grand total	**13.6**	**49.6**	**18.2**	**18.6**

Source: SFC

* May be used for particular categories of registration.

** HND Childhood Practice not used for registration but should include an HNC Childhood Practice or SVQ at SCQF level 7.

*** PDA at SCQF level 8 used as route to PDA at SCQF level 9; PDA at SCQF level 9 meets requirements for Manager of Day Care of Children Service.

**** We require further information about these awards to correctly classify them.

***** These professional development courses appear to be delivered online, likely for existing social service workers.