

Developing a new continuous learning requirement

Survey report

October 2019



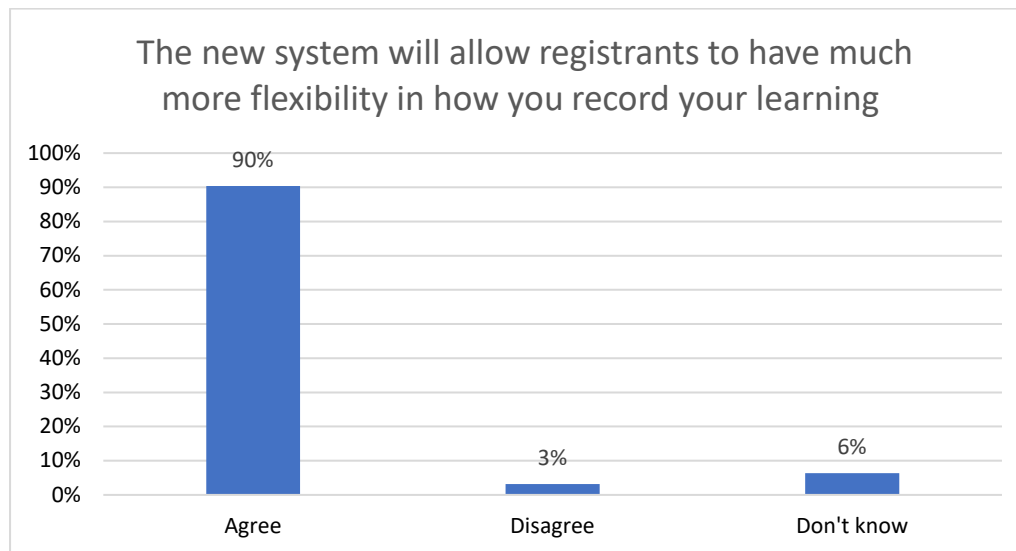
Views on the proposed changes to PRTL

1: Changes to the way registrants record PRTL

The proposals would bring more flexibility to the way that registrants can record their learning. Rather than requiring all learning to be logged on MySSSC, registrants could record their learning in a way that suits them (eg using their organisation's own paperwork to avoid duplication) and could use a variety of formats such as audio and video in addition to written reflections. Registrants remain responsible for maintaining their record of learning and must submit their full record to SSSC on request.

Survey response

90% of respondents agreed with the proposal to provide more flexibility for the way learning can be recorded for PRTL.



Overall comments on this proposal were very positive, particularly in relation to the opportunity to reduce duplication of recording and to allow flexibility in methods of recording. Several potential issues were highlighted, including questions about how to ensure consistency if there are a variety of options for recording, and how to make sure the system is as simple as possible to ensure engagement. A number of respondents highlighted the importance of written recording skills (particularly for newly qualified social workers) and questioned whether requirements should be slightly different for this group.

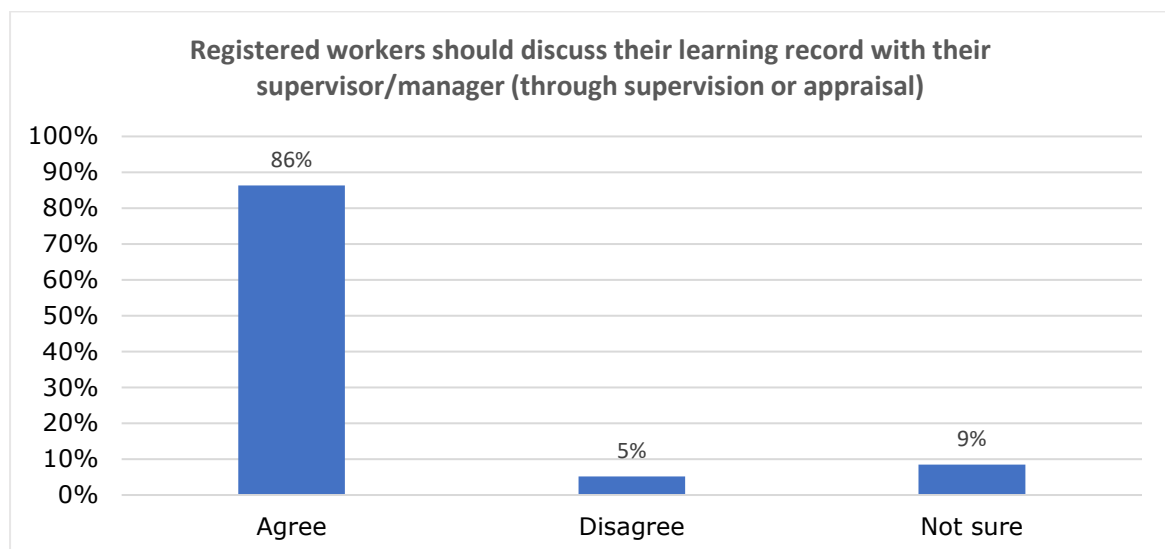
2. Discussing your learning with your supervisor

The proposals would require registrants to discuss their learning record with their supervisor at the end of each registration period. This discussion can take place as part of a regular supervision session. The SSSC will provide a verification form with a small number of questions for reflection. The questions will link learning to a registrant's responsibilities under the Codes of Practice and the Health and Social Care Standards.

A small number of registered social workers may work independently or not be currently practising social work so will not have a supervisor. In such cases, guidance will be provided to clarify who these workers should discuss their learning with and who can verify their learning.

Survey response

86% of respondents agreed that registered workers should discuss their learning record with their supervisor.



Comments on this proposal were generally positive, with many respondents stating that they already discuss their learning through supervision or appraisal. A small number questioned whether this requirement was necessary, or whether it would just lead to duplication. A small number of comments (20) disagreed with the proposals and questioned whether this proposal would make a positive difference.

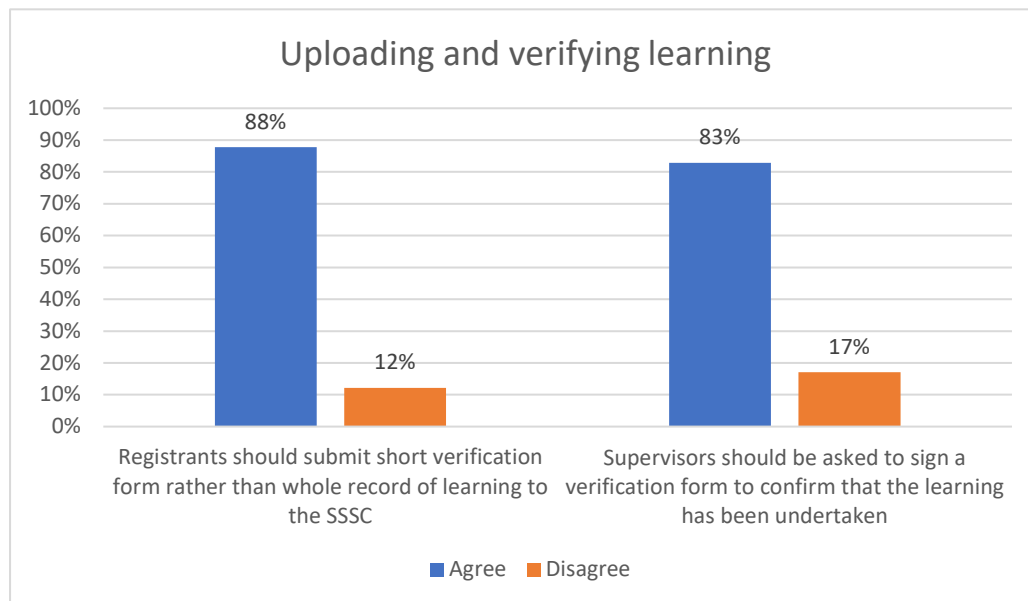
Some respondents expressed practical concerns and questioned what would happen if a registrant could not comply due to lack of availability of supervision (eg through operational issues, cancellations, or if they worked for an agency). Time, funding and quality of supervision were also highlighted as issues. In particular, more than 20 respondents questioned whether it would be appropriate for someone of a different professional background to be verifying CPD records.

3. Uploading your learning record to MySSSC

Rather than submitting the whole record of learning to SSSC, the proposal is that registrants will submit a short verification form at the end of each registration period, signed by a supervisor.

Survey responses

A majority agreed that registrants should submit a short verification form (88%), and that this should be signed by a supervisor (83%).



Overall comments on this proposal were positive, with 60 stating general agreement. A small number (10) stated they preferred the current system. Issues raised included access to supervision, particularly for those working in agencies, and considerations for self-managing teams who may need to identify who to verify. Six people were concerned the new system would encourage cheating or false verification.

Thirty-five people gave reasons for disagreeing with the proposals, including concern that this would make no difference to practice, and that a shorter form would not allow for reflection. Low pay and the reality that many registrants use their own time to complete learning and PRTL, were highlighted, and some questioned whether the proposal would increase already stretched workloads.

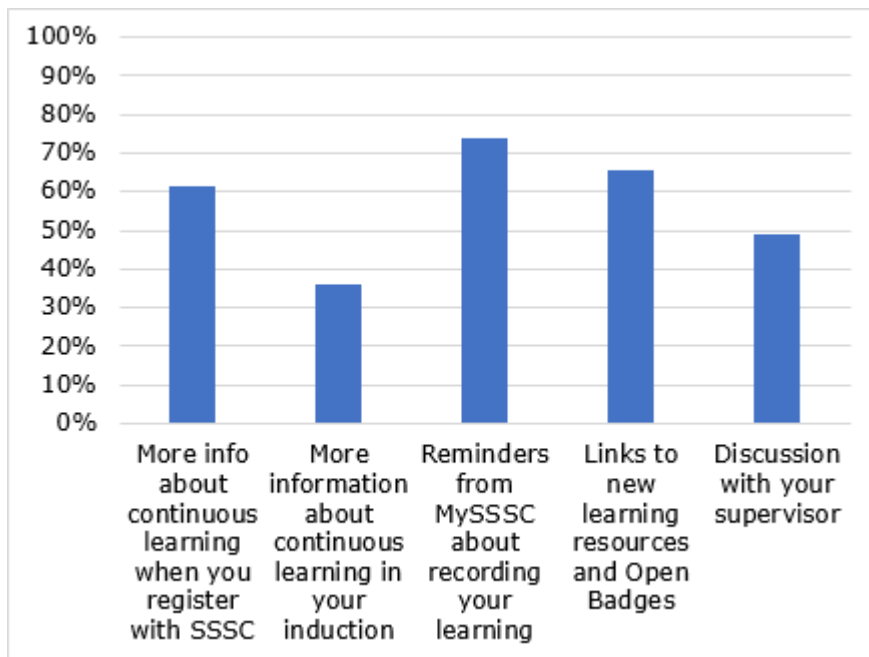
A number of specific issues about the verification process were raised. What would a supervisor actually be asked to verify? Would this be verifying that an individual had undertaken their training and learning, or that they believed the learning had made a positive difference to practice. What would happen if a supervisor feels they cannot verify an individual's record – how would this be resolved, and where does the accountability lie? How would the system support consistency, and what role is there for quality assurance?

Trust was also an important issue, with some respondents suggesting that signed verification should not be necessary. One respondent suggested the

registrant could confirm they have undertaken the learning and verification from a supervisor could be requested if that registrant was subject to sampling by SSSC as part of the audit process.

4. Continuous learning throughout your registration period

Meeting the continuous learning requirement is much easier done gradually, rather than waiting until your registration is due for renewal. We asked registrants what would be helpful.

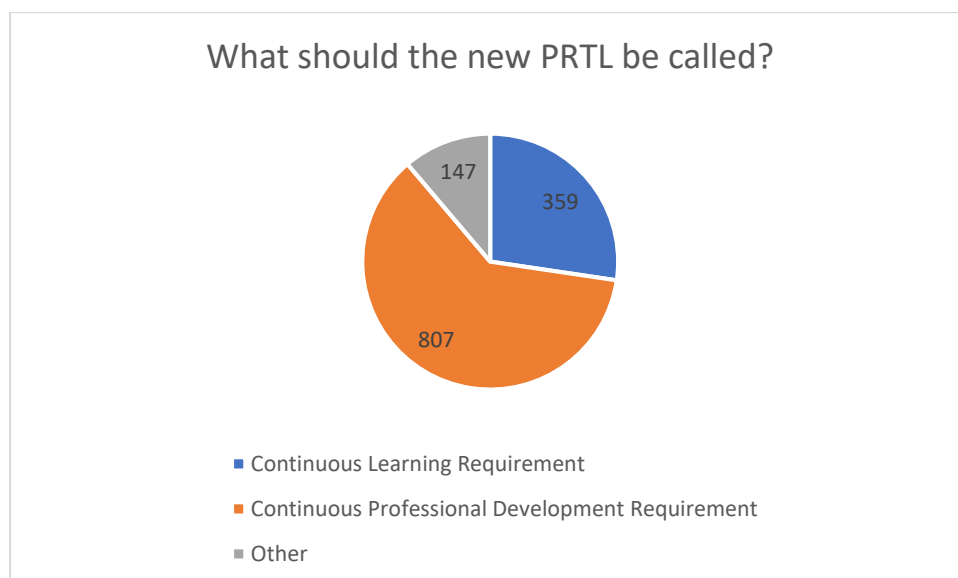


Comments on what would be helpful focused on issues such as:

- making sure learning is discussed at supervision sessions
- more organisational support, including protected time for learning and PRTL
- keeping the system for recording as simple as possible
- recording your learning as you go along
- an App
- clear guidance and information about what is expected.

5. What should the new system be called?

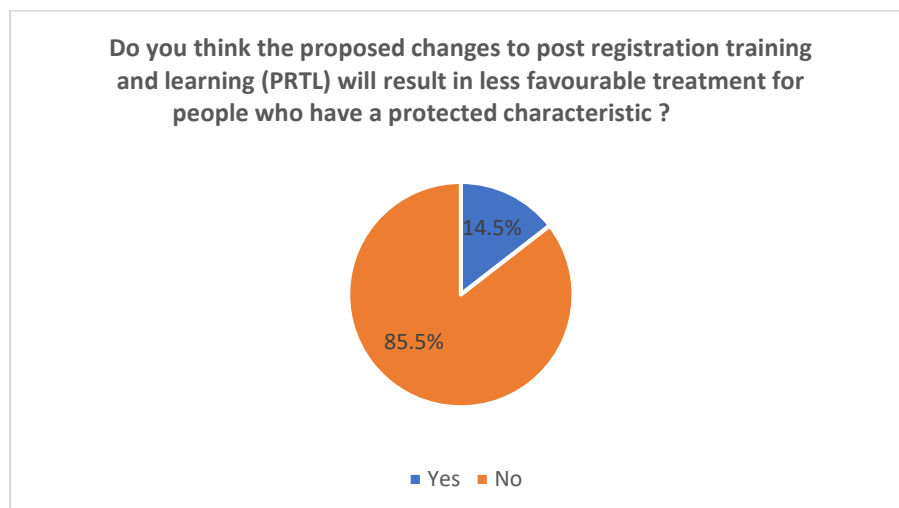
The term post registration training and learning (PRTL) has been used since the Register first opened. We asked for views on a name for the new system.



Comments were mixed, with some people suggesting the name was not important, or that they prefer the current title. Others highlighted the need to avoid jargon and have a name that is easily understood.

6. Equalities question

The SSSC has a responsibility to promote equal opportunities.



85.5% of respondents believed that the proposals will not result in less favourable treatment for people who have a protected characteristic.

Some respondents suggested the proposals would support the whole of the workforce through encouraging greater flexibility of recording PRTL.



Scottish Social Services Council
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

Tel: 0345 60 30 891
Email: enquiries@sssc.uk.com
Web: www.sssc.uk.com

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