

Date issued: 15 May 2025

Members of the Scottish Social Services Council are advised that a meeting of the Council is to take place at 10am on Thursday 22 May 2025 in Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY and by Teams meeting.

**Peter Murray
Interim Convener**

**AGENDA
PUBLIC SESSION**

	Item	Report no
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence	
2.	Declarations of interest	
3.	Minutes of previous meetings – 3.1 - 27 February 2025 3.2 - 25 March 2025	
4.	Matters arising	
5.	Interim Convener's report	12/2025
6.	Chief Executive's report	13/2025
7.	Audit and Assurance Committee report to Council	14/2025
8.	Risk Appetite Review 2025/26	15/2025
9.	English language requirements for Social Work applicants	16/2025
10.	Qualified status of the workforce	17/2025
11.	Proposed registration of new groups	18/2025
12.	Have Your Say - Workforce Survey	19/2025
13.	Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation (IRISR)	20/2025
14.	Partnership Agreement with the Care Inspectorate	21/2025
15.	Digital Annual report	22/2025

16.	Information Governance Annual report	23/2025
17.	Complaints Performance - annual update 2024/25	24/2025
18.	Council Action Record	
19.	Date of next meeting and calendar of business – The next scheduled meeting of the Council will be held on 21 August 2025	

PRIVATE SESSION

20.	Minutes of private session - 27 February 2025	
21.	Review of Finance System	25/2025
22.	Reappointment of Panel Members	26/2025

Private session items explained

The Convener of Council has directed that the following items be taken in private session and has given the following reasons for their exclusion:

Agenda item	Reason for exclusion
21.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • matters involving issues of commercial or financial sensitivity or confidentiality • matters relating to policy or the internal business of the SSSC which are for discussion with the Scottish Government or other regulatory or public bodies, before Council approves
22.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • matters constituting or comprising personal data

SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Unconfirmed minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 February 2025 at 10.00am in Tay Room, Compass House, Dundee and by Teams meeting

Present: Peter Murray, Interim Convener, Council Member
Sharon Ballingall, Council Member
Jillian Brannan, Council Member
David Heaney, Council Member
Rona King, Council Member
Doug Moodie, Council Member
Frank Reilly, Council Member

In Attendance: Maree Allison, Chief Executive
Hannah Coleman, Director of Regulation
Laura Lamb, Director of Workforce, Education and Standards
Laura Shepherd, Director of Strategy and Performance
Jennifer Carnegie, Head of Finance (for item 9)
Anne Stewart, Head of Legal and Corporate Governance
Audrey Wallace, Corporate Governance Coordinator

Observers: There were 13 staff observing

1.	Welcome and apologies
1.1	The Interim Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting. He advised that apologies had been received from Council Members, Edel Harris and Lindsay MacDonald. Anne Stewart confirmed that the meeting was quorate.
1.2	Peter Murray advised that he planned to change the order of the meeting and item eight on the agenda would be taken before item five.
2.	Declarations of interest
2.1	Frank Reilly declared an interest in item numbered eight on the agenda due to his work with SASW. He advised that he will leave the meeting before discussion of the item.
2.2	Sharon Ballingall and Jillian Brannan both declared a connection in relation to the same item, being registrants but were satisfied that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would not regard their connection as being sufficiently significant as to be likely to influence their discussion or decision-making.
3.	Minutes of the previous meeting – 21 November 2024

3.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2024 were approved as an accurate record.
4.	Matters arising
4.1	There were no matters arising not already included on the agenda.
	<i>Frank Reilly left the meeting for the following item</i>
8.	Decision on review of registration fees
8.1	Maree Allison presented report 04/2025 which provided Members with details on the outcome of the consultation on the review of fees, which took place towards the end of 2024. The report also provided options for decision by the Council on the future fee levels. Maree Allison advised Members that the response numbers to the consultation were low, however this may have been partly due to many registrants having their fees paid by their employer, through the Scottish Government settlement with COSLA in 2022, if they work for a Local Authority. She added that engagement is usually higher with other surveys having more positive engagement.
8.2	<p>Members raised a number of questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maree Allison clarified figures in the report regarding the percentage of cost of regulation met by fees, one table was calculated if fees were increased and the other if no increase. • Maree Allison explained that fees can only be applied to register parts and not to individual registered roles/jobs. • The funding gap figure reported relates to the gap between registration fees and regulation costs. • Members were advised that option 2, to increase gradually, annually, in small amounts, was formulated based on the responses received in the consultation. • Planned fee progression was welcomed as a way forward. • We do not practice debt recovery, if a registration fee isn't paid, then a worker isn't registered. There is an Exceptional Hardship Policy in place. • There are ongoing concerns about recruitment and retention in the sector. • Officers are working with some employers around options for employers to assist workers to pay for registration. • There is a possibility of workers making a claim against expenses, to HMRC, depending on a workers status.
8.5	There was further discussion around communicating effectively with the sector to make sure the workforce is fully aware of the resources available from the SSSC and benefits from registration of the workforce.
8.6	<p>The Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. approved option 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £8 a year increase for social workers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce a care service managers fee and freeze it at £80 • no fee increase year one for practitioners/supervisors and £4 a year for the following four years • no fee increase year one for support workers and £3 a year for the following four years • no increase for student social workers <p>2. delegated authority to the Convener to sign the Registration Rules required to implement the increase.</p>
	<i>Frank Reilly returned to the meeting</i>
5.	Interim Convener's report
5.1	Peter Murray presented his report 01/2025 as Interim Convener to Council. He gave an overview of meetings he had attended as well as other engagements. He commended all members of the organisation on the achievement of the Investors in People (IiP) gold award. He also commended the new Council Members on their quick integration and their valued input into SSSC business.
5.2	The Council
	1. noted the report
6.	Chief Executive's report
6.1	<p>Maree Allison presented report 02/2025 which provided Council with an update on key points of interest and also SSSC activities broken down by strategic outcomes. Key points mentioned were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The permanent appointments of Hannah Coleman and Laura Lamb to the posts of Director of Regulation and Director of Workforce, Education and Standards, respectively. The permanent posts were effective as of 24 February 2025. • Maintaining the IiP gold award. • Meeting with Maree Todd, Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, and discussions on the role of the National Social Work Agency (NSWA) and how that will impact the work of the SSSC. • The upcoming joint discussion session between the Council and the board of the Care Inspectorate, to take place on 19 March 2025.
6.2	<p>Members raised and discussed the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maree Allison discussed how the SSSC work currently cuts across three government departments and advised that this may change when the NSWA is in place. • Members were assured that feedback on the IiP award including the positive outcome of the culture review will be fed back to staff. Maree Allison also clarified that the comment on leadership referred to the previous long period of instability in having temporary posts in the management team and that the appointment of permanent posts would provide opportunities to strengthen their leadership role.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharon Ballingall commented favourably on the learning app for registrants including the introduction of the QR code and commended those involved in developing this. • Maree Allison clarified membership of and work of the Stakeholder Advisory Forum, adding that it was originally set up to assist in the development of the Future Proofing Programme, but stakeholders agreed that it was a useful group and would continue to exist to assist in other areas across the organisation where stakeholder engagement will be helpful. Maree Allison agreed that she would provide the list of members of the group to Council Members. • Frank Reilly commented on the positivity of the vast breadth of partnership working between the SSSC and other organisations. Peter Muray also confirmed that a large amount of work is carried out that's not readily visible.
6.3	The Council
	1. noted the information contained in the report
	2. congratulated management on retaining the IiP Gold award.
7.	Audit and Assurance Committee report to Council
7.1	Rona King presented report 03/2025, which summarised the matters dealt with at the Audit and Assurance Committee held on 4 February 2025.
7.2	<p>She highlighted the following matters which were discussed at the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on the Strategic Performance Indicators (SPIs) and the proposal to include rolling month to month projections. Also noting that Executive Management Team (EMT) reviews the value or benefit of the SPIs reported. • The percentage of sickness absence figures in the organisation and how these could be benchmarked usefully with similar organisations. • Reduction of the risk scores for risks 5 and 6 on the Risk Register. • Committee also noted the positive update on the Future Proofing Programme notifications issue and management was thanked for the prompt response to the issue.
7.3	Members discussed the report on digital projects benefits realisation. Members requested that, due to the comprehensive amount of information presented, it would be useful to have this fully presented during a development session. This will improve understanding of the measurements and the implications of each piece of data provided. Peter Murray agreed to discuss with the Chief Executive the inclusion of this in one of the planned development sessions.
7.4	The Council
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. accepted that the assurance report presents a true and fair view of the SSSCs performance towards achievement of strategic objectives, financial management and risk identification and management 2. approved the Risk Register at Appendix 2 to the report 3. agreed that the Risk Register is reviewed quarterly at each Committee meeting and that the risk appetite is reviewed annually

	<p>4. noted that Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. noted the internal audit report on Future Proofing Programme phase 3 will be submitted to the April meeting of the Committee b. approved the Draft Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2025 to 2028 c. approved the Draft External Audit plan for 2024/25 d. noted future arrangements for reporting on benefits realisation.
8.	Decision on review of registration fees
	<i>This item was taken between items 4 and 5 above</i>
9.	Draft Budget 2025-2026
9.1	<p>Laura Shepherd presented report 05/2025 which outlined the draft budget for 2025/26. She referred to the development session held in December 2024 and confirmed that feedback from the session had been taken into account when preparing the budget report. Laura Shepherd outlined the areas of focus of the budget and highlighted that staffing costs made up 80% of the organisations spend. She emphasised the increase in National Insurance (NI) rates as well as the lower threshold at which NI becomes payable. She confirmed that due to the launch of the FPP, the number of FTE (Full Time Equivalent) staff posts can be reduced. Laura Shepherd also spoke to the need for the digital business as usual costs in order to fund digital licences, to allow for inflation and also to ensure digital security.</p>
9.2	<p>With reference to previous discussions around the percentage based general reserves, Laura Shepherd confirmed that this figure will be reviewed upwards. This will be set at a level to ensure there is a reserve amount sufficient to provide funding for approximately three month's running costs. This is in accordance with advice received.</p>
9.3	<p>Laura Shepherd provided reduction scenarios at Appendix 5 to the report but advised that these had not been requested by Scottish Government and were provided for information at this time.</p>
9.4	<p>Members requested their concern noted that the Grant in Aid did not match the organisations spend and this would be a far more preferable situation than working on a spending pressure. The spending pressure for the year being £4.1million.</p>
9.5	<p>Council requested information on the ringfenced funds for 2026/27 and Maree Allison explained this is necessary in order to ensure funding for specific projects which spanned two or more financial years.</p>
9.6	<p>Laura Shepherd confirmed that fee income was still to be accounted for and this will present a more favourable general reserves position when the budget is due to be finally approved towards the end of March.</p>
9.7	<p>The Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. endorsed the draft budget which will be submitted to Council for formal approval on 25 March 2025.
10.	People Management policies

10.1	Laura Lamb presented report 06/2025 which sought approval from Council for three revised people policies, the Recruitment Policy, the Retirement and Severance Policy and the Workforce Change Policy. She advised that the Recruitment Policy incorporated a number of changes as it will replace the current Recruitment Policy, Redeployment Policy, Salary Protection Policy, Secondment Policy, Job Analysis Guidance, Relocation Guidance and Starting Salary Guidance. This is intended to simplify navigation of the recruitment process by all end users.
10.2	The Retirement and Severance Policy and the Workforce Change Policy have been updated and now provide clarity for flexible retirement arrangements and how we effect workforce change when redeploying staff, respectively.
10.3	Laura Lamb brought to Members' attention that, although in May 2020 it was agreed that the Recruitment Policy would be reserved to Council, it is now proposed that this would be approved by EMT in future and the library will be amended to reflect this.
10.4	<p>Members raised a number of queries and comments referencing changes in the Recruitment Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleased to see the equal access provision and noted that the terms for each case would be different therefore the wording 'reasonable adjustments are made' is appropriate • Clarification on the appeal process for the Recruitment Policy • Noted that support for acting-up and secondment were inconsistent however Maree Allison confirmed this referred particularly to secondment outwith the organisation. • Clarified that although the policy would in future be approved by EMT, any major changes to policies are reported to Council. • Clarified that the words to the effect of 'any other reasonable tasks' is not included in the employment contracts but may be included in job descriptions.
10.5	<p>The main comments on the Workforce Change Policy were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If someone is redeployed for ill health reasons this is a different policy. • Noted that structural staffing changes are delegated to the Chief Executive however major changes would be reported to Council.
10.6	<p>The Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. approved the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Policy • Retirement and Severance Policy • Workforce Change Policy 2. delegated the review of the Recruitment Policy to Executive Management Team, in future.
11.	Corporate Governance report
11.1	Anne Stewart presented report 07/2025 which addressed four matters of governance. She advised on the revised draft Executive Framework

	document between the SSSC and Scottish Government, which outlines the relationship between the two bodies.
11.2	Anne Stewart then referred to the revised Code of Corporate Governance which had been substantially reviewed by management and included changes to the remit of the Audit and Assurance Committee as well as changes to bring the content and wording of the document in line with other regulatory bodies. She advised verbally that there were some minor wording changes still to be agreed regarding the Audit and Assurance Committee remit. These would be approved by officers but brought back to Council if anything substantial emerged.
11.3	Members were also presented with the calendar of meeting up to 2028 and this included a further change to the meeting scheduled to approve the budget in March 2025. The new proposal is to change this meeting to Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 2pm.
11.4	Council was also asked to note that the annual effectiveness had been carried out in November/December 2024 and there were no issues arising from it.
11.5	The Council
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. approved the Executive Framework and authorised the Chief Executive to finalise it with the Scottish Government 2. approved the revised Code of Corporate Governance subject to minor changes being agreed by officers on the remit of the Audit and Assurance Committee 3. approved the schedule of dates for meetings 2025 to 2028 including the revised date of the upcoming budget meeting now set for Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 2pm 4. noted the annual effectiveness review.
12.	Future Proofing Programme Achievements report
12.1	Hannah Coleman presented report 08/2025 which provided Members with a comprehensive round up of the processes involved and benefits derived so far from the Future Proofing Programme. She acknowledged that the report and various appendices contained a lot of detail, in order to better present the changes made and demonstrate the benefits achieved and to be achieved.
12.2	<p>Members raised some queries and comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hannah Coleman advised that the various targets set for achievements were based on best information available from previous projects and information ingathered. • Laura Lamb confirmed that the number of social workers returning into work was, at this point, fewer than anticipated, however noted that the number would be recalculated at the end of the financial year. • Workers moving between services would be required to have the relevant qualifications but would also be required to carry out the relevant Continuous Professional Learning for that service in order to

	<p>ensure they have the necessary competencies. This would be verified by sampling and also by employer checks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hannah Coleman confirmed the process for reporting on the benefits which were not yet realised. Members noted that some changes would take 1-2 years to show benefits and these would be reported as part of the benefits realisation reporting. • Noted the lessons learned report submitted to the Programme Board, especially noting that stakeholders in general perceived the programme as very positive.
12.3	Peter Murray spoke to the magnitude of the programme and level of change brought about by it. He asked that this be acknowledged and all involved should be applauded for their contribution to its success.
12.4	The Council
	1. noted the report and appendices.
13.	Council Action Record
13.1	Council noted that ten actions were completed and would be archived for future information. Three actions were in progress and will be updated at the May Council meeting.
14.	Date of next meeting and Calendar of Business
14.1	The next scheduled meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 2pm, as agreed at item 11 above. This will be an online meeting mainly to consider the 2025-26 budget.
14.2	The next scheduled meeting to consider usual business will be held on 22 May 2025 at 10am.
14.3	The calendar of business for the next 12 months was noted.

The meeting started: 10am
The meeting finished: 12.15pm

Signed _____
Peter Murray
Interim Convener

Date_____

SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Unconfirmed minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 March 2025 at 2.00pm by Teams meeting

Present: Peter Murray, Interim Convener, Council Member
Sharon Ballingall, Council Member
Jillian Brannan, Council Member
David Heaney, Council Member
Edel Harris, Council Member
Rona King, Council Member
Lindsay MacDonald, Council Member
Doug Moodie, Council Member
Frank Reilly, Council Member

In Attendance: Maree Allison, Chief Executive
Hannah Coleman, Director of Regulation
Laura Lamb, Director of Workforce, Education and Standards
Laura Shepherd, Director of Strategy and Performance
Jennifer Carnegie, Head of Finance
Anne Stewart, Head of Legal and Corporate Governance
Audrey Wallace, Corporate Governance Coordinator

Observers: There were five staff observing

1.	Welcome and apologies
1.1	The Interim Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting. All Members were in attendance, there were no apologies and the meeting was quorate.
2.	Declarations of interest
	There were no declarations of interest.
3.	Budget 2025/26
3.1	Laura Shepherd introduced report 10/2025 which, along with appendices 1 – 3 outlined the budget for 2025/26. Appendix 4 provided forecasts for 2026/27 and 2027/28 and appendix 5 provided scenarios should the Grant in Aid (GIA) be reduced by 3%, 5% or 10%, although there was no intimation from Scottish Government that there would be any reduction in GIA.
3.2	Laura Shepherd highlighted the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pay increase: 3% provisional pay increase for staff for the next year. This increase is subject to change depending on the Scottish Government's decisions and negotiations with various unions.• National Insurance: Provision for National Insurance increases and staff moving up the pay scales. The National Insurance increase is

	<p>set at 15%, with a reduction in the threshold contributing to the overall increase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing changes: Staffing changes include a 0.4 FTE increase overall, accounting for both reductions and additions in temporary and permanent staffing. • Digital budget change: The digital budget has shifted slightly, with approximately £40-£50K moved from development to Business as Usual to ensure correct allocation. • Grant In Aid (GIA) Letter: Discussions with the sponsor team have taken place, and we expect to receive the GIA letter by the end of the week. This letter will confirm the verbal agreement on spending pressure. • General reserves: Following discussions with Members and with Sponsor and auditors, she was proposing a change to the target level of reserves from the current 2-2.5% to %-6% of gross budget.
3.3	<p>The following questions were raised and answered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answering a question on whether the £1.7 million reserve includes grants, Laura Shepherd clarified that the grants reserves are not included in the available reserves as they are reserved for specific grants. • Jennifer Carnegie provided clarification about the seemingly substantial increase in cost per head for permanent and temporary staff between figures for 2024-2025 and 2025-2026. She explained that the financial cost for temporary posts included in last year's budget might not reflect the actual cost. One of the posts in question was the Director of Finance and Resources which was included in the establishment but had no budget provision last year. • Asked about the local authority registration fee refund, Laura Shepherd explained that the agreement with Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) is a set figure for a number of years, which is later reconciled against the actual number of registered workers in the sector. • Laura Shepherd advised that the £150K for Scottish Government-driven digital development was in respect of a one-off piece of work and covered by grant money. • In answer to a question about the timescale for the replacement of the Fitness to Practise case management system, Laura Shepherd explained that it is part of the digital program work, with an approximate two-year timeline for completion. Hannah Colman added that the current system will reach its end of life in three years, providing sufficient time for the replacement to be completed within the planned timeline. • Laura Shepherd explained that the proposed reduced budget requirement and budget pressure in 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 is due to the impending increase in fees, which will generate more income and reduce the spending pressure.
3.4	<p>Members joined Peter Murray in thanking the SSSC staff for the work carried out in producing the budget and in presenting it in a clear report.</p>
3.5	<p>The Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. approved the budget for 2025/26

	2. approved the changes to the reserve tolerance levels.
4.	Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes report and Data Annex 2025
4.1	<p>Laura Shepherd presented report 11/25 which introduced the Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report for 2025. The report highlighted activities contributing to our duties and introduced the new draft outcomes for the next period. She mentioned the importance of the People Strategy and fitness to practice decisions guidance, both key pieces of work.</p> <p>Other key activities highlighted include the analysis of registrant equality data, impact assessment processes for policies and procedures, and the revision of the codes of practice published in multiple languages and formats.</p>
4.2	<p>Laura Shepherd additionally mentioned</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The success of the Equality Forum for employees, which holds quarterly discussions on various equality topics and has received positive feedback. • The organisation has achieved Disability Confident Level 3 leader status, a significant accomplishment in promoting disability inclusion. • We are planning to introduce a care experience guaranteed interview scheme for job applicants, aiming to support individuals with care experience in their job applications.
4.3	<p>Members discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A question about the procedure and policy for paying expenses for people to participate in the work of the SSSC and whether this primarily targeted at people with lived experience. Laura Shepherd explained that the procedure is already written and includes all stakeholders. It is recognised that lived experienced people are those less likely to engage and work is ongoing to address this. • Maree Allison clarified that they are clear about the role of stakeholders in influencing and informing decisions, but the final decisions rest with Council or delegated staff. We will continue to consider this in strategic and communication plans. • Peter Murray and Maree Allison are actively discussing concerns about the accessibility of reports, particularly this Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report. Maree Allison acknowledged it is an issue and work is being carried out on involving people in this work and understanding their needs for information and communication. • Following a question on the issue of age and diversity in the sector. Maree Allison advised that we are involved in looking at careers pathways and targeting different groups to bring them into work in the sector.
4.4	Peter Murray acknowledged the efforts of staff in producing the comprehensive report and thanked the team for their hard work.

4.5	<p>The Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. endorsed the progress we have made to achieve our equality outcomes 2. approve the report and data annex (Appendices 1 and 2 to the report) for publication.
5.	Date of next development session
5.1	Peter Murray confirmed that the next scheduled development session will be held on Thursday 3 April 2025. The agenda will be issued once finalised.

The meeting started: 2pm
The meeting finished: 2.45pm

Signed _____
Peter Murray
Interim Convener

Date_____

Title of Report	Interim Convener's Report
Summary/purpose of report	Update on the Interim Convener's activities since the last Council meeting on 27 February 2025
Recommendations	The Council is asked to note the summary of recent key issues and activities from the viewpoint of the Interim Convener
Author	Peter Murray, Interim Convener
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
Link to Risk Register	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.</p>

	<p>Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p> <p>Risk 5: We fail to develop and support SSSC staff appropriately to ensure we have a motivated and skilled workforce.</p> <p>Risk 6: The SSSC fails to secure sufficient budget resources to fulfil the financial plans required to deliver the strategic plan.</p> <p>Risk 7: Closed.</p> <p>Risk 8: We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks.</p> <p>Risk 9: Closed.</p>
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Documents attached	None
Background papers	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report covers the Interim Convener's activities for the period from the last full Council meeting on 27 February 2025.

INTRODUCTION

2. As can be seen from today's agenda this has been another busy period for SSSC. I have met weekly with Maree and shared any relevant on-going issues in the monthly briefing session with Council members. Review of the effectiveness of the briefing sessions will take place after the first six months of their implementation.
3. At the time of writing interviews for two new Council members and the Convener are to take place on the 19 May. The new Convener will take up post on 1 July. The new Council members will start on 1 September.
4. Our next development day is taking place on 25 June in Edinburgh. This will be a great opportunity for us to meet key stakeholders and help shape the next strategic plan.

DEVELOPMENT DAYS

5. The development afternoon on 19 March was focused on SSSC's approach to risk and risk appetites. This session was a helpful opportunity to explore and improve understanding and Item 8 on the agenda today reflects the output of that work.
6. The development day on 3 April covered AI, an update on the SSSC's work to meet the Promise, an insight into the findings of the Have Your Say survey and a presentation on the Witness to Harm research the SSSC participated in. This was a wide-ranging session allowing Members to familiarise themselves with these areas of the organisation's work.

ENGAGEMENTS

7. Maree and I met with Sponsor on 12 May with a number of important items on the agenda including Council recruitment, Scottish Government Efficiencies Commission, National Social Work Agency (NSWA) update, meetings with NHS Education Scotland (NES) and Care Inspectorate (CI), Oracle finance system, and the reduction in the registered workforce. Maree will expand on these areas in her update.
8. With the introduction of the NSWA, sponsorship arrangements for the SSSC will change as it isn't suitable for the NSWA as an Executive Agency to undertake that role. It isn't yet clear which Scottish Government department the new sponsor will come from.

MEETINGS WITH PARTNERS

9. The Council's joint Board meetings with the CI and NES have allowed us to explore how the respective organisations can work more closely with the

aim of achieving better outcomes for the registered workforce and wider public.

10. The interaction between the three organisations continues with significant developments in our work with NES on the Social Careers Opportunities Tool and National Induction Framework. The National Induction Framework is due to launch at the end of May.
11. A further iteration of the Joint Delivery Plan was discussed at the most recent joint Chair/Convener and Chief Executive meeting. Laura Lamb will be able to provide any update since the joint meeting. Both parties agreed that a more structured and strategic approach to any future joint meetings is beneficial.
12. The Chair/Convener and Chief Executive meeting between the CI and SSSC took place on 6 May. We discussed the joint Council/ Board meeting which seemed to have been reasonably well received. On the agenda today is the Partnership Agreement, which is an important acknowledgement of the positive working relationship between the CI and SSSC.
13. I have commenced meetings with Council members individually to discuss the best way to introduce better guidance on Council member claims. It is clear that more consistency would be beneficial following a survey of claims over the last year.

CONCLUSION

14. The Scottish Care report on qualifications is a useful reminder of the challenges that remain to ensure that those that expected through registration to meet qualification criteria must be adequately supported to do so. Much of the work described above sets out to support the registered workforce in a number of very positive ways. Our deliberations on the future strategic direction of the organisation will provide more opportunity to underline SSSC's desire to be a force for good and help achieve better outcomes for those receiving care from the registered workforce.

Title of Report	Chief Executive's Report
Summary/purpose of report	To provide Council Members with an update from the Chief Executive.
Recommendations	The Council is asked to note the information contained in the report.
Author	Maree Allison, Chief Executive
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence, and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
Link to Risk Register	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the right standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.</p> <p>Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p> <p>Risk 5: We fail to develop and support SSSC staff appropriately to ensure we have a motivated and skilled workforce.</p>

	<p>Risk 6: The SSSC fails to secure sufficient budget resources to fulfil the financial plans required to deliver the strategic plan.</p> <p>Risk 7: Closed.</p> <p>Risk 8: We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks.</p> <p>Risk 9: Closed.</p>
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Documents attached	None
Background papers	None

INTRODUCTION

1. As set out in the Executive Framework Document agreed by Scottish Government and the SSSC, the Chief Executive is accountable for the operational performance of the SSSC and responsible for organisational governance. This report highlights important information that has happened since the last full Council meeting on 27 February 2025 and looks forward to emerging issues.

KEY POINTS

2. The size of the Register is decreasing. The reduction is mainly in social care and has continued since the end of 2024. We discussed this at Audit and Assurance Committee in April and will monitor this closely. This trend reflects the challenges in the workforce and may have staffing and financial impacts on the SSSC if it continues. We update our workforce data website with live information on the size of the Register on a weekly basis [Link to data website.](#)
3. The financial sustainability of the social care workforce is a focus of many discussions with Scottish Government and our stakeholders. We have carried out extensive work on understanding the workforce and their skills and the report on Qualifications elsewhere on the agenda shows our focus on addressing those challenges.
4. I chaired the second meeting of our National Stakeholder Advisory Forum. This is an opportunity to share developing work with stakeholders and many items on today's agenda were shaped by those discussions.

OUTCOME 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.

5. We have finalised our amended Decisions Guidance for fitness to practise decision makers, having publicly consulted on the changes last year. We will publish this alongside a suite of Practice Guidance Notes in the early summer.
6. Hannah Coleman, Director of Regulation, is giving evidence to Phase 9 of the Child Abuse Inquiry on 14 May. This is the fourth phase in which SSSC has given evidence. Phase 9 is focused on special schools.
7. Our Regulatory Improvement team have started a series of webinars for managers in services about fitness to practise referrals to help them understand what to refer and when.

OUTCOME 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.

8. The Codes, Rights and Keeping the Promise learning resource is now available on the Learning Zone. This resource is intended for professionals who work with children and young people, providing information on how the SSSC Codes of Practice, The Promise, and the UNCRC complement and reinforce each other.
9. We have enhanced the Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) portal for the Early Learning and Childcare Workforce to offer better support. The portal lists training providers, learning opportunities, national online modules, and induction resources in one directory. Developed in line with the Scottish Government's Early Learning and Childcare Quality Action Plan, it launched early 2024.

OUTCOME 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence, and wellbeing of the workforce.

10. In April, we published our first Have Your Say Workforce Wellbeing Survey report. This annual report offers insights from social work, social care, and children and young people workforce on topics like wellbeing, pay, terms, conditions, support, training access, qualifications, and general work experiences.
11. The findings will help us and key partners, including Scottish Government, to find out more about the experience of working in this field, as well as informing the development of national policies that have an impact on this sector and approaches on how best to support the workforce. There is a report elsewhere on the agenda regarding this report.

OUTCOME 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.

12. In April we published our SSSC Register Leavers Survey Report which gives an insight into leavers from the social work, social care and children and young people workforce. It examines who is leaving the SSSC Register, why and where they are moving to. Real time data is now available on the Registration data dashboard on our Data Website. Retirement, health and poor terms and conditions are the top reasons given for people leaving the Register.
13. In March we published our Workforce Skills Report 2025 which looks at the current provision of qualifications for the adult social care, children's residential care and early years workforce, and demand for those qualifications. It also looks at barriers to undertaking qualifications.

SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

14. We have started research into how the sector and other regulators are using AI. Several of the other regulators in the Alliance are looking at similar research and we will work with them to share and understand

findings. We will look to develop statements for the sector and our own staff on use of AI.

15. Work is ongoing in relation to the procurement of a new Case Management System for our fitness to practise work and our Digital Programme Board has approved the business case.
16. The Head of Human Resources and our Whistleblowing Champion Council Member, Rona King, did a broadcast to staff highlighting our Whistleblowing Policy, the importance of speaking up and how to do so. I am most grateful to Rona for taking part.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Work with NHS Education Scotland (NES)

17. As Members are aware we have a long-standing partnership with NES and a formal Memorandum of Understanding with them. As part of the arrangements the Convener and I meet quarterly with their Chair and Chief Executive. A delivery plan for the year is agreed. Two specific joint pieces of work which have just launched are the Social Care Career Options Tool and the National Induction Framework.
18. The Social Care Career Options Tool will make it easier for people to find out about the wide range of roles and careers available in social care. Whether someone is new to the social care sector or looking to advance their career, the mobile-friendly resource available through www.careersincare.scot will help guide them through over 75 roles across adult and children's social care.
19. Role descriptions and real-life career stories will give people a better understanding of how their existing skills and experience can match the many opportunities available in the sector. Information on qualifications and career paths will help them plan their next step in education or employment.
20. The National Induction Framework: Social Care is a new 30-hour induction learning programme for adult social care staff in Scotland. New staff can access free learning resources to cover the foundational knowledge needed for their role. They will see and share their progress on the SSSC MyLearning app. Employers will benefit from this non-compulsory induction programme which will help reduce duplication of time and resources. The resource launches on 14 May 2025 and NES and the SSSC will work with organisations locally to support its implementation.
21. A joint session for the Council and Board is in planning for later in the year after further work is completed on qualifications and skills needs.

Work with the Care Inspectorate (CI)

22. There is a report elsewhere on the agenda with the Partnership Agreement for approval following the joint development session between Board and Council in March. We are replicating the arrangements we have with NES and future reports to Council will include progress on joint work.

HORIZON SCANNING

23. **Care Reform (Scotland) Bill:** on 4 March the Care (Reform) Bill (previously known as the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill) was published. The revised Bill will give the SSSC powers to require people to provide information for fitness to practise investigations. The Bill gives Ministers further powers around delegation of section 58 of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. It also provides for the establishment of the National Social Work Adviser and National Social Work Agency. The planned introduction of a National Care Board and changes to roles and responsibilities around social care is no longer in the revised Bill. We have been in discussion with our Sponsor Department about the changes that will occur as a result of the National Social Work Agency and I will bring a report to a future meeting of Council once further detail is known.
24. **The Promise:** In March the Minister for Children, Young People and The Promise indicated that they hope to introduce the Promise Bill prior to summer recess, subject to agreement by the Cabinet. I met with Audit Scotland in April who are reviewing progress with meeting the Promise and we have work developing in this area.
25. **Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill (Members Bill):** The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee is scrutinising the Bill. And parliament have just voted in favour of the Bill at stage one. I wrote to the Committee to highlight the need to consider the impact on the registered workforce.
26. **Consumer (Scotland) Act 2020:** This Act introduced a duty for relevant public authorities, including the SSSC, to consider the impact on consumers and have regard to the desirability to reduce harm when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions. The Act also states that information must be publicised on the steps public authorities have taken to meet the duty and have regard to the Consumer Scotland guidance. The Scottish Government issued guidance in February 2025. We have amended our Impact Assessment template to include the Consumer duty and will report on our compliance with the duty in our annual report from next year.
27. **Employment Rights Bill (Westminster):** The Bill is in the House of Lords and is at Committee Stage. Amendments tabled in March 2025 make provision for a social care negotiating body in Scotland. In April the Scottish Government lodged a supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum (LCM) covering these provisions. The Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee is considering the supplementary LCM and wrote

to the SSSC seeking comment. We have responded to highlight that whilst we do not have a direct role in terms and conditions, we support the fair work agenda and have published reports which highlight the impact on the workforce of current pay and terms and conditions.

CONSULTATION

28. Internal Stakeholders have contributed to this report. This report also provides information on how we are working with partners and stakeholders to support the sector.

CONCLUSION

29. This report provides a broad overview of activity across the organisation.

Title of report	Audit and Assurance Committee report to Council
Summary/purpose of report	To make recommendations from the Audit and Assurance Committee
Recommendations	<p>The Committee recommends that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Council accepts that the assurance report presents a true and fair view of the SSSCs performance towards achievement of strategic objectives, financial management and risk identification and management 2. the Council approves the Risk Register at Appendix 2 as a statement of the strategic risks as of 1 April 2025 3. the Council approves the Committee's Annual Report to Council at Appendix 4 to this report 4. the Council notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the Committee approved the Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2025-28 and the Internal Audit Plan 2025/26 b. the Committee approved the revised Financial Regulations c. the Committee approved the Draft Annual Governance Statement for inclusion in the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/5
Author	Lindsay MacDonald, Chair, Audit and Assurance Committee
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p>

	Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.
Link to Risk Register	Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.
Impact Assessments	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Documents attached	<p>Apx 1 - Assurance report at 31 March 2025</p> <p>Apx 2 - Strategic Risk Register</p> <p>Apx 3 - Assurance Map as at 31 March 2025</p> <p>Apx 4 - Annual Committee report to Council</p>
Background papers	<u>DRAFT AAC minutes - 29 April 2025</u>

INTRODUCTION

1. As set out in the Executive Framework Document and Scheme of Delegation, accountability for strategic oversight remains with the SSSC Council. The Council has delegated responsibility for oversight and scrutiny of achievement of operational key performance indicators, monitoring of Financial Performance and Strategic Risk Management to the Audit and Assurance Committee.
2. This report records the business and any recommendations of the matters of the Audit and Assurance Committee to SSSC Council following the Committee's meeting on 29 April 2025.

ASSURANCE REPORT

3. The Committee reviewed the assurance report as of 31 March 2025 relating to the activities of the SSSC. Appendix 1 to this report is the Assurance Report considered by the Committee.

Finance

4. Committee queried the general reserves percentage at 31 March which was sitting at 7.1% and noted that it was close to the revised figure of 5-6% set for 2025/26 at the previous Council meeting.
5. Committee noted savings in staff costs and accepted the assurance that the budget for 2025/26 will reflect the recent and current recruitment programme. This includes recruitment into the Fitness to Practice (FtP) department, the benefits of which will filter into the Strategic Performance Indicators (SPIs) once all new staff are fully trained.
6. The Committee noted the write offs of £85k are partly due to irrecoverable debt. £115k of digital costs will be carried into 2025/26.
7. Committee noted the bursary underspend will not be subject to clawback by Scottish Government and will be carried forward. It also noted that the underspend is partly due to students sourcing alternative methods of funding. Work is ongoing in this area.
8. Management of the spending pressure will be discussed with Scottish Government around September, mid-way into the financial year.

Strategic Performance Indicators (SPIs)

9. Committee noted the reduction in SPI 2.1, the time for workers to register. A report will come to the next Committee meeting and consideration will be given to reducing the target time.
10. Committee noted that SPI 2.2 regarding number of open FtP cases continued to sit on amber status and accepted that this number is expected to improve following completion of training of recently recruited staff.
11. Committee was pleased to see the increased uptake in provision of learning resources by the sector and noted that consideration was being given to stretching this target. Improved access to the learning zone was considered a factor.

HR data

12. Committee discussed the sickness absence rate for SSSC staff, which showed continued improvement since November 2024, noting there were no emerging trends.
13. Committee noted the rolling 12-month staff turnover rate is 11.5% with no emerging trends.

Key Operational Indicators (KOIs)

14. The main area of discussion by Committee was the decrease in number of registered workers and the effect this would have on the modelling of the SSSC's role and work. The SSSC is based on a register of 176-177k registered workers. This decrease in workers is being monitored as an emerging issue and will continue to be monitored and reported upon. Further work on ascertaining the reason for the decline in workers will be investigated.
15. Committee took assurance from the information contained in the assurance report and further information verbally provided that management is taking appropriate action to manage the areas which are reported and where there may be emerging or ongoing risk.

Risk Register

16. Committee reviewed and approved the Risk Register position as at 31 March 2025, noting that the Committee will consider the Risk Appetite at Council in May 2025.
17. The Risk Register at Appendix 2 is a statement of the strategic risks as of 1 April 2025 and the Committee noted and took assurance that the risk register is subject to approval by Committee at each quarterly meeting.

Assurance Map

18. Members reviewed the Assurance Map as at 31 March 2025 and noted that the map provided three lines of assurance which are appropriate to manage the areas of identified risk.

AUDIT REPORTS

19. The Committee was presented with the following audit reports:
 - The Annual Report
 - Future Proofing Programme (FPP), Phase 3 audit report
 - Implementation of responses from the Independent Review of Inspections, Scrutiny and Regulation of social care in Scotland (IRISR) audit report
 - Travel and expenses audit report
 - Follow up review report,
 - Audit actions tracker
 - Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2025 to 2028 and Internal Audit Plan 2025/26.
20. The FPP Phase 3 report and the report on IRISR both provided a good level of assurance. The travel and expenses report provided a satisfactory level of assurance with two recommendations which were already actioned.
21. The follow-up review provided detail on the progress against the 2024/25 internal audit plan. Committee noted the completion of all actions apart from one exception, which was superseded by the introduction of the new Oracle Fusion Finance system and no longer relevant. The internal/external audit tracker also indicated all actions were completed.
22. The Committee reviewed the three-year Strategic Internal Audit Plan along with the Internal Audit Plan for 2025/26 and agreed the five areas to be audited in 2025/26 are PMO general, staff recruitment and retention, budget setting process, (internal) Whistleblowing Policy and cyber security.
23. The Committee took assurances from the auditor's reports, including the three-year plan, on completion of previous internal audit recommendations and also that the areas of proposed audit for the next three years are appropriate, it noted that other priorities may arise and these will be added into the auditor's plan as necessary.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

24. The Committee accepted that only minor changes were made to the revised Financial Regulations during the recent review and approved them. The

Committee took assurance from the annual review of the regulations that appropriate processes, roles and responsibilities are in place.

ANNUAL COUNTER FRAUD REPORT

25. Committee was pleased to note that there were no incidences of fraud, bribery or corruption detected at the SSSC in the year 2024/25. It took assurance from this and also from the participation in the National Fraud Initiative exercise and that appropriate steps are in place to detect or deter this risk.

CONCLUSION OF WORKER STATUS OF FITNESS TO PRACTISE (FTP) PANEL MEMBERS - CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

26. Committee was provided with an update on the worker status of FtP panel members, an issue which arose following a case brought against the Nursing and Midwifery Council. Committee is assured that all appropriate measures for holiday pay and pension were now in order and the matter is closed.

CLOSURE OF FUTURE PROOFING PROGRAMME (FPP) NOTIFICATION ISSUE – CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

27. Committee was provided with a final update on the notification issue which arose as part of the introduction of the FPP. It was satisfied that all appropriate steps have now been taken to remedy this issue and the matter is now closed.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AUTHORITY (PSA) PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF SOCIAL WORK ENGLAND (SWE)

28. The Committee took assurance from the report and Hannah Coleman's verbal update that the performance of the SSSC in FtP matters gave no case for concern, this included turnaround time for cases to be resolved. Committee noted that although not answerable to the PSA we carry out assessment of our work against its standards.

DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

29. Committee reviewed and approved the draft Annual Governance Statement from the Chief Executive along with the Certificates of Assurance from each directorate. The Chief Executive advised that there was only one significant issue to raise which was the ongoing issues with the Oracle Fusion finance system and its possible impact on end of year accounts. Committee agreed that any impact should immediately be brought to the attention of both the Chair and the Interim Convener.

DRAFT ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL

30. Committee approved the draft annual committee report to Council which summarised the work of the Committee over the year. It forms part of the process for the annual report and accounts and Committee recommended that the report is submitted to Council for approval, subject to two minor amendments.
31. The amended Annual Report is appended to this report at Appendix 4, for Council approval.

CONSULTATION

32. No specific stakeholder engagement was necessary in the preparation of this report as this forms a summary of the matters discussed at the Audit and Assurance Committee earlier in the meetings cycle.

RISKS

33. We have an averse risk appetite to governance matters. This report gives assurances to Council that the Committee is carrying out its remit.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

34. There are no resource implications arising from this report.

Compliance

35. There are no compliance implications arising from this report.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IA)

36. An IA was not necessary as this report relates to internal governance matters.

CONCLUSION

37. This report, appendices and background minutes give assurances to Council that the Audit and Assurance Committee is carrying out its remit in accordance with the terms of reference contained in the Code of Corporate Governance, including approval of its Annual Report.

38. The Committee requests that Council takes assurance, following consideration of the documents, that the Committee has been presented with a fair view of the operational and financial performance and risk facing the SSSC.

Title of report	Assurance Report as of 31 March 2025
Summary/purpose of report	<p>To provide performance, financial and risk information which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assesses delivery of our strategy through the analysis of strategic performance indicators highlights areas of concern identifies corrective action required. <p>The report identifies variance to expected performance and any impact or risk this may have on the strategic objective to which the KPI relates. Actuals are measured against an initial forecast with the KPI owner providing an explanation for variance. If there are negative variances the KPI owner details corrective actions.</p>
Recommendations	<p>The Audit and Assurance Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> endorse the direction of travel for the strategic measures, risk register and financial position.
Author	Laura Shepherd, Director of Strategy and Business Services
Responsible Officer	Maree Allison, Chief Executive
Link to Strategic Outcomes	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted - People who use services are protected by a regulated workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled - Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident - Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Valued - The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Link to the Strategic Risk Register	Strategic Risk 4: We fail to provide value to our stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.
Documents attached	<p>Apx 1: Full 2024/25 Strategic Risk Register.</p> <p>Apx 2: Assurance Map.</p>

ASSURANCE REPORT AS OF 31 MARCH 2025

AAC Meeting Version

29 April 2025

Agenda item: 05, Report no: 08/2025

Action: For Decision

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MARCH 2025 SPI PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

SPI	SPI Description	Outcome	Risk	Ambition	Current	V (+/-)	Movement	YE	Actions & Comments
Finance	Available reserves (%)	1-4	5	2 to 2.5	7.1	+1.1	↓	Red	
2.1 Reg	Reduce the time taken to being registered (weeks)	1	1	<18	16.0	+0.5	↓	Green	
2.2 Reg	SSSC will maintain the number of open fitness to practise cases at an acceptable level	1	1	1850	1857	-	→	Amber	
	95% of our open cases will be less than three-years-old	1	1	95.0	97.1	0	→	Green	
2.3 WE&S	Increase the percentage of the workforce using learning resources to achieve CPL (%)	2, 3	2	33.0	37.0	+0.2	↑	Green	
2.4 WE&S	Percentage of those reporting positively that our development activity is delivering the support required by the workforce (%)	2, 3	2	80.0	86.6	+2.6	↑	Green	
	Cumulative performance (%)	2, 3	2	80.0	83.9	+0.5	↑	Green	

KOI	KOI Description	Outcome	Risk	Ambition			Movement	Proj. YE	Actions & Comments
2.5	Delivery of key milestones across our joint initiatives and programme of work against national strategies	2, 3, 4		-				N/A	
3. Organisational Information	Programme Management Office	1-4	-	-			-	-	
4.1 HR	The overall percentage of staff who are absent from work (%)	1-4	6	<3.6	4.1	-2.1	↑	Red	Likely to change due to a lag in reporting which is a result of manual intervention.
4.2 HR	The overall staff turnover percentage (%)	1-4	6	<16.2	11.5	0.0	→	Green	
5.1 KOI Reg	Registrant workforce numbers			N/A	176.2k	+52	↑	N/A	
5.2 KOI S&P	The percentage of the workforce feeling valued for the work they do	4		N/A	16.7	-0.4	-	N/A	
5.3 KOI S&P	The percentage of the workforce with the correct qualification (%)	1,2,3,4		N/A	55.8	+0.2	-	N/A	

RAG Status Key

Green	On track, on budget, minor issues within green parameters set within a measure
Amber	Low level risks/issues, short term delays, potential for budget under or overspend that has not yet manifested. Within amber parameters set within a measure
Red	Not on track, reported red risks, over budget, significant delays. Within red parameters set within a measure

1. CORPORATE FINANCIAL POSITION

1.1 Results

The Results & Summary below show the projection for the year to 31 March 2025 based on reviews to the end of March 2025.

The projection is the addition of actual income and expenditure to 31 March 2025 and forecast of remaining income and expenditure to 31 March 2025.

- Our projected expenditure for the year is £19.417m compared against a budgeted expenditure of £20.470m (excluding disbursements).
- Our projected results show projected net income of £299k (surplus). This will result in a £0 spending pressure.
- Our projected results show an expected underspend due to staffing costs as described below, during the year there has been higher vacancies in FtP and Registration which have contributed to this underspend. There were occasions that this had a low-level impact on performance however the current position is good and a clear recruitment and backfill plan is in place. There were also delays to recruitment elsewhere that created underspends which are no resolved.
- Our projected reserves are currently at 7.1% which is higher than the 2.5% internal target, however there are risks that might require mitigating with the use of reserves.
- There is an underspend across disbursements and SG have confirmed carry forward into 2025/26.
- There are no commitments noted in the results table due to the continued reporting issues with the new Finance system.

Scottish Social Services Council	Projection						
Income Statement	Actual	Committed	Total Actual + Committed	Forecast remaining	Projection	Budget	Movement against budget
Grant in Aid							
Staff Costs	15,873	0	15,873	132	16,005	16,714	(709)
Non Staff Costs	2,717	0	2,717	680	3,397	3,741	(344)
Grant in Aid & Other Income	(19,717)	0	(19,717)	0	(19,716)	(19,675)	(42)
Net Grant in Aid							
Expenditure/(Income)	(1,127)	0	(1,127)	813	(314)	781	(1,095)
GIA income Disbursements		0					
Post graduate bursaries	(2,655)	0	(2,655)	0	(2,655)	(2,655)	0
Practice learning fees	(3,852)	0	(3,852)	0	(3,852)	(3,852)	0
Payments							
Post graduate bursaries	1,560	0	1,560	(6)	1,555	2,655	(1,100)
Practice learning fees	619	0	619	2,982	3,601	3,852	(251)
Net Grant in Aid Disbursements	(4,328)	0	(4,328)	2,975	(1,351)	0	(1,351)
Income							
Voluntary Sector Development Fund	(768)	0	(768)	(30)	(798)	0	(798)
Other grants	(1,066)	0	(1,066)	0	(1,066)	0	(1,066)
Payments							
Voluntary Sector Development Fund	758	0	758	0	758	0	758
Other grants	670	0	670	352	1,021	15	1,006
Net Other Grants/Disbursements	(406)	0	(406)	322	(84)	15	(99)

* Budget includes £2.4m additional GIA awarded in Autumn budget revision

Staff Costs represent over 80% of expenditure excluding disbursement payments.

In the year to 31 March, there is an overall net saving on staff costs of £709k resulting from the following:-

Payroll costs show a £667k saving on budget (2.6%) and the projection reflects the savings so far this year. There has been the use of agency staff to fill vacant posts increasing other staff costs by £102k. Panel Member allowances (£617k) are also included in staff costs and there is projected to be a £71k reduction on budget for the year based on outturn to date. There is also an underspend of £50k on staff training costs.

Non Staff Costs represent the remaining 20% of expenditure.

This covers accommodation (£192k), administration and travel (£1.2m), digital costs (£1.5m), supplies and services (£452k) and projects (£356k). In comparison to the previous year, accommodation costs are lower due to reduced space (£270k) and transfer of lease costs to administration due to IFRS 16 (£175k).

Within non staff costs there are projected savings of £344k to budget the main areas being write offs (£85k), ICT costs (£115k carried forward to be used in May/June 2025), legal fees and professional fees (£114k). This also reflects the £100k ringfenced for digital equipment.

Income combines the GIA Income and other sources of income generated internally. Funding and income illustrate the different elements of income.

Expenditure on staff and non-staff Costs is covered by £19.7m of basic GIA funding (including £2.4m additional GIA awarded as part of the Autumn budget revision) and other internally generated income plus Spending Pressure of £796k. During May to March 2025, we have drawn down £22.5m from the Scottish Government.

Other income is projected to be £42k higher than budgeted due to an increase in secondment income and other income.

GIA Disbursements cover Post Graduate Bursaries (PGB) and Practice Learning Fees (PLF). In 2024/25 there is funding of £2,655k for PGB and £3,852k for PLF of which £1,500k is an additional funding element. These disbursements follow the timing of the academic year. There is a projected underspend of £787k on PGB. The underspend is due to a reduction in student numbers and more students applying for funding through SAAS. The includes £300k to be used to support Practice Learning Support Grant (PLSG) for PG students.

Spend on PLF is projected to be in line with the previous year resulting in a projected underspend of £608k for 2024/25, including the carry forward from 2023/24.

Other Disbursements cover the Voluntary Sector Development Fund (VSDF) and other grants that are not budgeted. The main component of other grants is the Workforce Development Grant (WDG) with funding of £156k for 2024/25. There is a projected underspend for 2024/25 and a carry forward into 2025/26 has been agreed.

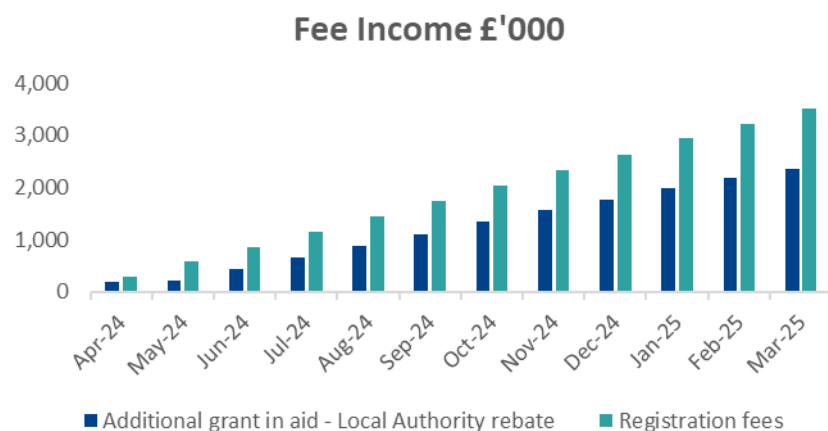
The projection for the PLSG is an underspend of £420k, reflecting spend of £600k against funding of £700k and the £300k transferred from PGB.

Other grants include ELC projects, Cyber Resilience work with the sector and other small areas of external disbursements.

1.2 Areas of exceptions and risk

Category	Exception/risk	Value	Comments
Legal issues	There are ongoing legal matters which we are addressing that may result in a payment.	£40K	This amount has been ring fenced within the reserve figure - see 1.5.

1.3 Registration fee income



Fee income reflects actual income for April 2024 to March 2025 totalling £5,892k, £11k under-budget for the year.

1.4 Funding and income

Funding and income	Budget £000	Scottish Government £000	Other £000	Drawdown /received £000	Projection 31 Mar 25 £000
Grant in aid *	13,428	13,428		13,428	13,428
Local Authority fees	2,593	2,593		2,593	2,593
Registration fees	3,310		3,310	3,522	3,522
Other income	344		344	396	396
	19,675	16,021	3,654	19,940	19,940
GIA - disbursements					
Practice Learning Fees	2,352	2,352		2,352	2,352
Additional Practice Learning funding	1,500	1,500		1,500	1,500
Post Graduate Bursaries	2,655	2,655		2,655	2,655
	6,507	6,507	0	6,507	6,507
Other disbursements					
Voluntary Sector Development Fund			775	768	775
Workforce Development Grant and others			1,066	1,066	1,066
	0	0	1,841	1,834	1,841
Spending pressure	796	0			0
Total funding and income	26,978	22,528	5,495	28,280	28,288

Total funding is budgeted at £27m with £28.3m being drawn down to 31 March. The Grant in Aid figure from the Scottish Government of £13.4m (including £2.4m additional GIA awarded as part of the Autumn Budget Revision) is supplemented by Fee income noted at 1.3 and other income to support the main activities of SSSC. GIA Disbursements have been claimed in full. There has been no draw down of the spending pressure, but as detailed at 1.5 we have used savings and reserves instead to fund expenditure for 2024/25.

1.5 General reserve and available reserve

Scottish Social Services Council		Reserve	
Change in Taxpayers Equity	Grant in Aid	GIA Disbursements	Other Disbursements
Balance at 31st March 2024	2,018	467	392
Carried Forward to 2024/25			
Post graduate bursaries		217	
Practice learning fees		250	
Voluntary Sector Development Fund			135
Other grants			257
Ring fenced			
IT Equipment	100		
Carried forward & Ring fenced	100	467	392
Available General Reserve	1,918	0	0
Balance at 1st April 2024	2,018	467	392
Expenditure	(19,417)	(5,156)	(1,765)
Funding from Government & other income	19,716	6,507	
Funding from Other Disbursements			1,865
Transfer to Practice Learning Support Grant		(424)	424
Spending Pressure	796		
Balance at 31st March 2025	3,114	1,395	893
Carried Forward to 2025/26			
Post graduate bursaries		787	
Practice Learning Fees		608	
Workforce Development Grant			285
Practice Learning Support Grant			420
Voluntary Sector Development Fund			175
Other grants			36
Ring fenced			
Potential external issues (refer to 1.2)	40		
Office refurbishment	114		
Website development	41		
Removal of Spending Pressure	796		
Digital Equipment (refer to Non Staff Costs in 1.1)	200		
Carried forward & Ring fenced	1,191	1,395	916
Available General Reserve	1,923	0	0

The reserve is split into three categories:

Grant In Aid – shows the main activities of SSSC. Funding from the Government and other income to cover staff and non-staff costs and supported where necessary by Spending Pressure.

GIA Disbursements – payments made for Post Graduate Bursaries and Practice Fee Learning which are recompensed by Government.

Other Disbursements – other payments including Workforce Development Grant and Voluntary Sector Development Fund which are recompensed by other bodies.

The projected net income for 2024/25 is £299k, with no draw down of the spending pressure of £796k.

From the available general reserve, there are ring-fenced amounts totalling £200k for digital equipment, £40k for legal issues as explained in 1.2, £41k for website development costs and £114k for the office refurbishment.

As a result of the salary savings to date and a higher level of reserves at the start of 2024/25 the spending pressure of £796k has been removed. This means that the SPI Finance Available reserves % at 31 March 2025 is 7.0%. Our aim will be to manage spending pressure reduction considering how available reserve is positioned within Ambition.

The underspend on disbursements will be carried forward into carried forward into 2025/26 as confirmed by SG.

Approved Budgeted Expenditure		26,977
<i>(Staff Costs, Non-Staff Costs & disbursement payments)</i>		
Available Reserve (%)	7.1%	1,923
upper	2.5%	674

2. STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

2.1 Regulation: Reduce the average time taken from a person starting their employment to being registered with the SSSC.

Assessment & Analysis

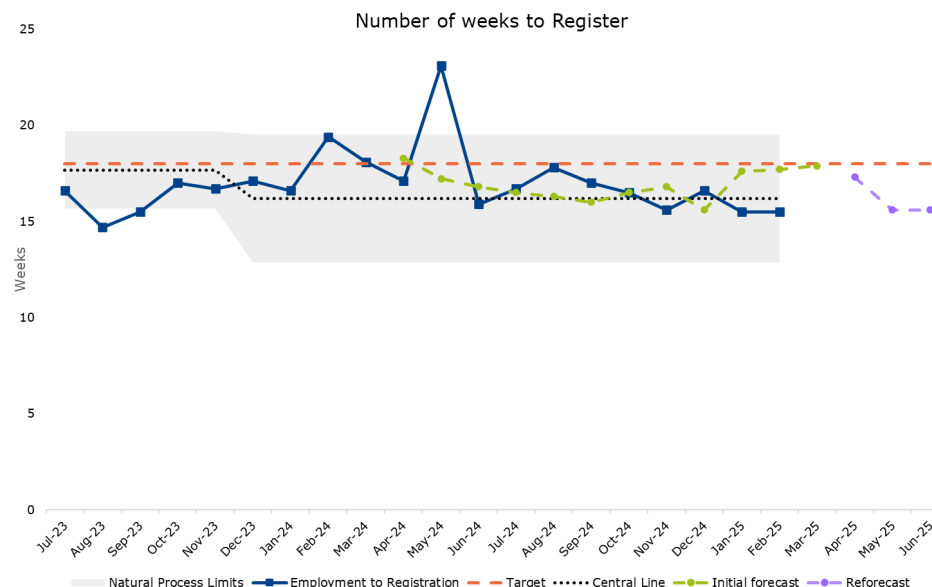
Time taken from employment to registration was 16.0 weeks in March 2025. Application received to registration was 3.2 weeks, an increase of 0.3 weeks from the previous month.

RAG		
<18	18 to 22	>22
Target: 18 weeks		

Length of time to register -
Individuals who haven't been
registered previously on the same
register part

Apr-24	17.1	-5.0%
May-24	23.1	28.3%
Jun-24	15.9	-11.7%
Jul-24	16.7	-7.2%
Aug-24	17.8	-1.1%
Sep-24	17.0	-5.6%
Oct-24	16.5	-8.3%
Nov-24	15.6	-13.3%
Dec-24	16.6	-7.8%
Jan-25	15.5	-13.9%
Feb-25	15.5	-13.9%
Mar-25	16.0	-11.1%
Apr-25	17.3	-3.9%
May-25	15.6	-13.3%
Jun-25	15.6	-13.3%

The measure captures the risk of those who have not been registered at all or were previously registered on another part. From the data we can see that these individuals usually register in a timely manner.



Management Action

We are working on reviewing the data that has been removed from this indicator, relating to workers who have been removed then reapply to the same part. We will bring detail on this and a proposal for taking forward the work required to the next Assurance meeting.

2.2 Regulation: SSSC will maintain the number of open fitness to practise cases at an acceptable level; 95% of our open cases will be less than three years old.

Assessment & Analysis

Prompt processing of Fitness to Practise (FtP) cases ensures concerns are addressed and the right people are registered. This analysis focuses on both number of cases open and how many of those are less than three years old.

RAG			RAG		
<0%	0% to 10%	>10%	>95%	90% to 95%	<90%
Target: 1850			Target: 95%		
Number of open fitness to practise cases at an acceptable level actual and reforecast			% of open cases less than 3 years old actual and reforecast		
Apr-24	1841	-0.5%	Apr-24	96.0%	1.1%
May-24	1843	-0.4%	May-24	95.8%	0.9%
Jun-24	1870	1.1%	Jun-24	95.6%	0.6%
Jul-24	1906	3.0%	Jul-24	95.8%	0.8%
Aug-24	1899	2.6%	Aug-24	96.2%	1.2%
Sep-24	1948	5.3%	Sep-24	96.4%	1.4%
Oct-24	1934	4.5%	Oct-24	96.5%	1.6%
Nov-24	1904	2.9%	Nov-24	96.6%	1.7%
Dec-24	1866	0.9%	Dec-24	96.8%	1.9%
Jan-25	1900	2.7%	Jan-25	97.1%	2.2%
Feb-25	1857	0.4%	Feb-25	97.1%	2.2%
Mar-25	1857	0.5%	Mar-25	97.1%	2.2%
Apr-25	1898	2.6%	Apr-25	97.4%	2.5%
May-25	1872	1.2%	May-25	97.3%	2.4%
Jun-25	1850	0.0%	Jun-25	97.2%	2.3%

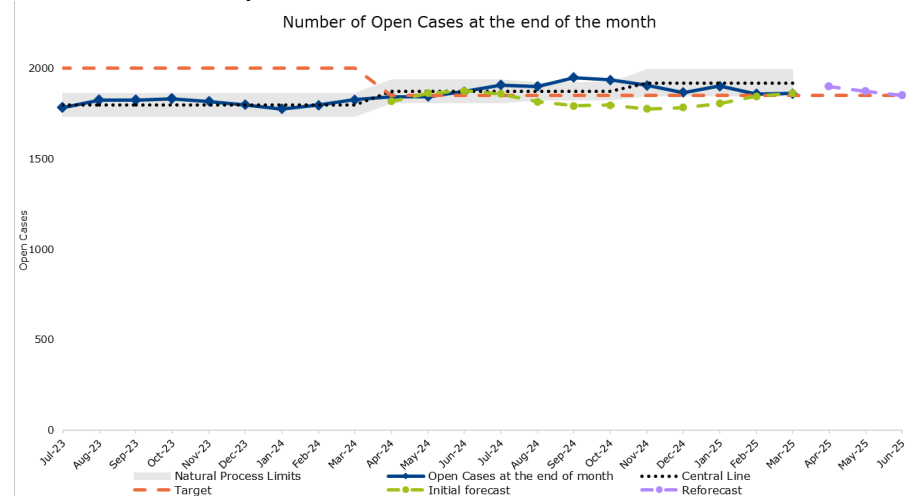
Several factors affect the number of cases open and their age profile. Some are external, such as complexity of cases, proportion of cases affected by third party proceedings, the quality of information about a case and the proportion of member of the public complaints. Others are internal such as case to staff ratios, staff turnover, experience and capacity. The number of referrals received is increasing.

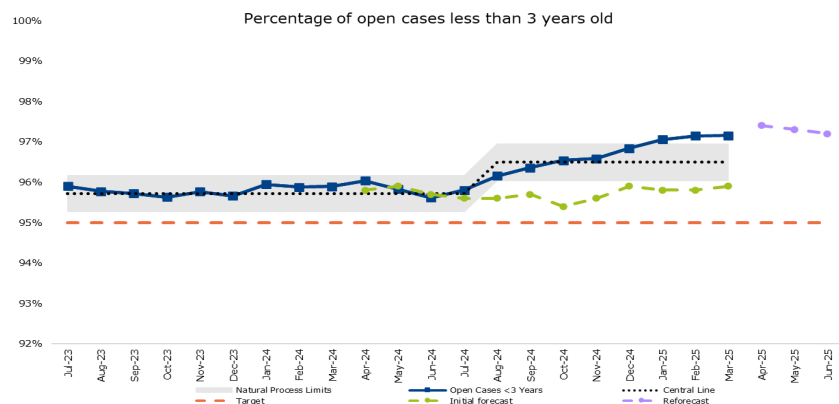
At the end of March 2025, the number of open cases was 1,857. No increase from the previous month but an increase of 42 from March 2024. Of these open cases, 97.1% (1,804 of 1,857) are less than three years old. The number of cases open over 3 years old is decreasing, following targeted work.

Staffing underspends due to vacancies throughout the year have contributed to the first measure remaining amber for most of the year.

The total number of cases being referred has increased by 4.8% over the last 12 months. Referrals about registrants have increased by 12.5% and these are more complex and take longer than referrals about applicants. Referrals made by members of the public are also more complex. They formed 16.5% of referrals for the past two years.

We have reviewed our data on cases that are over 3 years old. At the end of March 2025, over 92% of these cases had a criminal case contact (police, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service or Sheriff Court) on the case record.





Management Action

Performance for open fitness to practise cases has been amber for nine months. We have budget approval to address the habitual loss of capacity due to volume of maternity leave and/or turnover. Recruitment is underway and we expect new staff in post in late summer, the impact of this will be seen in Q4.

We are undertaking a deeper investigation into referrals to try and understand the trend of increases and will report to Council in November.

2.3 Workforce Education and Standards: Increase the percentage of the workforce using our learning resources to achieve Continuous Professional Learning.

Assessment & Analysis

This measure looks at active users who access our CPL products as well as number of badges completed each month. The calculation for monthly performance comes from:

- the number of applications for badges in a month, minus the number which were returned and not resubmitted or revoked
- number of leadership capability 360 feedback tool accounts
- number of learner accounts minus the number identified as dormant accounts
- number of MyLearning App users in the prior 30 days
- number of registrants who have answered yes on their annual declaration on if they used our learning resources

	RAG	
	>33%	<28%
	Target: 33%	
Apr-24	29.6%	-10.2%
May-24	30.5%	-7.4%
Jun-24	32.7%	-0.8%
Jul-24	32.6%	-1.1%
Aug-24	34.5%	4.6%
Sep-24	35.4%	7.3%
Oct-24	35.6%	7.8%
Nov-24	35.8%	8.5%
Dec-24	34.3%	4.0%
Jan-25	36.7%	11.3%
Feb-25	36.8%	11.6%
Mar-25	37.0%	12.0%
Apr-25	38.0%	15.2%
May-25	38.8%	17.6%
Jun-25	38.4%	16.4%

These are all combined and divided by the number of unique individuals on the register for that month.

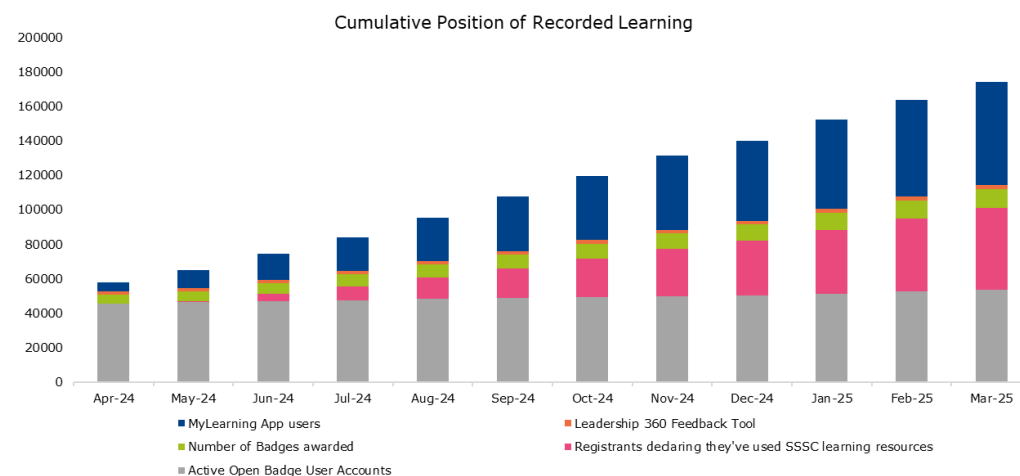
A new target of 33% has been agreed. The previous financial years performance led to a target of 28% being suggested however, due to improvement work planned and the introduction of annual declarations as a data source the target has been increased.

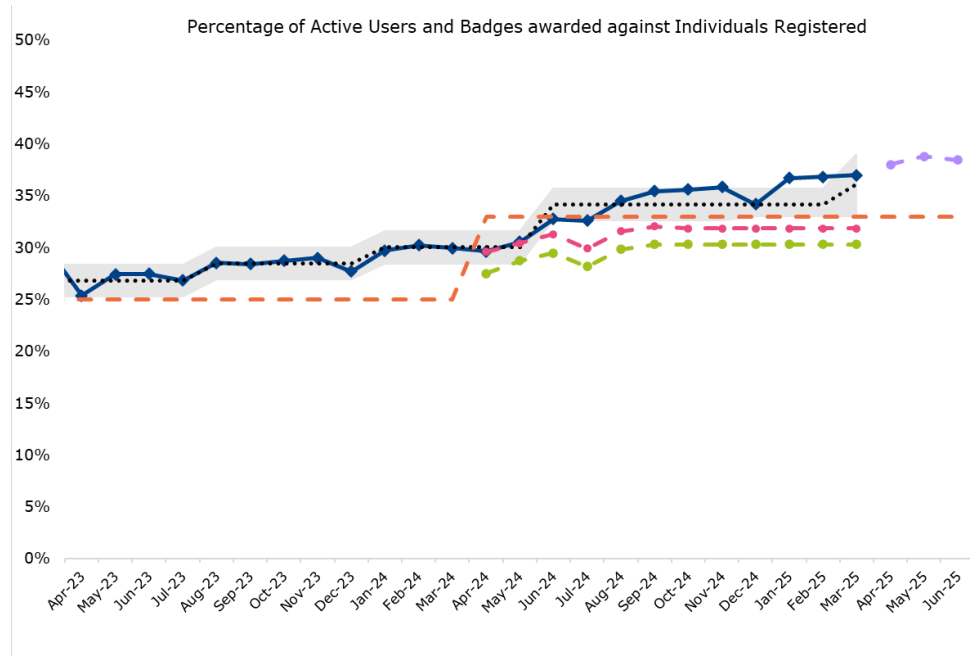
Performance continues to be above the target despite the increase to 33%.

There were 535 badges awarded in March 2025, an increase of 35 compared to last month and an increase of 30 from March 2024.

We currently have 53,758 active SSSC Open Badges user accounts and saw 3,380 users of the MyLearning app in the previous 30 days.

For March this was 5,050 individuals of 14,188 total declarations submitted, or 35.6%. This is 2.9% of the unique number of individuals on the register for March.





The graph of percentage of active users and badges awarded against individuals registered now includes two forecast lines, the green line shows the forecast if no improvement activity happened, and we maintained performance from previous years. The pink line shows potential uplift in performance due to improvement activity.

Management Action

2.4 Workforce Education and Standards: Percentage of those reporting positively that our development activity is delivering the support required by the workforce.

Assessment & Analysis

This indicator reflects the feedback from people who have been using SSSC learning to support their continuous professional development. This calculation uses survey information from:

- the annual declaration from users, how many used CPL and how they rated the resources used when available.
- surveys across our corporate website and our learning zone
- post-event feedback

RAG		
>80%	70% to 80%	<70%
Target: 80%		

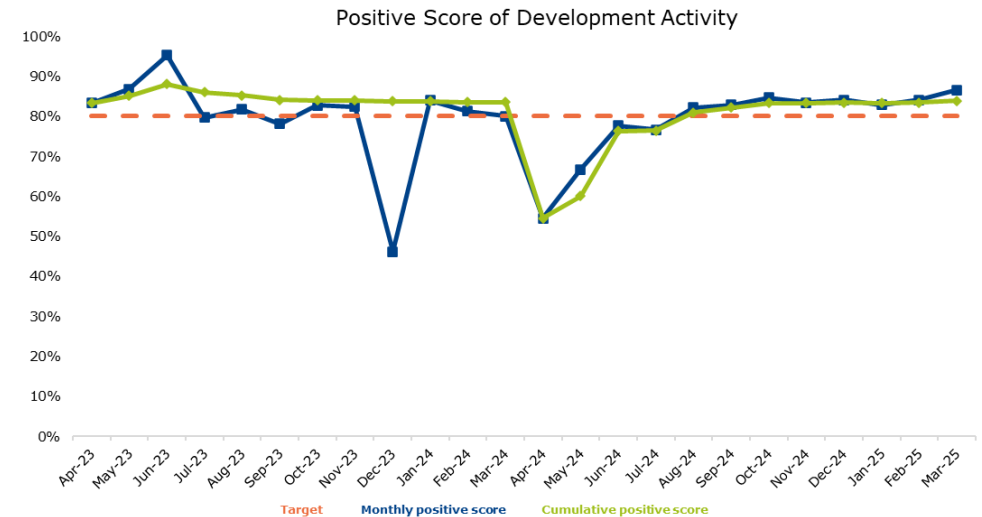
RAG		
>80%	70% to 80%	<70%
Target: 80%		

Monthly Performance Actual and Reforecast		
Apr-24	54.5%	-31.8%
May-24	66.7%	-16.7%
Jun-24	77.6%	-3.0%
Jul-24	76.3%	-4.6%
Aug-24	82.2%	2.8%
Sep-24	82.8%	3.5%
Oct-24	84.7%	5.9%
Nov-24	83.4%	4.2%
Dec-24	84.1%	5.1%
Jan-25	82.9%	3.6%
Feb-25	84.0%	5.0%
Mar-25	86.6%	8.2%
Apr-25	83.8%	4.7%
May-25	83.8%	4.7%
Jun-25	83.7%	4.7%

Cumulative Performance actual and Reforecast		
Apr-24	54.5%	-31.8%
May-24	60.0%	-25.0%
Jun-24	76.3%	-4.7%
Jul-24	76.3%	-4.6%
Aug-24	80.9%	1.1%
Sep-24	82.1%	2.7%
Oct-24	83.3%	4.1%
Nov-24	83.3%	4.1%
Dec-24	83.5%	4.3%
Jan-25	83.3%	4.2%
Feb-25	83.4%	4.3%
Mar-25	83.9%	4.8%
Apr-25	83.5%	4.4%
May-25	83.5%	4.4%
Jun-25	83.6%	4.4%

From the above resources we received 5,222 responses, 5,074 (97%) are from the annual declaration.

Cumulative performance reflects the cumulative performance for the current financial year.



Management Action

2.5 Delivery of key milestones across our joint initiatives and programme of work against national strategies. Agreed with key stakeholders.

Joint initiative or Programme	Named actions and timescales for delivery	KOI Performance	Our achievements	Management action	Link to strategy
NOS Review	<p>NOS review.</p> <p>To be completed by December 2025</p> <p>This is detailed in the strategic framework for Scotland's Early Learning and Childcare, School Aged Childcare and Childminding Services Profession</p>	90% of actions on track to deliver on time. Project on track to deliver on time.	<p>NOS review project plan and programme governance structure in place.</p> <p>Stakeholder Advisory Group and NOS Development Group made up of key stakeholders have been established to support the review.</p> <p>SDS have allocated a grant of £69,000 for this work.</p> <p>Work on reviewing the suites of NOS is progressing well across the four nations and on target to be complete by mid-May.</p> <p>External supplier has been appointed to manage the formal consultation due to be launched in August.</p>	The projected spend for all countries this financial year is £20k. We are projecting a spend of the full £69k grant and therefore do not anticipate requiring further funding from SDS for this work.	Skilled
The Promise: Change Programme 1	<p>Lead the refresh of the Common Core of skills, knowledge, understanding and values for the children's workforce in Scotland.</p> <p>Quarter 2</p>	80% of actions on track to deliver on time.	Final revised common core with SG for sign off.	<p>The Directorate for Children and Families in SG have confirmed this work has been delayed and are making final revisions to the draft.</p> <p>We plan to create a resource for the Common Core to support understanding.</p>	Skilled

				Revised timescale for launch of the refreshed Common Core is Summer 2025.	
Adult Social Care Skills Response Plan	Carried forward from 2023/4 Actions and timescales to be agreed by partners.	Starting to progress		Continuing to meet with partners and lead agencies SDS/NES/SQA/SG to review progress actions in relation to funding, system capacity and delivery models, and approaches to learning. Current focus continues to be improving the achievement of qualifications for registrants. Short life working group with partners from NES/SG/SQA have agreed activities to make improvements to SVQ delivery and working through the actions	Skilled Confident Valued
National Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy	Work with SSSC and key partners to promote career opportunities in Social Care and deliver policies on upskilling and developing the workforce to attract new people to Social Care and address retention issues. Quarter 4.	100% of actions on track to deliver on time.	Commissioned by Joint Social Services Taskforce (JSST), to work with NES to develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a career opportunities tool for adult and C&YP social care workforce a national induction framework for adult social care workforce The Career Opportunities tool will be launch on 30 April and the National Induction Framework will be launched on 14 May.	Launch plan has been agreed and communications are being finalised.	Confident Valued
	Carried forward from 2023/4 OSCWA leading work and timeline still to be agreed with SDS Scottish Government will work closely with SSSC and sector	Plan and timeline for the framework has been agreed.	Development of GA and approval of award in progress and due for completion by June 2025.	Timeline for GA development has been agreed with SDS and OCSWA. The timeline for the framework development is in place and set to complete in June 2025.	Confident

	<p>partners to develop a pilot Graduate Apprenticeship scheme, to improve career pathways for Social Care staff into Social Work.</p> <p>Quarter 4 TBC</p>			<p>The timeline for the approval of the pilot programme has yet to be finalised, the proposed date of September 2025 may be reviewed.</p>	
<p>National Dementia Strategy delivery plan</p>	<p>SSSC and partners to establish a short life working group to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further develop our understanding of the dementia workforce and scope the learning needs of the current and future dementia workforce, recognising its diversity in health and social care and beyond, from those working in varied settings such as care homes, hospitals, community hubs and people's own homes to registered professional groups such as Allied Health Professionals, social workers and mental health professionals. • create a 'roadmap' of the existing rich sources of learning and skills programmes and resources that map against the Promoting Excellence Framework to establish the need 	<p>95% of actions on track. Plan to be developed and specific activity identified</p>	<p>Worked with NES colleagues and NES supplier to support engagement with stakeholders to inform development of knowledge product to support achievement of both objectives. Focus groups and interviews carried out by supplier in February.</p>	<p>Agree any additional resource/budget requirements that will need to be requested to SG for agreed activity in 2025/26.</p> <p>Work closely with NES, their supplier, and the SLWG to finalise the commissioned work.</p>	<p>Confident</p>

3. ORGANISATION INFORMATION

3.1 Programme Management Office

Overall Summary: Programmes

Programme	Budget RAG	Risk/ Issues RAG	Stakeholder Buy In RAG	Timescale RAG	Overall RAG	Approval and Monitoring	Key Deliverables	Comment
Digital Programme	Green	Amber	Green	Amber	Green	All digital projects approved and monitored at by Digital Development Sponsor Group and Digital Development Programme Board. Updates with PMO	SSSC Learning Zone redevelopment Phase 2 Project: Total deliverables: 7 Due: 3 Completed:3 Delayed:0 SSSC corporate website Development Project: Total deliverables:7 Due: 4 Completed: 4 Delayed: 0 SSSC MyLearning developments Project: Total deliverables:5 Due: 5 Completed:5 Delayed:0 D365 recontracting project: Total deliverables:3 Due: 1 Completed:1 Delayed:0 AI co-pilot trial project: Total deliverables:8 Due:7 Completed:6 Delayed:1 CYP platform project: Total deliverables:10 (5 each for two sub projects) Due:6	Risks and issues: tracking Green except for the SSSC corporate website project– SSSC corporate website project: The timescales and resource allocation for the project are tight which were highlighted to DPB however work is progressing as planned. AI copilot trial project: Project can't close until milestone for evaluation is complete.

							Completed:6 Delayed:0 CPL project: Total deliverables:6 Due:3 Completed:5 Delayed:0 MatterSphere upgrade project: Total deliverables:4 Due:3 Completed:3 Delayed:0 Fees increase system changes project: Total deliverables:7 Due:6 Completed:6 Delayed:0	
JSST programme (National Induction Framework)	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Projects approved and monitored by JSST Project Board and Sponsor Group.	Total deliverables: 6 Due:4 Completed: 4 Delayed: 0	Risks and issues: No significant strategic risks or issues.
JSST programme (Career Opportunity Tool)	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Projects approved and monitored by JSST Project Board and Sponsor Group.	Total deliverables: 7 Due:6 Completed: 6 Delayed: 0	Risks and issues: No significant strategic risks or issues.
NOS Review programme	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Programme approved and monitored by the NOS Review programme board. Updates with PMO.	Total deliverables: 4 Due: 1 Completed: 1 Delayed: 0	Risks and issues: No significant strategic risks or issues.
SVQ and apprenticeship review	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Programme approved and monitored by the SVQ Review programme board. Updates with PMO.	Total deliverables: 6 Due: 1 Completed: 1 Delayed: 0	Risks and issues: No significant strategic risks or issues.

4 HUMAN RESOURCES PERFORMANCE

4.1 HR: The overall percentage of staff who are absent from work.

Assessment & Analysis

This metric combines all types of absence across the SSSC to give an overall metric. The assessment focuses on areas of concern or risk by looking at sickness absence by directorate/team and identifying any emerging reasons that could cause additional staff absence in the future.

RAG		
<3.6%	3.6% to 4.6%	>4.6%
Target: 3.6%		
Apr-24	3.9%	8.3%
May-24	3.7%	2.8%
Jun-24	6.1%	69.4%
Jul-24	6.1%	69.4%
Aug-24	5.0%	38.9%
Sep-24	4.7%	30.6%
Oct-24	6.4%	77.8%
Nov-24	8.0%	122.2%
Dec-24	7.2%	100.0%
Jan-25	6.6%	83.3%
Feb-25	6.2%	47.2%
Mar-25	4.1%	13.9%

Definitions: Short-term absence is up to a week. Medium-term absence is between 8 and 27 calendar days. Long-term absence is a period of four weeks or more.

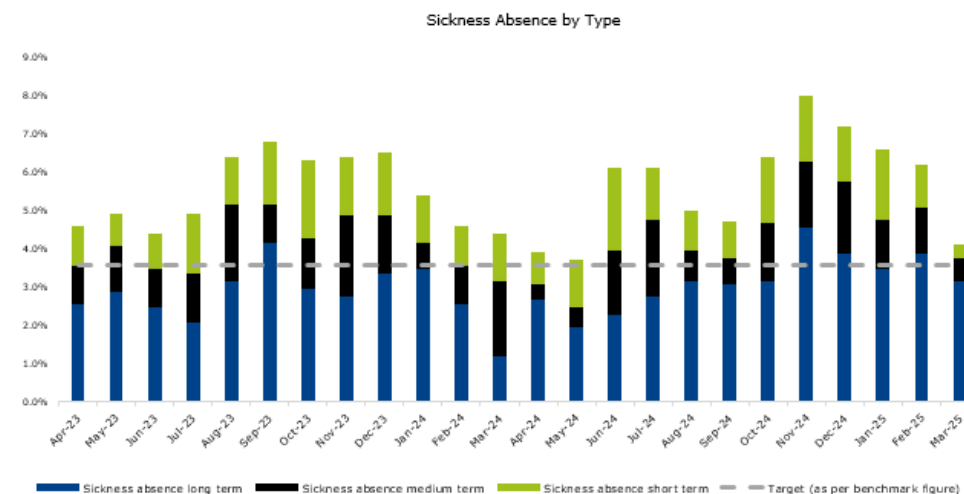
15 employees were off on long term sick in March. These were in five different absence categories and make up 3.2% of the sickness absence rate.

February 2025's position has increased from 5.3% to 6.2%.

In March SSSC lost 254 days to sickness (4.1% of capacity). We break this down in the table below:

Directorate	Department	Days	Sick %
EMT & Support	EMT & Support	0	0.0%
Regulation	FtP	25	1.2%
Regulation	RIH	37	10.3%
Regulation	Registration	91	7.1%
Regulation	LCG	0	0.0%
WE&S	E&S	10	3.4%
WE&S	WP&P	22	6.4%
WE&S	HR	21	21.3%
WE&S	OD	0	0.0%
S&P	Comms & Policy	10	3.4%
S&P	P&I	21	5.6%
S&P	Digital Services	0	0.0%
S&P	Finance	0	0.0%

Although not displayed in the above table, SSSC shared service staff are included in the calculation of overall capacity and SSSC sickness figures.



Management Action

We are working with the Care Inspectorate (CI) to develop better reporting processes for absence management. There is still a lag in reporting due to manual intervention. CI have met with Zellis to develop better reporting functionality.

4.2 HR: The overall staff turnover percentage.

Assessment & Analysis

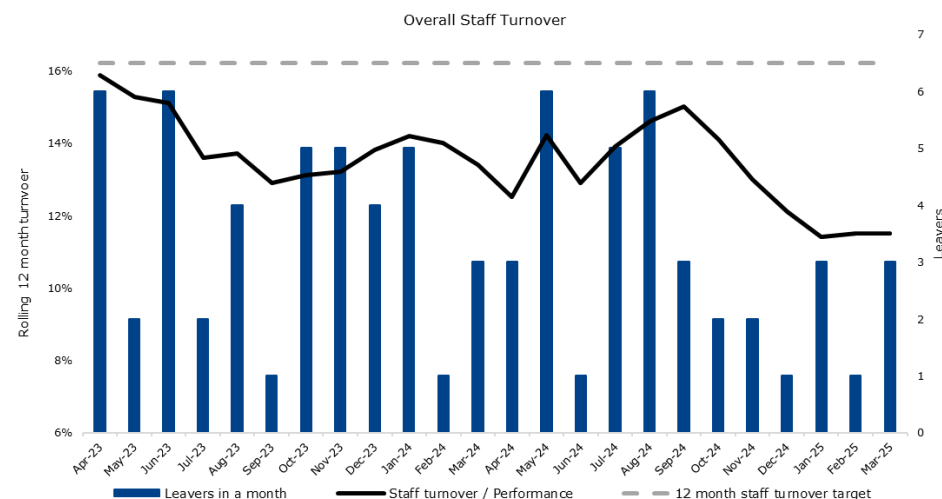
This metric looks at the average staff turnover for the SSSC. The assessment focuses on any areas of concern or risk by looking at staff turnover in certain directorates/team. We will identify any emerging reasons that could cause more staff turnover within an area.

RAG		
<16.2%	16.2% to 17.2%	>17.2%
Target: 16.2%		
Apr-24	12.5%	-22.8%
May-24	14.2%	-12.3%
Jun-24	12.9%	-20.4%
Jul-24	13.9%	-14.2%
Aug-24	13.3%	-17.9%
Sep-24	15.0%	-7.4%
Oct-24	14.1%	-13.0%
Nov-24	13.0%	-19.8%
Dec-24	12.1%	-25.3%
Jan-25	11.4%	-29.6%
Feb-25	11.5%	-29.0%
Mar-25	11.5%	-29.0%

In March we had three leavers, one in Fitness to Practise, one in Regulatory Improvement and Hearings and one in Workforce Policy and Planning. The overall rolling turnover was approximately 11.5%.

Although not displayed in the next table, all SSSC shared service staff are included in the overall calculation of the SSSC turnover figure.

Directorate	Department	Leavers	Current Headcount	12-month turnover %
EMT & Support	EMT & Support	0	8	0.0%
Regulation	FtP	1	99	10.1%
Regulation	RIH	1	18	16.0%
Regulation	Registration	0	67	5.6%
Regulation	LCG	0	9	12.6%
WE&S	E&S	0	29	13.8%
WE&S	WP&P	1	16	6.0%
S&P	Comms & Policy	0	15	0.0%
S&P	P&I	0	18	6.3%
S&P	Digital Services	0	14	14.6%
WE&S	HR	0	5	0.0%
S&P	Finance	0	5	41.4%
WE&S	OD	0	3	0.0%



Management Action

We continue to encourage the take up of exit interviews and monitor any trends arising from these so we can build in interventions as required.

For the table dictating the threat level is determined by OMT assessment based on current empty post and seconded position.

Table. HR information - turnover, empty post and seconded out threat level assessment.

Directorate	Department	Turnover	Empty Posts	Seconded out (headcount)	Current Headcount	Current FTE	Threat
EMT and Support	EMT and Support	0.0%	0	1	8	7.4	Green
Regulation	Total	8.1%	12	17	194	182.1	Amber
	Fitness to Practise	10.1%	8	8	99	94.2	Amber
	Registration	5.6%	3	7	67	60.8	Amber
	Regulatory Improvement and Hearings	10.7%	4	2	19	17.3	Amber
	Legal and Corporate Governance	12.6%	0	0	9	8.8	Green
Strategy and Performance	Total	10.3%	3	3	52	47.8	Green
	Digital Services	14.6%	2	1	14	14.0	Green
	Finance	41.4%	0	0	5	5.0	Green
	Performance and Improvement	6.3%	1	2	18	17.8	Green
	Communications and Policy	0.0%	0	0	15	14.0	Green
Workforce, Education and Standards	Total	9.4%	0	2	53	50.2	Green
	Education and Standards	13.8%	0	2	29	26.1	Green
	Workforce Policy and Planning	6.0%	0	0	16	15.6	Green
	Human Resources	0.0%	0	0	5	4.7	Green
	Organisational Development	0.0%	0	0	3	2.7	Green
Total		8.5%	17	23	307	287.5	Green

Table. HR information for Shared Services- turnover, empty post and seconded out threat level assessment

Directorate	Department	Turnover	Empty Posts	Seconded out (headcount)	Current Headcount	*Current FTE	Threat
Shared Services	Total		1	1	15	15.0	Green
	Estates, Health and Safety		0	0	3	3.0	Green
	Finance transactions		0	1	6	6.0	Green
	Payroll		0	0	4	4.0	Green
	Procurement		0	0	2	2.0	Green

*Total Current FTE include CI employed staff

5. KEY OPERATIONAL INDICATORS

5.1 Regulation: Registrant workforce numbers

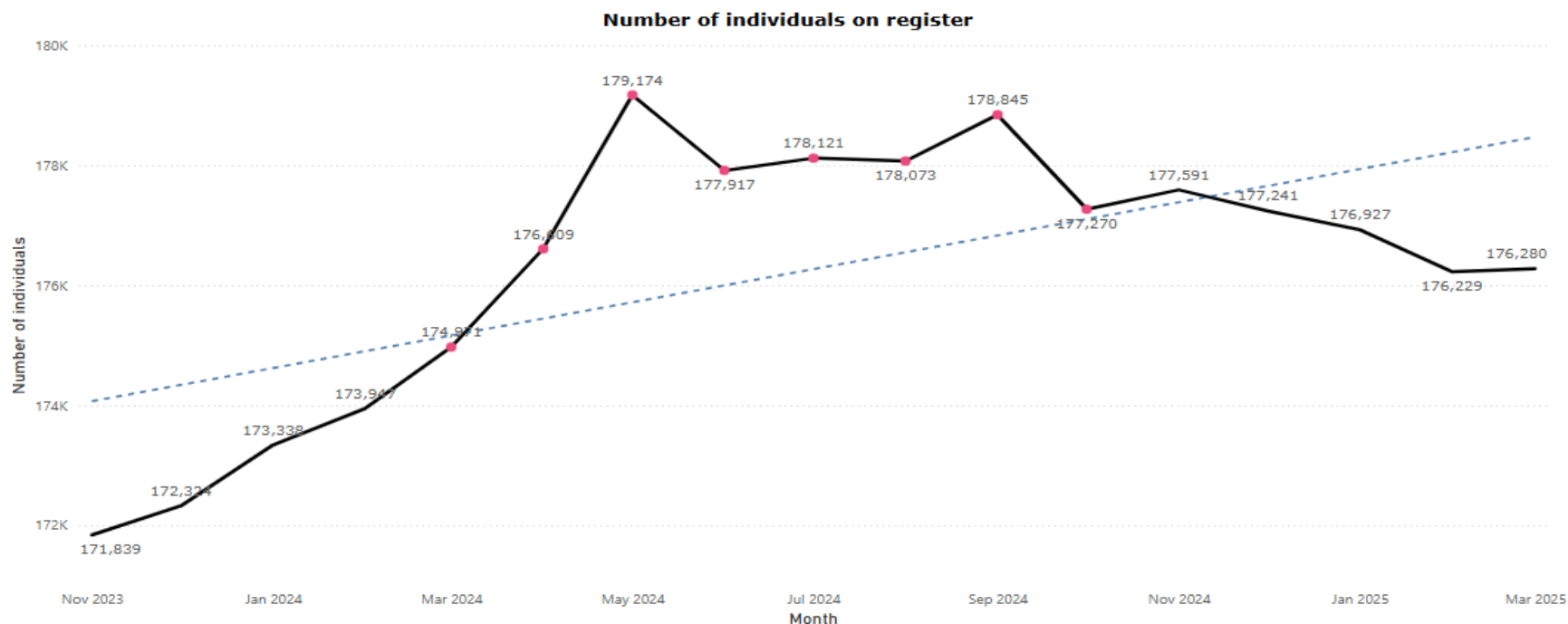
Key Operational Indicators (KOIs) are measures the SSSC aims to influence by its work but may have limited control over.

We will analyse the overall number of individuals registered with the SSSC and the trends associated with this. Although not fully reflective of the overall workforce this will give us some indication of trends that might be happening in the wider workforce.

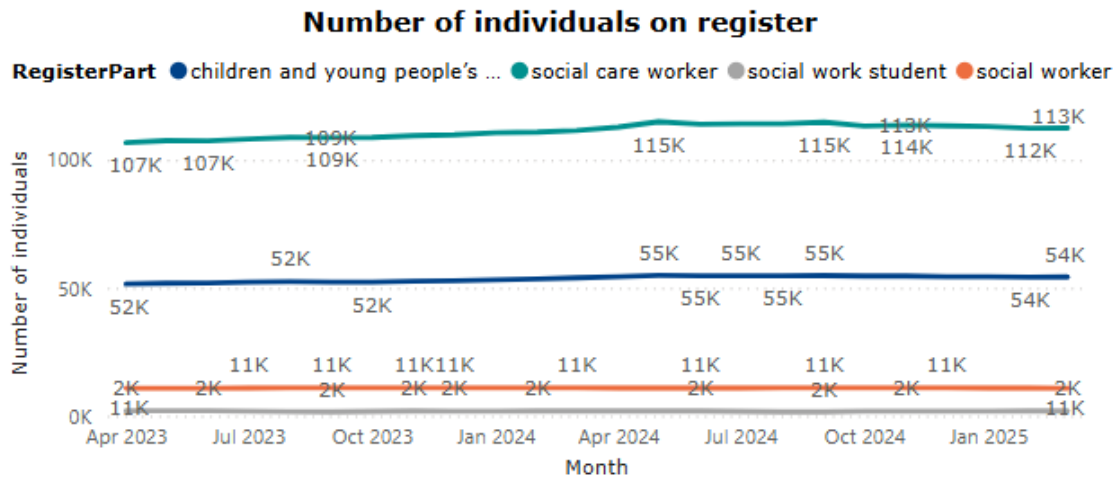
The data is taken from the first day of the month which makes it easier to compare and visualise.

After decreasing for three months in a row, the register has increased by 51 at the start of March 2025. We will monitor to see if this is a new trend, if the register is now stabilising or if the register will still decrease, after the effects of FPP. In May 2021 there were approximately 162,394 people on the register, that figure currently stands at over 176,000.

The steep increase and reduction is a result of pausing then restarting our registration processes during the Future Proofing Programme. As a result, the number of registered workforce during this time is not entirely accurate. The period affected between March 2024 to October 2024 is highlighted in the graph with different coloured markers.



We also looked at the number of individuals by register part groupings to show the movement for each grouping.



Register Part Grouping	Number of individuals on register	Vs 2024
Children and Young People's Worker	54,334	+392
Day Care of Children Services	45,234	-234
Residential Child Care Services	8,731	+309
Residential School Care Accommodation Service	434	+11
Care Inspector	308	+22
Social Care Worker	112,531	+948
Adult Day Care Services	349	+3
Care at Home Services	68,165	+459
Care Home Service for Adults	45,046	+734
Housing Support Services	56,740	+181
Care Inspector	319	+23
Social Worker	10,844	-55
Social Work Student	1,893	-60

5.2 Strategy and Performance: The percentage of the workforce feeling valued for the work they do.

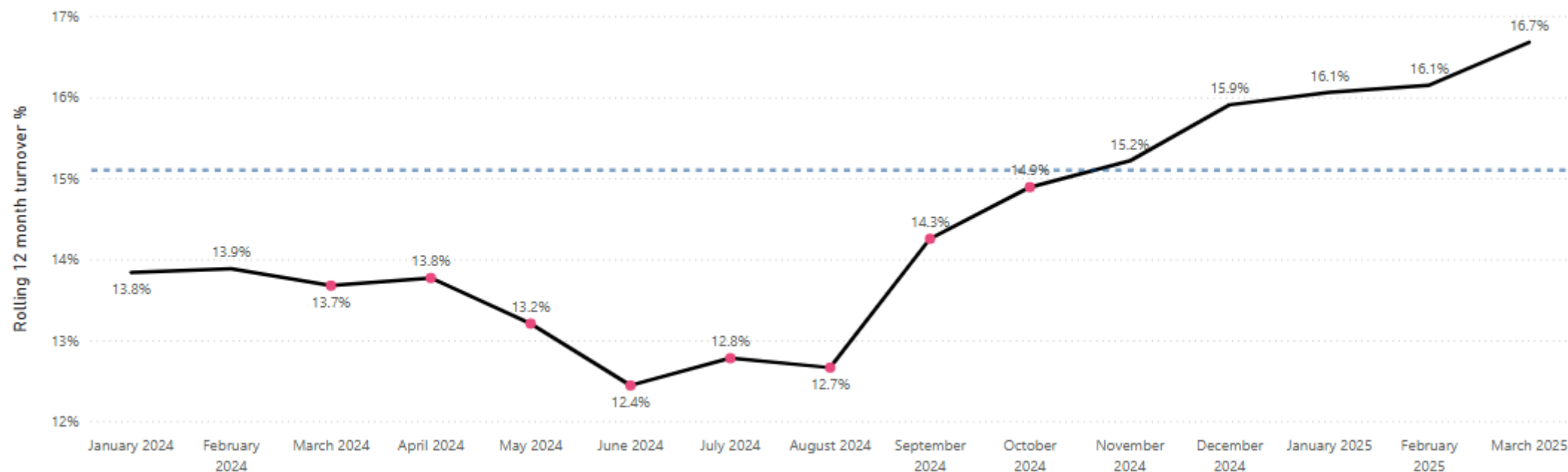
We will collate this information from several internal and external data sources. We also propose to have turnover of registrant workers as part of the analysis on this KOI. This will be done under the assumption that a workforce feeling valued for the work they do will remain within the sector.

This measure considers turnover of staff in the sector. The below is the turnover for the last two financial years plus year to date for 2024. This measure only includes individuals who have left the register and currently haven't returned:

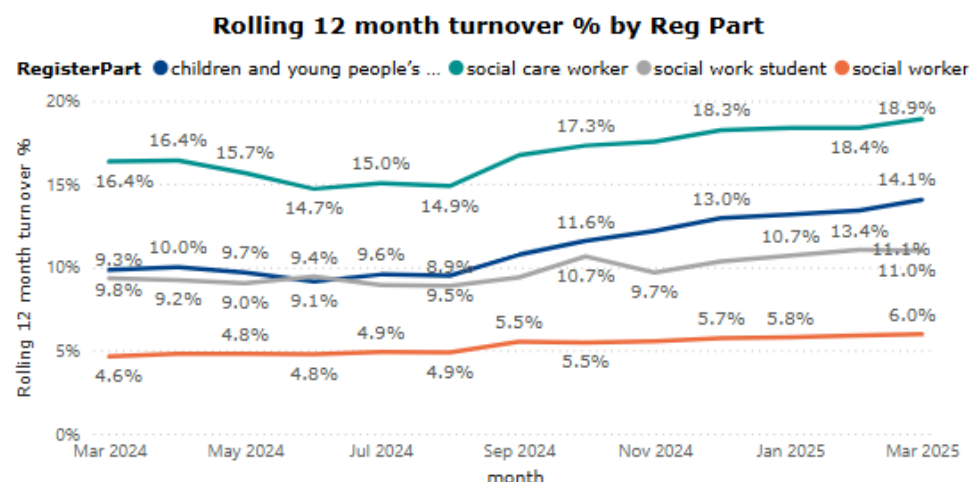
- 2022/2023 – 15.4% - turnover in all sectors was 16.4% in 2022
- 2023/2024 – 13.7% - turnover in all sectors was 15.1% in 2023
- 2024/2025 – 16.7% - turnover in all sectors is not yet available.

Turnover has been affected by changes implemented for the future proofing programme. Due to pausing and restarting our registration processes we will see turnover reduce then increase for a period. The period directly affected, between March 2024 to October 2024, is highlighted in the graph with different coloured markers.

Rolling 12 month turnover % by month

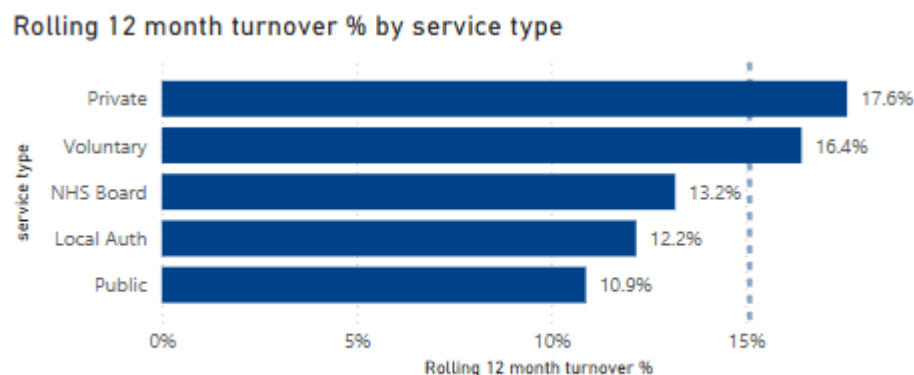


We also looked at turnover by register part groupings to show the movement for each grouping. We can see that the highest turnover of staff leaving the sector and not returning is within the social care workforce. This movement does not consider when an individual moves from one register part to another but leaving the register.



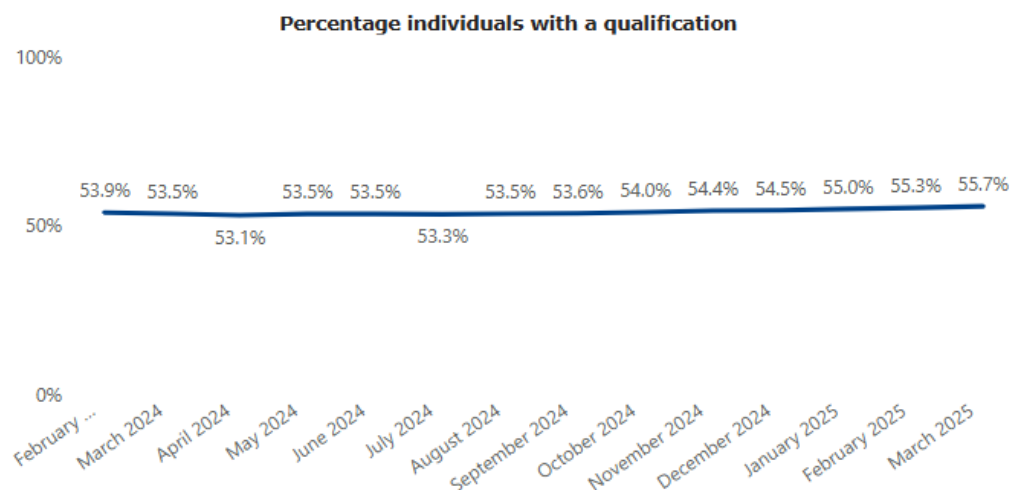
Register Part Grouping	Rolling 12-month turnover %	Vs 2024
Children and Young People's Worker	14.1%	+9.8%
Day Care of Children Services	14.1%	+4.8%
Residential Child Care Services	13.9%	+1.3%
Residential School Care Accommodation Service	21.6%	+5.0%
Care Inspector	0.0%	+0.0%
Social Care Worker	18.9%	+3.5%
Adult Day Care Services	14.6%	+4.5%
Care at Home Services	18.7%	+3.7%
Care Home Service for Adults	19.4%	+1.4%
Housing Support Services	17.8%	+3.6%
Care Inspector	1.6%	-5.6%
Social Worker	6.0%	+1.4%
Social Work Student	11.0%	+1.7%

We can see that the highest turnover of staff leaving the sector and not returning is within private service types. This movement does not consider when an individual moves from one employer to another but leaving the register.



5.3 Workforce Education and Standards: The percentage of the registered workforce with the correct qualification.

Overall, the numbers of individuals with the correct qualification in March was 55.8%. We also looked at register part groupings to see which groupings had the largest numbers of individuals qualified. Below is a graph showing overall qualification percentage for individuals as well as two tables showing this for job groupings and registration part groups.



Job Grouping	Percentage Qualified	Vs 2024
Managers	56.5%	+1.2%
Practitioners	73.6%	-1.3%
Supervisors	48.0%	+1.1%
Support Workers	44.7%	+3.5%
Primary Authorised Officer	64.5%	+8.1%
Secondary Authorised Officer	83.1%	+23.9%

Register Part Grouping	Percentage Qualified (+/- from target)	Vs 2024
Children and Young People's Worker	69.8% (-4.2%)	+0.9%
Day Care of Children Services	74.6%	+1.5%
Residential Child Care Services	46.7%	-1.3%
Residential School Care Accommodation Service	46.4%	+1.0%
Care Inspector	62.5%	+12.2%
Social Care Worker	44.5% (-8.5%)	+3.0%
Adult Day Care Services	64.9%	-1.1%
Care at Home Services	45.7%	+4.6%
Care Home Service for Adults	40.7%	+0
Housing Support Services	49.5%	+4.9%
Care Inspector	62.9%	+13.2%

Analysis of the “maximum” amount of people you would expect to be registered with/without a condition has been completed. There could be alternative ways to estimate this but on three occasions in three separate ways this has come to an overall position of 60% to 70%. We estimate that for Children and Young people this should be 74% and Social Care Worker approximately 53%.

6. Strategic Risk

MARCH 2025 SSSC STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER							
Risk number	Strategic Risk Description	Outcome	Gross	Residual	V(+/-)	Owner	Actions & Comments
1.	We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.	1, 2	20	12	➡	DoR	
2.	We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the right standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.	2, 3, 4	16	12	➡	DoWES	
3.	We fail to meet corporate governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.	1, 2,3,4	16	9	➡	DoFR	
4.	We fail to provide value to our stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.	1,2,3,4	12	9	➡	DoSP	
5.	We fail to develop and support SSSC staff appropriately to ensure we have a motivated and skilled workforce.	1, 2, 3,4	20	4	➡	DoFR	
6.	The SSSC fail to secure sufficient budget required to deliver the strategic plan.	1,2,3,4	20	12	➡	DoFR	
7.	We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks.	1, 2, 3, 4	20	12	➡	DoSP	

New, Emerging, and Changed Strategic/Directorate Risks identified.

Changes to Sponsorship at SG due the progression of the NSWA will impact the SSSC. The impact is yet unknown and discussions are ongoing with OCSWO.

There is an emerging risk around the decrease in registrants since January 2025, this could impact of service delivery in the sector and the SSSC. This has been highlighted to SG and work is underway to understand this.

By exception.

Head of OD will flag to Directors/EMT that Managing Safely is below the 80% (currently 79%) performance however we believe this is because of the timings of the in-person sessions ran by H&S team in shared services.

Director of Strategy and Business Services will address the Shared Services completion rates currently 76% across all mandatory courses.


CONTROL CHARTS

This section gives a brief description of some of the terms used within the control charts.

Central line – this is the average performance and indicates the trend in performance. The line is also used to calculate the lower and upper natural processes. If the line is flat then performance is steady, if the central line moves up or down this indicates that the trend in performance has changed over several months and the central line has had to be recalculated.



Natural process limit – This is the region between the lower natural process limit and the upper natural process limit. How performance sits within this limit will determine if we need to calculate the central line. If a performance point sits outside of this natural process limit, then it would be considered an outlier. The upper and lower natural limits are calculated based on the average of the moving range, the moving range being the difference between two performance points.

ID	Risk heading	Risk appetite	Risk description	Owner	Gross risk			Mitigation/controls	Residual risk			Movement since last review	Residual exceeds appetite? Y/N	If Y, how long has it exceeded?
					Impact	Probability	Score		Impact	Probability	Score			
1	Regulatory or compliance	Averse (risk score 25)	<p>We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Cause:</p> <p>We take too long to make a decision, make an indefensible decision, or are unable to make a decision due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient staff as a result of external factors we cannot control, resourcing issues in the sector affecting service provision, difficulty recruiting or errors in our resource model assumptions Ineffective quality assurance, decision-making frameworks or systems, reciprocal arrangements with third parties Legislation or third-party policies preventing us from obtaining necessary information. <p>We do not share/receive information and intelligence with/from other organisations.</p> <p>Our processes and approach are bureaucratic, and our legislative framework is a structural barrier to flexible working across care.</p> <p>The arrangements for Fitness to Practise Panel Hearings are not compliant with evolving law.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <p>A worker's fitness to practise is not assessed as they do not comply with registration requirements, or our registration process is too slow, or a worker is on the register who is not fit to practise and as a consequence a service user is harmed.</p>	Director of Regulation	5	4	20 (High)	<p>Existing Mitigation and Controls</p> <p>Rules and frameworks based on risk in place to ensure legal compliance, fairness and consistency.</p> <p>Digital systems to manage our processes and casework, and hold hearings, with ongoing development of those systems.</p> <p>Resource modelling for calculating our staff base.</p> <p>Training and quality assurance and audit process in place for staff and panel decision making.</p> <p>Publicising hearing outcomes and decisions.</p> <p>Over recruitment of key posts and external legal presenter services to undertake conduct of panel hearings to provide additional capacity.</p> <p>Liaison work with sector to ensure understanding of our frameworks and processes and to receive feedback to help us improve.</p> <p>Relationships and where necessary data-sharing agreements with other agencies to share intelligence for public protection.</p> <p>Planned Mitigation and Controls</p>	4	3	12 (Moderate)	↔	N	

ID	Risk heading	Risk appetite	Risk description	Owner	Gross risk			Mitigation/controls	Residual risk			Movement since last review	Residual exceeds appetite? Y/N	If Y, how long has it exceeded?
			<p>Care cannot be delivered in a person-centred way because of barriers caused by registration and fitness to practise approach and processes, which leads to poorer outcomes for people using services.</p> <p>Workers leave the sector unnecessarily because of our processes and decisions, which compromises the ability for care to be delivered to people using services.</p> <p>Our processes have a detrimental impact on workers and others involved in regulation processes, and it affects their health and personal circumstances.</p> <p>The public lose confidence in the profession and us as regulator.</p> <p>The workforce does not have sufficient capacity to provide care and support to people who use services because they are focussed on responding to regulatory requirements.</p>					<p>Implement and embed fitness to practise help and support lines for witnesses and members of the public making a referral – June 2025 – Director of Regulation</p> <p>Work with Police Scotland, Scottish Government, Disclosure Scotland and GTCS mapping information sharing processes – (April 2026 Director of Regulation)</p>						
2	Regulatory or compliance	Averse (25)	<p>We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the right standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Cause:</p> <p>Failure to ensure the sector understand the changing qualification, CPL and Return to Practice (RTP) requirements.</p> <p>Failure to engage and communicate the changes to the code of practice with the sector</p> <p>Our contribution to developing resources does not meet the needs of registrants and employers.</p> <p>Our standards (i.e National Occupational Standards, CPL, Standards in Social Work Education, Codes of Practice, Qualification requirements) don't meet the needs of employers and/or the workforce to deliver high quality care and support.</p> <p>Failure to share supply and demand data and intelligence with key partners to ensure adequate levels of training and funding</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <p>Workers are not appropriately qualified and skilled and are removed from the register, leading to gaps in service delivery which</p>	Director of Workforce, Education and Standards	4	4	16 (High)	<p>Existing mitigation and controls</p> <p>It is to be noted not all these actions are at the sole discretion of the SSSC to implement.</p> <p>The SSSC produces a quarterly workforce intelligence report on qualification conditions.</p> <p>Publish data on training provision across Scotland to meet identified demand.</p> <p>Working with Scottish Care and Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland on the promotion and allocation of funding to employers.</p> <p>We are supporting a Joint Social Services Taskforce workstream aiming to produce information for employers and workers about funding for training and qualifications. This will be live</p>	4	3	12 (Moderate)		N	

ID	Risk heading	Risk appetite	Risk description	Owner	Gross risk			Mitigation/controls	Residual risk			Movement since last review	Residual exceeds appetite? Y/N	If Y, how long has it exceeded?
			<p>affects the delivery of care to people using services.</p> <p>Reduced confidence of public protection.</p> <p>Existing qualifications and standards do not support new models of care.</p> <p>Workers are unable to adhere to the SSSC Codes of Practice.</p> <p>Risk to our reputation with external partners when we cannot provide the information or data requested</p> <p>Workers do not understand the new CPL and RTP requirements and fail to maintain their registration.</p> <p>Workers do not adhere to the new codes because they do not know about them or understand them</p>					<p>on our careers website by the end of the year.</p> <p>Published career pathways resources to promote a career in social care which link to qualifications funding and registration.</p> <p>We are developing a career opportunities tool with NES to support career development in social care.</p> <p>We are working with NES to revise the National Induction Framework for adult social care and develop a portable induction.</p> <p>We are supporting the development of a new Graduate Apprenticeship Route into Social Work.</p> <p>We have developed a new integrated health and social care SVQ qualification.</p> <p>We have developed an improvement plan based on the registrant and learning resources surveys and our data insights research to inform how we target and promote our resources to different registrant groups.</p> <p>The new model of CPL, flexibility of qualifications we accept for registration and return to practice standards for social workers have been implemented.</p> <p>SSSC data triage and delivery group established between WES and P&I to prioritise and respond to data requests</p> <p>Planned actions</p> <p>Working in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, SG,NES and other partners to develop a Skills Response Plan for Adult Social Care 9 Ongoing Head of Qualifications and Standards).</p>						

ID	Risk heading	Risk appetite	Risk description	Owner	Gross risk			Mitigation/controls	Residual risk			Movement since last review	Residual exceeds appetite? Y/N	If Y, how long has it exceeded?
								Working with Sector Skills partners on the NOS review, to be completed by end of 2025 (Director of Workforce Education and Standards). Have your say wellbeing report will be published 23 April 2024 (Director of Workforce, Education and Standards) Publish leavers survey and data live 2024 Director of Workforce, Education and Standards) .						
3	Regulatory or compliance	Averse (25)	We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations. Cause: Corporate governance arrangements are not effectively discharged at the right level. Insufficient project management. Unclear policies and procedures. Ineffective working relationships between Council Members and Officers. Poor assurance mapping. Systems that support good corporate and financial governance not being fit for our needs Consequence: Loss of credibility. Conflicts of interest. Fraud. Data breach/loss. Information and records management does not comply with legislative requirements. Reduced quality of challenge and oversight. Reduced public confidence. Qualified audit. Failure to deliver strategic objectives. Systems that create risks of meeting good financial governance – Oracle Fusion	Director of Strategy and Business Services	4	4	16 (High)	Existing mitigation and controls Effectiveness review of Council performance carried out annually. Audit and Assurance Committee review own effectiveness annually. Assurance mapping part of regular reporting to Audit and Assurance Committee. Legislative compliance framework in place. Strategic 3 – year internal audit plan agreed. Contract in place with internal auditors to 31 March 2028. Planned actions Annual report and accounts process underway September 2026 DS&BS) Investigation into a fit for purpose finance system (June 2026 DS&BS)	3	3	9 (Moderate)	↔	N	

ID	Risk heading	Risk appetite	Risk description	Owner	Gross risk			Mitigation/controls	Residual risk			Movement since last review	Residual exceeds appetite? Y/N	If Y, how long has it exceeded?
4	Communication and profile: Proportionate regulation	Cautious (12-15)	<p>We fail to provide value to our stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p> <p>Cause:</p> <p>People don't understand how we make decisions. Insufficient management of key relationships. Stakeholders do not have the capacity/resources to engage.</p> <p>Limited resource to communicate the role of SSSC and our key programmes Unable to respond timeously to requests for internal data due to lack of resource.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <p>Reduced public confidence. Lack of stakeholder involvement/engagement in design and delivery of strategic outcomes. Unable to implement the Scottish Approach to Service Design Stakeholder voice is not heard. Poor perception of registration. Under-utilisation of SSSC resources. Risk to reputation with our external partners who rely on SSSC data. The value of registration is diminished. Conflict of interest with SG when consulting on fees. Insufficient communication and engagement of the Future Proofing Programme with low awareness of the changes affecting registrants and employers.</p>	Director of Workforce, Education and Standards	3	4	12 (Moderate)	<p>Existing mitigation and controls</p> <p>Regular review of business plan objectives in line with budget monitoring (Operational Management Team)</p> <p>Regular surveying of Registrants and Stakeholders to determine the perception of the work of the SSSC</p> <p>Process in place to monitor activity on outcomes and inform future year budgets.</p> <p>New strategic plan based on research and intelligence gathered, which reflects the views of our stakeholders (Director of Strategy & Business Services)</p> <p>National Advisory Forum established.</p> <p>Data and intelligence delivery plan in place which demonstrates how we influence national policy and decision making.</p> <p>Planned actions</p>	3	3	9 (Moderate)		N	
5	People and culture: Organisational development	Averse (25)	<p>We fail to develop and support SSSC staff appropriately to ensure we have a motivated and skilled workforce</p> <p>Cause:</p> <p>Lack of a strategic workforce plan and ineffective workforce planning at directorate and team level. Lack of effective monitoring of workload and capacity.</p>	Director of Strategy and Business Services	5	4	20 (High)	<p>Existing mitigation and controls</p> <p>People Strategy in place and OMT are accountable for delivery of particular themes. People Strategy Board reviews progress and reports to Council.</p>	2	2	4		N	

ID	Risk heading	Risk appetite	Risk description	Owner	Gross risk			Mitigation/controls	Residual risk			Movement since last review	Residual exceeds appetite? Y/N	If Y, how long has it exceeded?
			<p>Managers are unaware of their duties in relation to supporting staff. Large number of fixed term contracts supporting delivery. Single points of failure in several areas. Unsuccessful recruitment</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <p>Increased turnover of staff - staff leave the organisation due to uncertainty Unable to deliver our statutory functions Unable to deliver strategic plan ET claim. Reputational damage. Unable to effectively maintain business as usual and deliver strategic outcomes if fixed term contracts are ended.</p>					<p>Development discussions take place with every employee at least twice a year.</p> <p>Regular open and honest communications with staff on people matters inviting questions and feedback e.g. Chief Executive webinars, EMT broadcasts, weekly bulletins, breaking news on intranet, meetings with the partnership forum, HR drop-in sessions, staff surveys, focus groups on particular issues, annual staff event.</p> <p>Internal Audit completed- no recommendations.</p> <p>IIP Gold status and regular reviews to maintain this.</p> <p>Planned actions</p> <p>Recruitment and retention internal audit underway (June 2026 DS&BS)</p>						
6	Finance and value for money: Financial management	Cautious (12-15)	<p>The SSSC fail to secure sufficient budget resources required to deliver the strategic plan.</p> <p>Cause:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Government do not increase permanent funding, and we continue to run with a deficit budget Single year funding settlements to support a three-year strategic plan. Fee income is not in line with projections. Late notification of Scottish Government budget allocations. Removal of ability to hold reserves. Ineffective financial planning, not aligned to strategic and business plans. Any agreed increase in fees is offset by a reduction in grant in aid. 	CEO	4	5	20 (High)	<p>Existing mitigation and controls</p> <p>Financial Strategy that considers current position plus the next three years is in place and reviewed annually (last formal review in March 2023) and audit of financial sustainability</p> <p>Audit and Assurance Committee consider an assurance report that integrates the financial position, organisational performance and risks at each of its meetings.</p> <p>Budget performance reviewed at directorate and Executive Management Team level monthly, risks to achieving a balanced budget are identified</p>	4	3	12 (moderate)	↔	N	

ID	Risk heading	Risk appetite	Risk description	Owner	Gross risk			Mitigation/controls	Residual risk			Movement since last review	Residual exceeds appetite? Y/N	If Y, how long has it exceeded?
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No compulsory redundancy policy affects ability to realise savings from staffing efficiencies Scottish Government struggle to fund spend-to-save initiatives <p>Consequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are unable to fund the organisation to deliver our statutory public protection functions We have a reliance on temporary funded post to delivery core statutory functions We cannot implement improved process due to lack of investment 					<p>and action taken by senior managers to mitigate.</p> <p>Strategic Plan 2023-26 and Financial Strategy 2023-26 agreed by Council.</p> <p>Resource models reviewed and updated and regularly compared to the actual position (Director of Regulation(</p> <p>Close communication with Scottish Government about budget and fee levels.</p> <p>Budget agreed for 2025/26</p> <p>Planned actions</p> <p>Budget planning for 26/27 will get underway in June (DS&BS October 2026)</p>						
7	Operational and policy delivery: Business continuity and adaptation of service	Cautious (12-15)	<p>We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks</p> <p>Cause:</p> <p>Insufficient funds allocated to manage core IT infrastructure. Insufficient development investment to upgrade security and systems. Lack of staff, skills and knowledge. Insufficient horizon scanning of future threats. Lack of understanding and awareness by staff. Successful cyber-attack.</p> <p>Consequence:</p> <p>Complete loss of use of core business systems. Loss of data and sensitive information. Major data breach. Financial fraud.</p>	Director of Strategy and Business Services	4	5	20 (Very High)	<p>Cyber essentials accreditation.</p> <p>Regular mandatory cyber security training.</p> <p>Digital security policies in place.</p> <p>Positive internal audit Relevant insurances in place.</p> <p>Regular cyber security incident management testing plan in place.</p> <p>Regular pen testing carried out twice yearly.</p> <p>Regular cycle of phishing exercises carried out for all staff and reported to Council yearly.</p>	3	4	12 (Moderate)	↔	N	

ID	Risk heading	Risk appetite	Risk description	Owner	Gross risk			Mitigation/controls	Residual risk			Movement since last review	Residual exceeds appetite? Y/N	If Y, how long has it exceeded?
			Action by external stakeholders – ICO, SPSO, Audit Scotland. Financial penalties.					Planned actions Planned Digital Development Programme for 2025/26.(June 2026)						

RISK SCORING MATRIX

Table 1 Impact scores

	Consequence score (severity levels) and examples of descriptors				
	1	2	3	4	5
Domains	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Impact on the safety of, staff or public (physical/psychological harm)	Minimal injury requiring no/minimal intervention or treatment. No time off work	Minor injury or illness, requiring minor intervention Requiring time off work for >3 days	Moderate injury requiring professional intervention Requiring time off work for 4-14 days RIDDOR/agency reportable incident An event which impacts on a small number of stakeholders	Major injury leading to long-term incapacity/disability Requiring time off work for >14 days Mismanagement of cases with long-term effects and impacts of service users	Incident leading to death Multiple permanent injuries or irreversible health effects An event which impacts on a large number of stakeholders
Quality/complaints/audit	Peripheral element of treatment or service suboptimal Informal complaint/inquiry	Overall service suboptimal Formal complaint (stage 1) Local resolution Single failure to meet internal standards Minor implications if unresolved Reduced performance rating if unresolved	Service has significantly reduced effectiveness Formal complaint (stage 2) complaint Local resolution (with potential to go to independent review) Repeated failure to meet internal standards Major implications if findings are not acted on	Non-compliance with national standards with significant risk if unresolved Multiple complaints/independent review Low performance rating Critical report	Totally unacceptable level or quality of service Gross failure of findings not acted on Inquest/ombudsman inquiry Gross failure to meet national standards
Human resources/organisational development/staffing/competence	Short-term low staffing level that temporarily reduces service quality (< 1 day)	Low staffing level that reduces the service quality	Late delivery of key objective/service due to lack of staff Unacceptable staffing level or competence (>1 day) Low staff morale Poor staff attendance for mandatory/key training	Uncertain delivery of key objective/service due to lack of staff Unsafe staffing level or competence (>5 days) Loss of key staff Very low staff morale No staff attending mandatory/key training	Non-delivery of key objective/service due to lack of staff Ongoing unsafe staffing levels or competence Loss of several key staff No staff attending mandatory training /key training on an ongoing basis
Statutory duty/Governance/inspections	No or minimal impact or breach of guidance/statutory duty	Breach of statutory legislation Reduced performance rating if unresolved	Single breach in statutory duty Challenging external recommendations/ improvement notice	Enforcement action Multiple breaches in statutory duty Improvement notices Low performance rating Qualified audit	Multiple breaches in statutory duty Prosecution Complete systems change required Zero performance rating Severely critical report
Adverse publicity/reputation	Rumours Potential for public concern	Local media coverage – short-term reduction in public confidence Elements of public expectation not being met	Local media coverage – long-term reduction in public confidence	National media coverage with <3 days service well below reasonable public expectation	National media coverage with >3 days service well below reasonable public expectation. MP concerned (questions in the House) Total loss of public confidence
Business objectives/projects	Insignificant cost increase/schedule slippage	<5 per cent over project budget Schedule slippage	5–10 per cent over project budget Schedule slippage	Non-compliance with national 10–25 per cent over project budget Schedule slippage Key objectives not met	Incident leading >25 per cent over project budget Schedule slippage Key objectives not met
Finance including losses and claims	Loss or compensation of under £1,000	Loss of up to £25k of budget Loss or compensation less than £10,000	Loss of £25k+ to £100k of budget Loss or compensation between £10,000 and £50,000	Uncertain delivery of key objective/Loss of £100k+ to £500k of budget Loss or compensation between £50,000 and £1150,000 Purchasers failing to pay on time	Non-delivery of key objective/Loss of >£500k of budget Failure to meet specification/slippage Loss of contract / payment by results Loss or compensation >£150,000
Service/business interruption Environmental impact	Loss/interruption of >1 hour Minimal or no impact on the environment	Loss/interruption of >8 hours Minor impact on environment	Loss/interruption of >1 day Moderate impact on environment	Loss/interruption of >1 week Major impact on environment	Permanent loss of service or facility Catastrophic impact on environment
Breaches of confidentiality involving person identifiable data (PID), including data loss	No significant reflection on any individuals or body. Media interest very unlikely	Damage to an individual's reputation. Possible media interest, e.g. celebrity involved	Damage to a team's reputation. Some local media interest that may not go public	Damage to a service reputation/ low key local media coverage Damage to an organisation's reputation/ local media coverage	Damage to SSSC reputation/ National media coverage. Serious breach with potential for ID theft or over 1000 people affected
	Minor breach of confidentiality. Only a single individual affected	Potentially serious breach. Less than 5 people affected or risk assessed as low, e.g. files were encrypted.	Serious potential breach & risk assessed high, e.g. unencrypted file lost. Up to 20 people affected.	Serious breach of confidentiality, e.g. up to 100 people affected	

Table 2 Probability score (L)

What is the likelihood of the consequence occurring?

The frequency-based score is appropriate in most circumstances and is easier to identify. It should be used whenever it is possible to identify a frequency of occurrence.

Likelihood score	1	2	3	4	5
Descriptor	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain
Frequency How often might it/does it happen	This will probably never happen/recur	Do not expect it to happen/recur but it is possible it may do so	Might happen or recur occasionally	Will probably happen/recur but it is not a persisting issue	Will undoubtedly happen/recur, possibly frequently

Table 3 Risk rating = consequence x likelihood (C x L)

Consequence scores (C)	Likelihood scores (L)				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain
5 Catastrophic	5	10	15	20	25
4 Major	4	8	12	16	20
3 Moderate	3	6	9	12	15
2 Minor	2	4	6	8	10
1 Negligible	1	2	3	4	5

For grading risk, the scores obtained from the risk matrix are assigned grades as follows:

1 - 5	VERY LOW risk
6 - 10	LOW risk
12 - 15	MODERATE risk
16 - 20	HIGH risk
25	VERY HIGH risk

Risk appetites, as agreed by Council, can be aligned to the above matrix as follows:

Risk grade	Risk appetite
VERY LOW risk	HUNGRY
LOW risk	OPEN
MODERATE risk	CAUTIOUS
HIGH risk	MINIMALIST
VERY HIGH risk	AVERSE

For example, a risk heading which has been assigned a risk appetite of 'minimalist' should not exceed an overall risk grade of high.

Instructions for use

1. Define the risk(s) explicitly in terms of the adverse consequence(s) that might arise from the risk.
2. Use table 1 to determine the consequence score(s) (C) for the potential adverse outcome(s) relevant to the risk being evaluated.
3. Use table 2 to determine the likelihood score(s) (L) for those adverse outcomes. If possible, score the likelihood by assigning a predicted frequency of occurrence of the adverse outcome. If this is not possible, assign a probability to the adverse outcome occurring within a given time frame, such as the lifetime of a project. If it is not possible to determine a numerical probability then use the probability descriptions to determine the most appropriate score.
3. Calculate the risk rating by multiplying the consequence score by the likelihood score:
 $C \text{ (consequence)} \times L \text{ (likelihood)} = R \text{ (risk score)}$
4. Identify the level at which the risk will be managed in the organisation, assign priorities for remedial action, and determine whether risks are to be accepted on the basis of the colour bandings and risk ratings, and the organisation's risk management system. Include the risk in the organisation risk register at the appropriate level.

Scoring system in the trend column of the summary tables

In the trend section up to 6 months is judged as 'improving' greater than six months is 'gradually improving' and 'steady' is self explanatory.

SSSC

Assurance Map 2024-2025

STEP 1– Identify Sources of Assurance															
Issue	Issue Owner	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and mitigating actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.				Corporate Oversight (Second line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.						Independent assurance (Third line)			
		Strategies and Business plans	Performance management - KPIs	Financial management and reporting	Statement of assurance checklist	Governance Structures & Processes (e.g. Council/ Committee reports and mitigating actions).	Functional Compliance reviews (Finance & Information security)	Internal Quality Control Checks (such as PSA self-assessment)	Internal business change (stage/ gateway review) undertaken by PMO	Stakeholder surveys and Complaints	Corporate Risk Management / Assurance	External Project/programme reviews (e.g. Scottish Government Independent Assurance Review)	External Accreditation /Certification (such as IIP, EFQM, PCIP and Cyber Essentials Plus)	Strategic Partners Assurance Reports (such as Care Inspectorate and Shared Services)	Internal Audit reviews
Risk Management	DoSP														
Business Planning	CE & DoSP														
Project Management	DoSP														
Financial Management	DoSP														
Fraud	Acting DoReg														
Procurement	DoSP														
Human resources	Ac														
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	DoSP														

STEP 1– Identify Sources of Assurance															
Issue	Issue Owner	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and mitigating actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.				Corporate Oversight (Second line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.						Independent assurance (Third line)			
		Strategies and Business plans	Performance management - KPIs	Financial management and reporting	Statement of assurance checklist	Governance Structures & Processes (e.g. Council/ Committee reports and mitigating actions).	Functional Compliance reviews (Finance & Information security)	Internal Quality Control Checks (such as PSA self-assessment)	Internal business change (stage/ gateway review) undertaken by PMO	Stakeholder surveys and Complaints	Corporate Risk Management / Assurance	External Project/programme reviews (e.g. Scottish Government Independent Assurance Review)	External Accreditation /Certification (such as IIP, EFQM, PCIP and Cyber Essentials Plus)	Strategic Partners Assurance Reports (such as Care Inspectorate and Shared Services)	Internal Audit reviews
Information Governance	DoReg														
Health & Safety	DoSP														
Legislative Compliance	DoReg& DoSP														
Business Continuity Planning	DoSP														
Cyber security	DoSP														
Shared Services	DoSP														

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
					Internal audit	Other sources of assurance			
Risk Management	DoSP	Risk Management Policy Risk registers and appetite statement Risk management procedure Strategic risk register Directorate risk registers Department risk registers	Directorate Assurance Report Assurance Report (EMT)	Oversight and approval by A&A and Council (Assurance Report) Certificates of Assurance	Risk Management 20/21	Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation	High	Yes	

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
Business Planning	CE & DoSP	Strategic, Operational and Directorate Business Plans Procedure Performance Management Strategy People Strategy Strategic Outcomes Risk Register Business Plans and departmental objectives Operational Plan	Directorate Assurance Report Assurance Report (EMT) Budget setting and monitoring	Oversight and approval by A&A and Council (Assurance Report, Strategic Plan) Certificates of Assurance	Performance Reporting and KPIs 21/22	Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation	High	Yes	

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
Project Management	DoSP	PMO policies, processes, handbooks and templates Programme management training Project and programme risk and issue registers Benefits Realisation	Directorate Assurance Report Assurance Report (EMT) PMO oversight, auditing and reporting Project risk reporting Highlight reports	Oversight by A&A and Council (Assurance Report) Certificates of Assurance Project and Programme Boards and sponsor groups	Future Proofing: - Mini audit of Scottish Government external review action plan - 2022 - Finance systems audit – 2024 - Overall audit – 2024 Rewards Review: - Audit 2024	Future Proofing: - Scottish Government Independent Assurance Reviews – 2022, 2023, 2024 (x2) - Scottish Government Assurance Office Systems Review - 2023	High	Yes	

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
Financial management	DoSP	Financial Strategy Financial Regulations Debt Management Policy Delegated authority (Scheme of Delegation) Financial Planning Business cases Budget management training	Directorate Assurance Report Assurance Report (EMT) EMT oversight of budget setting Finance team compliance checks and reconciliations Monthly meetings between finance staff and budget managers	Oversight by A & A and Council (Assurance Report & Financial Strategy) Certificates of Assurance Budget monitoring and approval Annual report and accounts	Budgetary Control 21/22 Procurement & Creditors 22/23 Payroll 22/23 Financial Sustainability 23/24 Debtors/Income 23/24	External audit Monthly budget monitoring report to Sponsor Dept NFI process Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation	High	Yes	

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
Fraud	DoReg	Counter Fraud Policy Procurement controls Fraud training Whistleblowing Policy Codes of Conduct Financial Controls Payroll & expenses controls Fraud Risk Assessment process Compliance Reviews Intranet page	Reporting to A&A	Oversight by A & A and Council (Annual Fraud Report) Certificates of Assurance NFI Update report to A&A Committee (Oct 23)	Fraud Prevention, Detection and Response 21/22	NFI every two years	High	Yes	NFI exercise commenced October 2024 will report in October 2025

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
Procurement	DoSP	Procurement Strategy Training Procurement policy note GPC guidance Procurement risk register Procurement contract register Financial Regulations Business cases Scheme of Delegation	Biannual reporting to Procurement Development Group inc reporting on agreed performance indicators Consultancy register Procurement Team oversight PSR Act reporting	Annual Procurement report to A&A Certificates of Assurance Annual Report and Accounts Report to A&A re NFI process	Procurement & Creditors 22/23	NFI report Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation External Audit review of procurement guidance GPC guidance PCIP	High	Yes	

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
Human Resources	DoWES	People Strategy HR policies Development discussions	Directorate Assurance Report Assurance Report (EMT) People Strategy Board	Oversight by A & A and Council (Assurance Report) People Strategy annual report to Council Certificates of Assurance	HR data and performance management 21/22 Organisational Development 22/23 Internal Workforce Planning 23/24 Travel and expenses 24/25	IIP Gold status	High	Yes	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	DoSP	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy EQIAs Mandatory training Report template – Impact Assessments	People Strategy Board Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group EDI Community of Practice group.	Certificates of Assurance Annual Report Equality Mainstreaming Report	Equality and diversity 20/21	Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation SPA standards Equality, Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report Equality Delivery Plan	High	Yes	New equality outcomes to be published by April 2025.

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
Information Governance	DoReg	Information Gov policies, processes & guidance Mandatory training Model Publication Scheme Data Champions Records Management Champions	Directorate Assurance Report Assurance report (EMT) Quality Assurance & oversight by Info Gov Team Information Governance Oversight Group (IAOs/OMT) bi annual meetings	Oversight by A & A and Council (Assurance report by exception) Certificates of Assurance Annual report Info Gov annual report to Council Bi annual reports to Information Governance Oversight Group	Data protection 21/22	Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation SPA standards	High	Yes	
Health & Safety	DoSP	Corporate H&S Policy and related policies and procedures Mandatory training H&S risk assessments	SSSC H&S Committee Performance reporting	Certificates of Assurance Corporate Health and Safety Policy approved by Council Annual Report	Health & Safety 22/23		High	Yes	

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
Legislative Compliance	DoReg & DoSP	Legal services provide advice to all departments Horizon scanning by legal and policy teams Training Audit processes	Report to EMT Legal clinics held monthly Legislative Compliance procedure and table of legislative requirements	Certificates of Assurance Horizon scanning at A&A Committee	Compliance with legislation 24/25	Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation	High	Yes	Compliance with legislation audit report - good level of assurance. Proposal to reduce risk to reflect this.
Business Continuity Planning	DoSP	Business Impact Analyses Strategic Risk register Business planning strategy and plans Business continuity policy Business continuity procedure SSSC Incident Management Plan	Report to EMT S&P Risk Register	Oversight by A & A and Council Certificates of Assurance		Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation	High		

STEP 2 – Assess Sources of Assurance									
Issue	Issue Owner	Controls	Business Management (First Line) Identifying risks and improvement actions. Implementing controls. Reporting on progress. Management Assurance.	Corporate Oversight (Second Line) Designing policies. Setting direction. Ensuring compliance. Assurance oversight.	Independent Assurance (Third Line) Independent challenge, audit. Reporting on assurance. Audit of assurance providers. Entity level assurance.		Control RAG Rating (See Key below)	Assurance Sufficient (Y/N)	Action Points
Cyber Security	DoSP	Digital Strategy Digital Security policy Mandatory annual training Risk Register	Directorate Assurance Report Digital Development Programme Board	Certificates of Assurance Digital Development Sponsor Group Annual Report to Council	Cyber security 21/22	Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation Collaboration with Scottish Government Cyber Resilience Team and NCSC Cyber Essentials accreditation Cyber Risk Technical Assessment Supplier Assurance Recognition by EFQM accreditation	High	Yes	Continued review of technology with Microsoft to ensure the right processes are in place to mitigate risks
Shared Services	DoSP	Governance arrangements - Strategy, Management Agreement, Performance Measures, Risk Register Customer satisfaction survey	Shared Services Review Board Shared Services Oversight Group	Certificates of Assurance Annual report to Council	Shared Services 22/23 Shared Services governance arrangements 21/22 (phase 1 and 2) Shared Services 24/25	Committed to Excellence – EFQM accreditation	High	Yes	

[Link to Index of Policies and Procedures](#)

Key: RAG rating on the effectiveness of controls from assurance work undertaken

LOW: Significant concerns over the adequacy/effectiveness of the controls in place in proportion to the risks
MEDIUM: Some areas of concern over the adequacy/effectiveness of the controls in place in proportion to the risks
HIGH: Controls in place assessed as adequate/effective and in proportion to the risks

Title of Report	Annual Audit and Assurance Committee report to Council
Public/Confidential	Public
Summary/purpose of report	This report provides a summary of the work of the Audit and Assurance Committee during the year 2024/25.
Recommendations	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. approve the annual report of the Audit and Assurance Committee for submission to Council in May 2025. 2. note that the content of the report informed the preparation of the annual governance statement in the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/25.
Author	Lindsay MacDonald, Audit and Assurance Committee Chair
Responsible Officer	Laura Shepherd, Director, Strategy and Business Services
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>

Link to Risk Register	Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Documents attached	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Audit and Assurance Committee Annual Report to Council summarises the work of the Committee over the 2024/25 financial year. The content of this report informed the Annual Governance Statement.
2. The Committee met on four occasions. All meetings were quorate.

REMIT OF THE AUDIT AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

3. The remit of the Audit and Assurance Committee is to
 - review the strategic KPI performance section of the assurance report
 - review financial monitoring section of the assurance report
 - review the Strategic Risk Register/Management Plan report
 - ensure that the audit requirements of SPFM (Scottish Public Finance Manual) are being implemented
 - scrutinise accounting policies, accounts and annual report of the organisation with recommendations for the Council before submission to Parliament.
4. The function of the Audit and Assurance Committee is to advise the Council and the Accountable Officer on strategic processes for risk, internal control environment, governance and the governance statement, counter fraud policies, whistleblowing processes, arrangements for special investigations, adequacy of management response to operational and financial performance, financial probity and stewardship, management of risk (financial and strategic objectives) and audit findings, effectiveness of audit functions.

SUMMARY OF AUDIT AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE WORK

Appointment of Internal Auditors

5. In October 2024 the Committee recommended to Council the appointment of internal auditors, Henderson Loggie, to provide internal audit services for three years up to 31 March 2028 with a possibility of two one-year extensions.

Internal Audit reports

6. The Committee considered seven planned internal audit reports as well as a consultancy report on the rewards review project. The following table documents the planned reports and actions.
7. The priority gradings for completion of recommended actions are:

Priority 1 – issue subjecting the organisation to material risk and which requires to be brought to the attention of management and the Audit and Assurance Committee

Priority 2 – Issue subjecting the organisation to significant risk and which should be addressed by management

Priority 3 – Matters subjecting the organisation to minor risk or which, if addressed, will enhance efficiency and effectiveness

Audited area	Committee date	Assurance level	Management action	Priority grading
Partnership working (external)	30 April 2024	Good	One recommendation	Grade 3
Future proofing Phase 2	30 July 2024	Good	No recommendations	N/A
Future proofing system controls – draft	30 July 2024	Good	One recommendation	N/A
Future Proofing system controls – final	29 October 2024	N/A - see above	One recommendation	Anticipate completion within financial year (ie before 31 March 2025)
Complaints	29 October 2024	Good	No recommendations	N/A
Qualification assessment	4 February 2025	Good	No recommendations	N/A
Compliance with legislation	4 February 2025	Good	One recommendation	Grade 3

Implementation and progress of audit recommendations

8. The Committee also received quarterly reports on management actions contained in the audit reports and reported on progress of these. There were four recommended actions during the year. The Committee granted three extensions to recommendation times during the year. One of the extensions for one of four recommended actions in relation to an audit on HR Data Performance which took place in 2021/22, one on an audit of Debtors/Income from 2023/24 and one on Internal Workforce Planning, Management Information also from a 2023/24 audit. These were all completed within the revised timescales.
9. In July 2024 the Committee received a consultancy review of the rewards review from the internal auditors. This had been requested previously when it was agreed to stop the rewards review project. The Chief Executive (Interim position at that time) also submitted her report on conclusions reached, steps taken and recommendations arising from the consultancy review. Committee approved the management's response to the recommendations.

10. The internal auditor has access to all the information and evidence relating to the recommendations and reports on this to the Committee in quarter one each year.

Consideration of the 2023/24 draft Annual Report and Accounts (ARA)

11. In April 2024 the Committee reviewed and approved the draft Annual Governance Statement and the Certificates of Assurance for the 2023/24 ARA. Committee noted there were no significant issues. I can confirm that the testing of the Business Continuity Plan was carried out and the Assurance Map updated and presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

Review of Audit Plans

12. In April 2024 the Committee considered and endorsed the External Audit Plan for the 2023/24 audit. The draft External Audit Plan for 2024/25 was presented to Committee and approved in February 2025.
13. The draft Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 had been presented and approved at the previous meeting in February 2024 and the final was issued to Council Members on 18 April. The draft Strategic Internal Audit Plan for 2025 – 2028 was presented to the Committee in February 2025 and approved, with a further report on the scope of the audits to be presented in April 2025.

Assurance

14. The Committee receives, reviews and comments upon the assurance report each quarter for the month immediately preceding the meeting date. The summary risk register and assurance map accompany the report for review. The format and content of the report is also monitored and reviewed to ensure Members are receiving the information which is relevant to the Council's Strategic Plan.
15. The Chair submits a report from the Committee to Council each quarterly meeting cycle. He makes recommendations to the Council as necessary and also provides assurances to Council that the Committee is carrying out its remit, in accordance with the Terms of Reference contained in the Code of Corporate Governance.

Strategic Risk Register and financial governance

16. At the February 2025 meeting the Committee recommended approval of the Strategic Risk Register, to Council. The Risk Appetite Statement was deferred to the meeting in April 2025. Committee agreed to recommend changing the approval process to enable the Risk Register to be reviewed at each meeting, rather than an annual review.
17. The Financial Regulations and the Debt Management Policy were both reviewed and approved on 30 April 2024.

Horizon Scanning

18. The most relevant matters to the work of the SSSC which were raised during the year were

- Partnership working, in particular Higher Education Institutes (HEIs)
- The National Care Service Bill
- Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) (Bill)
- National Social Work Agency
- NMC and whistleblowing
- Data request from Scottish Government
- Effect of the worldwide Microsoft outage
- Effect of Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- New global Internal Audit Standards

Fraud Bribery and Corruption

19. The annual Fraud Bribery and Corruption report was submitted and approved by the Committee in April 2024 when the Committee noted that there were no detected incidences of fraud bribery or corruption during the 2023/24 financial year and also noted the ending of the contractual arrangements with the Counter Fraud Service (CFS). In July 2024 the Committee approved a new SSSC Counter Fraud Policy, which replaced the framework prepared with the CFS.

Benefits realisation

20. The Committee considered two biannual reports detailing benefits realised from digital projects up to December 2024. Both reports were endorsed by the Committee having noted that one project 'Bundledocs' was discontinued and the previous product retained as it better fitted the work required. This resulted in a saving on licensing. The Committee considered the format of the report and agreed that in future these benefits would be reported to Committee through the annual digital report.

Future Proofing Programme (FPP) – Notification issues

21. In October 2024 the Committee was informed of a technical issue which had arisen during the transition to the FPP in relation to some electronic notifications which had not been sent to registered workers and had resulted in workers being removed from the Register. The Committee were made aware of financial implications and possible remedies and endorsed the proposed actions. In February 2025 Committee was updated on the issue and endorsed the progress made.

MEETINGS FORMAT

22. All four meetings held were in hybrid format with the majority of attendees attending in person in Tay Room, Compass House, Dundee.

ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

23. The Committee completed the effectiveness review questionnaire and a development session to review the results is scheduled to take place following the Committee meeting on 29 April 2025.

CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

24. The term of appointment of Alan Baird, the former Chair of the Audit Committee, as a Member of the SSSC ended at the end of August 2024. Peter Murray took up the appointment as Interim Convener to the SSSC on 1 October 2024 and, on the same date, Lindsay MacDonald took up appointment as the Chair of Audit and Assurance Committee and Rona King took up appointment as Vice Chair of the Committee.

QUALITY OF INTERNAL AUDIT

25. The Committee is content with the work of the internal auditors, Henderson Loggie. The Committee's view is that the standard of the internal audit work and the reports produced for 2024/25 were good. The Committee noted the positive relationship between the auditors, management team and other officers involved in the internal audit processes. The Committee is satisfied that the processes and liaison between the officers and auditors ensures that recommended actions are progressed, reported and reviewed as necessary to ensure any actions are taken forward to completion within agreed timescales.
26. The Committee held a private meeting with the internal auditors on 29 October 2024.

QUALITY OF EXTERNAL AUDIT

27. The SSSC's external auditors are Deloitte LLP.
28. Officers are working with the auditors to provide information requested via the Deloitte software to complete the external auditors annual report. The process for the 2024/25 accounts commenced with information requests early in 2025 and an internal checking system put in place to make sure that information requests were responded to timeously.
29. The Committee held a private meeting with the external auditors on 29 October 2024.

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

30. The Committee notes that this report will inform the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.

ASSURANCE OPINION

31. The Committee held separate private meetings with the external auditors and internal auditors during October 2024. Both meetings reflected positively on the SSSC in terms of the quality of internal and external audit reports. Auditors also commented positively on their working relationships with staff.
32. The Committee is of the opinion that the assurances supplied throughout the year are reliable, have integrity and are sufficiently comprehensive to support the Council and the Accountable Officer in their decision making and their accountability obligations. Further, the Committee is satisfied that there are sufficient mechanisms in place to allow the Committee to discharge its functions.

CONSULTATION

33. This report summarises the work of the Audit and Assurance Committee over the financial year 2024/25, for submission to Council after approval by the Committee.

RISKS

34. We have an averse risk appetite towards governance matters. There are no risks arising from the recommendations in this report.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

35. There are no financial, staffing or sustainability implications arising from this report

Compliance

36. This report complies with legal and governance requirements.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

37. An Impact Assessment is not necessary as this report relates to internal governance arrangements.

CONCLUSION

38. This report summarises the work of the Audit and Assurance Committee over the financial year 2024/25 and is submitted to Council for approval as

part of the process for completion of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/25.

Title of Report	Risk appetite review 2025-2026
Summary/purpose of report	To seek approval of the revised risk appetite statement
Recommendations	The Council is asked to approve: the revised risk appetite statement
Author	Laura Shepherd Director of Strategy and Business Services
Responsible Officer	Laura Shepherd, Director, Strategy and Business Services
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
Link to Risk Register	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.</p> <p>Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p>

	<p>Risk 5: We fail to develop and support SSSC staff appropriately to ensure we have a motivated and skilled workforce.</p> <p>Risk 6: The SSSC fails to secure sufficient budget resources to fulfil the financial plans required to deliver the strategic plan.</p> <p>Risk 7: Closed.</p> <p>Risk 8: We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks.</p> <p>Risk 9: Closed.</p>
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Documents attached	Appendix 1 – risk appetite statement
Background papers	none

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The attached risk appetite statement adopted by Council in April 2024 is due for review. The risk appetite statement's primary purpose is to our decision-making by defining the types and levels of risk we are willing to accept in pursuit of our strategic goals.
2. Audit and Assurance Committee review the risk register at every meeting with the information presented in the Assurance Report. Changes to scores or content, if agreed at Committee, are incorporated into the current month risk register and reported to Council for approval.
3. Members held a development session to review strategic risks and undertake an annual review of strategic appetites. The changes to the risk appetite are reflected in the attached Appendix 1.

PROPOSAL FOR 2025-2026

4. The style of the risk appetite statement was changed following feedback from members.
5. A new category of data and intelligence was added to reflect the importance of the SSSC sharing and managing its data within the organisation and sharing data with stakeholders.

CONSULTATION

6. Executive Management Team, Operational Management Team and Council Members were involved in the development of the appetite statement.

RISKS

7. There are no risks associated with this report.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

8. There are no resource requirements associated with this report.

Compliance

9. There are no compliance requirements associated with this report.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10. An impact assessment was not required.

CONCLUSION

11. This report asks Council to approve the revised risk appetite statement.

2025/26 SSSC Risk Appetite

Date agreed by Council:

Introduction

This statement sets out how we balance risk and opportunity. It describes our appetite for risk in different areas of our work. It is a key element of our corporate governance framework and is reviewed by Council annually. We recognise that the appetite for risk will vary according to the activity undertaken and there will be different appetites and tolerances to risk.

Risk appetite and risk tolerance are often used interchangeably. Risk appetite is defined as the level of risk which we aim to operate within. Risk tolerance, is the level of risk which we are willing to operate in.

Our risk appetites are aligned with the strategic risk register to identify existing and emerging risks that outside of our stated risk appetites.

Overarching Statement

We have successfully regulated and developed the social work, social care and children and young people workforce for over 20 years. We have developed an organisational maturity that helps us understand our risks and opportunities. We are therefore not a risk averse organisation. All our processes, procedures and

activities have a degree of risk. Our approach is to choose the most appropriate course of action based on an assessment of impact, anticipated benefits, risk and cost.

Risk Appetite Definition

Appetite	Descriptor
Hungry	Eager to be innovative and to choose options offering potentially higher business rewards, despite greater inherent risk.
Open	Willing to consider all potential delivery options and choose the one that is most likely to result in successful delivery while also providing an acceptable level of reward/value for money.
Cautious	Preference for safe delivery options that have a low degree of residual risk and may only have limited potential for reward.
Minimalist	Preference for ultra-safe business delivery options that have a low degree of inherent risk and only have a potential for limited reward.
Averse	Avoidance of risk and uncertainty is a key organisational objective.

Category		Descriptor	Appetite
Finance and Value for Money How we use our resources.	Financial Management	We operate in a tightly controlled and audited financial regime. We maintain a cautious risk appetite where financial management and delivering within allocated budget is our primary concern.	Cautious
	Cost benefit and best value	We are willing to consider the costs and benefits of any proposed course of action and are prepared to accept the possibility that some reward gains will outweigh the cost. The Executive Management Team closely monitors the overall level of financial risk we face. Efficiency is a very high priority to maximise our ability to pursue our strategic goals. Furthermore, efficiency and Best Value is within our control and is a strong focus for all staff. We therefore have an open risk appetite.	Open
Infrastructure How we are operationally fit.	Business continuity	We have a minimalist appetite for business continuity and the changes to our service. This allows us to make decisions to ensure our services are maintained with minimal impact and change for the sector.	Minimalist
	Operational processes, system and control	We maintain a cautious risk appetite towards sustaining appropriate operational processes, systems and controls to support operational delivery.	Cautious

	Development and enhancement of systems	However, we have an open risk appetite for the development and enhancement of these systems subject to effective testing and implementation controls.	Open
People and Culture How we support, motivate and retain our workforce.	Development of staff	<p>We recognise that our staff are critical to the achievement of our strategic priorities. The support and development of our staff is key to making the SSSC an inspiring and safe place to work.</p> <p>We need to manage our talent, succession plan, motivate, develop and train our staff. This includes having the right people in the right jobs and a structure fit to deliver our organisational outcomes. We have a minimalist risk approach to this.</p>	Minimalist
	Culture and transformation	We have an open risk appetite for decisions that improve culture and support transformational change or continuous improvement.	Open
Legal Compliance How do we meet our legal obligations.	Failure to meet obligations	<p>We aim to reduce our risk of failing to meet our legal to a managed position of being “as low as reasonably practicable”. We maintain an averse risk appetite towards regulatory and legal compliance.</p> <p>Risk taking is generally limited to those events where there is little chance of any significant repercussion for the SSSC if there is a compliance failure.</p>	Averse

Regulatory Quality How we approach our public protection and qualification functions.	Registration and fitness to practise	<p>We place public protection as our highest priority. We aim to respond proportionately to fitness to practise issues as they arise, and we have a cautious risk appetite to the management of these processes. We understand the need to be transparent in the decisions we make and maintaining the independence of Hearing panels. We understand the importance of maintaining proportionate regulation that provides public assurance and protects and improves the experience of people using social care services. The risks we are willing to take do not have a significant chance of long-term negative impacts on our regulatory quality. We accept that in striving for excellence and trying new approaches, short term issues may arise which we will seek to mitigate as best we can.</p>	Cautious
	Qualification and Standards	<p>Developing and setting the standards for practice, setting the qualification requirements, and quality assuring the education and training are part of our regulatory function. There are principles criteria, established rules and requirements set around assessment and standards that we must adhere too. When the guidance allows, we take a proportionate approach, however we are bound by the legislative framework that exists therefore we have a cautious risk appetite.</p>	Cautious
Developing the Sector	Sector Continuous Professional Learning	<p>In our work on learning and development for the sector, we recognise the need to maintain and enhance our reputation for being innovative and</p>	Hungry

How we develop the skills of the sector.		responsive to stakeholders' needs. We are therefore open to experimenting with new approaches for the delivery of CPL resources and products in the knowledge that not all of them will succeed. We have a hungry risk appetite for this area of our activity.	
National policy landscape How we contribute to national policy and the developing landscape.	National decisions impacting on the SSSC	We are a key contributor to the national policy landscape that defines the sector we work in. We play a key role in informing and delivering wider policy developments that contribute to the Scottish Government's national outcomes and shape wider society. We have a cautious approach to policy changes that impact on regulation of the workforce	Cautious
	Input to national development	We have an open appetite for areas of our work that create opportunities to support workforce development, initiatives and policies designed to improve the delivery of social work, social care and children and young people services.	Open
	Policy input and responding to consultations	We horizon scan to ensure we are aware of changes, so we can respond timeously to changes to policy at a national and local level that have an impact on the sector. We take a minimalist approach to responding to changes so our services are maintained and aligned with national policy, legislation and professional standards	Minimalist

Communication and Profile How we are perceived by our stakeholders.	Reputation of the SSSC	We can take decisions that have the potential to expose us to additional scrutiny but only where appropriate steps have been taken to minimise any adverse exposure and where such decisions could result in sustainable change. We have a cautious risk appetite for this area of our activity.	Cautious
	Promoting our work	We take an open approach to promoting our work to ensure we remain visible and are recognised for the value we bring to the sector. While we maintain a high standard of reputation, we will use different methods and technologies to promote the work of the SSSC and the sector.	Open
	Engaging our stakeholders	Developing an understanding of stakeholders' opinions, concerns and views will help us shape the delivery of our work. For this to be effective we need to use different ways of engagement to reach all our stakeholder groups. We have an open approach to ensuring the mechanisms are in place to hear the views and voices of our stakeholders.	Open
Data and Intelligence How we use our data and intelligence to	Data quality and use	We take a cautious approach to our data quality and use of our data. This ensures our data is accurate, complete and consistent and that data is used ethically and for the right purpose.	Cautious

inform our work and that of stakeholders.			
	Data availability	We take an open approach to our data availability to ensure the data is accessible and available when needed within the parameters of our capacity to delivery and that of data protection guidance. We want our stakeholders to use our data to develop and support the sector and our registrants and will work to make sure we can provide data and intelligence that is necessary.	Open

Title of Report	English language requirements for Social Work applicants
Summary/purpose of report	<p>We have reviewed our approach to English language requirements.</p> <p>This report outlines a proposed new approach whereby all social work applicants are required to evidence their knowledge of English and our rationale for this.</p>
Recommendations	The Council is asked to approve consultation on a change to our Registration Rules and current process to require all social work applicants to evidence their knowledge of English.
Author	Rachael Duncan, Learning and Development Adviser
Responsible Officer	Laura Lamb, Director, Workforce, Education and Standards
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p>
Link to Risk Register	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.</p>

Impact Assessment	<p>Impact Assessment (IA) was developed. The impact is neutral and we will continue to monitor through any application of the requirements.</p> <p>Link to Impact Assessment</p>
Documents attached	<p>Appendix 1 - English language requirements of the other UK social work regulators.</p> <p>Appendix 2 - options and guidance for applicants on the proposed English language requirements for the SSSC.</p>
Background papers	none

BACKGROUND

1. We do not currently impose English language requirements as part of our registration application process for any qualified social workers. At present, the SSSC does not have authority within its legal framework to impose an English language requirement, as a compensatory measure following a qualification assessment, or to reject an application for registration on that basis. This approach is inconsistent with our UK counterparts and other professional regulators across the UK.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

2. Pre-Brexit, under the 2015 Regulations, non-UK qualified social work applicant's competence in English could in certain circumstances have been considered as part of their registration application. However, post-Brexit the Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union, amended by Directive 2013/55/EC, which is given effect in the United Kingdom by the European Union (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulations 2015 Regulations were revoked in their entirety by the Professional Qualifications Act 2022 ("PQA 2022").
3. The PQA does not prevent or restrict regulators from imposing English Language requirements as part of qualification assessment process - it is for the regulator to determine how to assess knowledge and skills for international applicants. Our legal framework does not currently allow this.

PREVIOUS APPROACH

4. Under the 2015 Regulations the SSSC did not routinely impose English language requirements as part of the registration application process for non-UK qualified social workers but could where the assessor had concerns about English language competency when assessing an application. In these circumstances we set a control measure of an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) academic test to satisfy requirements for registration.
5. There were issues with this approach. It was not equitable, consistent or transparent and gave rise to risk of discrimination claim of judicial reviews.
6. We have had no authority to assess the English language competence of social work applicants since 2022. Since 2022 we have registered 34 internationally qualified social workers after assessment of their qualification (and post qualifying learning where required). Assessors raised concern regarding the English Language competency of one of these individuals.

APPROACH TO THE REVIEW

7. As part of this review, we have considered the approach of other professional regulators including the other UK Social Work regulators and have undertaken consultation with key stakeholders.

Comparison with other regulators

8. Both Social Work England (SWE) and the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) set English language requirements.
9. SWE set English language requirements for all social work applicants. The rationale is that this approach is equitable and prevents discrimination against international applicants.
10. NISCC set language requirements for those who are internationally qualified only. The rationale for this is that those who have achieved a UK qualification will have met English language competence requirements through achieving a UK approved social work qualification. If accepted onto the UK programme, applicants will have met English language requirements set by the UK university and will have then studied in English and undertaken two assessed practice learning opportunities (placements) within a UK context.
11. Social Care Wales (SCW) is in the process of reviewing English and Welsh language requirements for qualified social work applicants. SCW has not formally approved an approach, and their plans are subject to internal discussion and review.
12. SWE and NISCC have four routes which allow applicants to evidence their knowledge of English:
 1. Citizenship.
 2. Successful completion of a language competence test.
 3. Having achieved a social work qualification (both those achieved within and out with the UK) which was taught and examined entirely in English.
 4. Practising social work in English.
13. Both SWE and NISCC require applicants to achieve routes 2 and 3 within the last five years, although SWE are currently consulting on reducing option 2 (successful completion of a language competence test) to 2 years.
14. To qualify as a social worker in the UK, individuals need to have met English language requirements set by the University and will have then studied in English and undertaken two assessed practice learning opportunities (placements) within a UK context.

15. Appendix 1 provides further detail regarding the approaches taken by our UK counterparts including the specific requirements of each route.

SSSC proposed approach

16. We propose that we move to a more equitable and transparent approach whereby we require **all social work applicants** to evidence their competence of the English language. This will allow SSSC, as regulator, to be reassured that all social workers practising in Scotland, regardless of where they qualified, can evidence their competence of the English language at a level deemed necessary to practice safely and effectively.
17. We propose we follow the approach taken by SWE and implement four routes in which all social work applicants can evidence their knowledge of English language. This approach is equitable and will prevent discrimination against international, or internationally qualified applicants. Appendix 2 provides further detail regarding the proposed approach.
18. The proposed routes are:
 1. If an applicant holds a passport for a country on the Home Office citizenship list, we can consider this as evidence of knowledge of English.
 2. The applicant has successfully completed an approved language competence test within the last two years (both the British Council and International English Language Testing System recommend a two-year validity period for the test).
 3. It may be possible to use an applicant's social work qualification as evidence of knowledge of English. They must provide evidence that their social work qualification was taught in English, was awarded in the past five years and was completed in a country where English is a first and native language.
 4. The applicant has been registered and practised as a social worker in a country where English is a first and native language for at least 1 year within the last 5 years.
19. This proposal ensures the SSSC aligns with other social work regulators as well as other regulated professionals including doctors, nurses, dentists and pharmacists. applying to all social work applicants rather than just internationally qualified applicants and also mitigates risk of any discrimination claim.

CONSULTATION

20. We have consulted with SWE, NISCC and SCW and have reviewed their English language requirements.
21. We have also reviewed the English language requirements set by other regulators including the General Medical Council and the Nursing and Midwifery Council.
22. In addition, we have consulted with key stakeholders including Higher Education Institutions, Social Work Scotland, Scottish Association of Social Work and Chief Social Work Officers. Stakeholders were in favour of the proposed changes to English language requirements and noted the importance of social workers being able to communicate effectively to undertake their complex role. Several responses also noted that the proposed changes may have a positive impact on recruitment.
23. The proposed new approach will require a change to the SSSC Registration Rules and therefore will require formal consultation which will allow us to hear from a broad range of further stakeholders.

RISKS

24. We currently do not impose English language requirements as part of our registration process. We have no mechanism to ensure the English language competency of anyone applying to register and practice as a social worker in Scotland. This approach is inconsistent with our UK counterparts and other professional regulators across the UK.
25. Our risk appetite for regulatory quality is cautious. Public protection is our primary purpose, and we are concerned that without a formal process in place we will be unable to ensure the standard of practice we expect and therefore communication and decisions with and about vulnerable service users may be negatively impacted if there is not a sufficient competence in English language. If social workers do not have the necessary knowledge of English required to practise safely and effectively in their role, this does not ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of the people who use services and workers. Our risk appetite supports a decision to consult on implementing new criteria into the Rules.
26. The numbers of workers where a concern has been raised regarding English language is very low and therefore the scoring of the risk register itself will not be affected either by the status quo or implementing a change.
27. There is a risk that in consulting on English language requirements for social workers the response may indicate that all applicants to the Register should be assessed not just social workers.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

28. The average number of social work applicants per year is 712. The majority of applicants are UK qualified and/or British Citizens who will be able to evidence the proposed English language requirements easily as part of the normal application process and will therefore be processed automatically as green channel applications. On average we currently receive 20-25 non-UK social work applications per year. The requirement to provide evidence of English language competence is on the applicant and therefore it is anticipated there will be minimal impact on SSSC resources.

Compliance

29. Implementing this proposal will require an amendment to the Registration Rules which will require a formal consultation process.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

30. We have completed an impact assessment, and the impact is neutral. By proposing multiple routes for applicants to evidence they meet the requirements, the SSSC is ensuring English language requirements do not present as a barrier to qualified applicants joining the Scottish workforce we will update the impact assessment based on the findings from the consultation.

CONCLUSION

31. This report asks Council to approve the proposed approach and grant authority to consult on changes to the Registration Rules to allow the SSSC to implement English language requirements for all social work applicants following a change to the Registration Rules. A report will come back to Council on the outcome of the consultation for approval.

Appendix 1

UK social work regulators: Table of English Language Requirements

Social Work England (SWE)	Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)	Social Care Wales (SCW)
<p>If you hold a passport for a country on our citizenship list, we can consider this as evidence of your knowledge of English.</p> <p>If you're a British national (overseas) you will be required to undertake an IELTS test.</p>	<p>You do not need to complete a language test if-</p> <p>you are applying from and completed your social work qualification in one the list of countries on the Citizenship List.</p>	<p>Social Care Wales (SCW) are in the process of reviewing English and Welsh language requirements for qualified social work applicants. SCW have not formally approved an approach and their plans are subject to internal discussion and review.</p>
<p>International English Language Testing System (IELTS) certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that you took the full academic version of the test, which is based in a test centre that you got an overall score of at least 7.0 the original stamp and test report form number that you received your IELTS qualification in the last 5 years 	<p>International Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall score 7.0 with no element below 6.5. <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English (CAE) Minimum Grade C on the Cambridge CEFR C1 test <p>All language certificates must have been achieved within five years of the date you</p>	

	submitted your application to the Social Care Council.	
<p>Social work qualifications</p> <p>It may be possible to use your recognised social work qualification as evidence of your knowledge of English. To do this, your qualification must have been (all of the following):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awarded within the last 5 years • obtained in a country where English is the first and native language (see below) • entirely taught and examined in English 	<p>You have completed a United Kingdom social work qualification that is recognized by us.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>You can provide evidence that your social work qualification was taught in English, was awarded in the past five years and that you completed the qualification in a country where English is a first and native language.</p>	
<p>Practising social work in English</p> <p>If you've been registered and practising as a social worker in a country where English is the first and native language, this can be used as evidence of your knowledge of English.</p> <p>To do this, all of the following must apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you were registered and practising for at least 1 year. This must have been within the last 5 years 	<p>You have been registered and practising as a social worker in a country where English is a first and native language. This can be used as evidence of your English language skills if you were registered and practising in English for at least one year in the last five years and an English language assessment was required for registration. Confirmation, in English, will be required from the employer.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social work is regulated in that country • an English language assessment was required for registration 		
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Appendix 2

Options and guidance on how applicants can demonstrate meeting the English language requirements.

We will accept	How this is demonstrated
1) Citizenship	<p>If you hold a passport for a country on the Home Office citizenship list, we can consider this as evidence of your knowledge of English.</p> <p>The list can be accessed here Prove your knowledge of English for citizenship and settling: Who does not need to prove their knowledge of English - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>List of territories taken from: Types of British nationality: British overseas territories citizen - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>If you are a British national (overseas) you will be required to demonstrate English language competency through options 2, 3 or 4.</p>
2) Successful completion of a language competence test	<p>We accept an IELTS certificate which must show all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that you took the full academic version of the test, which is based in a test centre • that you got an overall score of at least 7.0 with no element below 6.5

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the original stamp and test report form number • that you received your IELTS qualification in the last 2 years
3) Social work qualifications (both those achieved within and out with the UK)	<p>It may be possible to use your recognised social work qualification as evidence of your English language competency. To do this, your qualification must have been (all of the following):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awarded within the last 5 years • obtained in a country named on our citizenship list or where English is an official language • entirely taught and examined in English <p>We will contact your course provider to confirm that the qualification was entirely taught and examined in English.</p>
4) Practicing social work in English	<p>To evidence practicing social work in English:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social work must be regulated in the country you were practicing in. • you must have been registered and practising for at least 1 year within the last 5 years. • an English language assessment was required for registration <p>Or:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you must have practised as a social worker in a country named on our citizenship list or where English is an official language – you must provide evidence of this

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where social work is regulated in that country, you have been registered as a social worker • you were registered and practising for at least 1 year within the last 5 years.
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Title of Report	Qualified status of the workforce
Summary/ Purpose of report	This report provides the Council with a six-monthly overview of the qualified status of the registered workforce. It provides an analysis of the data regarding demand for qualifications and compliance with qualification conditions. The report also identifies factors which are impacting on increasing the numbers of qualified workers and details actions that the SSSC are leading, influencing or collaborating with partners on to support the workforce to get qualified.
Recommendations	<p>The Council is asked to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. endorse the actions the SSSC is taking to support the workforce to get qualified and 2. approve consultation, if required by Scottish Government, on a change to the Registration Rules to provide further clarity on the qualification requirements for Residential Child Care Practitioners and Residential School Care Accommodation Practitioners and 3. approve amendment of the Rules as necessary to ensure consistency across the Rules.
Author and Responsible Officer	Laura Lamb, Director, Workforce Education and Standards
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p>

Link to Risk Register	Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Documents attached	Appendix 1 - Qualifying the workforce- summary of actions since October 2024
Background papers	<p>Workforce Skills Report March 2025 https://data.sssc.uk.com/images/WorkforceSkillsReport/Workforce_Skills_Report_2025.pdf</p> <p>Registrant Leavers Report April 2025 https://data.sssc.uk.com/data-publications/406-leaver-survey</p>

INTRODUCTION

1. This report provides Council with an overview of the qualified status of the registered workforce. It is the third six monthly report. It provides an analysis of the data regarding demand for qualifications and compliance with qualification conditions. The report also identifies factors which are impacting on increasing the numbers of qualified workers and details actions that the SSSC are leading, influencing or collaborating with partners on to support the workforce to get qualified.
2. Overall, it is an improved picture since the last report. The percentage of the workforce who have qualified has increased, the rate people are gaining their qualifications continues to increase and overall percentage qualified in both the social care and children and young people's workforce is within 10% of the maximum target we would expect to be qualified.
3. The most significant actions the SSSC is currently leading that will support the workforce to get qualified are the review of the National Occupational Standards, which will reduce and simplify the evidence required to gain qualifications and secondly, the promotion of the current flexibilities within the qualification assessment strategies to encourage training providers to support workers to evidence their knowledge and skills in more natural and innovative ways.
4. The joint development of the National Induction Framework: Social Care with NES which launches this month will also support those new into role to use the evidence from the induction programme as evidence towards their qualification.
5. The SSSC is preparing a regulatory briefing for Scottish Government based on our wide range of data and intelligence sources, setting out key challenges and areas that need addressed to support the workforce to get qualified.

BACKGROUND

6. As the regulator for the social work, social care and children and young people's workforce the SSSC sets the qualification requirements for the workforce. The SSSC is responsible for ensuring the registered workforce comply with the requirements of registration including gaining an appropriate qualification for their role within a specified timescale. For most register groups they have a period of 5 years to gain their qualifications if they join the register unqualified. This timescale reduced to three years for most function-based register groups from 3 June 2024 with the exception of those joining the register in housing support, care at home or care home roles whose timescale will not reduce until June 2025 and for those joining the register with more than one qualification condition who will continue to have 5 years.

QUALIFIED STATUS OF THE WORKFORCE

Current performance

7. The percentage of the registered workforce who are qualified is a Key Operational Indicator (KOI) and we report this in the assurance report. The percentage of the registered workforce who were qualified at the end of April 2025 has increased to 56.8% (from 52.2% in October 2024).
8. It is important to note that the number of individuals on our register has been decreasing since the start of the year. We will monitor to see if this is a new trend, if the register is now stabilising or if the register will still decrease.
9. Considering attrition rates and what we currently know about the profile of the registered workforce the maximum possible percentage of the workforce we could expect to be qualified has now been established and for the Children and Young People's Workforce it is 74% qualified and for the Social Care Workforce, 53% qualified.

Profile of the Register

10. The tables below show how qualified each of the register groups currently are, how qualified they are compared to last year and how close they are to the estimated maximum target.

Register Part Grouping	Percentage Qualified (+/- from target)	Vs 2024
Children and Young People's Worker	69.8% (-4.2%)	+0.9%
Day Care of Children Services	74.6%	+1.5%
Residential Child Care Services	46.7%	-1.3%
Residential School Care Accommodation Service	46.4%	+1.0%
Care Inspector	62.5%	+12.2%
Social Care Worker	44.5% (-8.5%)	+3.0%
Adult Day Care Services	64.9%	-1.1%
Care at Home Services	45.7%	+4.6%
Care Home Service for Adults	40.7%	+0
Housing Support Services	49.5%	+4.9%
Care Inspector	62.9%	+13.2%

Job Grouping	Percentage Qualified	Vs 2024
Managers	56.5%	+1.2%
Practitioners	73.6%	-1.3%
Supervisors	48.0%	+1.1%
Support Workers	44.7%	+3.5%
Primary Authorised Officer	64.5%	+8.1%
Secondary Authorised Officer	83.1%	+23.9%

11. The most qualified group are Care Inspectorate secondary authorised officers closely followed by practitioners, particularly those in the children and young people's workforce, and the least qualified group are support workers in the social care workforce, especially those working in Care Home Services for Adults.
12. The table shows most register groups have increased in qualified status since 2024 and since the last report to Council in October 2024. While there has been a small reduction in qualified staff in adult day care and residential childcare, the change in numbers of individuals qualified is minimal due to the small size of these workforces. Care Home Services for Adults is one of the biggest register part groupings and the least qualified grouping and therefore of most concern. There has not been an increase in the qualified status of this group since the last report however there has been no further decrease either, as had been the trend for the last two previous reports.
13. The number of qualification conditions due over the next five years has reduced in the last 6 months to 76,158 from 79,994. After attrition the number reduces to 38,240. Of those, 28,926 are workers registered within the social care register part.
14. This is not unexpected given the social care register part includes both the largest and newest groups to join the register. The two largest groups are support workers in care at home and housing support services. Registration became mandatory for these groups in September 2020 therefore a number of individuals registered around that date who have remained on the register will not have met the five-year deadline to meet their qualification condition at this stage.
15. In addition, the adult social care groups (housing support, care and home and care home services for adults) continue to have the highest turnover rates of our register groups, particularly at support worker level, therefore there are many individuals on the register in these groups who are still within their five years to gain the required qualification.

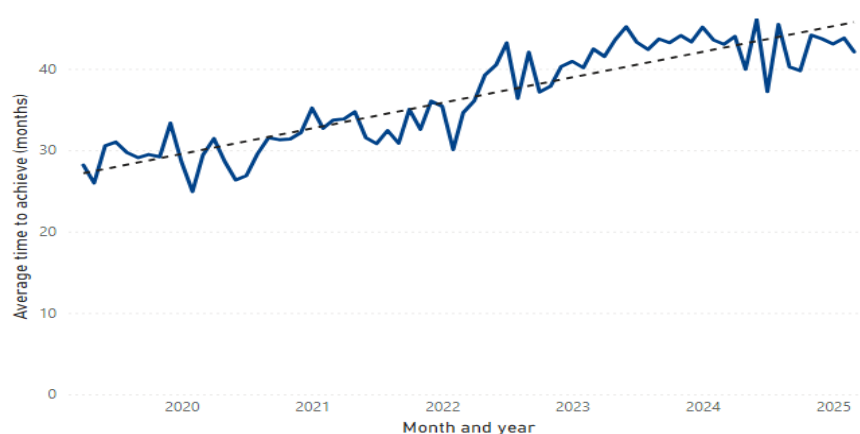
16. The biggest demand for qualifications over the next five years continues to be from support worker roles within adult social care. The qualification requirement for these roles is set at SCQF level 6 qualifications.

Compliance with qualification conditions

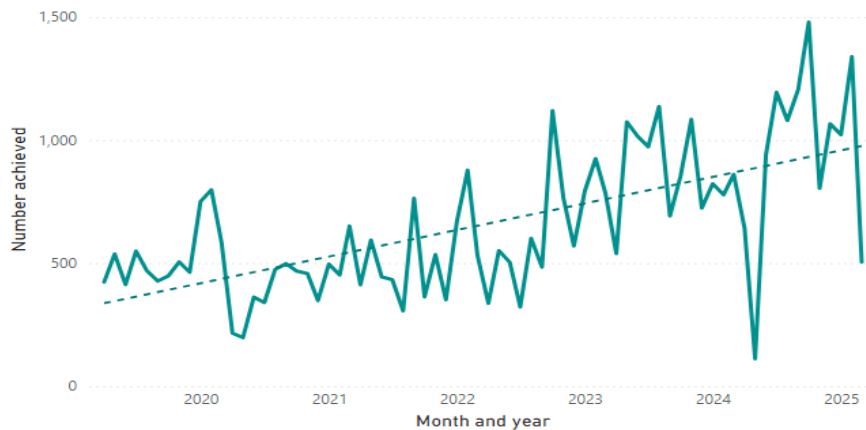
17. There are 7,684 individuals, currently on the register (as of 31 March 2025), who have had their qualification condition reapplied. This is a reduction from 8,102 as at 31 October 2024. The number of individuals with an extension to their qualification conditions represents less than 5% of registrants.
18. Other than Covid, our data shows the three main reasons given for extensions continue to be personal sickness/ bereavement, difficulties securing training provision, or other, which in many cases has been documented as caring responsibilities.
19. Applications for this year's Voluntary Sector Development Fund opens at the end of May. Applications from adult social care will be prioritised.
20. We published our first Leavers Survey report on 30 April 2025 and the live data is now available on our Data Website as part of the Registration Dashboard. <https://data.sssc.uk.com/2013-03-02-12-18-55/detailed-registration-data/registration-dashboard> Very few leavers (2.1%) who responded to the survey highlighted the need to gain a qualification as a reason why they were leaving the register.

Rate the workforce is gaining qualifications.

Average number of months between original reg date and conditio...



Number of individuals meeting qualification conditions



21. The current average timescale it takes individuals to gain their qualification has increased slightly. In October 2024 we reported the average timescale was 37.57 months and currently the average timescale is 38.2 months. The average timescale for the social care workforce is currently 40.13 months compared to an average timescale of 31.66 months for the children and young people's workforce. The timescale for the social care workforce is increasing and the timescale for the children and young people's workforce is decreasing. Although the average timescale has increased slightly the rate and number of individuals meeting their qualification condition each month continues to increase and is above pre-covid rates. The groups taking the longest to qualifying continue to be Care Inspectorate authorised officers and managers. However, we have seen an increase in the qualified status of both these groups.
22. The reduced timescale to gain a qualification from five to three years comes into effect for the adult social care workforce on 1 June 2025 and we expect this to have an impact on the timescales to achieve qualifications in the future.
23. As part of Future Proofing changes, we are now gathering data from the annual declarations on what progress individuals are making towards their qualification requirements. We are currently analysing this data to understand where individuals are within their qualification timescale versus the progress they have made. This will be valuable intelligence to understand supply and demand and likelihood of individuals meeting the requirements within the specified timescales. It will take a full year of data to accurately understand the qualified profile of the full registered workforce to this level of detail. We having been collecting the data since June 2024.

24. We published our latest Workforce Skills Report in March 2025. The report examines the supply and demand for qualifications undertaking a gap analysis at both a local and national level. Key findings include:
- The demand for SVQ Social Services and Healthcare SCQF level 6 is projected to total 30,957 over the financial years ending 2026 to 2030. This is greater than the current estimated supply of 19,926, however the HNC Social Services is an alternative benchmark award for adult social care support workers, with an estimated 5,000 HNC Social Services starts over the five-year period, potentially bridging some of the gap. The new integrated Health and Social Care award will provide an additional qualification route to meet the requirements.
 - The demand for Professional Development Award (PDA) Health and Social Care Supervision SCQF level 7 is projected to reach 3,421, around 1,200 more than the estimated number of PDAs projected to start in the corresponding period. As part of the NOS review we have developed a new supervision NOS. If approved this can be included when the benchmark qualifications are reviewed in 2026 and will allow workers to gain their practice award without the requirement to gain additional supervisory credits which will reduce the demand for the PDA.
 - In the children and young people's part of the Register, supply is expected to cover demand, except for SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) SCQF level 6. The NC Early Education and Childcare SCQF level 6 could bridge this gap.
25. We have shared the findings with relevant partners including Scottish Government (Education and Skills , Adult Social Care, Early Learning and Childcare, Children and Families Directorates and the Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser), Scottish Funding Council, Skills Development Scotland, the College Development Network and the Scottish Qualifications Authority.
26. Many training providers deliver both the children and young people and health and social care benchmark qualifications required for registration with the SSSC. As part of the Future Proofing Project, SQA surveyed training providers on our behalf to determine if they would be able to adjust their current delivery to meet demand for the benchmark qualifications and the majority indicated they could and would.

Changes to the Registration Rules

27. We have identified a need to provide further detail in the Registration Rules regarding the qualification requirements for residential childcare practitioners and residential school care accommodation practitioners.

Currently the Rules do not specify residential school care accommodation workers alongside residential childcare practitioners despite having two qualification requirements (except for those working in independent boarding schools). Additionally, supervisors in residential childcare have one qualification requirement not two, unlike social care, due to the level of the practice qualification. This is not clear in the current Rules.

28. There is no change proposed to the qualification requirements as agreed by Council as part of Future Proofing. It is our intention to update the qualification requirements within the Rules for the Children and Young People's Register part as set out in the table below to provide further clarity to the sector.

Children and young people's workers	Timescale for obtaining qualification
Any new worker who is registered as a children and young people's worker as a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager • Residential childcare/Residential school care accommodation (except independent boarding schools) practitioner With no recognised qualification	5 years
(Amend) Any new worker who is registered as a children and young people's worker as a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager • Residential childcare/Residential school care accommodation (except independent boarding schools) practitioner with one recognised qualification	3 years
All other children and young people's worker	3 years

Impact of qualifications

29. We are continuing to explore if there is any correlation between the qualified status of the workforce in services and their Care Inspectorate service grades. Initial findings show there is a weak but positive statistical correlation, and this correlation increases when we look at the qualified status of managers and supervisors. Further analysis is required, and we will update Council in future reports.
30. 71.8% of registrants who responded to our 2024 Registrant Survey (October 2024) agreed that SSSC qualification requirements support a

multiskilled workforce and 70.4% thought the various qualification requirements for different register groups are clear. Both of these questions have seen an increase in positive scores since the 2023 survey.

31. As part of the Workforce Skills Report we consulted with employers regarding their experience of accessing training provision and the fitness of the qualifications we require for registration by register part and level. For social care, participants agreed overwhelmingly (82% and above across the various roles) that qualifications were fit for purpose and provided the workforce with the knowledge and skills they needed for their role and for the children and young peoples workforce, participants agreed (over 80%) that the qualifications were fit for purpose for those in support worker and practitioner roles and 71% agree the qualification for Managers was fit for purpose. The findings will inform the National Occupational Standards (NOS) review and subsequent review of qualifications.
32. Scottish Care has published a report "Overcoming Qualification Barriers in Scottish Social Care" which highlights the challenges faced and views held by their members. Their findings regarding numbers of the workforce who are considering leaving the sector due to qualifications requirements does not correlate with our registration data or the findings from our leavers survey. The key challenges and barriers however, including access to funding and time to gain qualification is reflective of what we know. We will attend the Scottish Care Regulatory forums to discuss their findings and share what our data and intelligence is telling us.
33. We published our first Have your Say Workforce Wellbeing Survey report in April 2025. The findings indicate that overall, the workforce feel well supported by their employers to meet their qualification and CPL requirements.

ACTIONS

34. Setting the qualification requirements, timescale to gain qualifications and ensuring registrants meet the requirements for registration, including the qualification requirements, are the only factors directly within the SSSC's control. We can influence and work in collaboration with key partners to address the influencing factors, but they are not directly within our control. A full list of actions and progress is available at Appendix 1.

RISKS

35. We have a cautious risk appetite to the management of regulatory quality and effective regulatory functions.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

36. There are no resourcing requirements identified in this report.

Compliance

37. We are in discussion with Scottish Government regarding the proposed changes to the Registration Rules to determine whether further consultation is required or whether the consultation process that took place as part of the Future Proofing Programme is sufficient.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

38. This report does not require an impact assessment.

CONCLUSION

39. This report asks Council to endorse the actions the SSSC is taking to support the workforce to get qualified and grant authority to consult, if required, on changes to the Registration Rules to provide further clarity on the qualification requirements for Residential Child Care Practitioners and Residential School Care Accommodation Practitioners and approval to amend the Rules as necessary.

Appendix 1 - Qualifying the workforce - summary of actions since October 2024

Action	Lead Agency	SSSC Role- Lead (L), Contribute (C) Influence (I)	Progress
Reduce timescale for qualifications	SSSC	L	In effect from 3 June 2024 with the exception of ASC groups – changes to timescales postponed to June 2025
Annual declaration information on progress towards qualifications	SSSC	L	We will be able to report on this after June 2025
Determine maximum possible % qualified (taking into account turnover rates etc) and revise current KOI target	SSSC	L	Complete- 74% for CYP workforce 53% for social care workforce
D365 system changes to improve recording of reasons for extensions	SSSC	L	Scoping in progress
Introduction of leavers survey for everyone who comes off the register	SSSC	L	Report published 30 April 2025 and now live data on the Registration Dashboard on the SSSC data website. Survey being

			revised to capture more data to allow for better analysis
Target VSDF funding	SSSC	L	Applications will open in May for 2025/6 funding. Priority groups will be adult social care
Promote funding for qualifications and host SG resource for funding	JSST workstream SG ASC - lead	C	Complete- now on SSSC Careers Website
Develop new qualification pathways including graduate apprenticeship route into social work; and SVQ Integrated Award	OCSWA SSSC	C - SW graduate apprenticeship L	In progress SSSC Approval Panel planned 20 June 2025. First cohort to be recruited for Sept 2025 Award approved by SQA, Providers identified and ready for delivery
Review of National Occupational Standards (NOS) - Reduce number of knowledge and performance	SSSC	L	In progress- complete by December 2025

<p>criteria to make easier to evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simplify language for ease of understanding - New supervision NOS to meet supervisory requirement for registration 			
Develop career pathway resource for adult and children social care to promote diverse range career opportunities and support recruitment campaigns	SSSC/NES (JSST workstream)	L	Launched 30 April 2025, AI functionality live from July 2025
International Recruitment social care pilot	NES	C	In progress
Workforce Skills Report	SSSC	L	Complete Published March 2025
Develop resources to support employers when recruiting 16/17-year-olds	SSSC (employability and career network)	L	Complete Resource available on SSSC Careers Website
Revise National Induction Framework for ASC and develop induction passport (learning mapped to NOS and transferrable as evidence towards Qualification and CPL)	SSSC/NES (JSST workstream)	L	In progress Launch Planned 28 May 2025
CI service grades versus % workforce qualified to support	SSSC/CI	L	In progress

targeted inspection and joint action			
Supervisor learning events to support CPL/qualifications	SSSC/L2C/Scottish Care/CCPS	L	Complete
Policy changes to address higher fees for qualifications for workers on Tier 2 visas	SFC/CDN	I	In progress
Briefing to Education and Skills Directorate in SG to seek changes to the contribution rates for over 25's undertaking health and social care and children and young people MAs (currently highest rate goes to under 25s)	SDS/SSSC/SG	C	In progress
Promotion of flexibility within current assessment strategy and comms to training providers to encourage use and innovation to capture learning in more naturalistic ways and for learners to provide evidence in easier ways	SQA/SSSC	C	In progress
Revise assessment strategy and guidance (for SVQs)	SQA	C	Assessment strategy will be revised with SVQs on completion of NOS review
Highlight eligibility barriers to funding providers	SFC/SSSC	I	Complete
Develop Comms- to highlight support available for employers to enable	SDS	C	Not started

better use of apprenticeship levy			
Explore development of supervision micro credentials which can count towards fuller qualification	SSSC/NES/Strathclyde University	C	Not started
Collect data on SVQ/MA dropout rates and reasons	SQA/SDS	I	In progress-SVQ data provided by SQA
Gather views from candidates, verifiers and assessors on their experience of qualifications	SQA/SSSC/SG	C	In progress-current candidates being surveyed
Scope possible models of practice education/assessor support including whether current models in health i.e. Care Home Education Facilitators (CHEFs) can be upscaled for social care	NES	C	Not started-dependant on resources
Mapping of college health and social care short courses to NOS to identify possible pathways or evidence that can be used for SVQs	CDN/NES	C	Not started
Prepare regulatory briefing for Scottish Government, based on our wide range of data and intelligence sources, setting out key challenges and areas that need addressed to support the workforce to get qualified	SSSC	L	
Attend Scottish Care Regulatory Forum	SSSC	L/I	Next forums

and present response to their published qualifications report			3 June- CAH/HSS 4 June- CHSA
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Title of Report	Proposed Registration of New Groups
Summary/purpose of report	This report provides a summary of findings from the Expanding the Register Consultation.
Recommendations	<p>The Council is asked to approve the following for submission to Scottish Government if they decide to expand the register for the proposed new groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council is asked to approve the job role and functions for Adult Day Care Workers (Appendix 2) and Offender Accommodation Workers (Appendix 3) subject to the following changes to the Offender Accommodation Workers job role and function: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change 'offender' to 'justice' Change 'support worker' to 'practitioner' within the supervisor function 2. If Ministers decide to register social work assistants, Council is asked to agree further refinement of their job role and functions (Appendix 4) will be required and that a revised job role and function descriptor will come back to Council for approval. 3. The Council is asked to approve the proposed qualifications for all proposed new groups as detailed in paragraph 22. 4. The Council is asked to approve the fee levels for all proposed groups as set out in paragraph 26. 5. The Council is asked to approve the proposed CPL requirements for all proposed new groups as detailed in appendices 2, 3 and 4.

Author	Rachael Duncan, Learning and Development Adviser
Responsible Officer	Laura Lamb, Director, Workforce Education and Standards
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
Link to Risk Register	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p>
Impact Assessment	<p>An Impact Assessment (IA) was developed.</p> <p>Link to Impact Assessment</p> <p>We have identified that there will be some negative effects for the workforce. Further detail is available within the report</p>
Documents attached	<p>Appendix 1 Expanding the Register Consultation – Full Results</p> <p>Appendix 2 Adult day care services</p> <p>Appendix 3 Offender accommodation services</p> <p>Appendix 4 Social work assistants</p>
Background papers	Council meeting of 21 November 2024 Item 09 Proposed Registration of New Groups.pdf

	Council meeting of 21 November 2024 Item 09 Appendix 1 Report to Scottish Government on the scoping of new register groups.pdf
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. At its meeting in November 2024, Council agreed that we carry out a consultation on expanding the SSSC Register to new groups of workers from the social service sector.
2. The “Expanding the Register” consultation outlined proposals to extend the SSSC Register to the following Groups:
 - Adult Day Care Service (support worker, practitioner and supervisor)
 - Offender Accommodation Service (practitioner, supervisor and manager)
 - Social Work Assistants
3. Consultation results show strong support for expansion of the Register, with over 80% of respondents agreeing that these new groups should be included. Inclusion on the Register would bring parity with other parts of the workforce, provide clear qualification requirements, and support the SSSCs core regulatory function.
4. This report sets out the consultation response to allow Council to consider the feedback along with the recommendations of this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5. The SSSC was established under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 (ROCA). Section 58 (1) of ROCA gives Scottish Ministers authority to delegate powers to the SSSC to register workers and set education and training requirements of the registered workforce.
6. The Expanding the Register Consultation is based on the findings of scoping work carried out in 2023/24 by the SSSC on behalf of Scottish Government. The scoping (as presented to Council in November 2024) established a rationale for which groups to include in potential expansion of the Register and built an evidence base to inform the proposed role descriptors, CPL and qualification requirements.

CONSULTATION

Purpose and methodology

7. The consultation opened in January 2025, for a ten-week period, closing on 9 April 2025.

8. The consultation gathered views on:
 - registering each new group
 - job roles and functions
 - qualification requirements
 - continuous professional learning (CPL) requirements
 - fee levels
9. A total of seven online focus groups were held during March 2025. Two focus groups were planned for each proposed new Register group however a further session for social work assistants was added due to high demand. Over 100 people attended in total.
10. A short social media survey targeted at members of the public also ran for a two-week period during the consultation. This survey asked five questions regarding the regulation and registration of the workforce. 117 responses were received.

Respondents

11. There were 370 responses to the formal consultation. Respondents were able to respond to questions about all proposed new Register groups or specific groups only. Below is a breakdown of total responses for each proposed new group and roles of responders:

	Adult Day Care Service	Offender Accommodation Service	Social Work Assistants	
Survey Responses	188	57	268	
Role within organisation	Registrants	Social service workers	Employer/ service provider	On behalf of an organisation
Responses	166	156	33	8

12. We received separate national organisational responses from UNISON, the Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Association of Social Workers.

Consultation findings

13. The consultation reported high levels of agreement for all the proposals across Adult Day Care Services and Offender Accommodation Services. While there was still strong support for registering Social Work Assistants, views on the proposed job role and function for this group were mixed.

	Adult Day Care Service			Offender Accommodation Service			Social Work Assistants
	Support Worker	Practitioner	Supervisor	Practitioner	Supervisor	Manager	SWA
% agree should be registered	88%	91%	91%	91%	94%	92%	80%
% agree with job role and function	87%	88%	91%	85%	89%	89%	51% (role)- 57% (function)
% agree with qualification requirement	77%	86%	90%	88%	89%	87%	70%
% agree with CPL requirement	84%	88%	92%	91%	91%	87%	87%
% agree with proposed fee	67%	70%	79%	83%	82%	74%	65%

14. Appendix 1 provides fuller details of the responses received.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Registration

15. The majority of survey respondents (80%-94%) were in favour of all the proposed new groups being added to the Register. Those who disagreed tended to express general discontent with the registration and regulation of the workforce as whole.
16. The decision to register new groups is a decision for Ministers. With such a high level of agreement we will recommend to Scottish Government to expand the Register to all proposed groups.

Job role and function

17. Between 87% and 91% of respondents agreed with the proposed job roles and functions across both Adult Day Care Services and Offender Accommodation Services. Support for the job role and function for Social Work Assistants was significantly lower (51-57%), suggesting that further work may be required to reflect the complexity of this particular role.
18. Appendices 2, 3 and 4 detail the job role and functions for each proposed new group.

19. Specific feedback raised in relation to offender accommodation and social work assistants proposed job role and function included:
- concern regarding the use of the term 'offender'.
 - an identified error within the job role and function of a supervisor in offender accommodation services where it refers to 'support worker' and this should be 'practitioner'
 - respondents felt strongly that the complexity of the work that social work assistants undertake was not fully reflected within the job role and function noting that social work assistants often work autonomously with supervision from a senior and that they hold and manage their own caseloads, assessing and managing risk and overseeing care plans. Further clarity regarding social work assistants' involvement in statutory functions would be helpful.
20. With high levels of agreement with the proposed job roles and functions across Adult Day Care and Offender Accommodation we recommend that Council agree to these, subject to changing the term 'offender' to 'justice' and the term 'support worker' to 'practitioner' within the supervisor function.
21. We recommend to Council that should Ministers decide to expand the Register to social work assistants further work on refining the job role and functions of social work assistants will be required and a revised job role and function should be brought back to Council for approval

Qualification requirements

22. The majority of respondents (77%-90%) agreed with the proposed qualification requirements for Adult Day Care Services and Offender Accommodation Services. Agreement for Social Work Assistants was lower (69%).

New Group	Level	Proposed Qualifications
Adult Day Care Service Workers	Supervisors	HNC Social Services OR SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7 PLUS PDA Health and Social Care Supervision or equivalent
	Practitioners	HNC Social Services OR SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7
	Support Workers	Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 6

Offender Accommodation Service Workers	Managers	SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 9 PLUS SVQ Care Services Leadership and Management at SCQF Level 9 or equivalent
	Supervisors	HNC Social Services OR SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7 PLUS PDA Health and Social Care Supervision or equivalent
	Practitioners	HNC Social Services OR SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7
Social Work Assistants		HNC Social Services OR an award of certificated knowledge with 96 academic credits at or above SCQF level 7 PLUS SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 7 OR SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7

23. Concerns expressed within free text comments included:

- Perception that experience should be recognised not just qualifications
- Resource implications, including time and cost particularly for third sector organisations
- Impact on recruitment and retention of workers
- Personal circumstances such as retirement or caring responsibilities impacting on achievement of qualifications
- Learning provider provision.

24. While we recognise these concerns, implementation of the proposals will be gradual, allowing employers and learning providers to plan for this change. During this phase we will ensure clear communication with the sector. We will continue to work with the sector to help individuals get qualified. It may be possible for learners to use their experience for recognition of prior learning, and we will continue with our flexible approach to achieving

qualifications which takes into account personal circumstances where required.

25. In response to the high levels of agreement, we recommend that Council agree with setting the qualification requirements as set out in the table above for all proposed groups.

Proposed Fee levels

26. The majority of respondents (65%-83%) agreed with the proposed fee levels for each group:

Managers	£80
Supervisors	£35
Practitioners	£30
Support Workers	£25
Social Work Assistants	£35

27. Those not in support of the proposed fee levels highlighted concerns regarding the financial impact of fees for employees and the financial burden for those employers who reimburse employees registration fees. Respondents did not highlight the levels were wrong rather the negative impact of having to pay a fee at all. The unfairness of the local authority fee settlement was also stressed by many.
28. Any consultation relating to fees tends to get a lower agreement rate. The proposed fee levels are in line with other register groups therefore we recommend that Council agree to these proposed fee levels.

Continuous professional Learning (CPL)

29. The majority of respondents (84%-92%) were in agreement with the proposed CPL requirements and expressed the view that CPL played an essential role in the delivery of high-quality social care. Those who disagreed, suggested that CPL requirements would further impact on recruitment and retention issues within the sector.
30. The proposed CPL requirements were aligned to the existing levels of the Register.
31. We recommend that Council agree to the proposed CPL requirements for all proposed groups as set out in Appendices 2,3 and 4.

Key Stakeholder Responses

The Scottish Association of Social Workers (SASW)

32. SASW expressed the view that the job role and function for each group within the consultation, is task focused rather than focused on relationship-based and person-centred practice and human rights. SASW suggested that

the job roles and functions within this proposal should be reviewed and amended to reflect these areas. We acknowledge the importance of social service workers practicing in this way.

33. It is not recommended that these amendments are made as all SSSC function-based register part job role and function descriptors are task based to help employers to identify roles within their organisation, which may have a different title, where staff will require to be registered to carry out the functions. Relationship based and person-centred practice as well as a human rights approach to practice is emphasised and addressed within the SSSC Codes of Practice.

UNISON

34. UNISON expressed the view that it was important for further work to be carried out to clarify the distinction in practice between the paraprofessional (Social Work Assistant) role and that of a qualified social worker. UNISON also expressed the view that it is important that arrangements are put in place to monitor and enforce the distinction between the two roles.
35. UNISON highlighted the potential for the proposed job role to unintentionally draw into scope Occupational Therapy (OT) Assistants and the complications of this in terms of the planned National Social Work Agency (NSWA) potentially having oversight of the OT Assistant role but OTs excluded.
36. We agree that further work needs to be undertaken on the job role and functions for social work assistants.

Care Inspectorate

37. The Care Inspectorate queried whether the proposed qualifications for those working in offender accommodation services contained sufficient specialised knowledge which incorporates the management of risk and resettlement.
38. We have considered this feedback and as part of our current review of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) we have strengthened two standards to incorporate 'risk to others' and 'public protection'. Should Ministers agree to proceed with the registration of this group there is also the opportunity to strengthen 'risk to others' and 'public protection' within the CPL framework and develop learning and training resources specific to these areas.
39. The Care Inspectorate suggested inclusion of risk management and resettlement knowledge for practitioners as well as reference to attendance at Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) meetings or other justice-based multi-agency meetings. The Care Inspectorate also suggested

there should be consideration of incorporating managing people's restrictions within the job role and function as well as strengthening the supervisor role in ensuring that practitioners apply restrictions in a fair and reasonable manner.

40. There is reference to risk assessments and physical risk management in the list of practitioner functions as well as care planning which would include managing people's restrictions. Inter-disciplinary team working and planning is also in the list of practitioner functions.
41. The Care Inspectorate is currently undertaking a review of justice accommodation (offender accommodation) services and the outcome of this review may impact on our proposals for this group as it is likely that this group will increase in size as a consequence. At present there are approximately 85 people working across 5 registered offender accommodation services in Scotland. It is currently estimated that there may be up to 200 services delivering offender accommodation services that should be dual registered with the Care Inspectorate. As they will already be registered care services, it is likely that many of the workers will already be subject to SSSC registration.

GENERAL PUBLIC SURVEY

42. Key findings from the general public survey:
 - 93% of respondents answered 'yes' to 'Do you think registering social care workers is important for public protection'.
 - 86% of respondents answered 'very important' to 'How important is it that social care workers work to the same standards and have a Code of Practice?'
 - The top three responses to 'What do you think are the benefits of having a regulated social care workforce?' were 'public protection' 'skilled workforce' and 'meeting standards of care set out in the Codes of Practice'.
 - The top three responses to 'What are the qualities and values that you think are important for a social service worker?' were 'trustworthy' 'compassionate' and 'skilled'

NEXT STEPS

43. The SSSC will provide Scottish Government with the consultation findings and, if approved by Council, details of the role and functions descriptors, qualification, CPL requirements and fees for each proposed new group.

44. Scottish Government will decide whether or not to the expand the register to include the proposed new groups.
45. Expanding the register will require amendments to legislation and the Registration Rules.
46. The SSSC will work in partnership with Scottish Government to determine a timeline and implementation plan including a phased approach to the registration of any new groups.

RISKS

47. We have a cautious appetite to regulatory quality and effective regulatory functions.
48. There are risks to introducing new Register groups including pressure on the sector to achieve additional qualifications, however, it is anticipated that this should be implemented through a phased approach to minimise this risk.
49. There is a risk that by expanding the Register to new groups other workers in the workforce may feel more excluded. We will monitor this position and raise any feedback with Scottish Government.
50. Expanding the register will have significant and ongoing resource implications for the SSSC. There is a risk that Ministers decide to expand the Register without sufficient financial resources being made available to the SSSC.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

51. If adding the new groups to the Register, an amendment to legislation and changes to our Registration Rules will be required before making any changes to the Register.
52. If new groups are added to the Register, additional resourcing will be required to support the increased effort to process new applications and the ongoing registration of these new groups. An increase in register size will result in an increase in Fitness to Practise cases, Subject Access Requests etc.
53. Staffing resource will be required to benchmark qualifications we accept for new groups including, equivalent qualifications, legacy qualifications and qualifications meeting the requirements of other regulatory bodies.

- 54. When the register opens there will be an increase in qualification assessments to determine if a worker holds a qualification equivalent to requirements.
- 55. Resource implications have been provided to Scottish Government as part of the scoping work.

Compliance

- 56. If approved, the proposals will require changes to legislation and Registration Rules.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 57. We developed an Impact Assessment which forms a background paper to this report. We concluded that the recommendations in this report concern our Public Sector Equality Duty and the Impact Assessment documents the steps we are taking in relation to those with protected characteristics.
- 58. Responses in the survey raised concern about impact of the proposals on female workers in the new groups, particularly those with caring responsibilities. Concern was also raised regarding the impact of achieving qualifications for those nearing retirement.
- 59. We will keep the Impact Assessment under review.

CONCLUSION

- 60. The Council is asked to approve the job role and function descriptors, qualification requirements, CPL requirements and fee levels for the proposed new groups, as set out in the report, for submission to Scottish Government should they decide to expand the Register

Expanding the Register Consultation

This document details responses to the online consultation Expanding the Register.

Total responses: 370

About You

Q: Are you responding:

Responses: 369

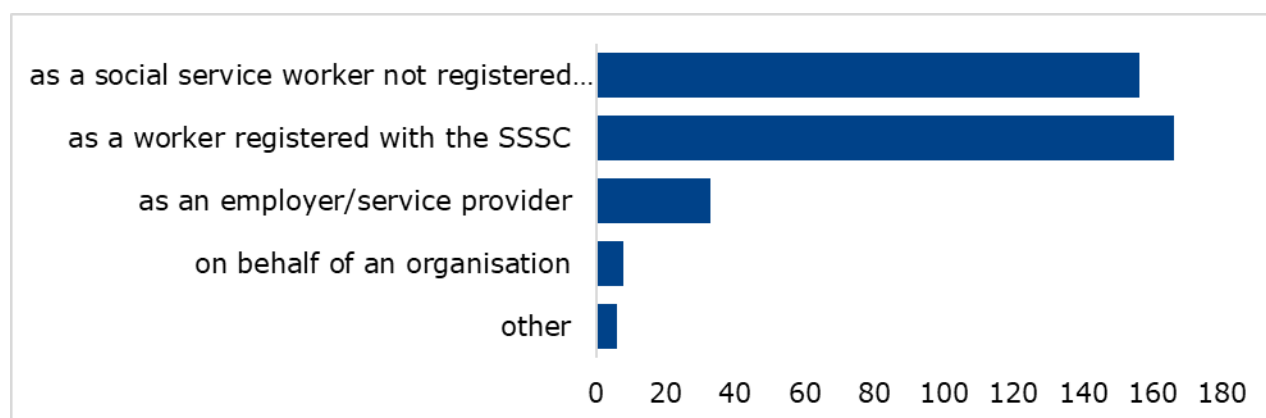


Table 1

Response	Number	Percent
as a social service worker not registered with the SSSC	156	42.3%
as a worker registered with the SSSC	166	45.0%
as an employer/service provider	33	8.9%
on behalf of an organisation	8	2.2%
other	6	1.6%

Q: Please tell us what Register part(s) you are on:

Responses: 163

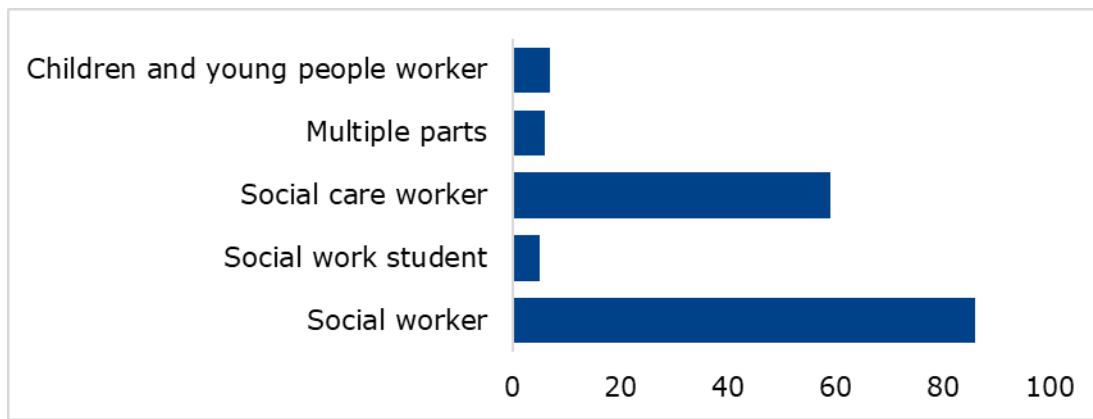


Table 2

Response	Number	Percent
Children and young people worker	7	4.3%
Multiple parts	6	3.7%
Social care worker	59	36.2%
Social work student	5	3.1%
Social worker	86	52.8%

Q: How long have you been registered with the SSSC?

Responses: 166

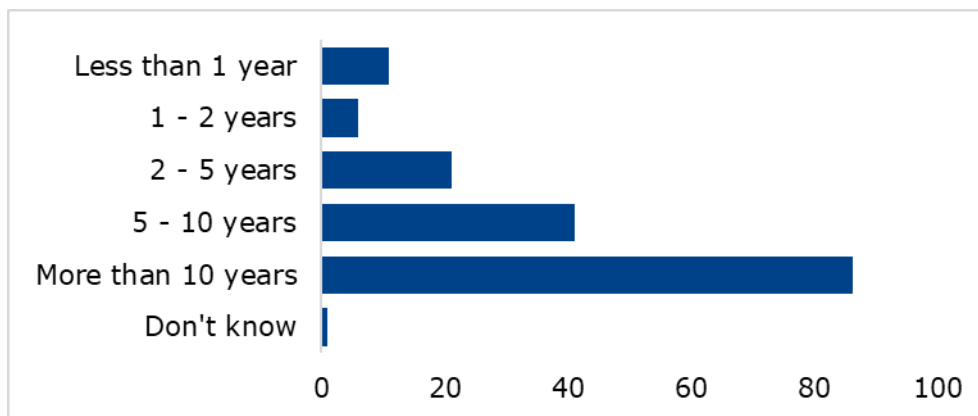


Table 3

Response	Number	Percent
Less than 1 year	11	6.6%
1 - 2 years	6	3.6%
2 - 5 years	21	12.7%
5 - 10 years	41	24.7%
More than 10 years	86	51.8%
Don't know	1	0.6%

Q: What is the name of your organisation?

Responses: 358

The 193 unique values recorded in response to this question have been categorised into Health Board, Local Authority, Private, Voluntary and Other.

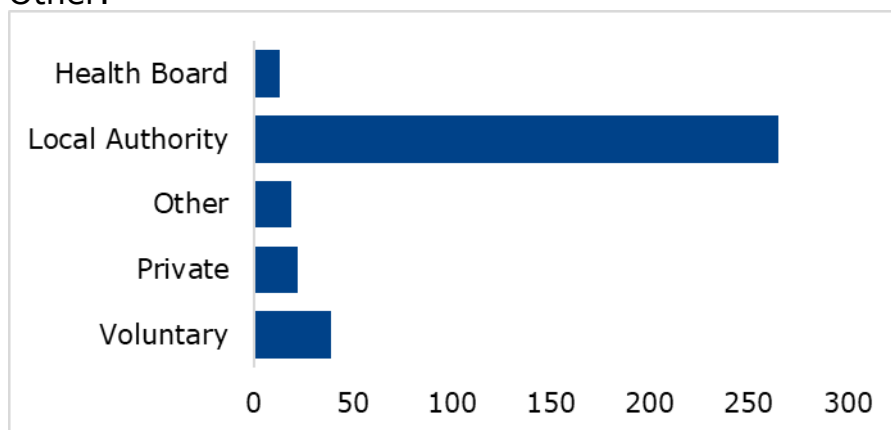


Table 4

Response	Number	Percent
Health Board	13	3.6%
Local Authority	265	74.0%
Other	19	5.3%
Private	22	6.1%
Voluntary	39	10.9%

Q: What is the role within your organisation?

Responses: 360

The 180 unique values recorded in response to this question have been categorised into role groups.

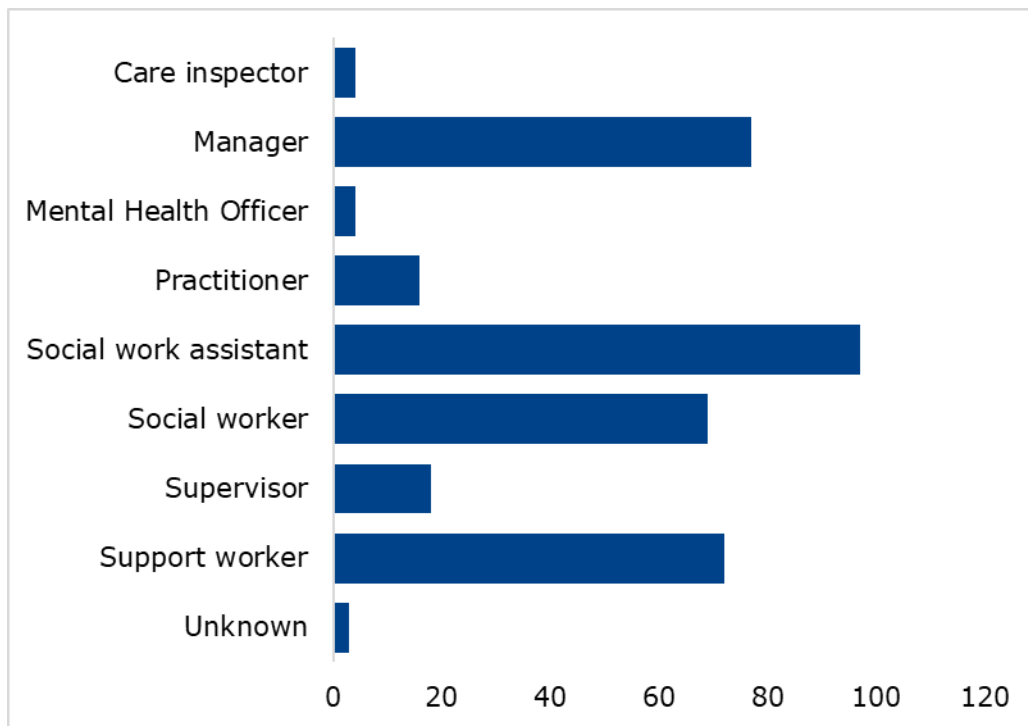


Table 5

Response	Number	Percent
Care inspector	4	1.1%
Manager	77	21.4%
Mental Health Officer	4	1.1%
Practitioner	16	4.4%
Social work assistant	97	26.9%
Social worker	69	19.2%
Supervisor	18	5.0%
Support worker	72	20.0%
Unknown	3	0.8%

Q: Which local authority area do you work in?

Responses: 354

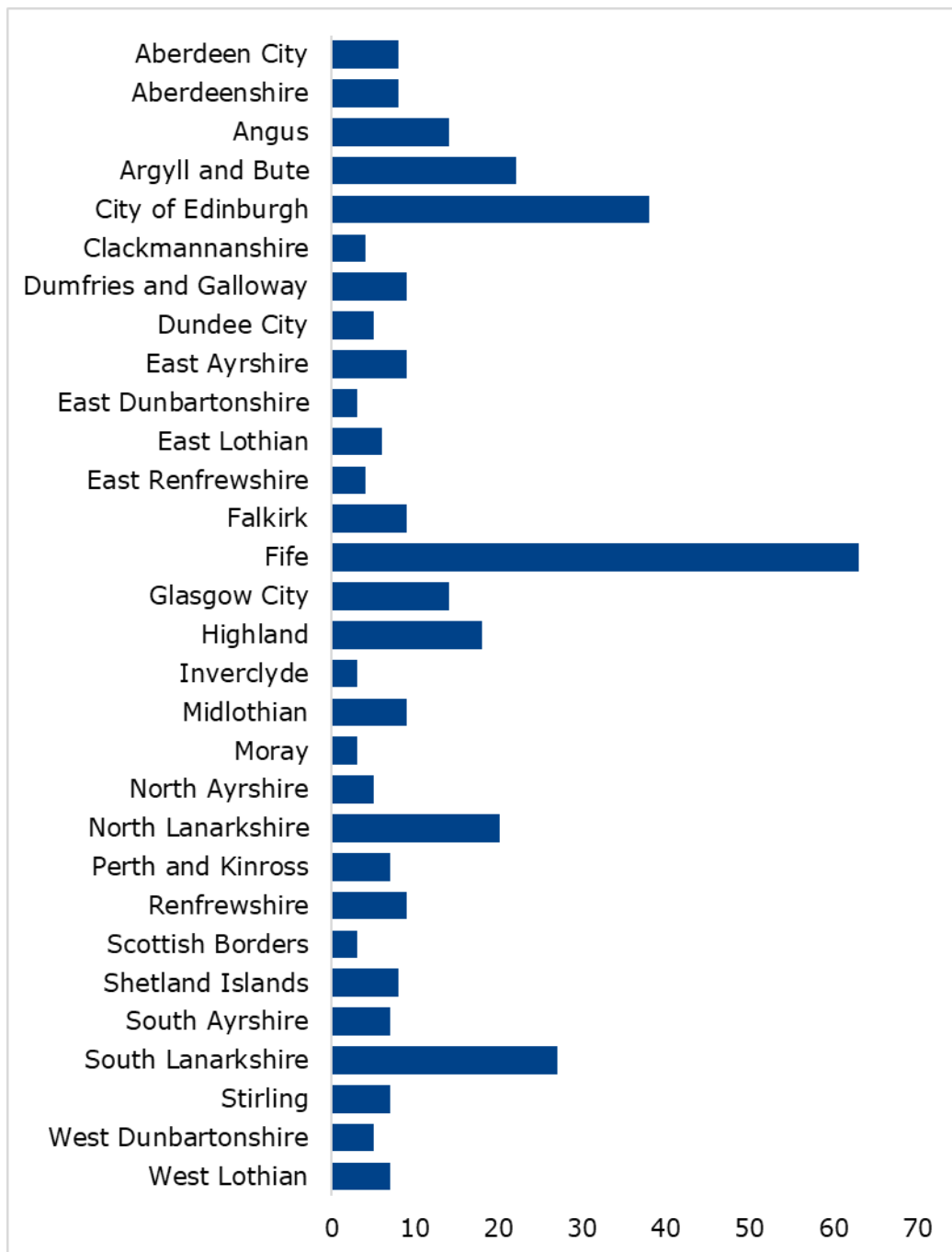


Table 6

Response	Number	Percent
Aberdeen City	8	2.3%
Aberdeenshire	8	2.3%
Angus	14	4.0%
Argyll and Bute	22	6.2%
City of Edinburgh	38	10.7%
Clackmannanshire	4	1.1%
Dumfries and Galloway	9	2.5%
Dundee City	5	1.4%
East Ayrshire	9	2.5%
East Dunbartonshire	3	0.9%

East Lothian	6	1.7%
East Renfrewshire	4	1.1%
Falkirk	9	2.5%
Fife	63	17.8%
Glasgow City	14	4.0%
Highland	18	5.1%
Inverclyde	3	0.9%
Midlothian	9	2.5%
Moray	3	0.9%
North Ayrshire	5	1.4%
North Lanarkshire	20	5.7%
Perth and Kinross	7	2.0%
Renfrewshire	9	2.5%
Scottish Borders	3	0.9%
Shetland Islands	8	2.3%
South Ayrshire	7	2.0%
South Lanarkshire	27	7.6%
Stirling	7	2.0%
West Dunbartonshire	5	1.4%
West Lothian	7	2.0%

Adult Day Care

Q: Do you wish to answer the consultation questions in relation to the proposed new Register groups for adult day care services?

Responses: 365

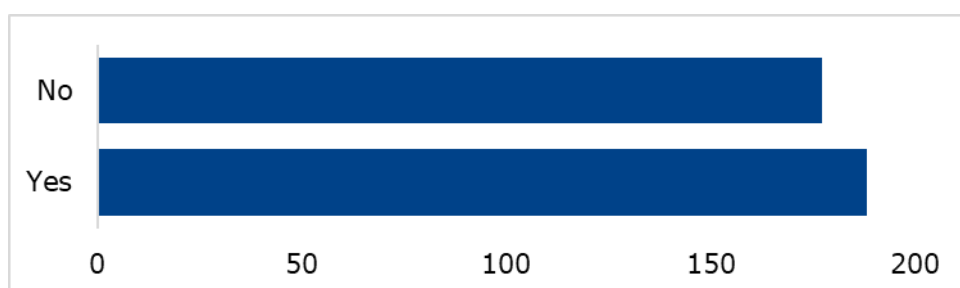


Table 7

Response	Number	Percent
No	177	48.5%
Yes	188	51.5%

Adult Day Care - Support Worker

Q: Do you wish to answer the consultation questions in relation to support worker - adult day care service?

Responses: 191

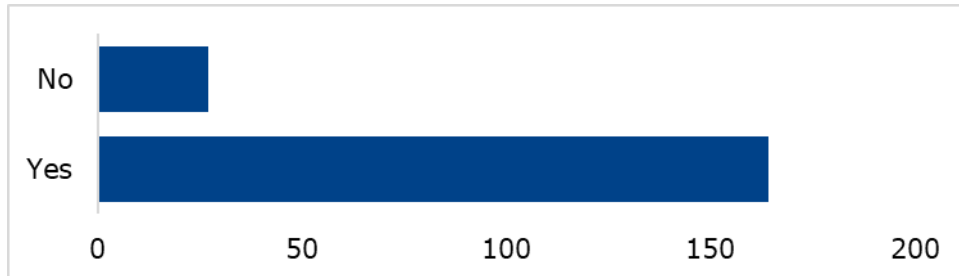


Table 8

Response	Number	Percent
No	27	14.1%
Yes	164	85.9%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed job role and function for support workers in an adult day care service?

Responses: 163

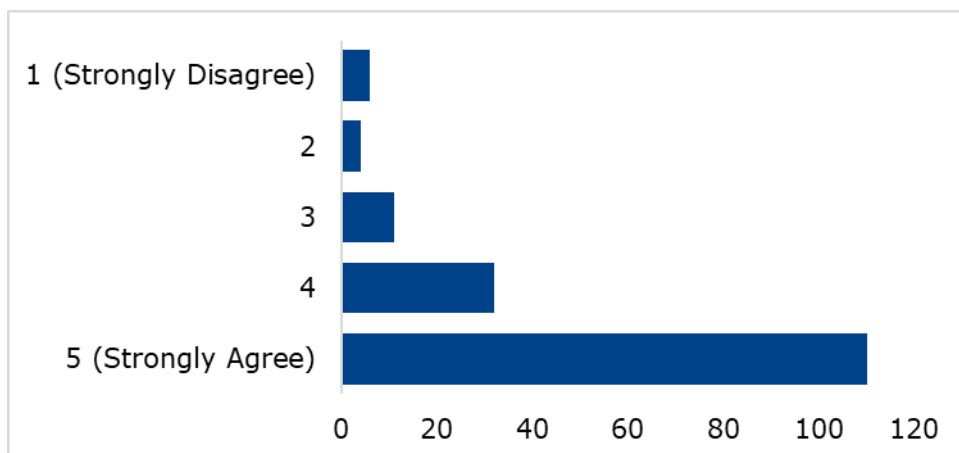


Table 9

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	6	3.7%
2	4	2.5%
3	11	6.7%
4	32	19.6%
5 (Strongly Agree)	110	67.5%

Q: To what extent do you agree that support workers in an adult day care service should be registered with the SSSC?

Responses: 162

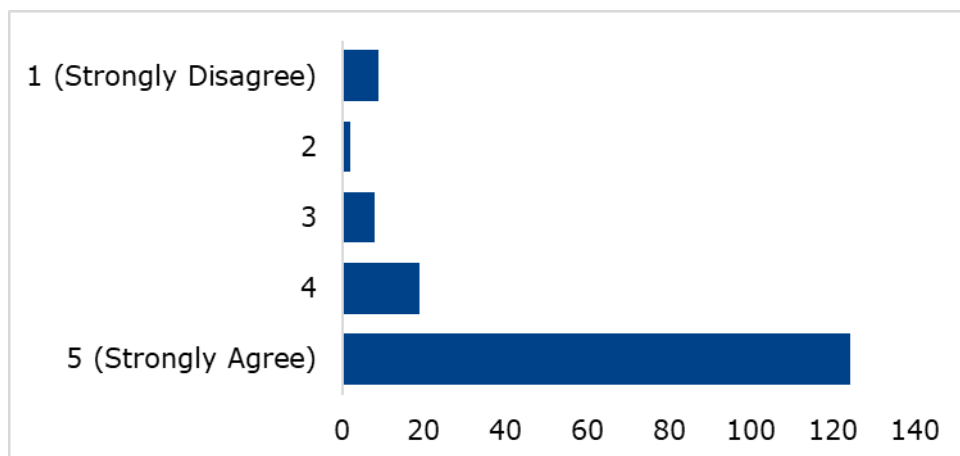


Table 10

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	9	5.6%
2	2	1.2%
3	8	4.9%
4	19	11.7%
5 (Strongly Agree)	124	76.5%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed qualification requirements for support workers in an adult day care service?

Responses: 164

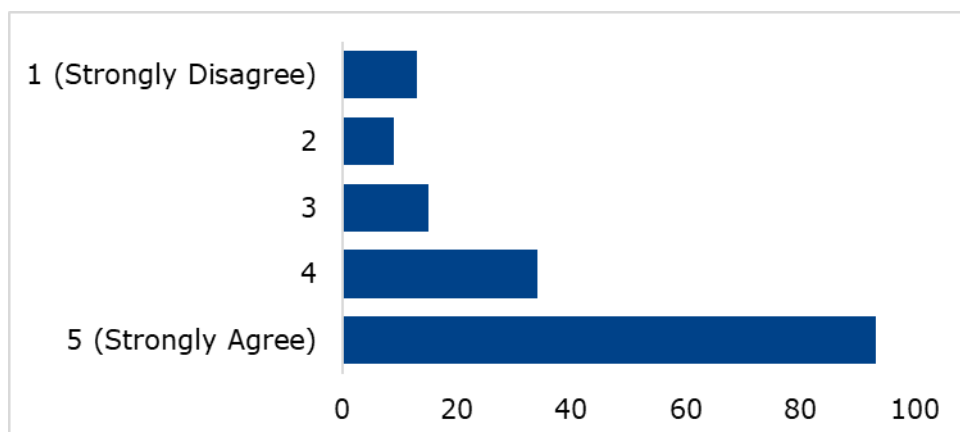


Table 11

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	13	7.9%
2	9	5.5%
3	15	9.2%
4	34	20.7%

5 (Strongly Agree)	93	56.7%
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Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed registration fee for support workers in an adult day care service?

Responses: 163

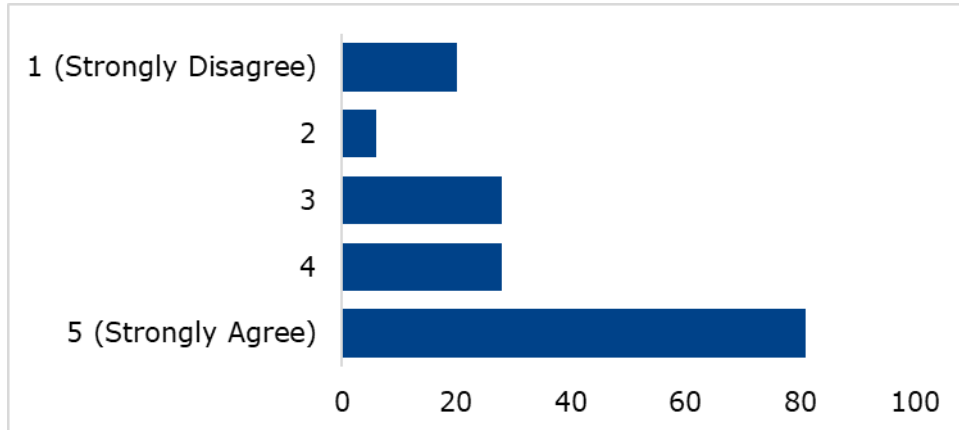


Table 12

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	20	12.3%
2	6	3.7%
3	28	17.2%
4	28	17.2%
5 (Strongly Agree)	81	49.7%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed CPL requirements for support workers in an adult day care service?

Responses: 163

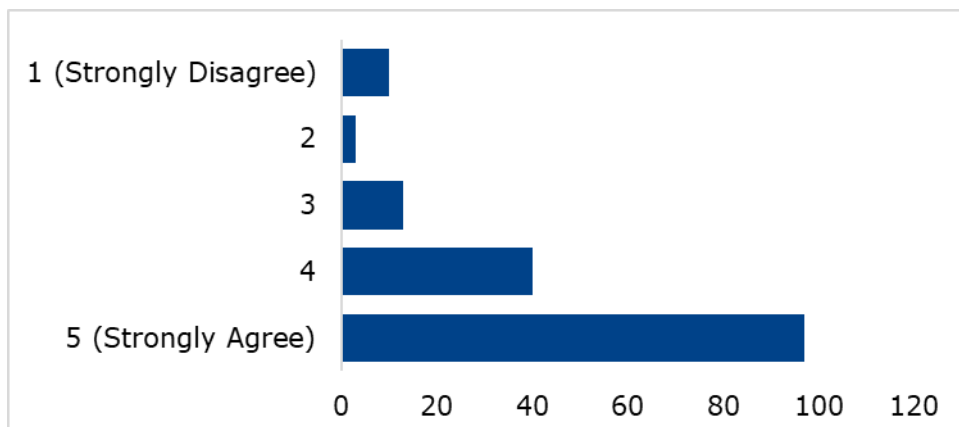


Table 13

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	10	6.1%
2	3	1.8%

3	13	8.0%
4	40	24.5%
5 (Strongly Agree)	97	59.5%

Adult Day Care – Practitioner

Q: Do you wish to answer the consultation questions in relation to practitioner - adult day care service?

Responses: 191

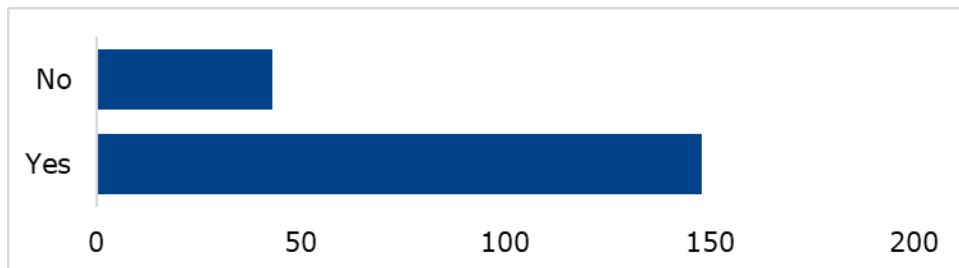


Table 14

Response	Number	Percent
No	43	22.5%
Yes	148	77.5%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed job role and function for practitioners in an adult day care service?

Responses: 147

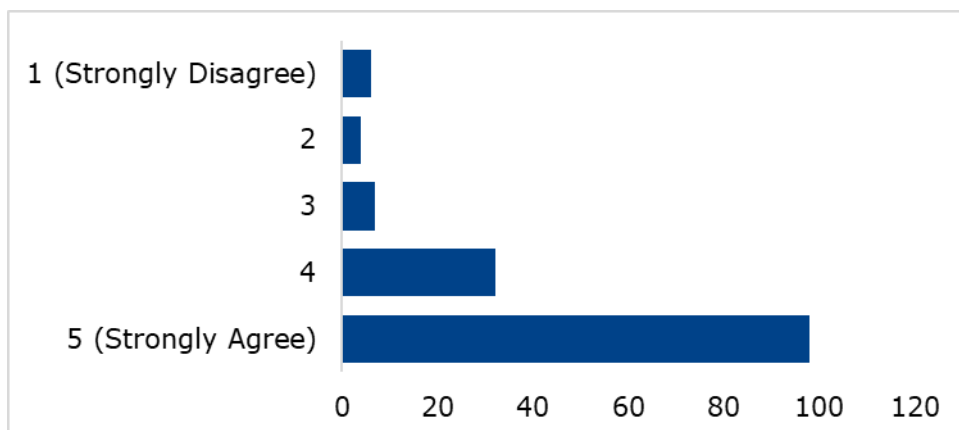


Table 15

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	6	4.1%
2	4	2.7%
3	7	4.8%
4	32	21.8%

5 (Strongly Agree)	98	66.7%
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Q: To what extent do you agree that practitioners in an adult day care service should be registered with the SSSC?

Responses: 146

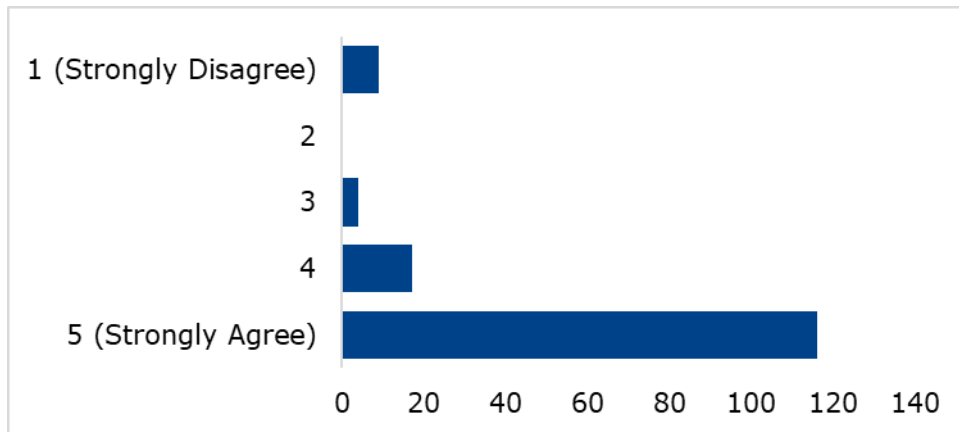


Table 16

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	9	6.2%
2	0	0.0%
3	4	2.7%
4	17	11.6%
5 (Strongly Agree)	116	79.5%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed qualification requirements for practitioners in an adult day care service?

Responses: 145

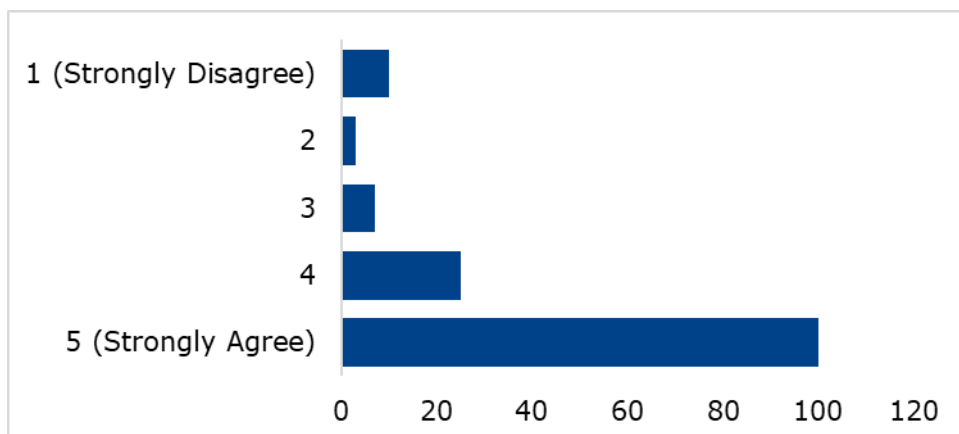


Table 17

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	10	6.9%
2	3	2.1%

3	7	4.8%
4	25	17.2%
5 (Strongly Agree)	100	69.0%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed registration fee for practitioners in an adult day care service?

Responses: 146

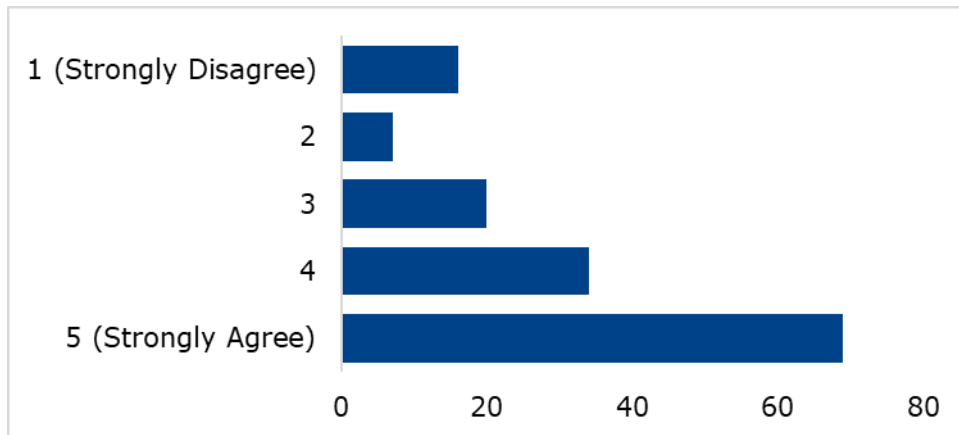


Table 18

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	16	11.0%
2	7	4.8%
3	20	13.7%
4	34	23.3%
5 (Strongly Agree)	69	47.3%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed CPL requirements for practitioners in an adult day care service?

Responses: 145

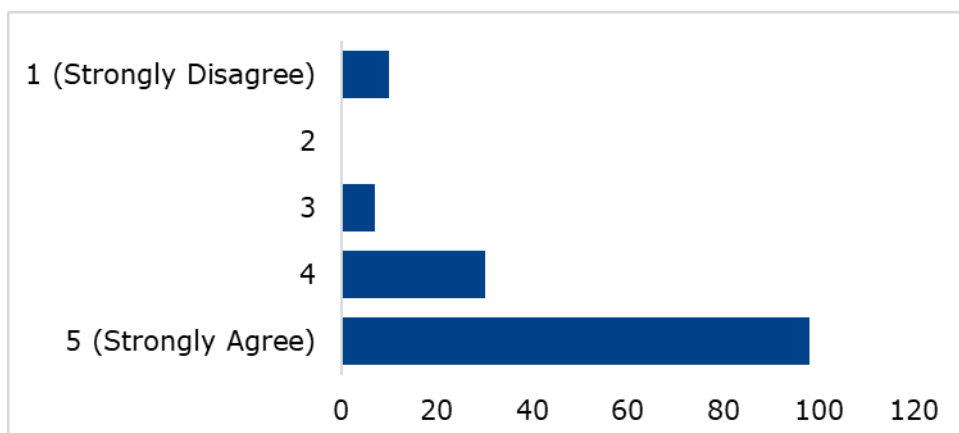


Table 19

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	10	6.9%

2	0	0.0%
3	7	4.8%
4	30	20.7%
5 (Strongly Agree)	98	67.6%

Adult Day Care – Supervisor

Q: Do you wish to answer the consultation questions in relation to supervisor - adult day care service?

Responses: 191

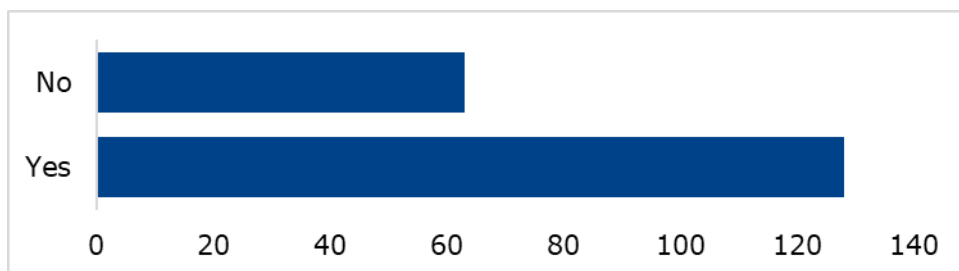


Table 20

Response	Number	Percent
No	63	33.0%
Yes	128	67.0%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed job role and function for supervisors in an adult day care service?

Responses: 127

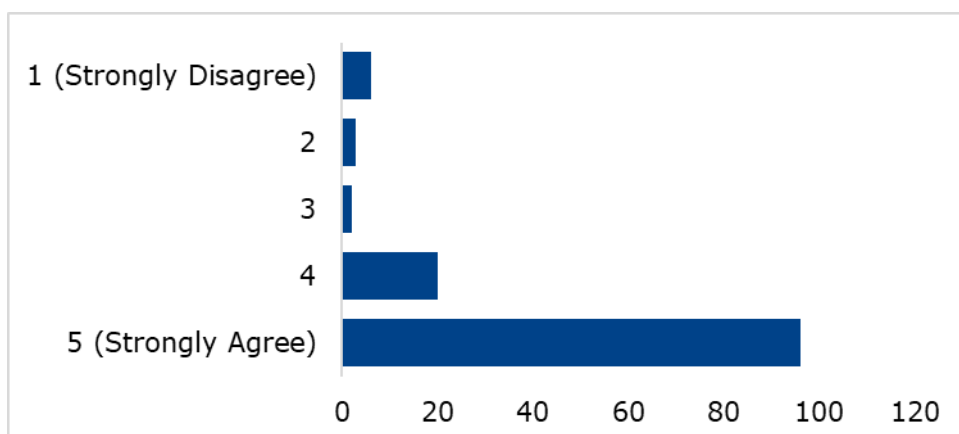


Table 21

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	6	4.7%

2	3	2.4%
3	2	1.6%
4	20	15.7%
5 (Strongly Agree)	96	75.6%

Q: To what extent do you agree that supervisors in an adult day care service should be registered with the SSSC?

Responses: 127

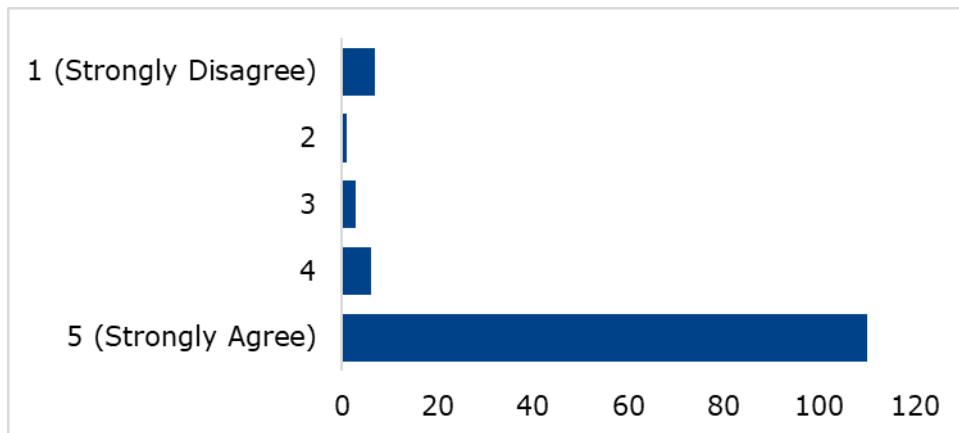


Table 22

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	7	5.5%
2	1	0.80%
3	3	2.4%
4	6	4.7%
5 (Strongly Agree)	110	86.6%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed qualification requirements for supervisors in an adult day care service?

Responses: 126

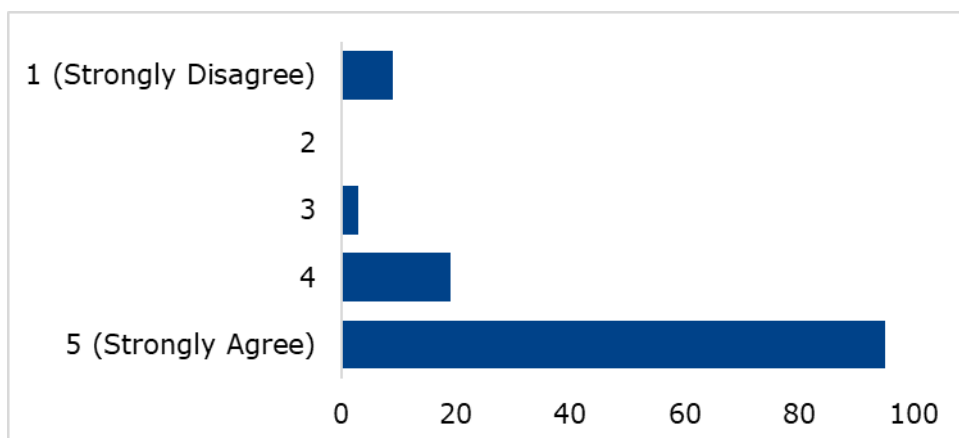


Table 23

Response	Number	Percent
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1 (Strongly Disagree)	9	7.1%
2	0	0.0%
3	3	2.4%
4	19	15.1%
5 (Strongly Agree)	95	75.4%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed registration fee for supervisors in an adult day care service?

Responses: 126

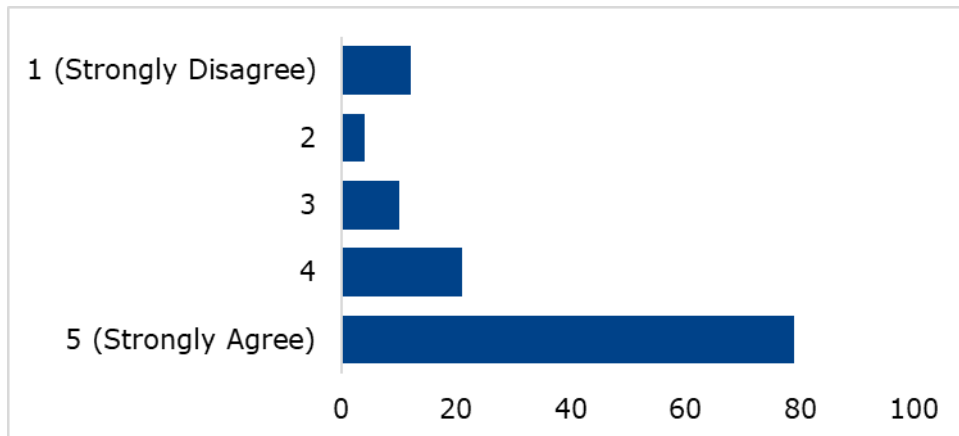


Table 24

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	12	9.5%
2	4	3.2%
3	10	7.9%
4	21	16.7%
5 (Strongly Agree)	79	62.7%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed CPL requirements for supervisors in an adult day care service?

Responses: 127

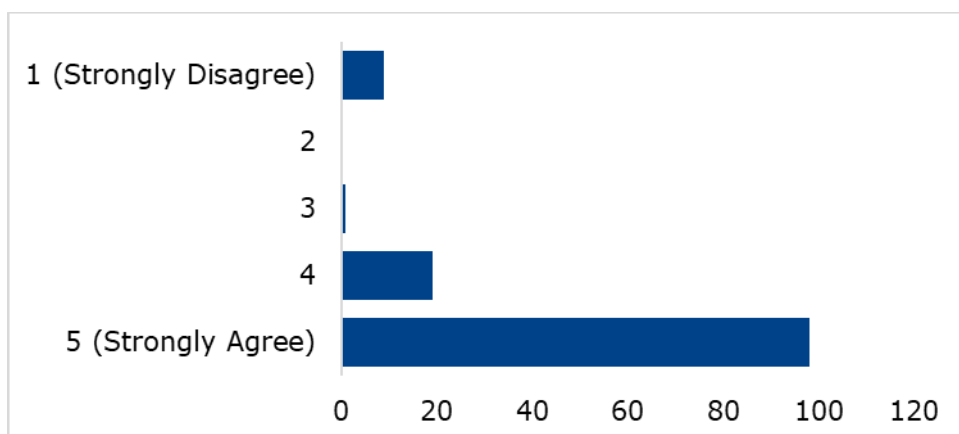


Table 25

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	9	7.1%
2	0	0
3	1	0.8%
4	19	15.0%
5 (Strongly Agree)	98	77.2%

Offender Accommodation Services

Q: Do you wish to answer the consultation questions in relation to the proposed new Register groups for offender accommodation services?

Responses: 365

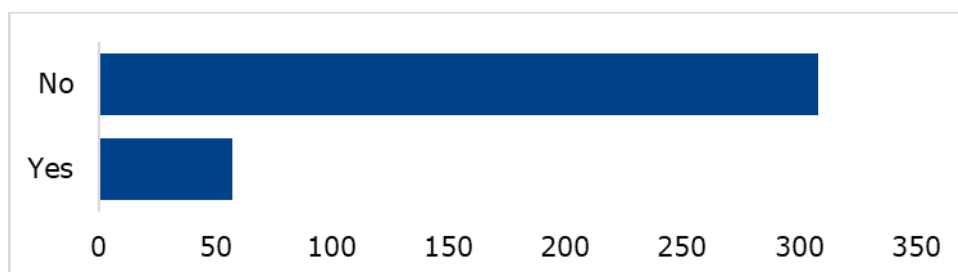


Table 26

Response	Number	Percent
No	308	84.4%
Yes	57	15.6%

Offender Accommodation Services – Practitioner

Q: Do you wish to answer the consultation questions in relation to practitioner - offender accommodation service?

Responses: 59

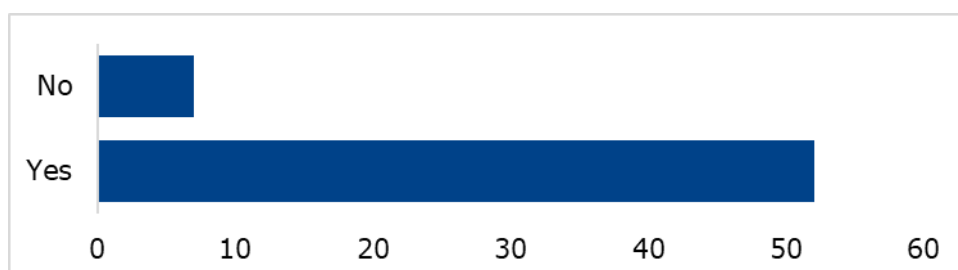


Table 27

Response	Number	Percent
No	7	11.9%
Yes	52	88.1%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed job role and function for practitioners in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 52

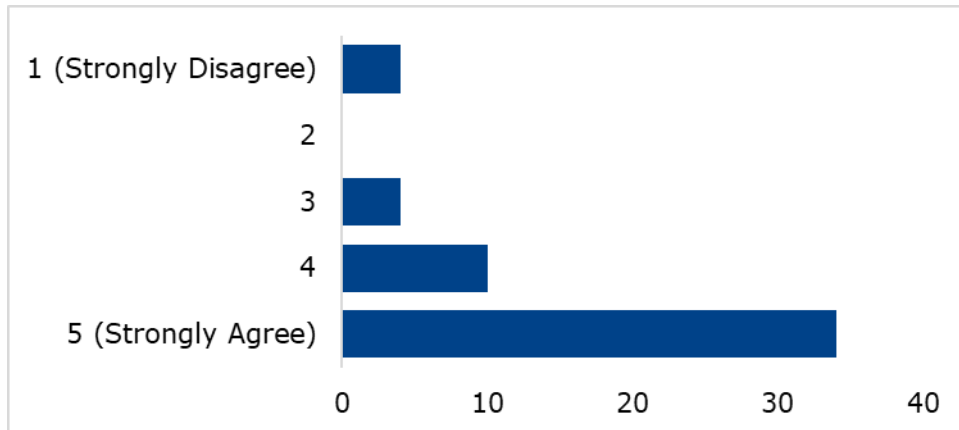


Table 28

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	4	7.7%
2	0	0.0%
3	4	7.7%
4	10	19.2%
5 (Strongly Agree)	34	65.4%

Q: To what extent do you agree that practitioners in an offender accommodation service should be registered with the SSSC?

Responses: 53

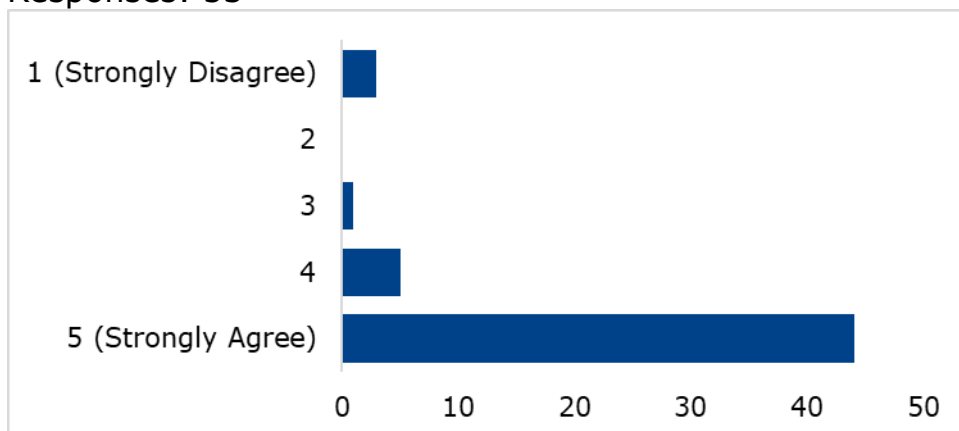


Table 29

Response	Number	Percent
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1 (Strongly Disagree)	3	5.7%
2	0	0.0%
3	1	1.9%
4	5	9.4%
5 (Strongly Agree)	44	83.0%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed qualification requirements for practitioners in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 51

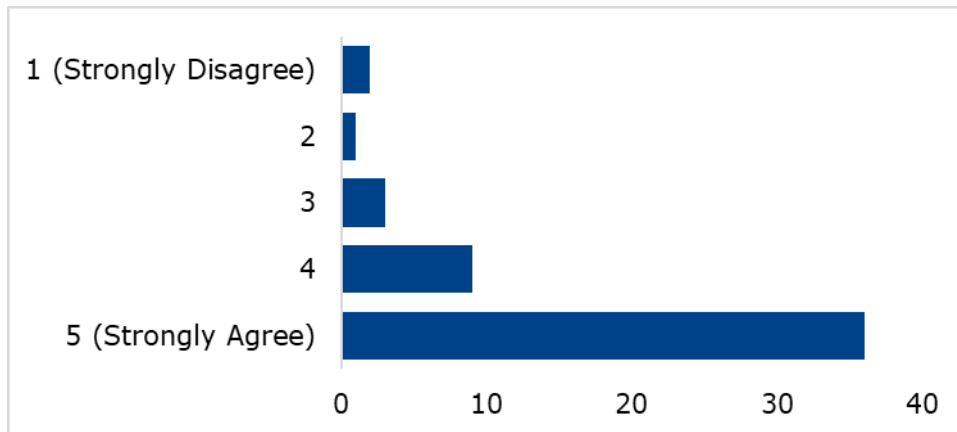


Table 30

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	2	3.9%
2	1	2.0%
3	3	5.9%
4	9	17.6%
5 (Strongly Agree)	36	70.6%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed registration fee for practitioners in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 52

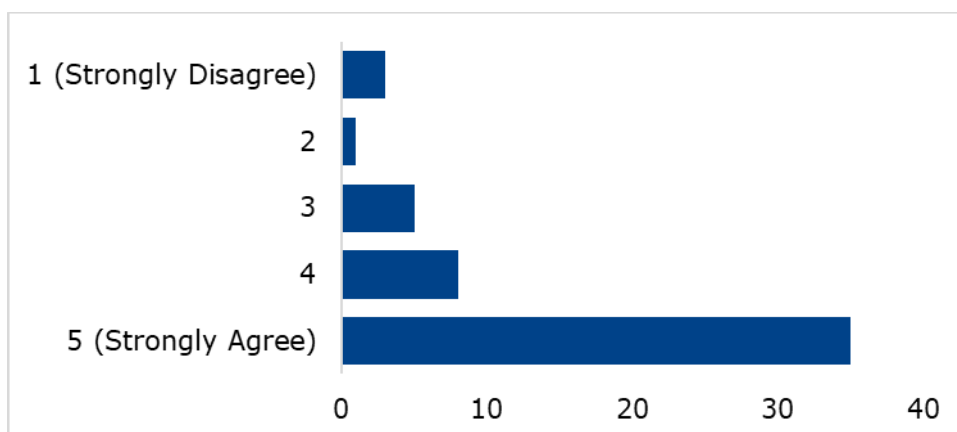


Table 31

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	3	5.8%
2	1	1.9%
3	5	9.6%
4	8	15.4%
5 (Strongly Agree)	35	67.3%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed CPL requirements for practitioners in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 51

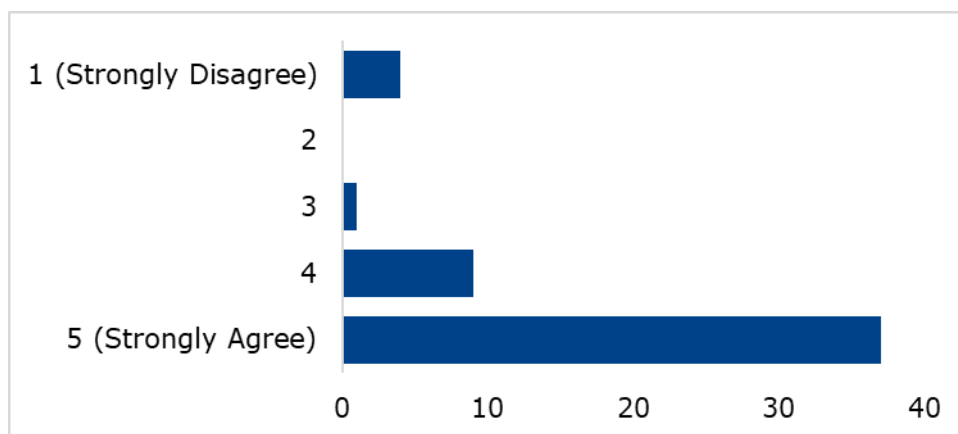


Table 32

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	4	7.8%
2	0	0.0%
3	1	2.0%
4	9	17.6%
5 (Strongly Agree)	37	72.5%

Offender Accommodation Services – Supervisor

Q: Do you wish to answer the consultation questions in relation to supervisor - offender accommodation service?

Responses: 58

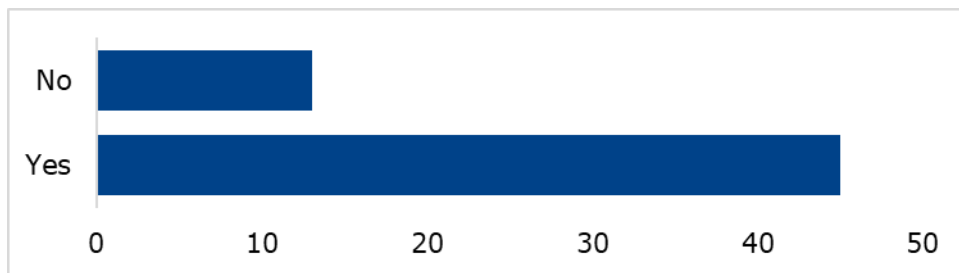


Table 33

Response	Number	Percent
No	13	22.4%
Yes	45	77.6%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed job role and function for supervisors in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 45

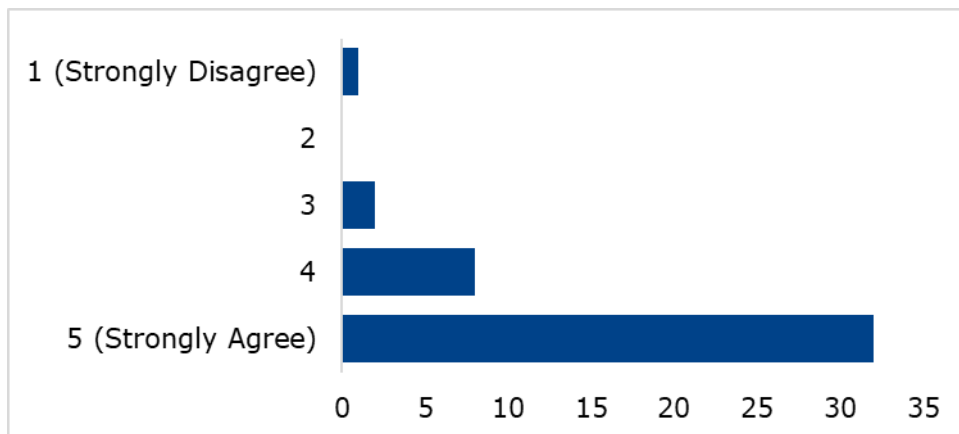


Table 34

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	1	6.7%
2	0	0.0%
3	2	4.4%
4	8	17.8%
5 (Strongly Agree)	32	71.1%

Q: To what extent do you agree that supervisors in an offender accommodation service should be registered with the SSSC?

Responses: 47

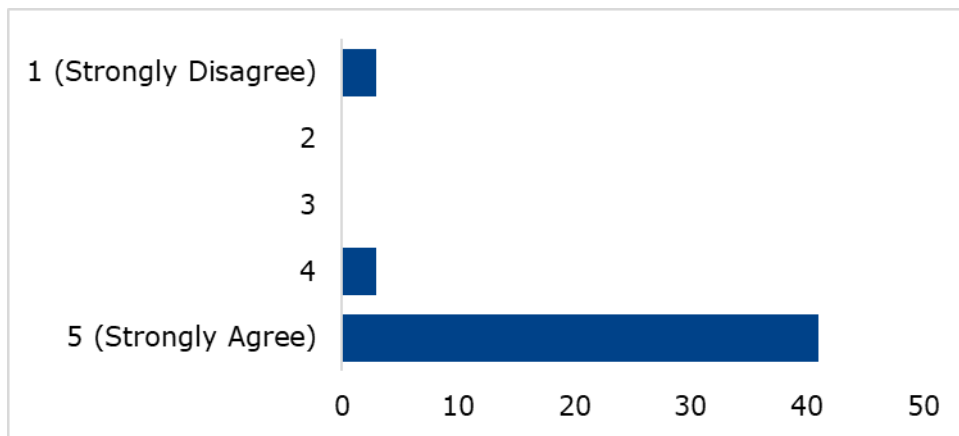


Table 35

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	3	6.4%
2	0	0.0%
3	0	0.0%
4	3	6.4%
5 (Strongly Agree)	41	87.2%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed qualification requirements for supervisors in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 46

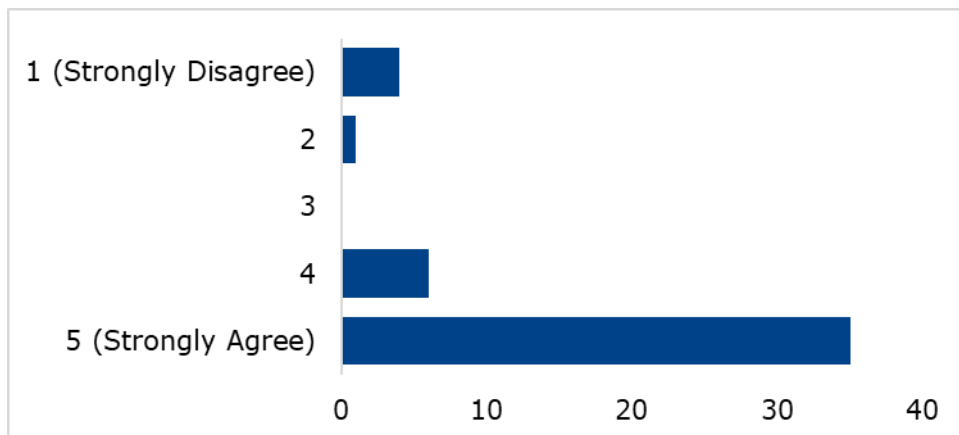


Table 36

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	4	8.7%
2	1	2.2%
3	0	0.0%
4	6	13.0%
5 (Strongly Agree)	35	76.1%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed registration fee for supervisors in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 46

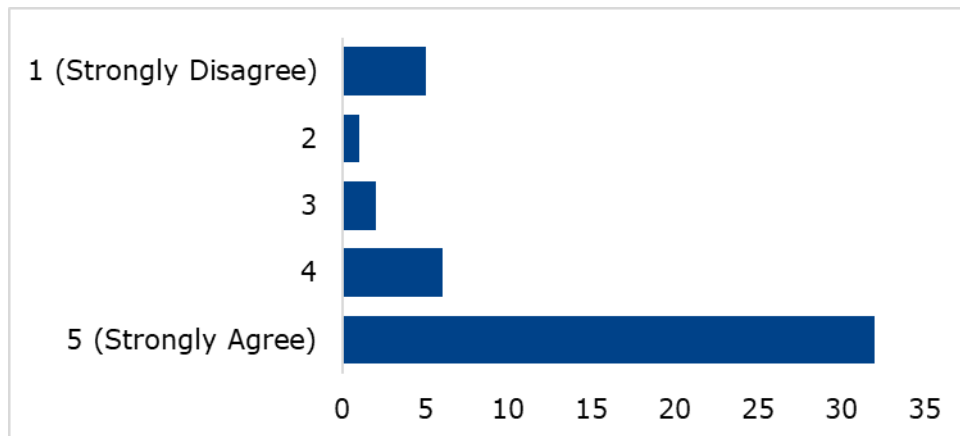


Table 37

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	5	10.9%
2	1	2.2%
3	2	4.3%
4	6	13.0%
5 (Strongly Agree)	32	69.6%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed CPL requirements for supervisors in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 46

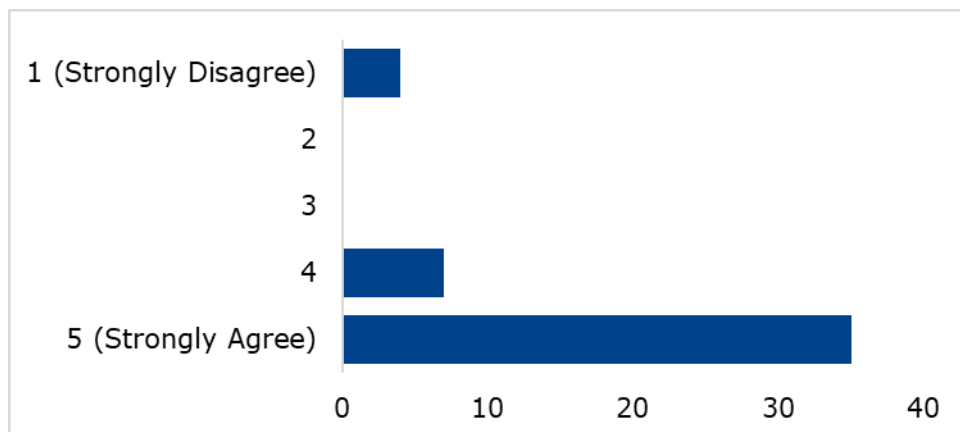


Table 38

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	4	8.7%
2	0	0.0%
3	0	0.0%
4	7	15.2%
5 (Strongly Agree)	35	76.1%

Offender Accommodation Services – Manager

Q: Do you wish to answer the consultation questions in relation to manager - offender accommodation service?

Responses: 60

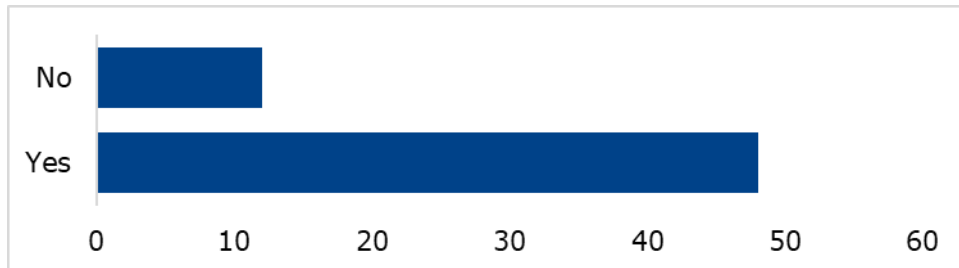


Table 39

Response	Number	Percent
No	12	20.0%
Yes	48	80.0%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed job role and function for managers in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 46

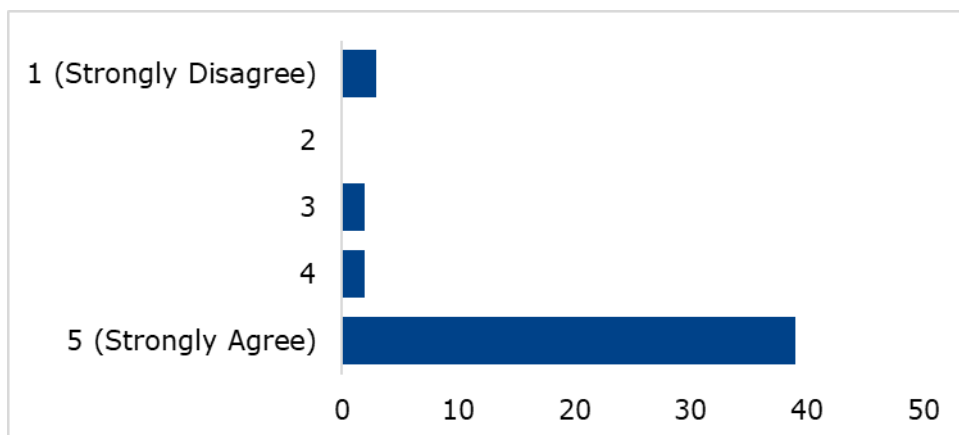


Table 40

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	3	6.5%
2	0	0.0%
3	2	4.3%
4	2	4.3%
5 (Strongly Agree)	39	84.8%

Q: To what extent do you agree that managers in an offender accommodation service should be registered with the SSSC?

Responses: 48

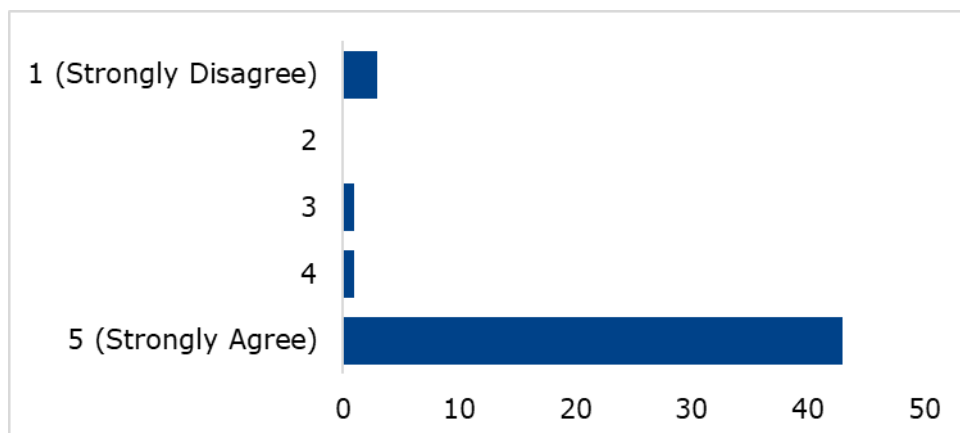


Table 41

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	3	6.3%
2	0	0.0%
3	1	2.1%
4	1	2.1%
5 (Strongly Agree)	43	89.6%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed qualification requirements for managers in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 47

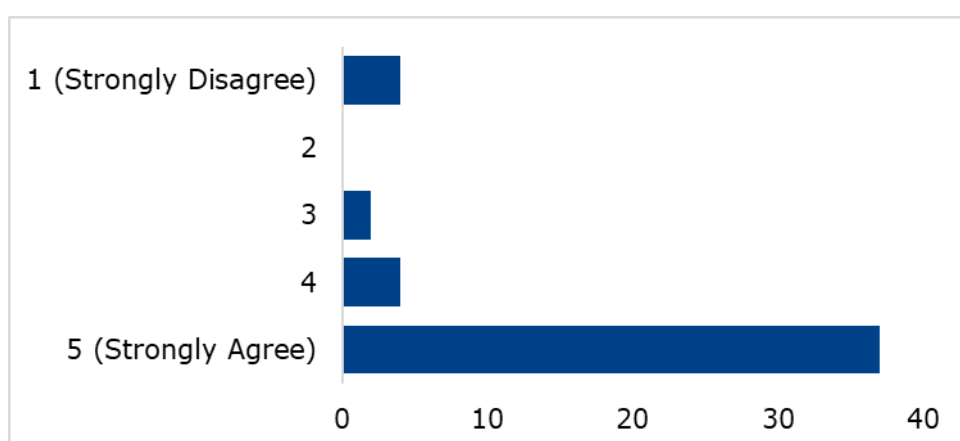


Table 42

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	4	8.5%
2	0	0.0%
3	2	4.3%

4	4	8.5%
5 (Strongly Agree)	37	78.7%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed registration fee for managers in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 46

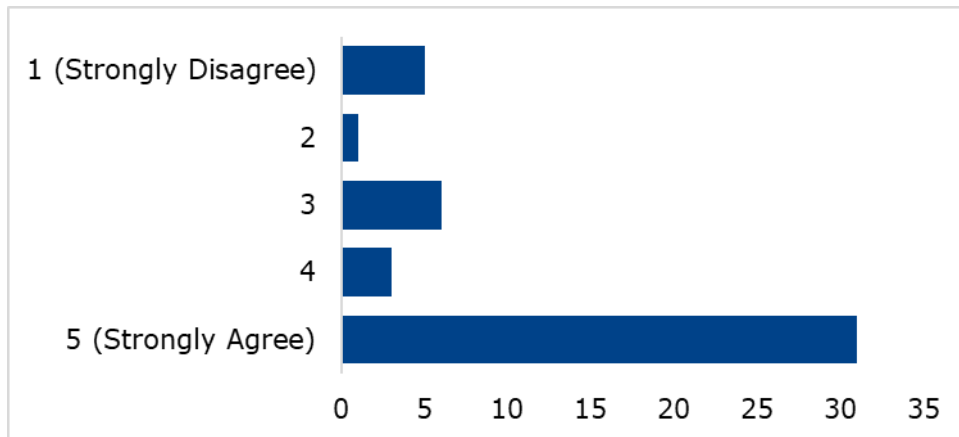


Table 43

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	5	10.9%
2	1	2.2%
3	6	13.0%
4	3	6.5%
5 (Strongly Agree)	31	67.4%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed CPL requirements for managers in an offender accommodation service?

Responses: 47

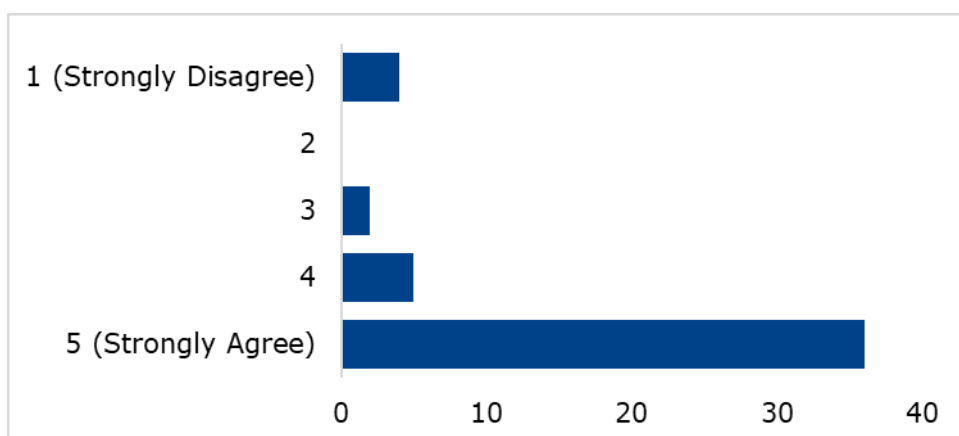


Table 44

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	4	8.5%

2	0	0.0%
3	2	4.3%
4	5	10.6%
5 (Strongly Agree)	36	76.6%

Social Work Assistants

Q: Do you wish to answer the consultation questions in relation to social work assistants?

Responses: 367

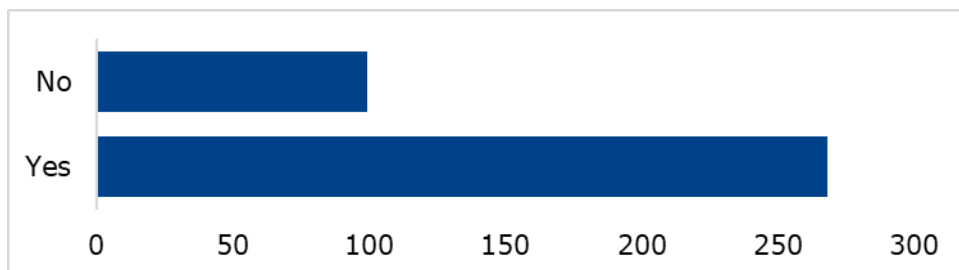


Table 45

Response	Number	Percent
No	99	27.0%
Yes	268	73.0%

Q: To what extent do you agree that this describes a social work assistant?

Responses: 268

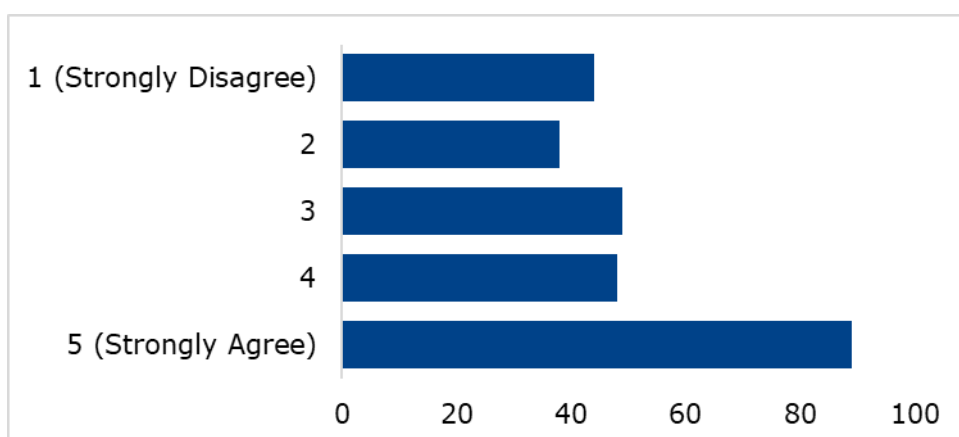


Table 46

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	44	16.4%
2	38	14.2%

3	49	18.3%
4	48	17.9%
5 (Strongly Agree)	89	33.2%

Q: To what extent do you agree that this describes the function of a social work assistant?

Responses: 267

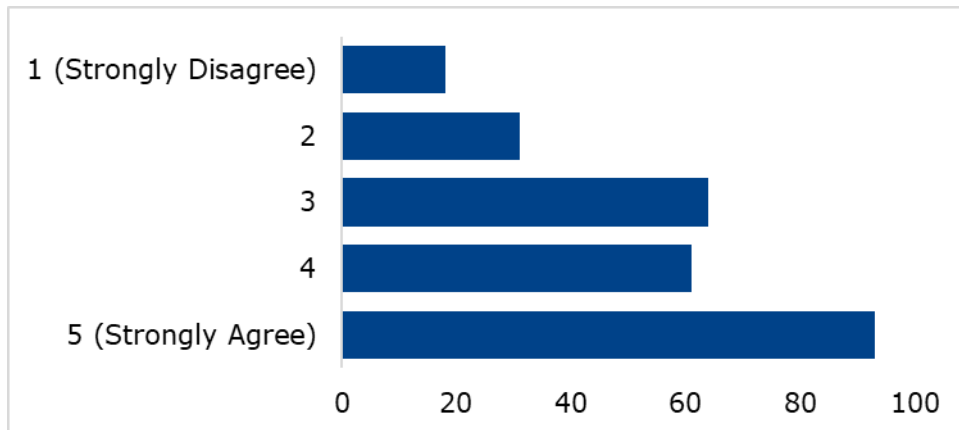


Table 47

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	18	6.7%
2	31	11.6%
3	64	24.0%
4	61	22.8%
5 (Strongly Agree)	93	34.8%

Q: To what extent do you agree that social work assistants should be registered with the SSSC? (Due to an error in the survey the first 140 respondents who answered 'Yes' to answer questions on social work assistants were not asked this question).

Responses: 128

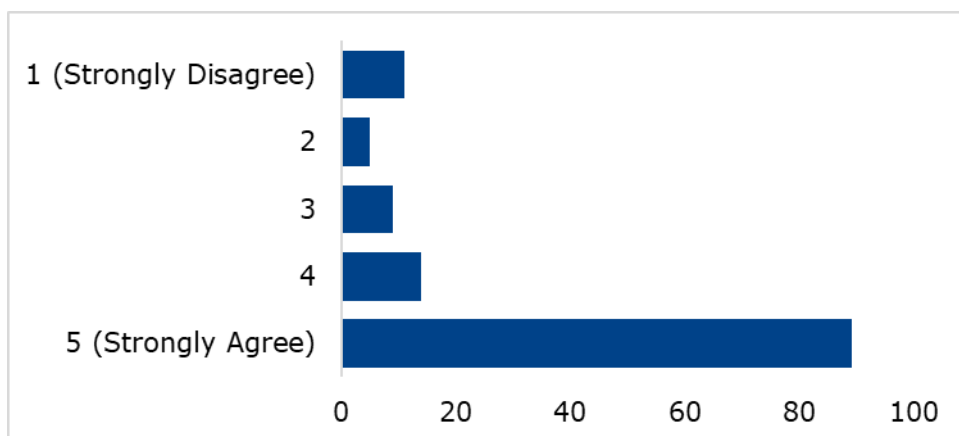


Table 48

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	11	8.6%
2	5	3.9%
3	9	7.0%
4	14	10.9%
5 (Strongly Agree)	89	69.5%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed qualification requirements for social work assistants?

Responses: 268

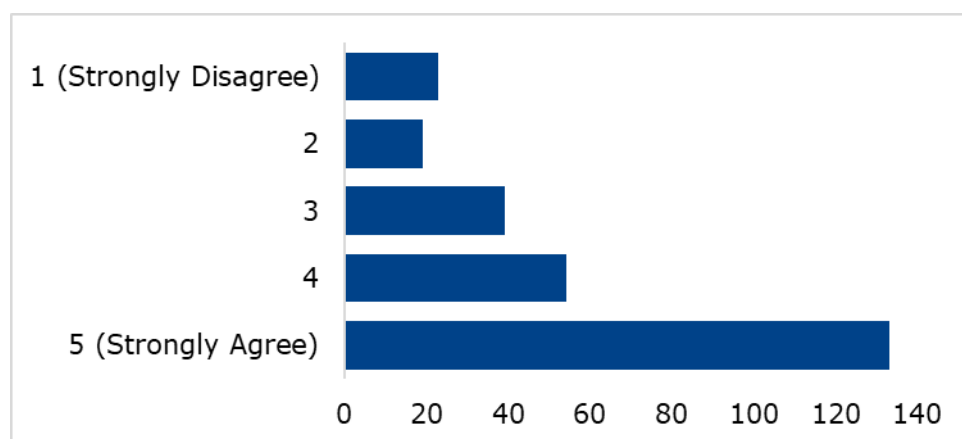


Table 49

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	23	8.6%
2	19	7.1%
3	39	14.6%
4	54	20.1%
5 (Strongly Agree)	133	49.6%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed registration fee for social work assistants?

Responses: 268

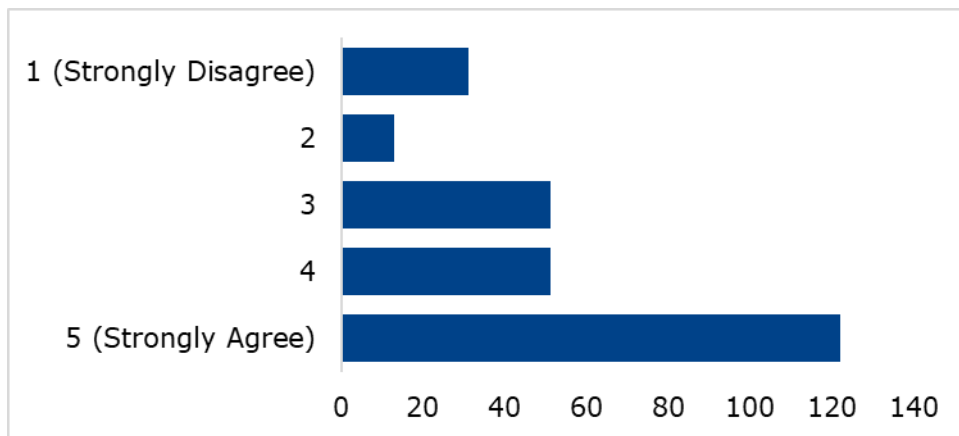


Table 50

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	31	11.6%
2	13	4.9%
3	51	19.0%
4	51	19.0%
5 (Strongly Agree)	122	45.5%

Q: To what extent do you agree with the proposed CPL requirements for social work assistants?

Responses: 268

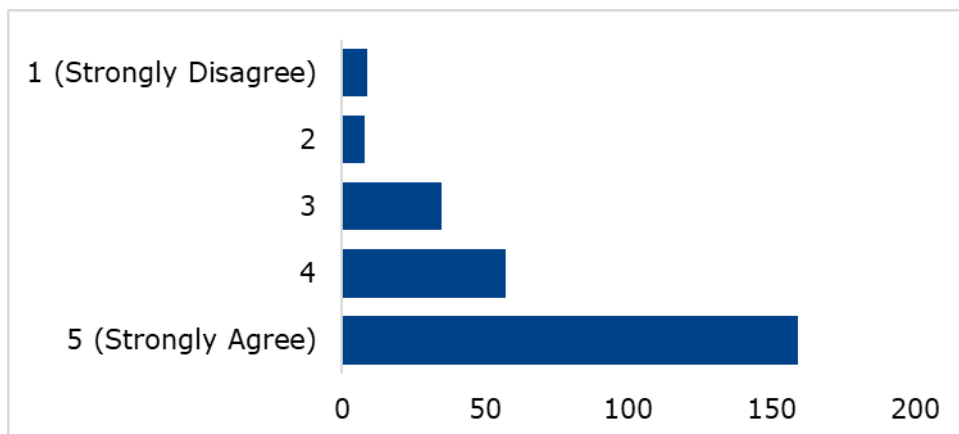


Table 51

Response	Number	Percent
1 (Strongly Disagree)	9	8.5%
2	8	0.0%
3	35	4.3%
4	57	10.6%
5 (Strongly Agree)	159	76.6%

Equalities Issues

Q: What, if any, do you see as the main equality related issues that you feel could arise from the proposals set out in this consultation?

Responses: 202

Of the 202 responses, 35 indicated that there did not see any equality related issues.

About You

Q: Do you wish to participate in equality, diversity and inclusion questions?

Responses: 370

Table 52

Response	Number	Percent
No	80	21.6%
Yes	290	78.4%

Q: What is your age group?

Responses: 287

Table 53

Response	Number	Percent
16 - 24	3	1.0%
35 - 44	64	22.3%
25 - 34	34	11.8%
45 - 54	89	31.0%
55 - 64	86	30.0%
65 or older	11	3.8%

Q: Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

Responses: 288

Table 54

Response	Number	Percent
No	220	76.4%
Prefer not to say	13	4.5%
Yes, limited a little	44	15.3%

Yes, limited a lot	11	3.8%
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Q: What is your ethnic group?

Responses: 286

Where a respondent answered in more than one ethnic group a calculation was used to select the most appropriate group.

Table 55

Response	Number	Percent
African, Scottish African or British African	Less than 10	*
Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian	Less than 10	*
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	Less than 10	*
Other ethnic group	Less than 10	*
White	276	96.5%

Q: What term best describes your sex?

Responses: 288

Table 56

Response	Number	Percent
Female	241	83.7%
Male	44	15.3%
Other	Less than 10	*
Prefer not to say	Less than 10	*

Q: Do you consider yourself to be trans, or have a trans history?

Responses: 280

Table 57

Response	Number	Percent
No	279	99.6%

An additional response was received in another category.

Q: What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?

Responses: 285

Table 58

Response	Number	Percent
Church of Scotland	38	13.3%
Muslim	Less than 10	*

None	153	53.7%
Other	13	4.6%
Other Christian	15	5.3%
Pagan	Less than 10	*
Prefer not to say	16	5.6%
Roman Catholic	45	15.8%

Q: Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

Responses: 277

Table 59

Response	Number	Percent
Bisexual	Less than 10	*
Gay/lesbian	11	4.0%
Heterosexual/straight	251	90.6%
Prefer not to say	Less than 10	*

Adult day care services

Support worker – adult day care services

Proposed job role and functions

Support workers are likely to undertake a range of tasks which will vary depending on the setting. They will ensure delegated tasks are carried out according to set schedules. They are responsible for developing their practice for the best outcome for the service and the individuals they support. The support worker reports to their line manager/supervisor who has responsibility for delegating tasks. A support worker will have direct engagement with individuals who use services to carry out a range of tasks.

A support worker in an adult day care service is likely to:

- support effective communication in day care services where adults are cared for or supported
- work with individuals to provide care and assist in activities to promote wellbeing and independence
- support individuals to communicate their food and drink choices and assist where necessary
- support individuals with their personal care needs including access and use of toilet facilities, maintain their personal hygiene and manage their personal appearance
- contribute to the implementation of care or support plan activities by carrying out specific activities, provide feedback and contribute to revisions eg how well activities meet individual preferences and help to achieve planned outcomes
- uphold the rights of individuals including the right to be in control of their lives, to be respected and to have personal information kept private
- relate to individuals and work in ways that support rights, inclusion and wellbeing of individuals
- keep self and individuals safe and secure including carrying out health and safety checks before you begin work activities, ensuring your actions support health and safety, and taking action to deal with emergencies
- develop practice including reflecting on your current skills and knowledge in the workplace, taking opportunities to improve your practice and applying learning in the workplace
- support the safeguarding of individuals eg clarify your own understanding about safeguarding and what you must do in cases of actual or potential harm or abuse.

Proposed qualification requirements

The proposed practice qualification is the SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 6.

The proposed qualification is in line with support workers in children and adult services.

Proposed Registration fee

All registrants must pay a fee. The proposed registration fee for support workers in adult day care services is set at the same level as the registration fee for other support workers which is currently £25 (fees are subject to change).

You can [see all our current registration fees here](#)

You can [read about proposed changes to registration fees here](#)

Proposed Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) requirements

CPL is necessary for the development of everyone who works in social work, social care and the children and young people workforce. CPL supports a workforce that is capable of designing, delivering, evaluating and improving high quality care and service.

You will have to show that you have engaged in CPL every year and you will be asked to undertake relevant learning which covers all of the core learning elements in the CPL model. We propose that CPL is in line with the requirements of workers who are registered on the social care and children and young people parts of the Register.

You can find out more about [the core learning elements and CPL requirements here](#)

Practitioners – adult day care services

Proposed job role and functions

Practitioners carry out a range of tasks whilst also supporting the planning for some of these tasks. They provide support to other workers. They apply their specific learning and knowledge when planning or carrying out their role. They will have direct practice duties with individuals using the service as well as delegating general duties to support workers.

A practitioner in an adult day care service is likely to:

- monitor and maintain the health, safety and security of yourself and others for whom you are responsible and promote safe working practices
- contribute to the assessment of care or support needs and preferences of adults in a day care service
- support the development and implementation of care or support plans and contribute to the review of these plans
- develop and sustain effective relationships with staff in other agencies
- participate in inter-disciplinary team working to support individuals and others to assess individuals' needs
- work together to plan, implement and evaluate personalised care or support packages
- work with individuals to identify development activities
- plan, implement and evaluate the activities through working in partnership.

Proposed qualification requirements

The proposed practice qualification is the:

SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7

OR

HNC Social Services.

The proposed qualifications are in line with practitioners in children and adult services.

Proposed Registration fee

All registrants must pay a fee. The proposed registration fee for practitioners in adult day care services is set at the same level as the registration fee for other practitioners which is currently £35 (fees are subject to change).

You can [see all our current registration fees here](#)

You can [read about proposed changes to registration fees here](#)

Proposed Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) requirements

CPL is necessary for the development of everyone who works in social work, social care and the children and young people workforce. CPL supports a workforce that is capable of designing, delivering, evaluating and improving high quality care and service.

You will have to show that you have engaged in CPL every year and you will be asked to undertake relevant learning which covers all of the core learning elements in the CPL model. We propose that CPL is in line with the requirements of workers who are registered on the social care and children and young people parts of the Register.

You can find out more about [the core learning elements and CPL requirements here](#)

Supervisors – adult day care services

Proposed job role and functions

Supervisors support services through the prioritising of service tasks and delegating these to relevant worker or practitioner. They have a responsibility to develop the service capabilities of the team in a way that best serves individuals. They also support the quality assurance of the service through supervision of workers, monitoring, overseeing and implementing care plans and outcomes.

A supervisor in an adult day care service is likely to:

- be responsible for the supervision of other workers, such as support workers and practitioners eg supervising their practice and monitoring compliance in relation to policies, procedures and best practice relevant to the assessment of risk, safe working practices and safeguarding
- promote effective communication within the service
- promote the health, safety and security of self and others for whom they are responsible within the service eg monitoring and maintaining health, safety and security; promoting working practices that are safe, healthy and secure; minimising risks arising from emergencies
- develop their practice within the service setting eg reflect on their own practice in the workplace and take action to enhance their practice by using opportunities for development
- promote the safeguarding of individuals eg establish understanding about safeguarding and what must be done in cases of actual or potential harm or abuse
- be responsible for assessment of care needs and the development and implementation of care plans.

Proposed qualification requirements

We recommended there is practice and supervisory qualification requirement for supervisors.

The proposed practice qualification is the:

SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7

OR

HNC Social Services

PLUS

The proposed supervisory qualification is the:

PDA Health and Social Care Supervision

OR

A qualification with at least 15 credits at SCQF level 7 of supervision or management theory and practice specifically for a supervisor of a care service.

The proposed qualifications are in line with supervisors in children and adult services.

Proposed Registration fee

All registrants must pay a fee. The proposed registration fee for supervisors in adult day care services is set at the same level as the registration fee for other supervisors which is currently £35 (fees are subject to change).

You can [see all our current registration fees here](#)

You can [read about proposed changes to registration fees here](#)

Proposed Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) requirements

CPL is necessary for the development of everyone who works in social work, social care and the children and young people workforce. CPL supports a workforce that is capable of designing, delivering, evaluating and improving high quality care and service.

You will have to show that you have engaged in CPL every year and you will be asked to undertake relevant learning which covers all of the core learning elements in the CPL model. We propose that CPL is in line with the requirements of workers who are registered on the social care and children and young people parts of the Register.

You can find out more about [the core learning elements and CPL requirements here](#)

Offender accommodation services

Practitioner – offender accommodation services

Proposed job role and functions

Practitioners carry out their role and support the planning for a range of tasks. They provide support to other workers. They apply their specific learning and knowledge when planning or carrying out their role. They will have direct practice duties with individuals using the service as well as undertaking tasks as directed by more senior workers.

A practitioner in an offender accommodation service is likely to:

- monitor and maintain the health, safety and security of yourself and others for whom you are responsible and promote safe working practices
- contribute to the assessment of care or support needs and preferences of individuals in offender accommodation services
- support the development and implementation of care or support plans and contribute to the review of these plans
- develop and sustain effective relationships with staff in other agencies.
- participate in inter-disciplinary team working to support individuals and others to assess individuals' needs
- work together to plan, implement and evaluate personalised care or support packages
- assist with initial and ongoing risk assessments of supported individuals
- support and assist individuals in crisis situations, and/or manage physical risk or behaviour likely to cause incidents, in accordance with the support plan or service protocol
- administer or prompt medication and ensure that medication protocols are adhered to
- liaise with landlords and similar others on behalf of supported individuals
- maintain confidentiality with shared information.

Proposed qualification requirements

The proposed practice qualification is the:

SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7

OR

HNC Social Services.

The proposed qualifications are in line with practitioners in children and adult services.

Proposed Registration fee

All registrants must pay a fee. The proposed registration fee for practitioners in offender accommodation services is set at the same level as the registration fee for other practitioners which is currently £35 (fees are subject to change).

You can [see all our current registration fees here](#)

You can [read about proposed changes to registration fees here](#)

Proposed Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) requirements

CPL is necessary for the development of everyone who works in social work, social care and the children and young people workforce. CPL supports a workforce that is capable of designing, delivering, evaluating and improving high quality care and service.

You will have to show that you have engaged in CPL every year and you will be asked to undertake relevant learning which covers all of the core learning elements in the CPL model. We propose that CPL is in line with the requirements of workers who are registered on the social care and children and young people parts of the Register.

You can find out more about [the core learning elements and CPL requirements here](#)

Supervisor – offender accommodation services

Proposed job role and functions

Supervisors support services through prioritising a range of tasks and delegating these to relevant workers. They have a responsibility to develop the service capabilities of the team in a way that best serves the individuals they work with. They also support quality assurance of the service through supervising staff and reviewing outcomes.

A supervisor in an offender accommodation service is likely to:

- promote effective communication within the service
- promote the health, safety and security of self and others for whom they are responsible within the service e.g. monitoring and maintaining health, safety and security; promoting working practices that are safe, healthy and secure; minimising risks arising from emergencies
- develop their practice within the service setting e.g. reflect on their own practice in the workplace and take action to enhance their practice by using opportunities for development
- promote the safeguarding of individuals e.g. establish understanding about safeguarding and what must be done in cases of actual or potential harm or abuse
- be responsible for the supervision of other workers, such as support workers e.g. supervising their practice and monitoring compliance in relation to policies, procedures and best practice relevant to the assessment of risk, safe working practices and safeguarding
- ensure the needs of individuals are prioritised and that they are provided with safety and care that promotes social inclusion and enables them to reach their potential whilst maintaining public protection
- assess risks and needs to develop individualised risk management and integration plans that allow individuals to move safely and successfully to independent living.

Proposed qualification requirements

We recommended there is practice and supervisory qualification requirement for supervisors.

The proposed practice qualification is the:

SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7

OR

HNC Social Services

PLUS

The proposed supervisory qualification is the:

PDA Health and Social Care Supervision

OR

A qualification with at least 15 credits at SCQF level 7 of supervision or management theory and practice specifically for a supervisor of a care service.

The proposed qualifications are in line with supervisors in children and adult services.

Proposed Registration fee

All registrants must pay a fee. The proposed registration fee for supervisors in offender accommodation services is set at the same level as the registration fee for other supervisors which is currently £35 (fees are subject to change).

You can [see all our current registration fees here](#)

You can [read about proposed changes to registration fees here](#)

Proposed Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) requirements

CPL is necessary for the development of everyone who works in social work, social care and the children and young people workforce. CPL supports a workforce that is capable of designing, delivering, evaluating and improving high quality care and service.

You will have to show that you have engaged in CPL every year and you will be asked to undertake relevant learning which covers all of the core learning

elements in the CPL model. We propose that CPL is in line with the requirements of workers who are registered on the social care and children and young people parts of the Register.

You can find out more about [the core learning elements and CPL requirements here](#)

Manager – offender accommodation services

Proposed job role and functions

Managers will hold responsibilities for the overall management, development and quality assurance of care and support provided in the service, including the supervision of staff and the management of resources. They contribute to community safety and the reduction of offending behaviour.

A manager in an offender accommodation service is likely to:

- lead the planning and processes for care and support plans ensuring effective outcomes that meet the needs of the individuals
- comply with organisational procedures and any legal requirements
- ensure a high-quality service is provided in line with legal, regulatory requirements and operational standards
- provide leadership, management, support and motivate workers
- build and maintain relationships with funders and stakeholders to ensure that service improvements are made
- deliver outcomes which meet the needs of individuals and is proportional to any risks presented
- be registered with the Care Inspectorate as manager of the service
- lead and maintain effective communication systems and practice
- Be responsible for the continuing professional learning of yourself and others through staff development and performance development review systems
- lead practice around safeguarding and know what action to take in cases of actual or potential harm or abuse
- lead practice to reduce and prevent the risk of danger, harm and abuse
- have overall responsibility for health and safety in the service
- be the first point of contact for complaint handling
- hold overall responsibility for budgets and oversee management and deployment of workers and resources for the service
- have overall responsibility for completing quality assurance processes for the service e.g. Care Inspectorate Annual Returns
- manage multi-agency working arrangements and joint working agreements
- lead and manage provision of care services that promotes the wellbeing of individuals
- monitor and manage the quality of the provision of the service
- comply with legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements

- lead practice that promotes the rights, responsibilities, equality and diversity of individuals.

Proposed qualification requirements

We recommended there is practice and management qualification requirement for managers of offender accommodation services.

The proposed practice qualification is the:

SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 9

PLUS

The proposed management qualification is:

SVQ Care Services Leadership and Management at SCQF Level 10

OR

Any award that is certificated at or above SCQF level 9 (min 60 credits) and mapped against the National Occupational Standards: Leadership and Management for Care Services at SCQF Level 10.

The proposed qualifications are in line with managers in children and adult services.

Proposed Registration fee

All registrants must pay a fee. The proposed registration fee for managers of offender accommodation services is set at the same level as the registration fee for other managers which is currently £80 (fees are subject to change).

You can [see all our current registration fees here](#)

You can [read about proposed changes to registration fees here](#)

Proposed Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) requirements

CPL is necessary for the development of everyone who works in social work, social care and the children and young people workforce. CPL supports a workforce that is capable of designing, delivering, evaluating and improving high quality care and service.

You will have to show that you have engaged in CPL every year and you will be asked to undertake relevant learning which covers all of the core learning elements in the CPL model. We propose that CPL is in line with the requirements of workers who are registered on the social care and children and young people parts of the Register.

You can find out more about [the core learning elements and CPL requirements here](#)

Social work assistant

Proposed job role and functions

Social work assistants (SWA) support the coordination and management of cases and support social workers to carry out statutory responsibility within their role. SWAs may contribute to risk assessments and contribute to statutory work supporting individuals subjected to statutory orders and have a caseload, however the accountability for this work rests with the qualified social worker.

A SWA is likely to:

- always work under the direct guidance and support of a qualified social worker and supervising manager
- participate in partnership working
- assist in contributing to assessment of needs and risks as required
- support needs and risk assessment outcomes to reduce levels of risk to individuals
- contributing to the development of care/action plans.
- maintain service user/carers contact as required.
- engage with families and carers
- ensure risk assessment and risk management procedures are followed to promote safe working practices
- develop and sustain effective relationships with individuals ensuring to work towards improved outcomes.

Proposed qualification requirements

We recommended there is an academic and practice qualification requirement for social work assistants.

The proposed academic qualification requirement is:

Certified knowledge - An award of certificated knowledge with 96 academic credits at or above SCQF level 7

OR

HNC Social Services

AND

The proposed practice qualification is the:

SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 7/ SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7

The proposed qualifications for social work assistants are in line with residential childcare workers.

Proposed Registration fee

All registrants must pay a fee. The proposed registration fee for social work assistants is set at the same level as the registration fee for practitioners which is currently £35 (fees are subject to change).

You can [see all our current registration fees here](#)

You can [read about proposed changes to registration fees here](#)

Proposed Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) requirements

CPL is necessary for the development of everyone who works in social work, social care and the children and young people workforce. CPL supports a workforce that is capable of designing, delivering, evaluating and improving high quality care and service.

You will have to show that you have engaged in CPL every year and you will be asked to undertake relevant learning which covers all of the core learning elements in the CPL model. We propose that CPL is in line with the requirements of workers who are registered on the social care and children and young people parts of the Register.

You can find out more about [the core learning elements and CPL requirements here](#)

Title of Report	Have Your Say - Workforce Survey
Summary/purpose of report	The report provides the Council with an overview of the key findings of our first annual Have your say workforce survey and planned next steps.
Recommendations	The Council is asked to note the findings of our Have Your Say workforce survey and endorse the planned next steps.
Author and responsible Officer	Laura Lamb, Director of Workforce, Education and Standards
Link to Strategic Plan	The information in this report links to: Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.
Link to Risk Register	Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration. Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was developed. Link to Impact Assessment We identified no negative impacts and noted potential positive impacts particularly in relation to the potential influence and use of the findings to highlight and address the experiences of workers which may relate to race, age, disability and gender.
Documents attached	Appendix 1: Have your say survey report 23 April 2025 Appendix 2: Comparison with Wales

Background papers	None
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The aim of the survey was to hear about the experiences of people working in the social work, social care and children and young people workforce, to inform the development of national policies and workforce strategies on how best to support the workforce and to inform national workforce planning.
2. The survey covered topics such as wellbeing, pay, terms and conditions, support and access to training and qualifications, and experiences of working in the sector.
3. The findings will help the SSSC, Scottish Government and other key partners learn more about workforce wellbeing to help the development of national policies and workforce strategies and to inform national workforce planning.
4. The SSSC plans to repeat the survey annually to build a picture of experiences of working in the sector over time and to understand what is improving, getting worse or what needs to change.

INFORMATION

5. The SSSC is uniquely placed to gain the views of the social care, children and young people's and social work workforce.
6. The SSSC commissioned Progressive Partnerships to conduct our first Have your say workforce survey. The survey replicates largely the Have your say surveys conducted by Social Care Wales to allow us to benchmark the experience of the workforce in Scotland with other parts of the UK.
7. The survey ran from 15 January to 14 February 2025 and was open to everyone working in or who has worked in the sector including non-registered roles.
8. We sent the survey directly to SSSC registrants (around 179,000 people) and employers/counter-signatories and umbrella/representative organisations, to reach as wide a range of staff as possible, from right across the workforce and including all types of services.
9. 6,581 responses to the survey, 96% were registered workers. The largest response was from the social care workforce (59%).
10. We published the report on 23 April 2025.

KEY FINDINGS

Joining the sector

11. Most respondents had come into social work, social care or CYP services to make a difference to people's lives (mentioned by 65%), because they

thought it would be a job they would love/enjoy (59%), and/or they felt it would suit their skills/they would be good at it (50%). People tended to have learned about the opportunity through friends and family working in the sector (38%) or by seeing a job advertised (32%).

Likelihood to leave

12. Just over a fifth of respondents (22%) said they were likely to leave their role in the sector in the next 12 months; almost half (45%) said the same when asked about the next five years. Key reasons for thinking about leaving were being overworked (mentioned by 50% of those likely to leave), the pay being too low (40%) and/or poor employment or working conditions in general (33%).
13. Staff turnover was reported to be high by almost half of respondents (48%), and a range of impacts was noted for other staff and managers – most often increased staff stress levels (mentioned by 87% of those reporting high turnover), workloads (82%), and lower staff morale (80%).

Satisfaction with current job

14. Overall, respondents were more likely to be satisfied than dissatisfied with their current job: just over half said they were satisfied (56%); just over a third were dissatisfied (35%). A majority (60%) said they feel safe in their work environment, while just under half (47%) said they would recommend their organisation as a great place to work.
15. Most respondents said that their colleagues help and support them (75%), that their job gives them a feeling of satisfaction (60%), their manager helps and support them (58%) and their own morale is good (56%), always/most of the time. They were less likely to say that the right staff are in place to deliver services (48%) or that morale amongst colleagues is good (40%).

Feeling valued

16. Four in five respondents (81%) agreed that their work is valued by the people/families they support, and three quarters (76%) felt valued by colleagues. However, they were less likely to feel that their work was valued by the general public (42%), their employer (40%) or the Scottish Government (20%).

Wellbeing at work

17. Around two thirds of respondents (65%) agreed that they feel able to meet the needs of people they care for/support. However, some issues with wellbeing at work were suggested: 60% said they find it difficult to switch off when they leave work, only 43% said they have enough time to do their job well, and just 30% said enough support is in place for dealing with stress. The most commonly mentioned aspects currently causing respondents stress at work were having too much work to do/not enough time to do their work (mentioned by 51% of respondents), paperwork/

bureaucracy (48%), and a lack of support from managers or colleagues if they need help (34%).

18. If people wanted information about health and wellbeing in the workplace, they were most likely to mention the SSSC and/or their manager (both mentioned by 42%), while online sources were also commonly mentioned (e.g. 38% mentioned Google/internet search and 36% would look at their employer's website/intranet).
19. A total of almost four in ten (37%) reported that they had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination at work – bullying was most likely to be mentioned, by 27%.

Skills and training

20. Attitudes towards training were generally positive: 85% agreed they want to improve their knowledge and skills, 73% said there are training and learning opportunities available to them, 69% said they have enough training/learning opportunities to fulfil their CPL requirements and 69% said they get the right training to do their job well. Two thirds (65%) agreed they are supported to gain qualifications for registration purposes, and 61% know how/where to look for a new role to match their skills and experience.
21. The most commonly mentioned barriers to training were lack of time (mentioned by 29%), employers not allowing time off for training (24%), and/or availability of courses (24%).

Terms and conditions

22. Respondents were most likely to be employed by a local authority (46%) or a private company (34%). The majority (60%) were working full time for one employer, on fixed hours and receiving a salary (an average of 31 hours a week).
23. Most respondents said they receive a workplace/company pension scheme contribution (73%) and/or 28 days' paid holiday (72%). However, fewer than three fifths receive paid sick leave (58%), a quarter have access to family friendly policies (25%) and a fifth said they had enough money to cover work-related travel expenses (19%).
24. Overall, just over half (54%) said they were very or fairly satisfied with their terms and conditions of employment – although the balance was towards fairly (36%) rather than very satisfied (18%).
25. Overall, 28% were satisfied with their current level of pay, while more than half (54%) were dissatisfied.
26. Although 40% said that they were living comfortably or doing alright, a third (32%) said they were just about getting by and a quarter (24%) said they were finding it difficult to manage financially. Just over half (52%) also

said they were finding it more difficult to manage financially than this time last year.

Differences across social work, social care and CYP services

27. Social workers tended to express the most negative views/lowest levels of satisfaction with their current roles. For example, they were the most likely to be considering leaving in the next 12 months, to report high staff turnover and impacts of this, and tended to be least likely to report high morale and high levels of job satisfaction. Social work staff were more likely than others to say that having too much responsibility was causing them stress; they were also more likely to have experienced bullying, discrimination or harassment. This group was least likely to feel that their work was valued, particularly by the people/families they support, their employer and the general public. They also gave the most negative feedback in relation to skills/training.
28. Social care workers were generally the most positive in their responses: they were the least likely group to be thinking of leaving their role, and tended to be most satisfied with their current job, most likely to agree they felt safe and would recommend their workplace, and to say that their job gives them satisfaction always/most of the time. Social care workers also tended to be more positive than other groups in relation to having enough time to do their job well, having enough support in place to deal with stress – and they reported the fewest sources of stress overall. They were more likely than other groups to agree that they get the right training to do their job well, and least likely to report any barriers to training.
29. Children and young people's workers tended to fall into the middle in terms of levels of satisfaction and reported wellbeing at work. They had slightly different sources of stress, e.g. they were more likely than others to mention working with vulnerable groups and difficulties with colleague relationships, but less likely to mention work costs such as travel, or lone working. They were also the most likely to say they found it difficult switching off when leaving work.

Benchmarking with Wales

30. The SSSC has benchmarked our findings against the Social Care Wales Have your say results. Respondents to both surveys expressed similar motivations for joining the sector. Both Scottish and Welsh respondents enjoyed similar aspects of working in the sector and recommended similar things to attract people to the sector. Both samples cited similar reasons for leaving/being likely to leave the sector. Reported levels of turnover were similar between surveys, and similar effects of turnover were observed. Reasons for difficulty in recruitment were also similar between surveys.
31. Scottish respondents were less likely to believe it was possible for them to become a leader (36%) than Welsh respondents (60%). Scottish workers in

each group were less likely to say they felt safe in their workplace (50-62%) than Welsh workers (60-72%). Scottish respondents were less likely to say they were able to meet needs of service users (65% vs 75%). Welsh respondents were more likely to say they experienced **no** barriers to training (65%) than Scottish respondents (31%). The full comparison summary is attached at Appendix 2.

NEXT STEPS

32. The SSSC has shared the report and the findings with Scottish Government and other key stakeholders. The SSSC has been invited to talk to our findings at national forums including the Collaborative Response and Assurance Group (CRAG). CRAG is a joint ministerial/COSLA chaired group which meets weekly to consider national and local responses to support improvement. It is attended by IJB Chief Officers, Local Authority and NHS Chief Executives as well as senior leaders across government. The meeting is co-chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care and Councillor Paul Kelly, CoSLA.
33. The Director of Workforce Education and Standards has been invited to speak at the Adult Social Care Reform Scotland Conference on 24 June 2025 and will join a panel discussion on building a Strong and Engaged Workforce.
34. The SSSC is undertaking more detailed analysis of the findings looking at service and employer type, roles, and personal characteristics, in particular age and ethnicity.
35. The SSSC will hold a series of webinar events for the workforce, employers and other key stakeholders to share the detailed findings in August/September.
36. We are using the findings from the survey to inform our workforce development activity, in particular our careers and workforce wellbeing activity.
37. The survey findings will be included in a regulatory briefing for Scottish Government, based on our wide range of data and intelligence sources, setting out key challenges and areas that need addressed to support the workforce to get qualified
38. The SSSC will repeat the survey annually. We will revise the current survey questions to include geography and add timescales to the experience questions to inform future findings.
39. The SSSC will include focus groups in the methodology for future surveys in order to allow for a deeper dive into the key findings. Suggested topics for

focus groups for the next survey include feeling valued and perceptions of the sector, experience of bullying harassment and discrimination in the workplace, employer support for training and learning. Topics will be informed by and may change when the detailed analysis is available.

CONSULTATION

- 40. We sent the survey directly to SSSC registrants (around 179,000 people) and employers/counter-signatories and umbrella/representative organisations, to reach as wide a range of staff as possible, from right across the workforce and including all types of services.
- 41. We have shared the report and results with key stakeholders.

RISKS

- 42. Developing an understanding of stakeholders' opinions, concerns and views will help us shape the delivery of our work. For this to be effective we need to use different ways of engagement to reach all our stakeholder groups. We have an open approach to ensuring the mechanisms are in place to hear the views and voices of our stakeholders.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

- 43. The SSSC has budgeted 30k within our Grant in Aid funding for 2025/6 to cover the cost of repeating the survey.

Compliance

- 44. There are no compliance matters that require consideration.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 45. We developed an impact assessment. We identified no negative impacts and noted potential positive impacts particularly in relation to the potential influence and use of the findings to highlight and address the experiences of workers which may relate to race, age and gender.

CONCLUSION

- 46. This report asks Council to note the findings of our Have your say workforce survey and endorse the planned next steps.

‘Have Your Say’ Workforce Wellbeing Survey – Report of Findings

12 March 2025

Author: Ruth Bryan, Research Director,
Progressive Partnership

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Executive summary

Background and objectives

This report outlines the findings of the first 'Have Your Say' Workforce Wellbeing Survey conducted by Progressive Partnership on behalf of the Scottish Social Services Council (the SSSC). The aim of the survey was to hear about the experiences of people working in the social work, social care and children and young people workforce, to inform future policies on how best to support the workforce.

The findings will help the SSSC, Scottish Government and other key partners learn more about workforce wellbeing to help the development of national policies and workforce strategies and to inform national workforce planning. The SSSC plans to repeat the survey annually to build a picture of experiences of working in the sector over time and to understand what is improving, getting worse or what needs to change.

Research method

The research was conducted via an online self-completion survey. The survey collected views from a sample of 6,581 people working in the social work, social care and children and young people's (CYP) service sector.

Invitations were sent via email, both directly to SSSC registrants (around 179,000 people) and via 12 employers/counter-signatories and 22 umbrella/representative organisations, to reach as wide a range of staff as possible, from right across the workforce and including all types of services. Since the survey was shared with an unknown number of people via these organisations, it is not possible to calculate an overall participation rate.

Key findings

Joining the sector

Most respondents had come into social work, social care or CYP services to make a difference to people's lives (mentioned by 65%), because they thought it would be a job they would love/enjoy (59%), and/or they felt it would suit their skills/they would be good at it (50%). People tended to have learned about the opportunity through friends and family working in the sector (38%) or by seeing a job advertised (32%).

Likelihood to leave, staff turnover and management/leadership

Just over a fifth of respondents (22%) said they were likely to leave their role in the sector in the next 12 months; almost half (45%) said the same when asked about the next five years. Key reasons for thinking about leaving were being overworked (mentioned by 50% of those likely to leave), the pay being too low (40%) and/or poor employment or working conditions in general (33%).

Staff turnover was reported to be high by almost half of respondents (48%), and a range of impacts was noted for other staff and managers – most often increased staff stress levels (mentioned by 87% of those reporting high turnover), increased



workloads (82%), and lower staff morale (80%). Those in management roles reported various difficulties in hiring or keeping staff, most commonly issues with the quality of candidates applying (79% of managers reported issues with this), availability of staff (57%), and/or the pay and conditions they are able to offer (50%).

Around two fifths of respondents (41%) agreed that managers/leaders in the sector come from different backgrounds. However, relatively small proportions of those not already in a management role believed it would be possible for them to become a manager/formal leader (36%) or that they would like to be in a management or formal leadership position in the future (30%).

Satisfaction with current job

Overall, respondents were more likely to be satisfied than dissatisfied with their current job: just over half said they were satisfied (56%); just over a third were dissatisfied (35%). A majority (60%) said they feel safe in their work environment, while just under half (47%) said they would recommend their organisation as a great place to work.

Most respondents said that their colleagues help and support them (75%), that their job gives them a feeling of satisfaction (60%), their manager helps and support them (58%) and their own morale is good (56%), always/most of the time. They were less likely to say that the right staff are in place to deliver services (48%) or that morale amongst colleagues is good (40%).

Four in five respondents (81%) agreed that their work is valued by the people/families they support, and three quarters (76%) felt valued by colleagues. However, they were less likely to feel that their work was valued by the general public (42%), their employer (40%) or the Scottish Government (20%).

Wellbeing at work

Around two thirds of respondents (65%) agreed that they feel able to meet the needs of people they care for/support. However, some issues with wellbeing at work were suggested: 60% said they find it difficult to switch off when they leave work, only 43% said they have enough time to do their job well, and just 30% said enough support is in place for dealing with stress.

The most commonly mentioned aspects currently causing respondents stress at work were having too much work to do/not enough time to do their work (mentioned by 51% of respondents), paperwork/ bureaucracy (48%), and a lack of support from managers or colleagues if they need help (34%).

If people wanted information about health and wellbeing in the workplace, they were most likely to mention the SSSC and/or their manager (both mentioned by 42%), while online sources were also commonly mentioned (eg 38% mentioned Google/internet search and 36% would look at their employer's website/intranet).

A total of almost four in ten (37%) reported that they had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination at work – bullying was most likely to be mentioned, by 27%.

Skills and training

Attitudes towards training were generally positive: 85% agreed they want to improve their knowledge and skills, 73% said there are training and learning opportunities available to them, 69% said they have enough training/learning opportunities to fulfil their CPL requirements and 69% said they get the right training to do their job well. Two thirds (65%) agreed they are supported to gain qualifications for registration purposes, and 61% know how/where to look for a new role to match their skills and experience. Around half (51%) said they need more training to progress their career.

The most commonly mentioned barriers to training were lack of time (mentioned by 29%), employers not allowing time off for training (24%), and/or availability of courses (24%).

Terms and conditions

Respondents were most likely to be employed by a local authority (46%) or a private company (34%). The majority (60%) were working full time for one employer, on fixed hours and receiving a salary (an average of 31 hours a week). Only a small proportion were working for more than one employer or doing additional roles. Most (66%) did not regularly work additional hours above their contracted hours, i.e. outside their main job, or regular overtime.

Most respondents said they receive a workplace/company pension scheme contribution (73%) and/or 28 days' paid holiday (72%). However, fewer than three fifths receive paid sick leave (58%), a quarter have access to family friendly policies (25%) and a fifth said they had enough money to cover work-related travel expenses (19%).

Overall, just over half (54%) said they were very or fairly satisfied with their terms and conditions of employment – although the balance was towards fairly (36%) rather than very satisfied (18%).

Income

Respondents were split roughly half and half between those paid an annual salary and those paid by the hour. Around half overall (51%) fell into the middle annual income band (£20,000 to £39,000) while 31% had an annual income of less than £20,000 and 10% earned £40,000 or more. For those paid an hourly rate, the average was £13.10 per hour. Overall, 28% were satisfied with their current level of pay, while more than half (54%) were dissatisfied.

Although 40% said that they were living comfortably or doing alright, a third (32%) said they were just about getting by and a quarter (24%) said they were finding it difficult to manage financially. Just over half (52%) also said they were finding it more difficult to manage financially than this time last year.

Views of the sector

Overall, respondents were more likely to recommend working in the sector than not: 40% said they would be likely to recommend it while 30% said they were not likely to do this.

When asked what they most like/enjoy about working in the sector, respondents tended to mention making a difference/feelings of satisfaction/the job being rewarding

(mentioned by 78% of those who commented), and/or aspects related to the service users they work with/relationships with clients (64%).

Suggestions about what should be done to make the sector an attractive and rewarding place to work focused on better pay (mentioned by 58% of those who commented). Other common suggestions included improvements in how staff are recognised and supported (21%), reducing workloads/time pressures (19%), and issues related to staffing/recruitment (18%).

Differences across social work, social care and CYP services

Responses varied across sub-groups of the sample. In general:

- **Social work staff** tended to express the most negative views/lowest levels of satisfaction with their current roles. For example, they were the most likely to be considering leaving in the next 12 months, to report high staff turnover and impacts of this, and tended to be least likely to report high morale and high levels of job satisfaction. Social work staff were more likely than others to say that having too much responsibility was causing them stress; they were also more likely to have experienced bullying, discrimination or harassment. This group was least likely to feel that their work was valued, particularly by the people/families they support, their employer and the general public. They also gave the most negative feedback in relation to skills/training.
- **Social care staff** were generally the most positive in their responses: they were the least likely group to be thinking of leaving their role, and tended to be most satisfied with their current job, most likely to agree they felt safe and would recommend their workplace, and to say that their job gives them satisfaction always/most of the time. Social care workers also tended to be more positive than other groups in relation to having enough time to do their job well, having enough support in place to deal with stress – and they reported the fewest sources of stress overall. They were more likely than other groups to agree that they get the right training to do their job well, and least likely to report any barriers to training.
- **CYP services staff** tended to fall into the middle in terms of levels of satisfaction and reported wellbeing at work. They had slightly different sources of stress, eg they were more likely than others to mention working with vulnerable groups and difficulties with colleague relationships, but less likely to mention work costs such as travel, or lone working. They were also the most likely say they found it difficult switching off when leaving work.

Next steps

This survey has provided a robust baseline measure of the views and experiences of the social work, social care and children and young people's service workforce. Results will act as a benchmark for the SSSC to track change over time in the wellbeing and needs of staff and to inform national workforce planning.

Introduction

Background and objectives

This report outlines the findings of the first 'Have Your Say' Workforce Wellbeing Survey conducted by Progressive Partnership on behalf of the Scottish Social Services Council (the SSSC). The aim of the survey was to hear about the experiences of people working in the social work, social care and children and young people workforce, to inform future policies on how best to support the workforce.

The survey covered topics such as wellbeing, pay, terms and conditions, support and access to training and qualifications, and experiences of working in the sector. The findings will help the SSSC, Scottish Government and other key partners learn more about workforce wellbeing to help the development of national policies and workforce strategies and to inform national workforce planning.

The SSSC plans to repeat the survey annually to build a picture of experiences of working in the sector over time and to understand what is improving, getting worse or what needs to change.

Method and sample

Research method

The research was conducted via an online self-completion survey. The survey collected views from a sample of 6,581 people working in the social work, social care and children and young people's (CYP) service sector.

Invitations were sent via email, both directly to SSSC registrants (around 179,000 people) and via 12 employers/counter-signatories and 22 umbrella/representative organisations, to reach as wide a range of staff as possible, from right across the workforce and including all types of services. Since the survey was shared with an unknown number of people via these organisations, it is not possible to calculate an overall participation rate.

The survey fieldwork ran from 15 January to 14 February 2025. Three reminders were sent during this period, and the survey was also promoted in the SSSC newsletter. A copy of the survey questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.

Data weighting

The profile of the survey data was compared to data held by the SSSC and was found to be broadly consistent with the registrants' profile in terms of job role and gender. The age profile, and length of time working in the sector, were slightly different among the survey sample (respondents tended to be slightly older than the profile of registrants and skewed towards those who have worked in the sector for 10 years or more), so the survey data was weighted by length of employment. All findings presented in the report are based on the weighted data (with the unweighted base sizes shown). Weighted and unweighted sample data can be found in Appendix 2.

Sample profile

An overview of the sample profile is outlined in Tables 1 and 2 below. The vast majority of respondents were registered with SSSC (96%), and the majority were part of the social care workforce (59%). Reflecting the sector as a whole, just over four in five respondents were female. For further details of the sample profile, see the tables included in Appendix 2.

Table 1. Sample profile: job role

	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Registration				
Registered with SSSC	6327	96%	6346	96%
Not registered	254	4%	235	4%
Job role*				
Social work	651	10%	584	9%
Social care	3785	58%	3881	59%
Children and young people	2045	31%	2016	31%
Has left role	100	2%	100	2%
Base (all)	6581	100%	6581	100%
Time in the sector				
Less than 1 year	300	5%	466	7%
1-2 years	566	9%	880	14%
3-5 years	909	14%	1413	22%
6-10 years	939	14%	1460	23%
More than 10 years	3767	58%	2261	35%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	100%	6481	100%

*Job role categories have been grouped for analysis – full breakdown in Appendix 2.

Table 2. Sample profile: demographics

	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Gender				
Female	5478	83%	5426	82%
Male	935	14%	981	15%
Other	14	<1%	19	<1%
Prefer not to say	154	2%	155	2%
Age				
16-24	241	4%	371	6%
25-34	752	11%	1003	15%
35-44	1273	19%	1345	20%
45-54	1746	27%	1648	25%
55-64	2048	31%	1748	27%
65+	315	5%	257	4%
Prefer not to say	206	3%	208	3%
Base (all)	6581	100%	6581	100%

Analysis and reporting

Analysis has been conducted looking at various sub-groups, including a sector breakdown (whether respondents work in social work, social care or children and young people's services), as well as a more detailed breakdown of job role (such as whether respondents are a manager) and employment (local authority, private company, third sector). Results have also been analysed by likelihood to leave the sector. Data was analysed by demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, disability), although factors such as age and gender are related to job role, so the analysis in this report focuses on roles. Unweighted base sizes for sub-groups used in the analysis are included in the sample profile tables in Appendix 2.

The sampling technique was non-probability; margins of error and significance testing should therefore be treated as indicative, based on an equivalent probability sample. The overall sample size of 6,581 provides a dataset with an approximate margin of error of between $\pm 0.24\%$ and $\pm 1.21\%$, calculated at the 95% confidence level (market research industry standard).

Only significant differences are reported, at the 95% level (ie results indicate 95% confidence that the difference is not due to chance or sampling error). Not every significant difference is noted – results are highlighted where they are notable/meaningful, part of a clear pattern of results across the reporting as a whole, and/or where they add insight in relation to the research objectives.

For ease of reading the results, percentage labels have been left off some of the charts where small percentages are charted. In instances where percentages quoted in the text do not match the sum of two figures in the charts, this is due to rounding.

Survey findings

Working in the sector

Motivation to join the sector

Respondents were asked what first motivated them to start working in social work, social care or children and young people's services. The main motivator, for two thirds (65%), was wanting a job that would make a difference to people's lives, followed by feeling it would be a job they would love/enjoy (59%) and/or feeling it would suit their skills/they would be good at it (50%). Just under three in ten mentioned that personal experience of caring for someone had motivated them (27%). See Table 3.

Table 3. Motivation to start working in the sector

	%
Wanted a job that would make a difference to people's lives	65%
Felt it would be a job I would love/enjoy	59%
Felt it would suit my skills/I would be good at it	50%
Through personal experience of caring for someone	27%
Looking for a change in career	22%
Felt it would be a stable/secure job	20%
Felt it would be a job with good career prospects/progression	20%
Felt the work pattern suited my lifestyle	20%
The salary on offer	4%
There was nothing else suitable or available to me	3%
Other	3%
None of the above	1%
Don't know/not sure	<1%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481

Differences between sub-groups of the sample included:

- Those working in social work were more likely than other groups to mention making a difference to people's lives (76%), a stable/secure job (29%), career progression (23%) and salary (9%).
- Social care staff were more likely than others to mention personal experience of caring for someone (34%) or that they had wanted a career change (24%).
- Those working in CYP services were more likely than others to have felt it would be a job they would love/enjoy (70%) and that the work pattern suited their lifestyle (25%).

How the workforce heard about the sector

When asked how they first learned about the opportunity to work in social work, social care or CYP services, the most common responses were that they had heard about it through friends and family working in the sector (mentioned by 38%) or that they saw a job advertised online/in a newspaper (32%). All other sources of information were mentioned by much smaller proportions (see Table 4).



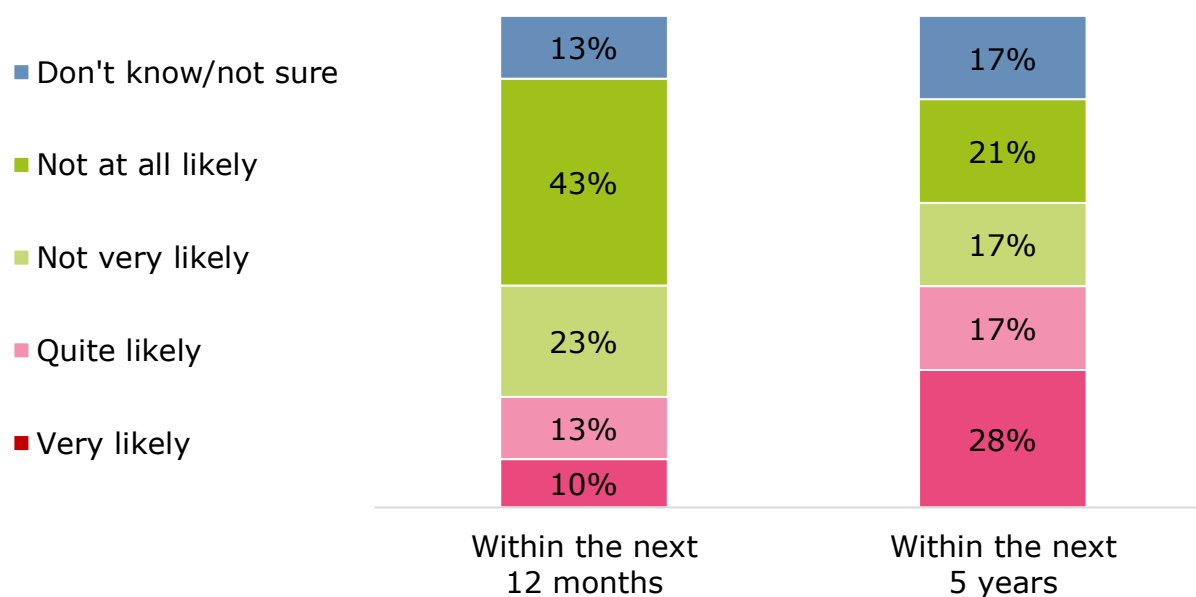
Table 4. How respondents heard about working in the sector

	%
Through friends and family working in the sector	38%
Job advertised online/in newspaper	32%
Careers advice	7%
Recruitment companies/fairs	5%
At school/college/university	3%
Other	9%
Don't know/not sure	5%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481

Results were broadly consistent across sub-groups, although CYP staff were more likely than others to mention careers advice (13%), and social care staff were more likely than others to mention friends/family (42%), job adverts (35%) or recruitment companies/fairs (6%).

Likelihood to stop working in the sector

Respondents were asked how likely they were to stop working in a social work, social care or CYP role within the next 12 months or within the next five years. As shown in Figure 1, just over a fifth (22%) said they were quite or very likely to leave in the next 12 months, and 45% within the next five years.

Figure 1. Likelihood to stop working in the sector

Base (all excl. left role): 6481

Social work staff were most likely to say they were **very** likely to leave in the next 12 months (13%, compared to 10% of social care and 8% CYP staff).

Those working in social care roles were the **least** likely to say they would leave the sector, either in the next 12 months or the next five years (43% overall said this, compared to 53% of social work staff and 52% of CYP staff).



Reasons to leave the sector

Among those saying they were likely to leave in the next 12 months or the next five years, the key reasons for this were being overworked (mentioned by 50%), the pay being too low (40%), and/or poor employment or working conditions in general (33%). A quarter (26%) said they were likely to leave due to retirement, and a similar proportion mentioned relationships with managers/senior staff as being a reason to leave (23%). See Table 5.

Table 5. Reasons for being likely to stop working in the sector

	%
Overworked	50%
Pay too low/need a higher-paying job	40%
Poor employment or working conditions in general	33%
Retirement	26%
Relationships with managers/senior staff	23%
No prospects of career progression	16%
Don't enjoy the job	14%
Want more flexibility	12%
For personal reasons (eg childcare/caring responsibilities, sickness or disability, moving abroad)	10%
Want to do something else	10%
To study/gain further qualifications	6%
Lack of job security	8%
Relationships with colleagues	8%
There is too much studying involved	7%
Experiencing discrimination, such as racism	4%
Other	11%
Don't know/not sure	1%
Base (all likely to leave in next 12 months or 5 years)	3188

There were some differences between sub-groups, including:

- Those working in social work (29%) or social care (30%) were more likely to mention retirement than those working in CYP services (18%).
- Not enjoying the job was more often mentioned by social work or CYP staff (20% and 19% respectively, compared to 9% of social care workers).
- Social care staff were least likely to mention being overworked as a reason to leave (42% compared to 59% social work and 60% CYP staff).
- Social care and CYP staff were more likely to mention the pay being too low (41% and 43% respectively, compared to 23% of social work staff).

Staff turnover

Respondents were asked if there was a high level of staff turnover in their workplace and almost half (48%) said yes. Those in social work roles were most likely to say there was high turnover in their workplace (55%) – see Table 6.



Table 6. Whether there is high staff turnover

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
Yes	48%	55%	48%	45%
No	35%	33%	31%	41%
Don't know/not sure	18%	12%	20%	14%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	651	3785	2045

Respondents who said they were likely to leave the sector in the next 12 months or five years were more likely to report high staff turnover than others (59% said this, compared to 38% of those not likely to leave).

Impacts of high staff turnover

Those who reported high staff turnover were asked what the impact of this was on the remaining staff and managers (see Table 7). The most commonly reported impacts were increased staff stress levels, increased workloads, and lower staff morale – these were all mentioned by eight in ten or more. Poorer outcomes for those receiving care/support, and poorer working relationships between colleagues and managers were also mentioned by over half of those reporting high staff turnover, and around three in ten mentioned a greater reliance on agency workers and a reduction in development of new processes/working practices.

Table 7. Impacts of high staff turnover on remaining staff and managers

	%
Increase in staff stress levels	87%
Increase in workload	82%
Lower staff morale	80%
Poorer outcomes for those receiving care and support	58%
Poorer working relationships between colleagues and managers	53%
More reliance on agency workers	31%
Reduction in development of new processes or working practices	29%
More difficult to access training/career progression pathways	22%
Other	4%
None of the above – there are no impacts	1%
Don't know/not sure	1%
Base (all saying there is high turnover)	3151

As well as being most likely to say there was high staff turnover, social work staff were more likely than others to mention that this led to increased workloads (90%), low staff morale (90%), poorer outcomes (73%) reduction of development of new practices (44%) and difficulties accessing training/progression (33%).

Respondents working as managers within social care and CYP services were also more likely than other workers in these services to highlight staff stress levels (91%) and increased workloads (88%) as impacts of high staff turnover.

As well as reporting high turnover, those who said they are likely to leave the sector were also more likely than others to mention most of the impacts on remaining staff and managers – suggesting that those experiencing the impacts of high turnover may be more likely to consider leaving themselves.



Recruitment to the sector

Respondents in management roles were asked about any difficulties their organisation faced in relation to hiring or keeping staff (see Table 8). The most frequently mentioned issue was the quality of candidates applying (79%), followed by availability of staff (57%) and the pay and conditions they are able to offer (50%). A third mentioned competition from other social care employers (32%) and 28% mentioned registration and qualification requirements. Only a very small proportion (3%) said there were no difficulties in hiring or keeping staff.

Table 8. Difficulties hiring or keeping staff

	%
Quality of candidates applying	79%
Availability of staff	57%
The pay and conditions we are able to offer (eg flexibility, pensions)	50%
Competition from other employers – other social care employers	32%
Registration and qualification requirements	28%
Competition from other employers – other sector	23%
Competition from other employers – health employers	18%
Costs associated with recruitment	15%
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic	15%
Difficulty recruiting from the EU following Brexit	13%
Difficulty in attracting underrepresented groups to the workforce	11%
Other	8%
None of the above – there are no difficulties	3%
Don't know/not sure	1%
Base (all managers)	767

Results were broadly consistent between sub-groups for this question, although managers in social care were most likely to mention difficulty recruiting from the EU due to Brexit (19%), competition from other employers (39% other social care, 30% health, 32% other sectors), and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (20%).

Management and leadership

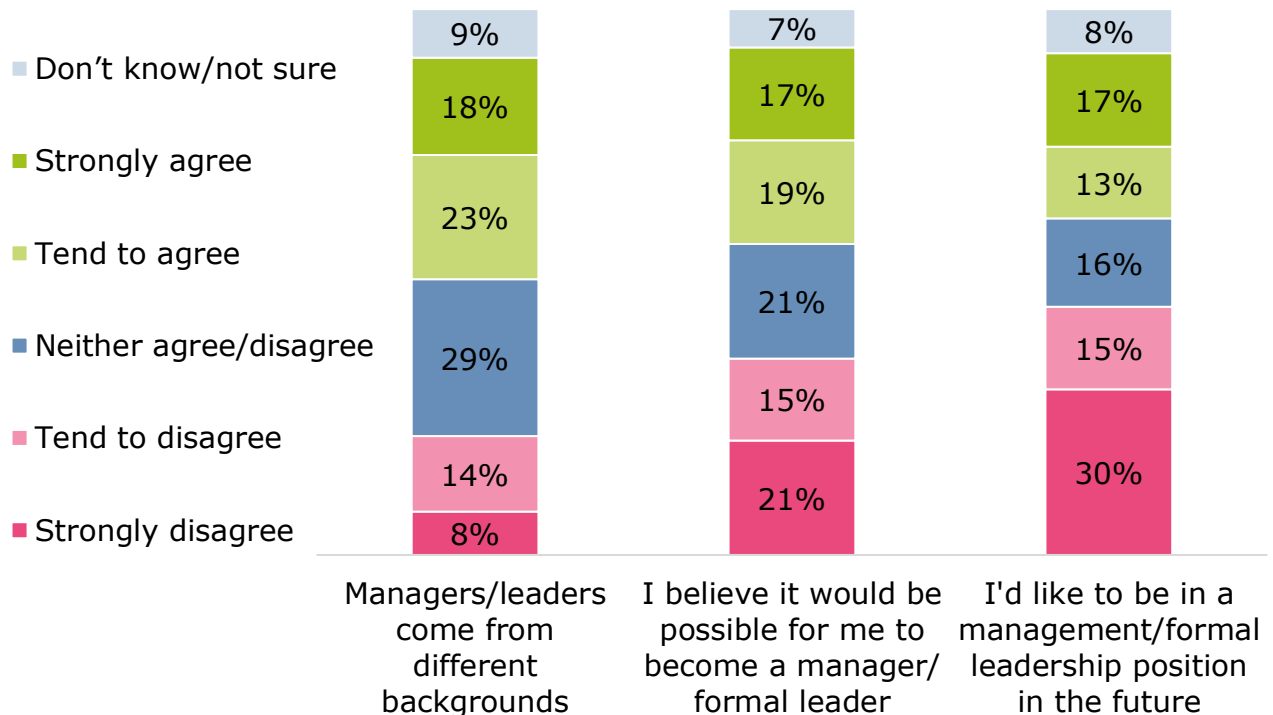
Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements about management and leadership in the sector (see a summary of overall agreement levels in Table 9 and a full breakdown in Figure 2).

Overall, two fifths (41%) agreed that managers/leaders come from different backgrounds. However, only 36% of those not already in a management role believed it would be possible for them to become a manager/formal leader, and 30% agreed they would like to be in a management or formal leadership position in the future. As shown in Table 9, social work staff were least likely to agree managers/leaders come from different backgrounds, while those working in social care were least likely to believe it would be possible for them to become a manager/formal leader.



Table 9. Management and leadership (tend to/strongly agree)

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
Managers/leaders come from different backgrounds	41%	38%	43%	40%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	651	3785	2045
I believe it would be possible for me to become a manager/formal leader	36%	41%	35%	38%
I would like to be in a management or formal leadership position at some point in the future	30%	30%	29%	32%
Base (all excl. left role, not in management position)	5646~5666	529~531	3417~3425	1700~1710

Figure 2. Management and leadership

Base (all excl. left role): 6481; Base (all excl. left role and not already in management position): 5646~5666



Health and wellbeing

Satisfaction with current job

Respondents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with their current job overall, on a scale of 1 (completely dissatisfied) to 7 (completely satisfied). Only 10% said they were completely satisfied, although 36% were completely/mostly satisfied (scoring 6 or 7) and 56% were satisfied overall (scoring 5~7). However, a substantial minority (35%) were dissatisfied overall.

As shown in Table 10, social care staff tended to be most satisfied – they were more likely than others to be satisfied overall (59%) and least likely to be dissatisfied overall (31%). Over two fifths of social work staff (43%) were dissatisfied overall.

Table 10. Overall satisfaction with current job

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
1 – Completely dissatisfied	5%	9%	5%	5%
2 – Mostly dissatisfied	11%	13%	10%	13%
3 – Somewhat dissatisfied	18%	21%	17%	20%
4 – Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9%	8%	9%	9%
5 – Somewhat satisfied	20%	25%	19%	22%
6 – Mostly satisfied	25%	19%	27%	24%
7 – Completely satisfied	10%	6%	13%	7%
NET: Completely/mostly dissatisfied	16%	22%	15%	18%
NET: Dissatisfied	35%	43%	31%	38%
NET: Completely/mostly satisfied	36%	25%	40%	31%
NET: Satisfied	56%	49%	59%	52%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	651	3785	2045

Staff working as managers in social care and CYP services tended to be more satisfied than other staff in these services: 66% were satisfied overall (this figure was even higher, 71%, among managers in social care).

Unsurprisingly, those who said they were likely to leave the sector in the next 12 months or five years expressed lower levels of satisfaction with their current job than others (37% were satisfied overall, compared to 73% of those who said they were not likely to leave).

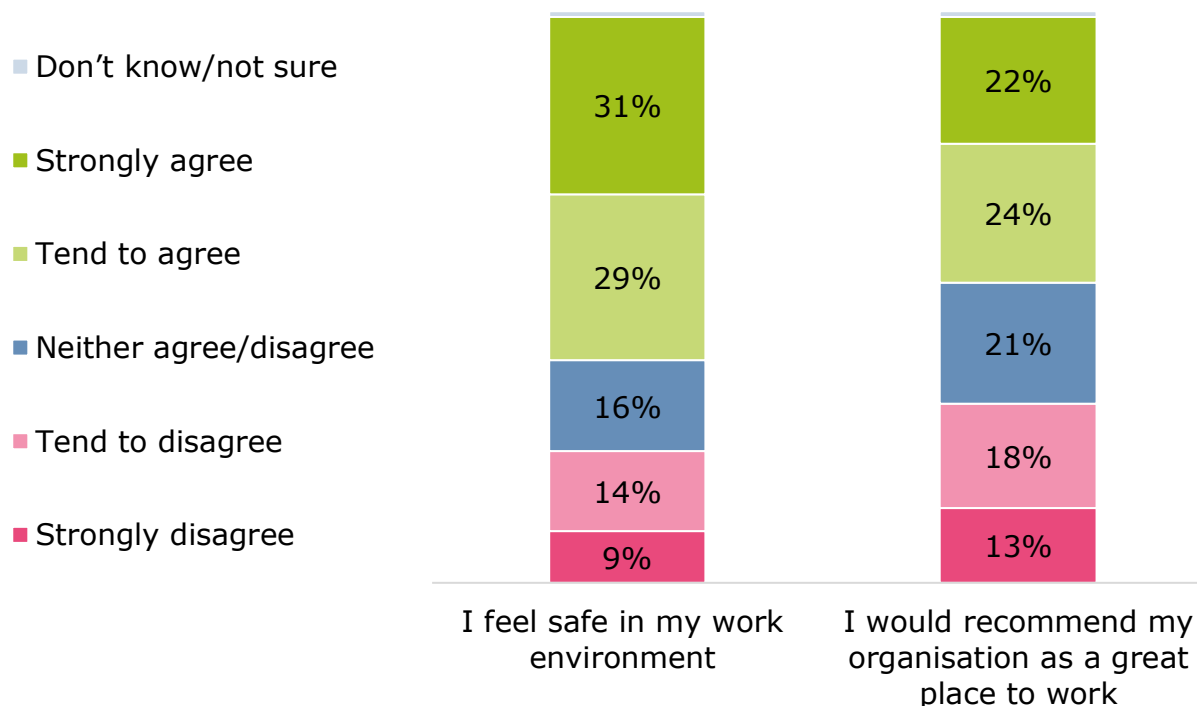
Views of the workplace

Six in ten respondents overall agreed that they feel safe in their work environment and just under half (47%) said they would recommend their organisation as a great place to work (see Table 11 for a summary of overall agreement levels, and a full breakdown in Figure 3). Those working in social work were least likely to agree with either of these statements, and those in social care were most likely to agree.



Table 11. Views of the workplace (tend to/strongly agree)

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
I feel safe in my work environment	60%	50%	62%	59%
I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work	47%	33%	50%	45%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	651	3785	2045

Figure 3. Views of the workplace**Base (all excl. left role): 6481**

Staff working as managers in social care and CYP services were more likely than other workers in these services to say they would recommend their organisation as a great place to work (71% of managers said this, and 73% of social care managers). Ratings of safety were also highest among managers: 78% of managers agreed with this statement.

It is also worth noting that ratings of safety were lower among those likely to leave the sector (47% said they felt safe in their work environment, compared to 72% of those unlikely to leave), suggesting a possible factor influencing decisions to leave.

Colleagues and morale

Respondents were asked how much they agreed with a series of statements relating to their colleagues and morale at work. See a summary in Table 12 and the full breakdown in Figure 4.

Respondents were most likely to say that their colleagues help and support them (75% said this was the case always/most of the time), while around three fifths said their jobs gives them a feeling of satisfaction (60%) and that their manager helps and supports them (58%). Respondents were less likely to say their own morale is



always/mostly good (56%), and fewer than half said this was the case for the right staff being in place to deliver services (48%) or that morale amongst colleagues is good (40%).

As shown in Table 12, social care staff were more likely than other groups to say their job gives them satisfaction always/most of the time, and social work staff were least likely to say this – social work staff also reported the lowest levels of morale (both for themselves and among colleagues).

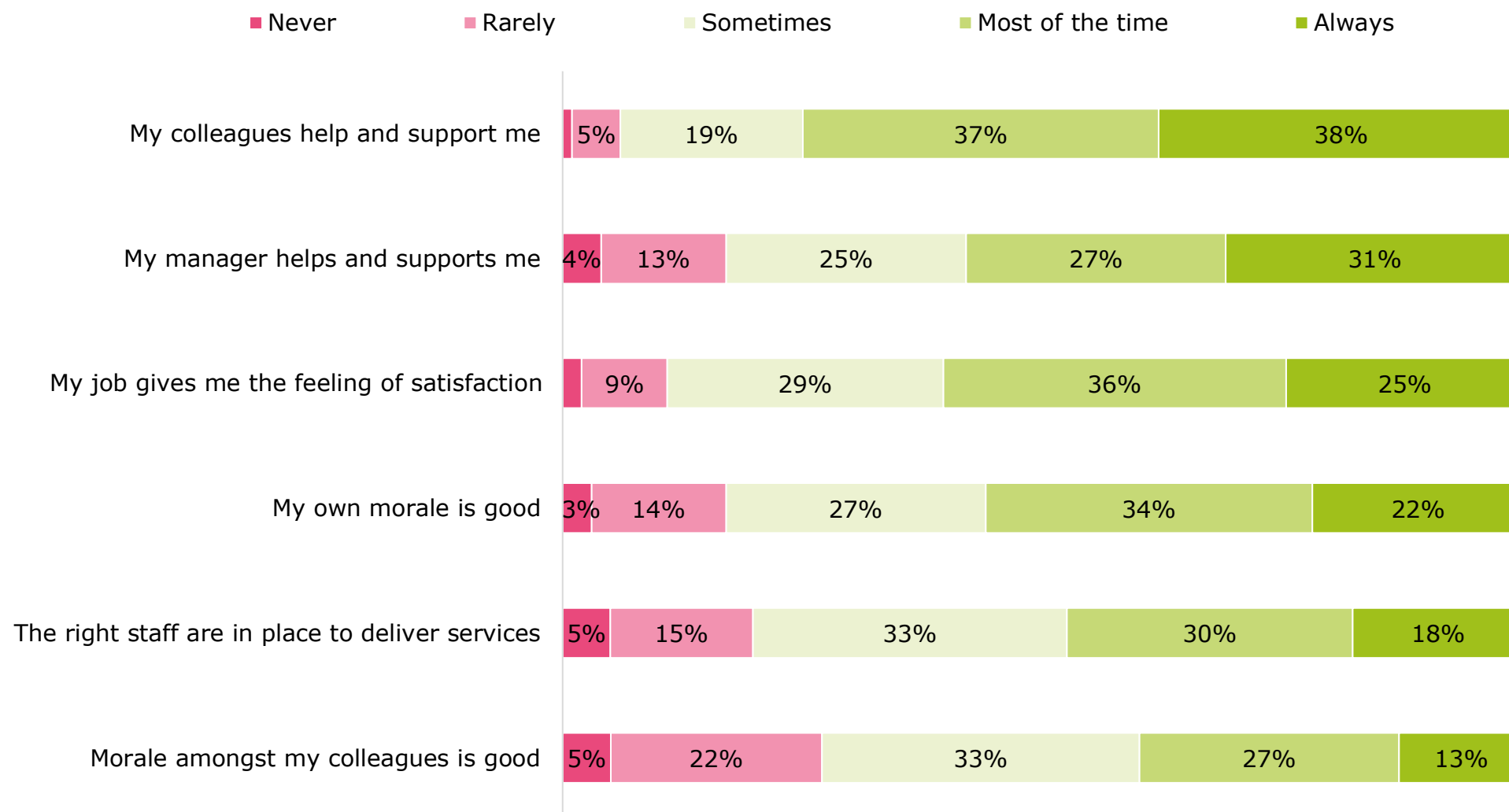
Table 12. Colleagues and morale (always/most of the time)

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
My colleagues help and support me	75%	76%	74%	78%
My job gives me the feeling of satisfaction	60%	44%	67%	53%
My manager helps and supports me	58%	57%	58%	59%
My own morale is good	56%	41%	61%	50%
The right staff are in place to deliver services	48%	37%	51%	45%
Morale amongst my colleagues is good	40%	28%	44%	37%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	651	3785	2045

Managers in social care and CYP services tended to have a better view of staff morale than other workers did: 55% of managers said morale among their colleagues is good always/most of them time, whereas these figures were 42% for social care workers and 34% for CYP workers in non-management roles. Managers were also more likely to say the right staff are in place to deliver services: 60% said this was the case always/most of the time, compared to 50% of social care and 44% of CYP non-management workers.

Unsurprisingly, those who said they were likely to leave the sector gave lower ratings of all these aspects of staff morale than those not likely to leave. It is possible that feelings of a lack of support from colleagues and managers could be contributing to respondents' likelihood to leave the sector.

Figure 4. Colleagues and morale



Base (all excl. left role): 6481

Feeling valued

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they feel valued for the work that they do (see Table 13 and Figure 5). The workforce was most likely to agree that their work is valued by the people/families they support (81% agreed), followed by colleagues (76%) and managers (59%). However, fewer than half agreed that partner agencies (46%), the general public (42%) and their employer (40%) value their work – and the lowest level of agreement was seen for Scottish Government, with only a fifth agreeing that the Scottish Government values the work they do (20%).

Social work staff tended to feel less valued than other staff groups, particularly by the people/families they support, their employer and the general public. However, social work staff felt more supported by their manager than social care and CYP staff did (see Table 13).

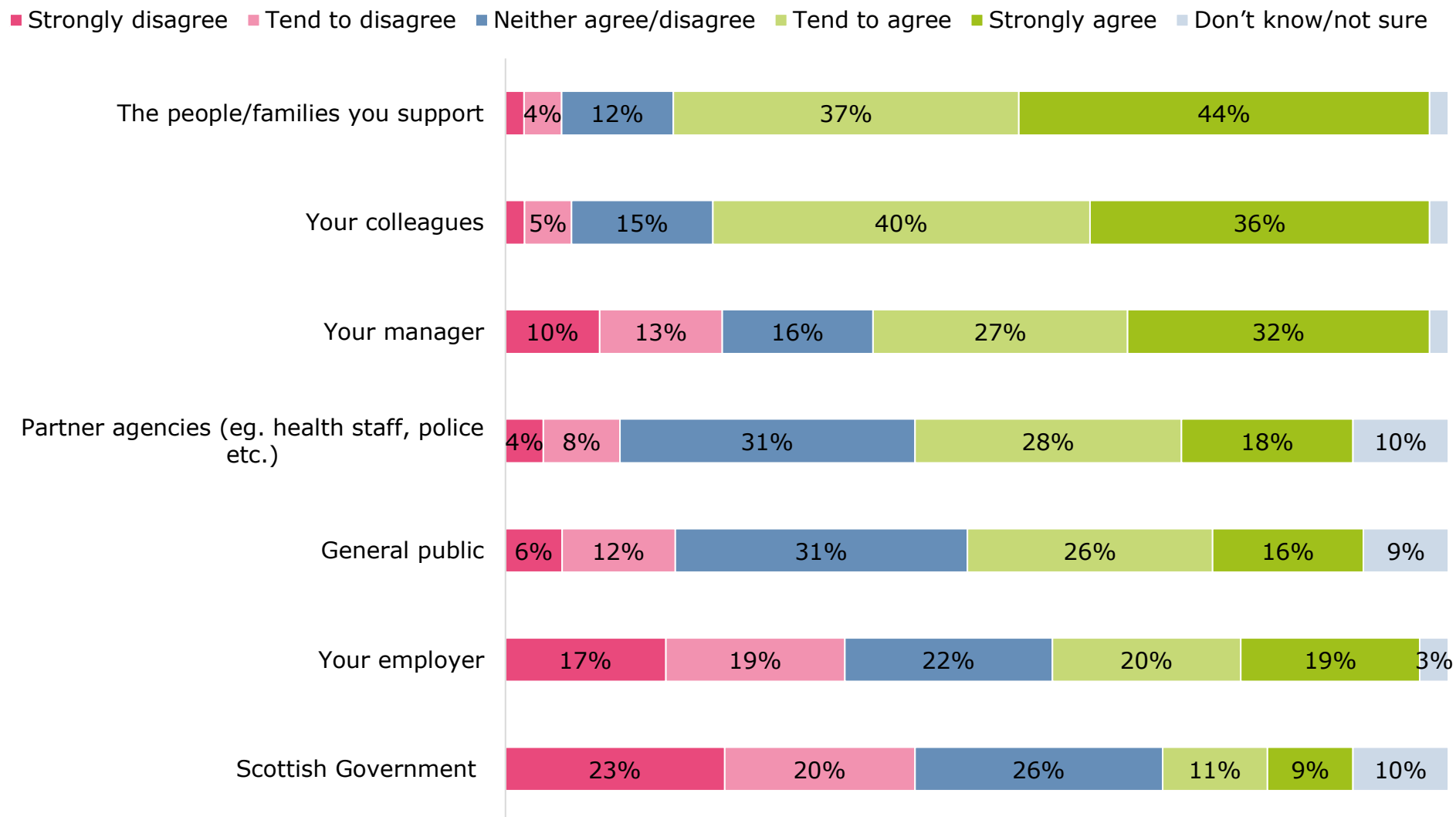
Table 13. Feeling valued (tend to/strongly agree)

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
The people/families you support	81%	66%	83%	80%
Your colleagues	76%	79%	75%	78%
Your manager	59%	64%	58%	60%
Partner agencies (eg health staff, police etc.)	46%	48%	48%	42%
General public	42%	24%	48%	35%
Your employer	40%	27%	44%	35%
Scottish Government	20%	14%	23%	15%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	651	3785	2045

For feeling valued by their manager, employer and colleagues, and for partner agencies, the general pattern in results was that those in management roles were more likely to feel valued than those in non-management roles. However, this pattern was reversed for feeling valued by Scottish Government – managers were less likely to say they felt valued than non-managers. The only areas where there was no difference was for feeling valued by the people/families they support, and the general public, where results were broadly consistent between managers and non-managers in social work and CYP services.

Reflecting previous findings, respondents who said they were likely to leave the sector were less likely to feel that their work is valued (by any of the people/groups listed) than others – it is possible that not feeling valued could be contributing to likelihood to leave.

Figure 5. Feeling valued for the work that you do by...



Base (all excl. left role): 6481

Aspects of wellbeing at work

The survey asked about various aspects of wellbeing at work – see summary data in Table 14 below, and a full breakdown in Figure 6. The majority (65%) agreed that they feel able to meet the needs of people they care for/support. However, three in five (60%) said they find it difficult to switch off when they leave work, only 43% said they have enough time to do their job well, and just 30% said enough support is in place for dealing with stress.

Social work staff were least likely to agree they feel able to meet the needs of the people they support, while social care staff were most likely to agree with this. Those finding it most difficult to switch off when leaving work were staff working in CYP services – almost seven in ten CYP workers said this. Social care workers tended to be more positive than other groups in relation to having enough time to do their job well and having enough support in place to deal with stress.

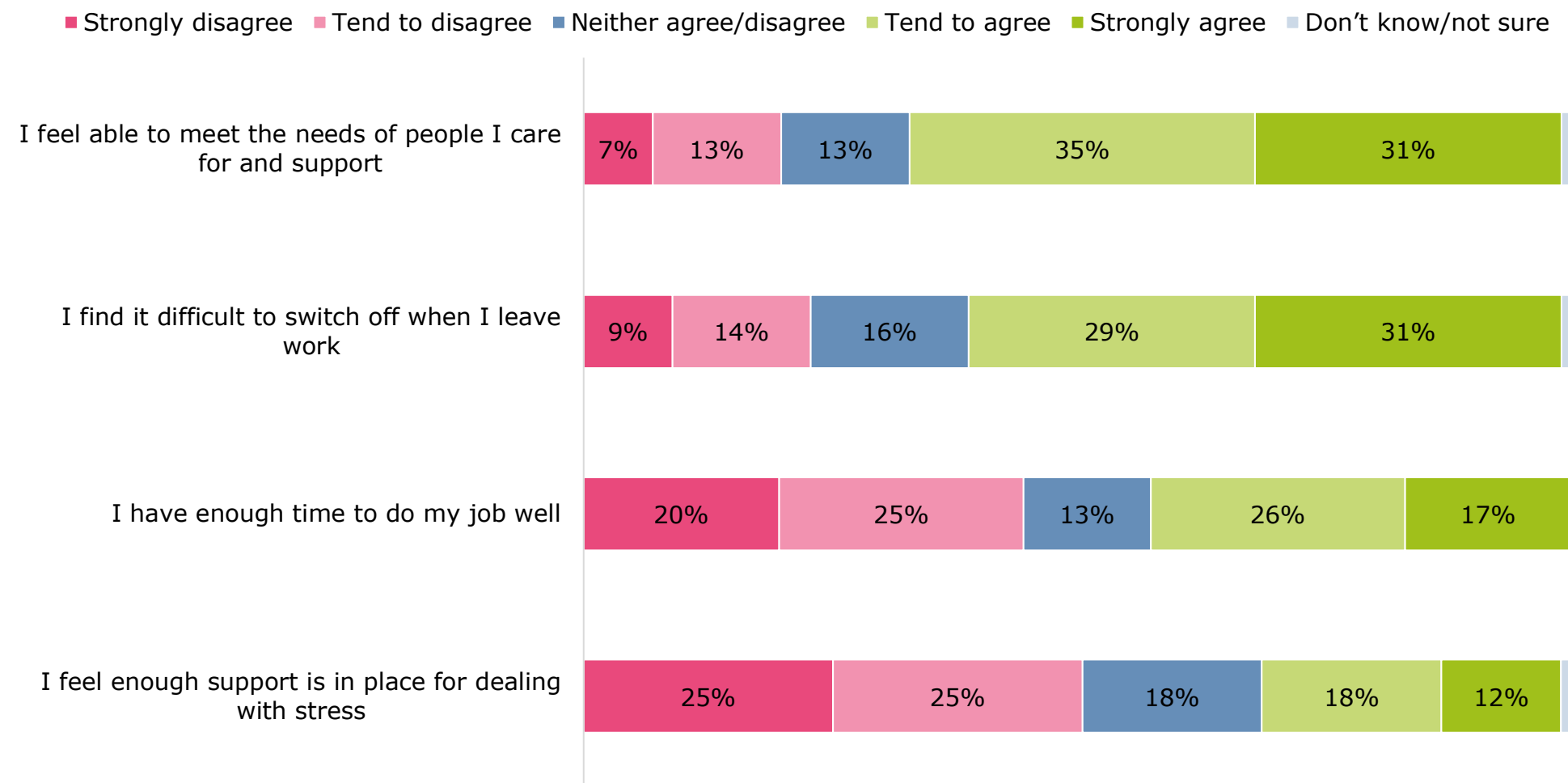
Table 14. Wellbeing statements (tend to/strongly agree)

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
I feel able to meet the needs of people I care for and support	65%	43%	72%	59%
I find it difficult to switch off when I leave work	60%	60%	56%	68%
I have enough time to do my job well	43%	31%	51%	31%
I feel enough support is in place for dealing with stress	30%	24%	34%	24%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	651	3785	2045

Those in management roles showed some signs of higher stress at work. For example, managers were more likely than non-managers in social care and CYP services to say they find it difficult to switch off when they leave work: 70% of social care managers compared to 55% of social care workers, and 80% of CYP managers compared to 66% of CYP workers said this.

Those who were likely to leave the sector gave less positive feedback generally to the questions about wellbeing than others – they were less likely to agree they feel able to meet people's needs, they have enough time to do their job well and say enough support is in place for dealing with stress, and more likely to find it difficult to switch off when they leave work.

Figure 6. Wellbeing statements



Base (all excl. left role): 6481

Current causes of stress at work

The most mentioned aspects currently causing respondents stress at work were having too much work to do/not enough time to do their work (mentioned by 51%), paperwork/bureaucracy (48%), and lack of support from managers or colleagues if they need help (34%). Worrying about things outside of work was also an issue for a quarter (25%). Only one in ten (11%) said that 'none of these' were currently causing them stress at work (see Table 15).

Table 15. Causes of stress when carrying out the job

	%
Having too much work to do/not having enough time to do my work	51%
Paperwork and bureaucracy	48%
Lack of support from managers or colleagues if I need help	34%
Worrying about things outside work in general (eg. responsibilities and stresses at home)	25%
Difficulties in relationships with colleagues	19%
Working with vulnerable children or adults	18%
Having too much responsibility	17%
Costs associated with work, such as travel	17%
Working alone	12%
Not being given enough independence to do my job well	11%
Worrying about the impact of my work on the climate/environment	5%
Other	12%
None of the above	11%
Don't know/not sure	3%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481

Sources of stress varied by sub-group, for example:

- Social work staff were more likely than others to mention having too much responsibility (24%, compared to 16% of social care and 18% of CYP staff).
- Those working in children and young people's services were more likely than others to mention working with vulnerable groups (34%) and difficulties with colleague relationships (22%), but less likely than other groups to mention work costs such as travel (11%) or lone working (8%).
- Social care staff reported the fewest sources of stress overall – they were most likely to say 'none of the above' (15% compared to 6% of other groups) and least likely to mention having too much work/not enough time (43%) and paperwork/bureaucracy (38%) – compared to around two thirds of social work/CYP staff who mentioned these issues.
- Managers were more likely than other workers to mention having too much responsibility (25% of managers overall said this) or paperwork/bureaucracy (71%). Social care managers were more likely than other social care workers to mention having too much work to do/not enough time (60% compared to 42%).
- Social care staff in non-management roles were more likely to highlight working alone (14% of social care workers compared to 4% of social care managers) or work-related costs such as travel (20% compared to 10%), while CYP non-managers were more likely than CYP managers to mention working with



vulnerable people (35% compared to 26%), difficulties in relationships (23% compared to 16%) or lack of management support (38% compared to 24%).

- Respondents who said they are likely to leave the sector were more likely than others to mention most of the causes of stress on the list – it is likely that all of these stressors may be contributing to decisions to leave the sector. For example, 62% among this group mentioned having too much work; 58% mentioned too much paperwork and 44% mentioned lack of support from managers/colleagues.

Sources of information on health and wellbeing

Respondents were asked where they would go to find information if they wanted to learn more about health and wellbeing in the workplace (see Table 16). Around four in ten mentioned the SSSC and/or their manager (both 42%), while online sources were also commonly mentioned (38% said Google/internet search, and 36% said they would look at their employer's website/intranet). Colleagues/peers (32%) and HR programmes (27%) were also mentioned relatively frequently.

Table 16. Sources of information about health and wellbeing in the workplace

	%
SSSC	42%
Your manager	42%
Google/internet search	38%
Employer website/intranet	36%
Colleagues/peers	32%
Human Resources (HR)/Employee Assistance Programme	27%
National Wellbeing Hub	16%
Your Trade Union rep(s)	15%
Other	5%
Don't know/not sure	10%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481

Sub-group differences included:

- Social work staff were more likely than others to mention an employer website/intranet (50%), colleagues/peers (39%) or a Trade Union rep (21%).
- CYP staff were more likely than others to mention Google/internet search (42%).
- Social care staff were more likely than others to mention the SSSC (48%) or their manager (44%).
- Those in management roles tended to have higher awareness of most information sources than non-management workers (and were less likely to say they did not know).

Bullying, harassment and discrimination

After being shown a description/definition of these terms, respondents were asked if they had personally experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination at work. Bullying (27%) was more likely to be mentioned than discrimination or harassment (both 15%). Almost four in ten (37%) overall had experienced any of these.



As seen in Table 17, social work staff were most likely to have experienced any of these issues – just under half (45%) mentioned a least one issue, and 37% of social work staff mentioned bullying compared to around a quarter of other groups. CYP staff were least likely to report experience any of these (34%). However, it also worth noting that higher proportions of social care and CYP staff said 'prefer not to say' compared to social work staff for this question.

Table 17. Experience of bullying, harassment and discrimination

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
NET: Experienced any	37%	45%	37%	34%
Bullying	27%	37%	26%	26%
Discrimination	15%	18%	16%	12%
Harassment	15%	19%	17%	11%
None of these	54%	49%	52%	57%
Prefer not to say	10%	6%	11%	9%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	651	3785	2045

Respondents who said they were likely to leave the sector in the next 12 months or five years were more likely to have experienced these issues than others – 43% had experienced any, compared to 31% of those who were not likely to leave. It is possible that experience of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination could be contributing to decisions to leave the sector.

Skills and training

Access to training

A series of questions was asked about skills and training. Table 18 provides a summary of overall agreement levels for these statements, and Figure 7 shows the full breakdown.

Attitudes towards training were generally positive: more than eight in ten (85%) agreed they want to improve their knowledge and skills, 73% said there are training and learning opportunities available to them, and around seven in ten said they have enough training/learning opportunities to fulfil their CPL requirements and they get the right training to do their job well (both 69%). Two thirds (65%) agreed they are supported to gain qualifications for registration purposes, and 61% know how/where to look for a new role to match their skills and experience. Around half (51%) said they need more training to progress their career.

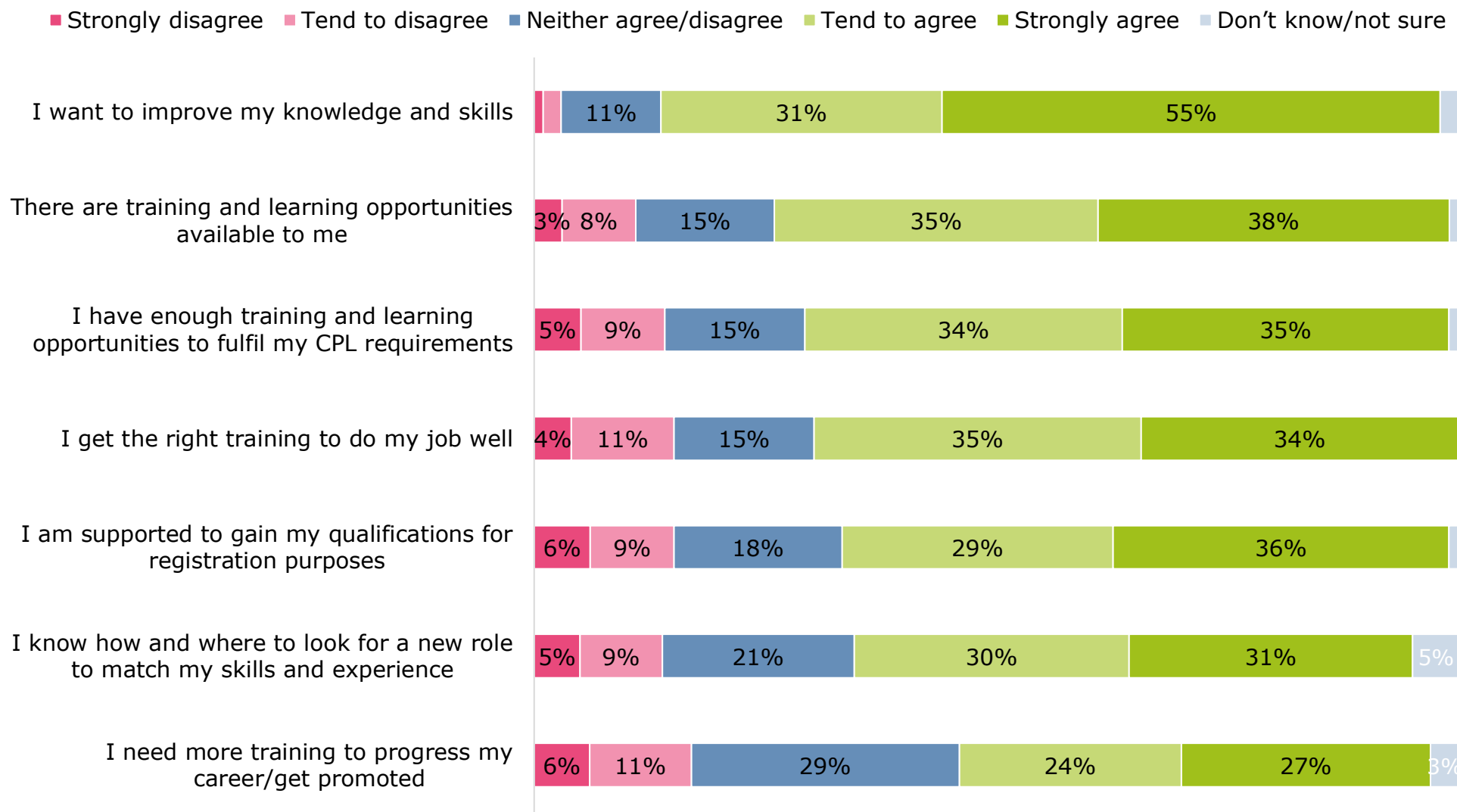
Generally, social work staff tended to provide the most negative feedback in relation to training – for example, they were less likely than social care or CYP staff to agree that there are training/learning opportunities available, they have enough opportunities to fulfil CPL requirements, they get the right training to do their job well and they are supported to gain qualifications. Social care staff were more likely than other groups to agree that they get the right training to do their job well.

Table 18. Skills and training statements (tend to/strongly agree)

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
I want to improve my knowledge and skills	85%	87%	83%	88%
There are training and learning opportunities available to me	73%	65%	74%	73%
I have enough training and learning opportunities to fulfil my CPL (Continuous Professional Learning) requirements	69%	64%	70%	70%
I get the right training to do my job well	69%	52%	73%	66%
I am supported to gain my qualifications for registration purposes	65%	56%	67%	65%
I know how and where to look for a new role to match my skills and experience	61%	60%	60%	63%
I need more training to progress my career/get promoted	51%	49%	51%	52%
Base (all excl. left role, and not applicable)	5959~ 6453	602~ 651	3515~ 3773	1829~ 2030



Figure 7. Skills and training statements



Base (all excl. left role, excl. N/A): 5959~6453

The broad pattern in results was for managers in social care to be more positive than non-managers in social care, and managers in CYP to be more positive than non-managers in CYP services, apart from the statement about needing more training to progress their career, where non-managers were more likely to agree than managers. In line with other findings, those saying they are likely to leave the sector expressed more negative views across all statements about training compared to those unlikely to leave.

Barriers to training

When asked about any barriers to accessing training in their workplace, three in ten (31%) said that there are no barriers (see Table 19). The most commonly mentioned barriers to training were lack of time (29%), employers not allowing time off for training (24%) and/or availability of courses (24%).

Table 19. Barriers to training

	%
I don't have time	29%
Employer not allowing time off for training/would have to attend training in my own time	24%
Availability of courses	24%
Lack of information on training available and how to access it	17%
I can't afford it/no funding available/not paid for by employer	16%
Staff issues (eg absence, shortage, lack of cover)	1%
Other	4%
None – there are no barriers to accessing training and learning in my workplace	31%
Don't know/not sure	8%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481

Sub-group differences included:

- Social work staff were more likely than other groups to mention not having time (49%) and availability of courses (36%).
- CYP staff were the group most likely to say that their employer would not allow time off for training (34%), or to highlight staffing issues/shortages making it difficult to attend training (2% compared to <1% among other groups).
- Social care staff were more likely than others to say there were no barriers to accessing training/learning (36%) – although they were also most likely to say they did not know (9%).
- Managers were more likely than non-managers to say they did not have time (38% of managers overall said this: 33% among social care managers and 43% among CYP managers). They were less likely than non-managers to say their employer would not allow time off (17%) or that they lacked information about training and how to access it (11%).
- Those likely to leave the sector in the next 12 months or five years were more likely than others to mention most of the barriers on the list, as well as expressing more negative attitudes towards training generally – it is possible that perceived difficulties accessing training could be influencing decisions about remaining in the sector.



Terms and conditions

Current employment status

Respondents were most likely to be employed by a local authority (46%), followed by a private company (34%) or a third sector body (15%). Only very small proportions were employed by an agency or in any other way (see Table 20). There were clear patterns in response by staff sub-group, with social work staff being the most likely to be employed by a local authority (77%), and social care staff more likely than others to be employed by a private company (41%) or third sector body (19%).

Table 20. Current employment status for main job

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP
Employed by a local authority	46%	77%	34%	60%
Employed by a private company	34%	12%	41%	27%
Employed by a third sector body	15%	6%	19%	10%
Employed by an agency	2%	2%	3%	1%
Employed by family member (eg as a Personal Assistant)	1%	1%	1%	<1%
Self-employed in social care	1%	1%	1%	1%
On secondment/placement	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Working on a voluntary basis	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Currently not working (suspended/investigation)	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	651	3785	2045

Managers in the sample were more likely than other workers in social care or CYP services to be employed in the third sector (34% of all managers said they worked for a third sector body). CYP managers were more likely than non-managers to be employed by a private company (38% of managers compared to 26% of non-managers) while this pattern was reversed for social care managers (33% of social care managers compared to 41% of non-managers were employed by a private company).

Current type of contract

The majority of respondents were working full time for one employer, on fixed hours and receiving a salary (60%), while a quarter were doing the same but part time (see Table 21).

Table 21. Type of contract

	%
Full time for one employer on fixed hours and receive a salary	60%
Part time for one employer on fixed hours and receive a salary	25%
For one employer on flexible hours	9%
For an agency on fixed hours	1%
For an agency on flexible hours	2%
For different employers with one full-time role and one or more part-time roles	2%
For different employers with two or more part-time roles	1%
For an agency as well as for one or more employers directly	<1%
Self-employed for one individual	<1%
Self-employed for different individuals	<1%
Base (all excl. left role and not currently working)	6459

Social work staff more likely than others to be working full time for a fixed hours salary (76%), CYP workers were most likely to be in a part time fixed hours salaried role (28%), while social care staff were more likely than others to be working for one employer on flexible hours (12%).

Managers in social care and CYP services were more likely than non-managers in the same services to be on full time contracts, while non-managers were more likely to be on part time contracts.

Other roles outside social work, social care or children and young people's services

Those who said they work for more than one employer were asked if they currently work in any other roles outside of the sector. Only 213 people fell into this group, and these tended to be social care staff (140).

Among these 213 people, 18% said they worked in a health care role, 26% worked not in a health care role and 54% said they were not working outside the social work, social care or children and young people's service sector (3% said prefer not to say). Among the 93 people who were working outside the sector, almost half (48%) said their pay in their other job was higher than within this sector, 19% said it was lower and 23% said the pay was around the same level in both jobs.

Contracted hours

Respondents were asked how many hours in total they are contracted to work per week in their main job in the sector (excluding any overtime or work in other jobs). The average was 31 hours, with most respondents falling into the 26-35 hours (30%) or 36-39 hours (31%) bands – see Table 22.



Table 22. Contracted hours in main job

	%
Up to 16 hours	9%
17-25 hours	19%
26-35 hours	30%
36-39 hours	31%
40+ hours	12%
Average	31 hours
Base (all excl. left role and not currently working)	6459

Social work staff tended to have slightly higher contracted hours (33.5 average, compared to 30.8 for social care and 30.7 for CYP staff).

Reflecting the difference in full and part time contracts, managers in social care and CYP services tended to do a higher number of contracted hours per week than non-managers.

Additional hours

Two thirds of respondents (66%) said they did **not** regularly work additional hours above their contracted hours (i.e. outside their main job, or regular overtime). Ten per cent worked extra hours up to and including 5 hours a week, and 10% worked an additional 6-10 hours a week. The average **among those who do any additional hours** was 14 hours per week. See Table 23.

Table 23. Additional hours if more than one job or do regular overtime

	%
Up to 5 hours	10%
6-10 hours	10%
11-16 hours	5%
17-25 hours	5%
26+ hours	5%
Not applicable – do not regularly work above contracted hours	66%
Average (among those who do any additional hours)	14 hours
Base (all excl. left role and not currently working)	6459

CYP staff were least likely to do any additional hours (three quarters said this was not applicable to them, compared to 63% of social care and 59% of social work staff). Among those who did do additional hours, social care staff tended to do more extra (15.6 average, compared to 11.6 for social work and 10.1 for CYP staff).

Zero hours contracts

Respondents who were not working for a single employer on fixed hours with a salary, for an agency on fixed hours, or were self-employed, were asked if they were employed under a 'zero hours contract', meaning they do not have a fixed number of hours each week and their employer offers them work when it becomes available.

Among these 788 respondents, 50% said they were on a zero hours contract. Among this group, 37% said they prefer this arrangement but 52% said they would prefer a fixed or regular hours contract; 11% were not sure (see Table 24). These results were broadly consistent between staff sub-groups, although 583 of the 788 people asked



the question were working in social care, so base sizes were relatively small for other staff groups.

Table 24. Views on zero hours contracts

	%
Would prefer a fixed/regular hours contract	52%
Would prefer a zero hours contract	37%
Don't know/not sure	11%
Base (all on a zero hours contract)	386

Terms and conditions of employment

Respondents were asked which benefits they receive in their jobs. They were most likely to report receiving a workplace/company pension scheme contribution (73%) and/or 28 days' paid holiday/pro rata for part time staff (72%). While only a small proportion (5%) said they received none of these things, some aspects were only received by relatively low percentages of respondents. For example, fewer than three fifths receive paid sick leave (58%), a quarter have access to family friendly policies (25%) and 19% said they had enough money to cover work-related travel expenses. See Table 25.

Table 25. Terms and benefits respondents receive

	%
A workplace or company pension scheme contribution from your employer	73%
28 or more days' paid holiday (or pro rata for part time staff)	72%
Sick leave with pay when unable to work due to illness	58%
Access to family-friendly policies such as flexible working, carers leave, enhanced parental leave	25%
Enough money to cover your work-related travel expenses	19%
Access to a company car	6%
None of the above	5%
Don't know/not sure	6%
Base (all excl. left role and not currently working)	6459

Social work staff were the most likely of all sub-groups to say they had access to each of the benefits listed. Those working in CYP services were least likely to say they receive 28 days' holiday (68%) or enough money to cover work-related travel (13%). Social care staff were least likely receive sick pay (54%).

Generally, managers in social care and CYP roles were more likely than non-managers to mention any of the benefits than non-managers in the same services. Respondents employed by a private company were also less likely to mention each of the terms/benefits listed than those employed in the third sector or by local authorities.

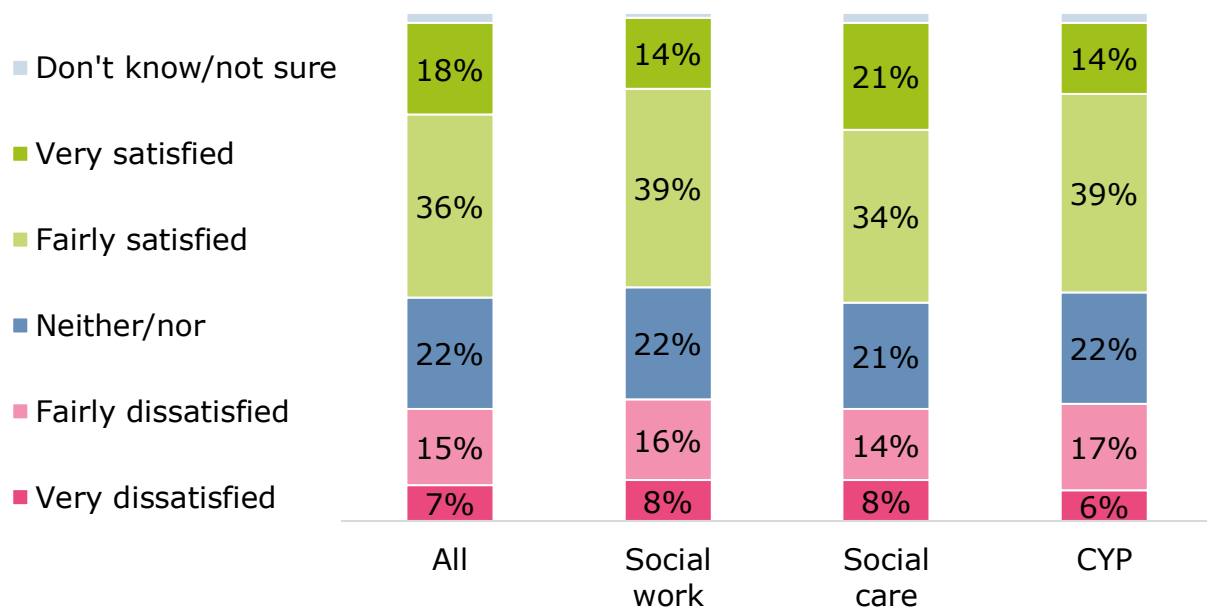
Interestingly, those saying they were likely to leave the sector were **more** likely to mention receiving paid holiday, sick leave or a workplace pension than others. Lack of access to these specific benefits is therefore unlikely to be the main driver of people leaving the sector.



Satisfaction with terms and conditions of employment

Overall, just over half (54%) said they were very or fairly satisfied with their terms and conditions of employment – although the balance was towards fairly rather than very satisfied (see Figure 8). Overall satisfaction was consistent across the staff sub-groups, although social care staff were most likely to be **very** satisfied (21% compared to 14% among social work and CYP staff).

Figure 8. Overall satisfaction with terms and conditions of employment



Base (all excl. left role and not currently working): 6459, Social work 649, Social care 3768, CYP 2042

Satisfaction was higher among those in management roles: 68% of all managers were satisfied (72% of social care managers and 63% of CYP managers), compared to just over half of non-managers in these services.

Those likely to leave the sector were less satisfied with their terms and conditions of employment (42% compared to 65% of those unlikely to leave), despite being **more** likely to receive several of the benefits listed in the previous question (although note that this question asks about terms and conditions more widely).

Income

Payment

Just under half of respondents (47%) said they were paid an annual salary, while the same proportion (47%) reported being paid by the hour (an additional 3% receive a salary and hourly pay for different jobs) – see Table 26.

Table 26. How respondents are paid

	%
Annual salary	47%
Paid by the hour	47%
Annual salary and by the hour for different jobs	3%
Prefer not to say	3%
Base (all excl. left role and not currently working)	6459

Social work staff were more likely than other groups to receive an annual salary (78%) while social care staff were the most likely group to be paid hourly (57%). Those in management roles were also more likely to be on an annual salary than non-managers (81% of all managers said this).

Annual income

Around three in ten respondents (31%) said their total gross annual income was under £20,000. Around half (51%) fell into the middle band of £20,000 to £39,999 and 10% said their income was £40,000 or more – see Table 27.

Table 27. Annual income

	%
NET: Less than £20,000	31%
Less than £10,000	6%
£10,000 - £14,999	14%
£15,000 - £19,999	11%
NET: £20,000-£39,999	51%
£20,000 - £24,999	22%
£25,000 - £29,999	17%
£30,000 - £39,999	12%
NET: £40,000+	10%
£40,000 - £49,999	6%
£50,000 - £59,999	2%
£60k or more	1%
Don't know/not sure	5%
Prefer not to say	4%
Base (all excl. left role and not currently working)	6459

Income was fairly consistent between the social care and CYP workers groups, but social work staff tended to have higher incomes. For example, while 9% of social work staff reported incomes of less than £20,000, this figure was 32% for social care and 34% for CYP staff. Conversely, social workers were more likely to be in the higher bracket: 53% were earning £40,000+ compared to 5% of social care and 6% of CYP



services staff. As would be expected, those in management roles were more likely to fall into the higher income bands than non-managers.

Hourly rate

For those paid an hourly rate, the average was £13.10 per hour (see Table 28).

Table 28. Hourly rate

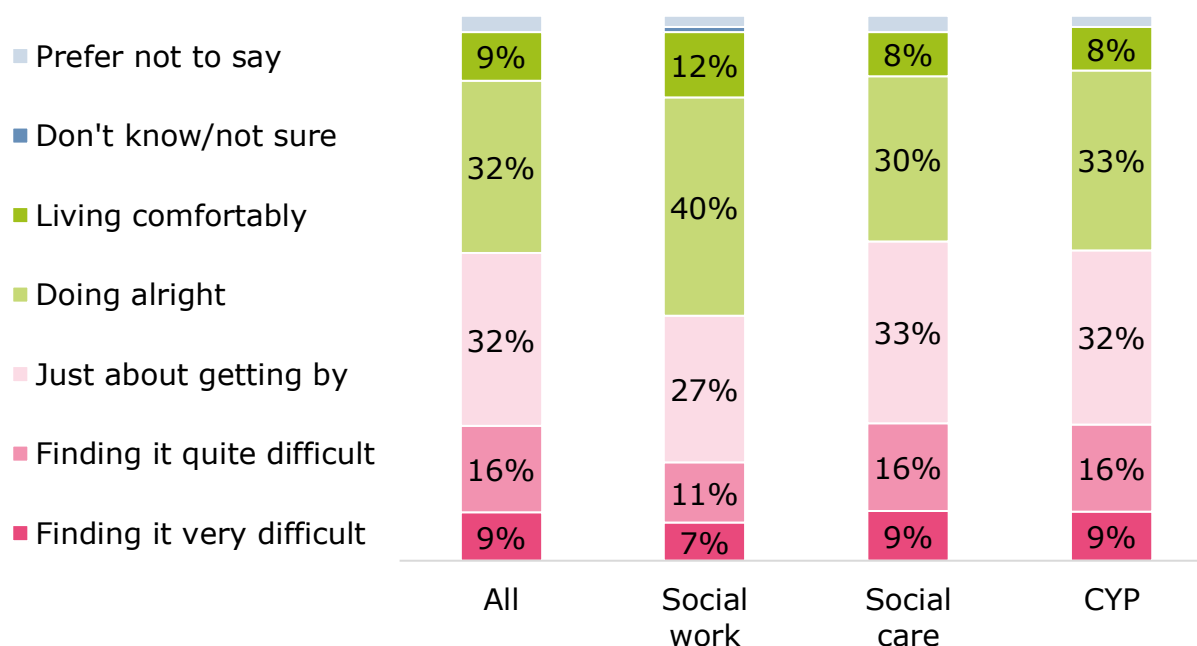
	%
Up to £11	3%
£12	36%
£13	17%
£14-15	11%
£16-20	7%
£21+	1%
Don't know/prefer not to say	24%
Average	£13.10
Base (all paid an hourly rate)	2934

Limited sub-group analysis is possible in relation to hourly rates of pay, because of the relatively low base sizes for some groups being paid hourly, and differences in the proportions saying 'don't know/prefer not to say' for this question.

How respondents are managing financially

Four in ten respondents (40%) said that they were living comfortably or doing alright, while a third (32%) said they were just about getting by and 24% said they were finding it very or quite difficult to manage financially (see Figure 9). Social work staff were more likely than other groups to say they were living comfortable/doing alright: 52% said this, compared to 38% of social care and 41% of CYP staff.

Figure 9. How respondents are managing financially



Base (all excl. left role): 6481, Social work 651, Social care 3785, CYP 2045



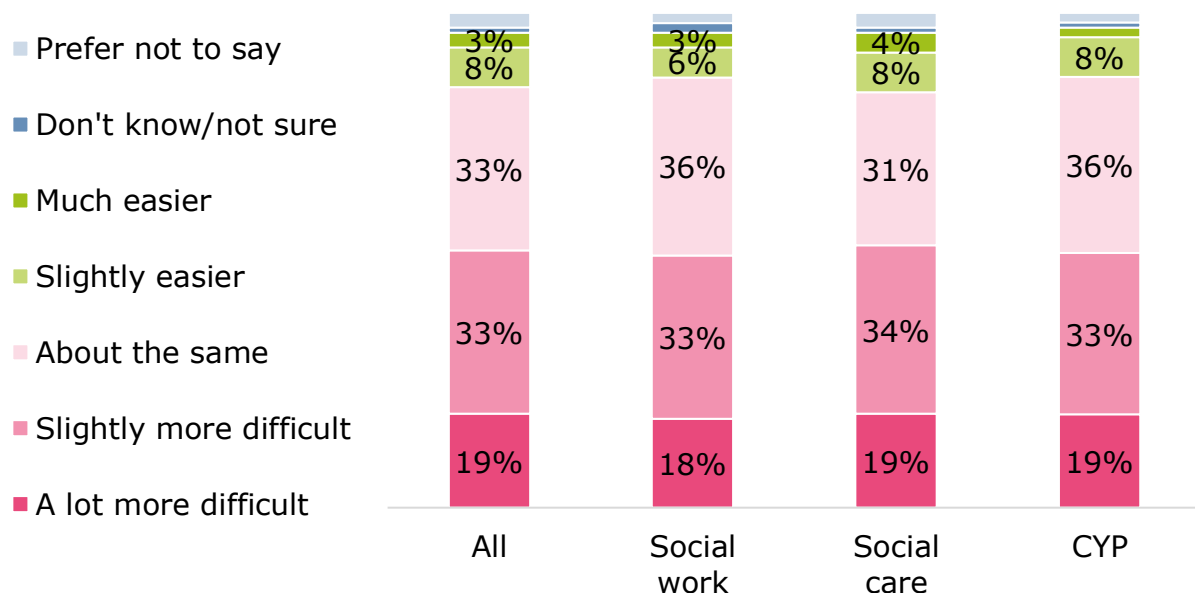
Social care managers were more likely than non-managers to say they were living comfortably/doing alright (62% compared to 37%); the same was the case for CYP managers compared to non-managers (55% compared to 39%).

Although there was no clear pattern in results for income/rates of pay based on likelihood to leave the sector, those who were likely to leave were more likely to say they were finding it very/quite difficult to manage financially (28% compared to 21% of those unlikely to leave).

How respondents are managing financially compared to last year

Respondents tended to say that they were finding it more difficult to manage financially compared to this time last year: 52% said it was slightly or a lot more difficult this year (see Figure 10). Results were broadly consistent across staff sub-groups.

Figure 10. How respondents are managing financially compared to last year



Base (all excl. left role): 6481, Social work 651, Social care 3785, CYP 2045

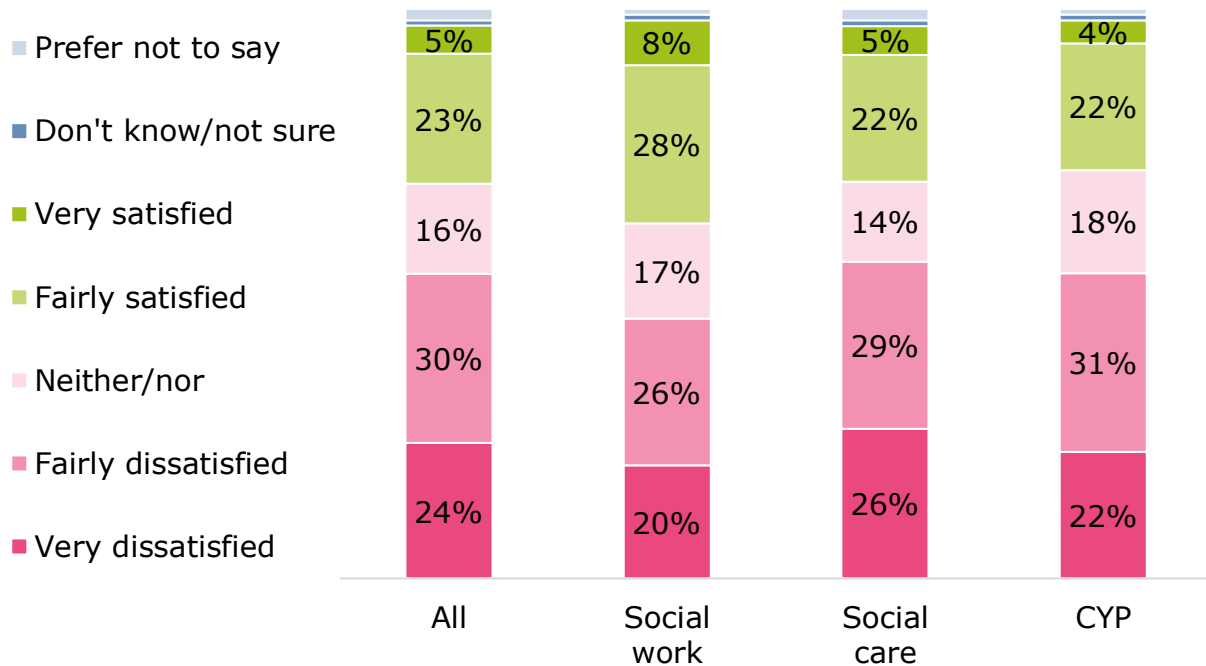
As well as finding it more difficult to manage financially, those who were likely to leave the sector were also more likely to say they were finding it more difficult to manage compared to last year (59% compared to 46% of those unlikely to leave).

Satisfaction with current level of pay

Overall, just under three in ten (28%) were satisfied with their current level of pay – although only 5% said they were **very** satisfied. More than half (54%) were dissatisfied (and 24% said they were **very** dissatisfied) – see Figure 11.

Social work staff were more satisfied than other groups: 36% were satisfied overall, compared to 28% of social care and 26% of CYP staff – and social work staff were the most likely to be **very** satisfied (8%). Social care staff were most likely to say they were **very dissatisfied** (26%, compared to 22% of CYP and 20% of social work staff).

Figure 11. Overall satisfaction with current level of pay



Base (all excl. left role and not currently working): 6459, Social work 649, Social care 3768, CYP 2042

Managers were generally more satisfied than other staff with their current level of pay: 45% of managers said this (51% social care managers compared to 26% non-managers; 39% CYP managers compared to 25% non-managers).

Those likely to leave the sector were less satisfied with their level of pay than those unlikely to leave: 63% said they were dissatisfied, compared to 46% of others.

Leaving the sector

Length of time in the sector

Most of the 100 respondents who had left their role in social work, social care or CYP services had worked in the sector for more than 10 years (55%) – see Table 29.

Table 29. Length of time in the sector

	%
Less than 1 year	14%
1-2 years	10%
3-5 years	11%
6-10 years	10%
More than 10 years	55%
Base (all who have left role)	100

Reasons for leaving the sector

The most common reasons for having left the sector were that they were overworked (24%), they had retired (23%), poor employment and working conditions (22%), and/or relationships with managers/senior staff (21%) – see Table 30.

Table 30. Reasons for leaving the sector

	%
Overworked	24%
Retirement	23%
Poor employment and working conditions in general	22%
Relationships with managers/senior staff	21%
Pay was too low/needed a higher-paying job	16%
Relationships with colleagues	12%
Wanted to do something else	11%
No prospects of career progression	10%
For personal reasons (eg childcare/caring responsibilities, sickness or disability, moved abroad)	8%
Didn't enjoy the job	8%
Wanted more flexibility	6%
Experiencing discrimination, such as racism	6%
There was too much studying involved	5%
To study/gain further qualifications	4%
Lack of job security	4%
Other	25%
Don't know/not sure	3%
Base (all who have left role)	100

Current work situation

Just under three in ten of those who had left the sector were working full time and a further quarter were working part time. Reflecting one of the key reasons for leaving, a quarter said they were now retired (see Table 31).



Table 31. Current work situation

	%
Working full time	28%
Working part-time	26%
Unemployed and looking for work	9%
Not working - on maternity/paternity/shared parental/adoption leave	-
Not working - retired	24%
Not working - looking after the home/children/relatives	4%
Not working - long term sick or disabled	6%
Not working - temporarily sick or injured	1%
Student/training - studying for a recognised qualification	2%
Base (all who have left role)	100

Among the 54 respondents who were currently working, this was most likely to be in a health role (11 respondents), education (10), hospitality (3), retail (3) or another type of role (27).

Views of the sector

Recommending the sector

All respondents, including those who had left their role, were asked how likely they were to recommend working in the sector, on a scale from 0 (not at all likely) to 10 (extremely likely) – see Table 32. While 40% said they were likely to recommend working in the sector (scoring 7~10), 28% were neutral (4~6) and 30% said they were **not** likely to recommend it (scoring 0~3).

Social care staff tended to be the most positive about recommending working in the sector: they were more likely than social work or CYP staff to give a rating of 10 out of 10 (15%), or to score 7~10 (45%). Those who had left their role were more likely than anyone currently working in the sector to say they were not at all likely to recommend it (20% scoring 0), but they were also most likely to say they did not know (10%).

Table 32. Likelihood to recommend the sector

	All	Social work	Social care	CYP	Left role
0 – Not at all likely	14%	16%	13%	16%	20%
1	3%	3%	2%	4%	1%
2	5%	7%	5%	6%	4%
3	8%	9%	7%	9%	7%
4	6%	8%	5%	8%	9%
5	14%	13%	14%	15%	10%
6	8%	8%	8%	8%	5%
7	11%	11%	12%	11%	8%
8	11%	10%	11%	10%	11%
9	5%	3%	6%	3%	5%
10 – Extremely likely	13%	9%	15%	8%	10%
Don't know/not sure	2%	2%	2%	2%	10%
NET: Not likely (0~3)	30%	36%	27%	35%	32%
NET: Neither/nor (4~6)	28%	30%	26%	30%	24%
NET: Likely (7~10)	40%	32%	45%	33%	34%
Base (all)	6581	651	3785	2045	100

Unsurprisingly, those who were likely to leave the sector themselves were less likely to recommend it to others – although a fifth would still recommend it to others (21% scored 7~10, compared to 57% of those unlikely to leave).

What respondents enjoy(ed) about working in the sector

All respondents were asked an open-ended question about what they like/enjoy(ed) about working in the sector. Responses were coded into themes and sub-themes (see Table 33). Almost eight in ten of those who commented (78%) mentioned making a difference/feelings of satisfaction/the job being rewarding. This was most commonly comments about making a difference (48%), the job being rewarding/fulfilling (31%) and/or the quality of care and caring for people (19%).

Almost two thirds (64%) highlighted the service users they work with: 34% mentioned client interactions/relationships generally, 29% specifically mentioned working with children, 12% families and 10% vulnerable adults.



Other themes were mentioned by smaller proportions of those who commented: these included teamworking/colleague relationships (13%), other aspects/features of the job such as variety and flexibility (8%) and opportunities for learning and development (7%). Some also used the opportunity to provide negative feedback (8%).

Table 33. What respondents most enjoy(ed) about working in the sector

	% ¹
Making a difference/satisfaction/reward	78%
Making a difference	48%
Emotional reward/it's rewarding/fulfilling	31%
Quality of care/caring for people	19%
Job satisfaction	8%
Helping/supporting independent living	6%
Community engagement/involvement	3%
Advocacy/advocating for clients	2%
Working with specific groups	64%
Client interaction/relationships	34%
Working with children	29%
Family relationships/working with families	12%
Working with vulnerable adults (incl. elderly, people with disabilities, ASN etc)	10%
Teams/colleagues	13%
Colleague relationships/other staff	8%
Teamwork/being part of a team	7%
Features/conditions of job	8%
Varied/variety of tasks (incl. every day is different)	5%
Flexibility (incl. flexible hours/working pattern etc)	2%
Learning and development	7%
Professional growth/development/learning	4%
Learning opportunities/always learning	3%
Any negative comment	8%
Management issues	4%
Low pay	2%
Staffing shortages	2%
Burnout	2%
Base (all who provided a comment)	4263

What should be done to make the sector an attractive/rewarding place to work

All respondents were also asked an open-ended question about what they think should be done to make the sector an attractive and rewarding place to work, and responses were coded into the themes and sub-themes shown in Table 34.

By far the most common suggestions related to better pay – three fifths of those who commented (58%) said pay should be increased, and/or be fairer. A fifth (21%) mentioned improvements related to how staff are recognised and supported, particularly requesting more support for employee wellbeing (9%). A similar proportion (19%) mentioned anything to do with workloads/time pressures – most

¹ Table shows comments made by 2% or more



often suggestions for less admin/paperwork, and/or reduction of workloads (both mentioned by 9%).

Staffing/recruitment issues were mentioned by 18% – the most common suggestion was for more staff/better staffing levels (13%). Other employment terms/benefits were mentioned by 16% – this included better terms and conditions generally, and specific comments about travel allowance, sick pay etc. Training/progression was mentioned by 14%; this was most likely to be requests for more/better training opportunities (10%). Thirteen per cent mentioned a need for better management/leadership/support from managers, and 10% mentioned improvements in relation to worklife balance or flexible working.

Table 34. What should be done to make the sector an attractive/rewarding place to work

	% ²
Better/fairer pay	58%
Pay increase/better pay	54%
Fairer/equal pay/salary (incl. across sectors, reflective of qualifications/skills etc)	7%
Staff recognition/support/respect/wellbeing	21%
Better support for/focus on/improve employee wellbeing/mental health support	9%
Staff recognition/appreciation/feeling valued	7%
Employee respect (e.g. treat staff equally, respect/listen to staff, reduce blame culture)	7%
Workloads/time pressures/admin	19%
Less paperwork/admin/bureaucracy	9%
Workload reduction/workloads are too high/need more manageable caseloads	9%
Allow more time with service users/to do job properly	3%
Staffing/recruitment	18%
Staffing levels/need more staff/better ratios (incl. need more staff to support ASN)	13%
Better recruitment/retention/less staff turnover	6%
Other terms/benefits	16%
Better terms and conditions/benefits	8%
Travel allowances (mileage and/or time)	3%
Sick pay	3%
Overtime (pay for overtime/unsocial hours, reduce overtime demands)	2%
Job security (incl. issues with zero hours/ temporary contracts)	2%
Training/progression	14%
More/better training opportunities (incl. paid time for training)	10%
More/better opportunities for professional development/career progression	6%
Better management/support/leadership	13%
Worklife balance/hours/flexibility	10%
Worklife balance (incl. shorter/better hours)	6%
Flexible working (incl. flexible hours, better shift patterns)	5%
Better sector funding/more resources (incl. Government funding/support)	6%

² Table shows comments made by 2% or more



Policy/regulation change³	5%
Better workplace safety (incl. lone working/abuse/violence)	4%
Improve public perceptions/understanding	2%
Base (all who provided a comment)	4746

It is worth noting that those who said they were likely to leave the sector in the next 12 months or five years were more likely than others to mention aspects relating to workloads/time/pressure/admin (23%), issues with staff recruitment (21%), better management (16%) and worklife balance (12%). While they did still mention better pay and other aspects of terms/conditions, they were less likely to do so than others.

³ No sub-theme mentioned by more than 1%. Includes policy reform, review 1140 hours entitlement, changes to qualifications/regulations



Summary and conclusions

Joining the sector

Most respondents had come into social work, social care or CYP services to make a difference to people's lives, because they thought they would be a job they would love/enjoy, and/or they felt it would suit their skills/they would be good at it. People tended to have learned about the opportunity through friends and family working in the sector or by seeing a job advertised.

Likelihood to leave, staff turnover and management/leadership

Just over a fifth of respondents said they were likely to leave their role in the sector in the next 12 months; almost half said the same when asked about the next five years. Key reasons for thinking about leaving were being overworked, the pay being too low and/or poor employment or working conditions in general.

Staff turnover was reported to be high by almost half of respondents, and a range of impacts was noted for other staff and managers – most often increased staff stress levels, increased workloads, and lower staff morale. Those in management roles reported various difficulties in hiring or keeping staff, most commonly issues with the quality of candidates applying, availability of staff, and/or the pay and conditions they are able to offer.

Around two fifths of respondents agreed that managers/leaders in the sector come from different backgrounds. However, relatively small proportions of those not already in a management role believed it would be possible for them to become a manager/formal leader (just over a third) or that they would like to be in a management or formal leadership position in the future (three in ten).

Satisfaction with current job

Overall, respondents were more likely to be satisfied than dissatisfied with their current job: just over half said they were satisfied; just over a third were dissatisfied. A majority said they feel safe in their work environment, while just under half said they would recommend their organisation as a great place to work.

Most respondents said that their colleagues help and support them, that their job gives them a feeling of satisfaction, their manager helps and support them and their own morale is good, always/most of the time. They were less likely to say that the right staff are in place to deliver services or that morale amongst colleagues is good.

Four in five respondents agreed that their work is valued by the people/families they support, and three quarters felt valued by colleagues. However, they were less likely to feel that their work was valued by the general public or their employer (around two fifths agreed) or the Scottish Government (a fifth).

Wellbeing at work

Around two thirds of respondents agreed that they feel able to meet the needs of people they care for/support. However, some issues with wellbeing at work were suggested: three in five said they find it difficult to switch off when they leave work, only two fifths said they have enough time to do their job well, and just three in ten said enough support is in place for dealing with stress.



The most commonly mentioned aspects currently causing respondents stress at work were having too much work to do/not enough time to do their work, paperwork/bureaucracy (both mentioned by around half of all respondents), and a third reported a lack of support from managers or colleagues if they need help.

If people wanted information about health and wellbeing in the workplace, they were most likely to mention the SSSC and/or their manager (both mentioned by around two fifths), while online sources were also commonly mentioned (eg just under two fifths mentioned Google/internet search and just over a third would look at their employer's website/intranet).

A total of almost four in ten reported that they had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination at work – bullying was most likely to be mentioned, by just under three in ten.

Skills and training

Attitudes towards training were generally positive: more than eight in ten agreed they want to improve their knowledge and skills, around three quarters said there are training and learning opportunities available to them, and around seven in ten said they have enough training/learning opportunities to fulfil their CPL requirements and they get the right training to do their job well. Two thirds agreed they are supported to gain qualifications for registration purposes, and three fifths know how/where to look for a new role to match their skills and experience. Around half said they need more training to progress their career.

The most commonly mentioned barriers to training were lack of time (mentioned by three in ten), employers not allowing time off for training, and/or availability of courses (both mentioned by around a quarter).

Terms and conditions

Respondents were most likely to be employed by a local authority or a private company. The majority were working full time for one employer, on fixed hours and receiving a salary (an average of 31 hours a week). Only a small proportion were working for more than one employer or doing additional roles. Most (two thirds) did not regularly work additional hours above their contracted hours, i.e. outside their main job, or regular overtime.

Respondents were most likely to say they receive a workplace/company pension scheme contribution and/or 28 days' paid holiday (both mentioned by just over seven in ten). However, fewer than three fifths receive paid sick leave, a quarter have access to family friendly policies and a fifth said they had enough money to cover work-related travel expenses.

Overall, just over half said they were very or fairly satisfied with their terms and conditions of employment – although the balance was towards fairly rather than very satisfied.

Income

Respondents were split roughly half and half between those paid an annual salary and those paid by the hour. Around half overall fell into the middle annual income band (£20,000 to £39,000) while three in ten had an annual income of less than £20,000 and one in ten earned £40,000 or more. For those paid an hourly rate, the average



was £13.10 per hour. Overall, just under three in ten were satisfied with their current level of pay, while more than half were dissatisfied.

Although four in ten respondents said that they were living comfortably or doing alright, a third said they were just about getting by and a quarter said they were finding it difficult to manage financially. Just over half also said they were finding it more difficult to manage financially than this time last year.

Views of the sector

Overall, respondents were more likely to recommend working in the sector than not: two fifths said they would be likely to recommend it while three in ten said they were not likely to do this.

When asked what they most like/enjoy about working in the sector, respondents tended to mention making a difference/feelings of satisfaction/the job being rewarding, and/or aspects related to the service users they work with/relationships with clients.

Suggestions about what should be done to make the sector an attractive and rewarding place to work focused on better pay. Other common suggestions included improvements in how staff are recognised and supported, reducing workloads/time pressures, and issues related to staffing/recruitment.

Differences across social work, social care and CYP services

Responses varied across sub-groups of the sample. In general:

- **Social work staff** tended to express the most negative views/lowest levels of satisfaction with their current roles. For example, they were the most likely to be considering leaving in the next 12 months, to report high staff turnover and impacts of this, and tended to be least likely to report high morale and high levels of job satisfaction. Social work staff were more likely than others to say that having too much responsibility was causing them stress; they were also more likely to have experienced bullying, discrimination or harassment. This group was least likely to feel that their work was valued, particularly by the people/families they support, their employer and the general public. They also gave the most negative feedback in relation to skills/training.
- **Social care staff** were generally the most positive in their responses: they were the least likely group to be thinking of leaving their role, and tended to be most satisfied with their current job, most likely to agree they felt safe and would recommend their workplace, and to say that their job gives them satisfaction always/most of the time. Social care workers also tended to be more positive than other groups in relation to having enough time to do their job well, having enough support in place to deal with stress – and they reported the fewest sources of stress overall. They were more likely than other groups to agree that they get the right training to do their job well, and least likely to report any barriers to training.
- **CYP services staff** tended to fall into the middle in terms of levels of satisfaction and reported wellbeing at work. They had slightly different sources of stress, eg they were more likely than others to mention working with vulnerable groups and difficulties with colleague relationships, but less likely to mention work costs such as travel, or lone working. They were also the most likely say they found it difficult switching off when leaving work.



Next steps

This survey has provided a robust baseline measure of the views and experiences of the social work, social care and children and young people's service workforce. Results will act as a benchmark for the SSSC to track change over time in the wellbeing and needs of staff and to inform national workforce planning.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire

Survey title: Have Your Say Workforce Wellbeing Survey

Introduction: This is the first Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) **Have Your Say Workforce Wellbeing Survey**. We've commissioned Progressive Partnership, an independent research company, to conduct this survey. This survey aims to be the primary method for us and our partners to understand how registered and non-registered workers in social work, social care and children and young people services in Scotland feel about their jobs. Your responses will help us identify trends, support the workforce and enable us, our partners and the Scottish Government to address issues affecting the workforce, including wellbeing and valuing the profession.

The survey should take around 15 minutes to complete. **The survey will not save your answers as you go, so make sure you complete them in one sitting and press 'submit' at the end.**

Progressive Partnership is carrying out the survey and analysis. They work in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Market Research Society Code of Conduct. Please be assured that your confidentiality and anonymity is respected at all times.

The survey may include collecting personal information from you such as your age, gender or ethnicity. You do not have to answer these questions if you prefer not to. Progressive Partnership will not provide personal data to the SSSC or to any other third parties, unless you agree to this and choose to volunteer to be involved in future research at the end of this questionnaire. You can view a copy of Progressive Partnership's Privacy statement [here](#), SSSC's privacy statement [here](#) and further information about the survey here *[insert link to info sheet]*.

SQ1: Consent

Are you happy to continue with the survey?

SINGLE CODE	CODE
Yes	1
No	2

Section header: About your role

S1. Are you registered with the SSSC?

SINGLE CODE	CODE
Yes	1
No	2

S2. Which of the following best describes your main job right now? If you have more than one role, just consider the one you spend the most time on.

SCRIPTING NOTE: RESPONDENT TO SELECT ONE BOX FROM MAIN HEADERS (S2) AND THEN SUB-QUESTIONS BASED ON S2 TO APPEAR

SINGLE CODE	Code	Route
Social Worker	1	
Social Care Worker	2	
Children and Young People's Worker	3	
Other paid social work role	4	
Other paid social care role	5	
Other paid children and young people's worker role	6	
Other voluntary social work role	7	
Other voluntary social care role	8	
Other voluntary children and young people's worker role	9	
I am an unpaid carer (i.e. look after friend or family member without being paid)	10	SCREEN OUT
None of the above – I have left my role in social work, social care or children and young people's services	11	SKIP TO S8

SOCIAL WORKERS (S2=1/4/7) – SELECT SERVICE TYPE

S3. Service type

SINGLE CODE	Code
Criminal justice	1
Adults	2
Children and Families	3
Mental health	4
Care Inspectorate	5
Other	6

SOCIAL CARE WORKERS (S2=2/5/8) – SELECT LEVEL OF JOB ROLE AND SERVICE TYPE

S4. Level of job role

SINGLE CODE	Code
Manager	1
Supervisor	2
Practitioner	3
Support worker	4
Other	5

SOCIAL CARE WORKERS (S2=2/5/8) – SELECT LEVEL OF JOB ROLE AND SERVICE TYPE

S5. Service type

SINGLE CODE	Code
Housing support	1
Care at home	2
Care home services for adults	3
Adult day care	4
Care Inspectorate	5
Other	6

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORKERS (S2=3/6/9) – SELECT LEVEL OF JOB ROLE AND SERVICE TYPE

S6. Level of job role

SINGLE CODE	Code
Manager	1
Supervisor	2
Practitioner	3
Support worker	4
Other	5



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORKERS (S2=3/6/9) – SELECT LEVEL OF JOB ROLE AND SERVICE TYPE

S7. Service type

SINGLE CODE	Code
Residential Child Care	1
Day Care of Children	2
Care at home	3
Housing Support	4
School Care Accommodation	5
Care Inspectorate	6
Out of school care	7
Other	8

ASK UNLESS LEFT ROLE (ALL EXCEPT S2=11)

S8. In total, irrespective of whether you have worked in the sector continuously or not, how many years have you worked in social work, social care or children and young people's services?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-10 years	4
More than 10 years	5

ASK IF THEY HAVE LEFT ROLE (S2=11)

S9. How long did you work in social work, social care or children and young people's services?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-10 years	4
More than 10 years	5

NOW SKIP TO SECTION F IF LEFT ROLE (S2=11)

ASK UNLESS LEFT ROLE (ALL EXCEPT S2=11)

S10. How long have you worked in your current role?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	3
6-10 years	4
More than 10 years	5

SECTION A

ASK SECTION A UNLESS LEFT ROLE (S2=11)

Section header: Working in social work, social care or children and young people's services

In this section, we are asking questions to understand what factors influenced your decision to join, stay, or leave the workforce in social work, social care or children and young people's services. Your responses will help us identify the key motivations and challenges faced by professionals in these fields.



A1. What first motivated you to start working in social work, social care or children and young people's services? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE (FIX DK)	Code
Wanted a job that would make a difference to people's lives	1
Felt it would suit my skills/I would be good at it	2
Felt it would be a job I would love/enjoy	3
Felt it would be a stable/secure job	4
Felt it would be a job with good career prospects/progression	5
Looking for a change in career	6
The salary on offer	7
Felt the work pattern suited my lifestyle	8
Through personal experience of caring for someone	9
There was nothing else suitable or available to me	10
Other	11
None of the above	12
Don't know/not sure	13

A2. How did you first learn about the opportunity to work in social work, social care or children and young people's services?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Careers advice	1
Recruitment companies/fairs	2
Job advertised online (eg. social media, websites about social care)/in newspaper	3
Through friends and family working in the sector	4
Other (please specify)	5
Don't know/not sure	6

A3. How likely are you to stop working in a social work, social care or children and young people's services role...?

SINGLE CODE, INVERT SCALE	Not at all likely	Not very likely	Quite likely	Very likely	Don't know/not sure
Within the next 12 months	1	2	3	4	5
Within the next 5 years	1	2	3	4	5

ASK IF LIKELY TO LEAVE (A3a OR A3b=3,4)

A4. Why do you expect to leave the social work, social care or children and young people's services? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE (FIX DK)	Code
Want to do something else	1
For personal reasons (eg. childcare/caring responsibilities, sickness or disability, moving abroad)	2
Retirement	3
To study/gain further qualifications	4
Don't enjoy the job	5
No prospects of career progression	6
There is too much studying involved	7
Poor employment or working conditions in general	8
Lack of job security	9
Want more flexibility	10
Overworked	11



Pay too low/need a higher-paying job	12
Experiencing discrimination, such as racism	13
Relationships with managers/senior staff	14
Relationships with colleagues	15
Other	16
Don't know/not sure	17

A5. Is there a high level of staff turnover in your (main) workplace? By high turnover we mean there is a high number of staff leaving their jobs.

SINGLE CODE	Code
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know/not sure	3

ASK IF YES (A5=1)

A6. How, if at all, do you think high turnover of staff affects the remaining staff and managers? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE (FIX NONE/DK)	Code
Increase in workload	1
Increase in staff stress levels	2
Lower staff morale	3
Poorer working relationships between colleagues and managers	4
Poorer outcomes for those receiving care and support	5
Reduction in development of new processes or working practices	6
More reliance on agency workers	7
More difficult to access training/career progression pathways	8
Other	9
None of the above – there are no impacts	10
Don't know/not sure	11

ASK MANAGERS (S4=1 OR S6=1)

A7. Which, if any, of the following difficulties does your organisation face when it comes to hiring or keeping staff? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE (FIX NONE/DK)	Code
Costs associated with recruitment	1
Availability of staff	2
Quality of candidates applying	3
Registration and qualification requirements	4
Difficulty in attracting underrepresented groups to the workforce	5
Difficulty recruiting from the EU following Brexit	6
The pay and conditions we are able to offer (eg. flexibility, pensions)	7
Competition from other employers – other social care employers	8
Competition from other employers – health employers	9
Competition from other employers – other sector	10
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic	11
Other	12
None of the above – there are no difficulties	13
Don't know/not sure	14

A8. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding managers in social work, social care or children and young people's services?

SINGLE CODE, INVERT SCALE	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree / disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ not sure	I am already in a management position
Managers/leaders come from different backgrounds	1	2	3	4	5	6	-
I would like to be in a management or formal leadership position at some point in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe it would be possible for me to become a manager/formal leader	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION B

ASK SECTION B UNLESS LEFT ROLE (S2=11)

Section header: Health and wellbeing

This section concentrates on your wellbeing and day-to-day satisfaction in your job in social work, social care or children and young people's services.

B1. On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 means 'completely dissatisfied' and 7 means 'completely satisfied', how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with your current job overall?

SINGLE CODE/INVERT SCALE	Code
1 – Completely dissatisfied	1
2 – Mostly dissatisfied	2
3 – Somewhat dissatisfied	3
4 – Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4
5 – Somewhat satisfied	5
6 – Mostly satisfied	6
7 – Completely satisfied	7

B2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

SINGLE CODE, INVERT SCALE	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree/ disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ not sure
I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel safe in my work environment	1	2	3	4	5	6

B3. For each of the following statements, please select the response which best describes your work situation?

SINGLE CODE, INVERT SCALE	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
My manager helps and supports me	1	2	3	4	5
My colleagues help and support me	1	2	3	4	5
My job gives me the feeling of satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
Morale amongst my colleagues is good	1	2	3	4	5
My own morale is good	1	2	3	4	5
The right staff are in place to deliver services	1	2	3	4	5

B4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that you feel valued for the work you do by...?

SINGLE CODE, INVERT SCALE	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree/d disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/not sure
Your manager	1	2	3	4	5	6
Your employer	1	2	3	4	5	6
Your colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	6
The people/families you support	1	2	3	4	5	6
Partner agencies (eg. health staff, police etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
General public	1	2	3	4	5	6
Scottish Government	1	2	3	4	5	6

B5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

SINGLE CODE, INVERT SCALE	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree/d disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/not sure
I have enough time to do my job well	1	2	3	4	5	6
I find it difficult to switch off when I leave work	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel enough support is in place for dealing with stress	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel able to meet the needs of people I care for and support	1	2	3	4	5	6

B6. Which of the following, if any, are currently causing you stress while carrying out your job? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE (FIX NONE/DK)	Code
Having too much work to do/not having enough time to do my work	1
Having too much responsibility	2
Not being given enough independence to do my job well	3
Working alone	4
Working with vulnerable children or adults	5
Difficulties in relationships with colleagues	6
Lack of support from managers or colleagues if I need help	7
Paperwork and bureaucracy	8



Costs associated with work, such as travel	9
Worrying about the impact of my work on the climate/environment	10
Worrying about things outside work in general (eg. responsibilities and stresses at home)	11
Other	12
None of the above	13
Don't know/not sure	14

B7. If you wanted to learn more about health and wellbeing in the workplace, where would you go to find this information? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE (FIX DK)	Code
Employer website/intranet	1
Google/internet search	2
Human Resources (HR)/Employee Assistance Programme	3
Your manager	4
Colleagues/peers	5
SSSC	6
National Wellbeing Hub	7
Your Trade Union rep(s)	8
Other	9
Don't know/not sure	10

We want to know if workers in social work, social care or children and young people's services have faced inappropriate comments or behaviours. This question is about bullying, harassment, and discrimination, and it might be sensitive for some people. Your responses will stay anonymous, and you don't have to answer if you don't want to.

- **Bullying** is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, isolate, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
- **Harassment** is unwanted actions or comments that are demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient. It may be related to any personal characteristic of the individual and may be persistent or an isolated incident.
- **Discrimination** is treating a person or group of people less favourably because they have one of the 'protected characteristics', which are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

B8. Have you ever personally experienced any of the following at work? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE	Code
Yes – bullying	1
Yes – discrimination	2
Yes – harassment	3
No – none of these	4
Prefer not to say	5

SECTION C

ASK SECTION C UNLESS LEFT ROLE (S2=11)

Section header: Skills and training

It is important that everyone working in social work, social care, and children and young people's services keep their knowledge and skills up to date, to ensure the best outcomes for the people they support and care for. This section helps us understand your experience of training and learning opportunities in your role.



The SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers applies to everyone working in social services, not just those who are registered. These codes emphasise the need for all workers to continuously improve their practice, skills, and knowledge.

C1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

SINGLE CODE, INVERT SCALE	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree/disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/not sure	Not applicable
I am supported to gain my qualifications for registration purposes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I get the right training to do my job well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have enough training and learning opportunities to fulfil my CPL (Continuous Professional Learning) requirements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I want to improve my knowledge and skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are training and learning opportunities available to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I need more training to progress my career/get promoted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know how and where to look for a new role to match my skills and experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

C2. Which, if any, of the following barriers to accessing training and learning exist in your workplace? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE (FIX DK)	Code
Availability of courses	1
I can't afford it/no funding available/not paid for by employer	2
I don't have time	3
Employer not allowing time off for training/would have to attend training in my own time	4
Lack of information on training available and how to access it	5
Other (please specify)	6
None – there are no barriers to accessing training and learning in my workplace	7
Don't know/not sure	8

SECTION D

ASK SECTION D UNLESS LEFT ROLE (S2=11)

Section header: Terms and conditions

We want to hear about your thoughts and experiences regarding your pay, terms, and conditions as a worker in social work, social care, and children and young people's services. Your responses will remain anonymous, and you are not obligated to answer if you prefer not to.



D1. What is your current employment status for your main job? If you are currently on maternity/parental leave, please tell us what your employment status was just before beginning your leave.

SINGLE CODE	Code
Employed in social work, social care or children and young people's services by a local authority	1
Employed in social work, social care or children and young people's services by a third sector body	2
Employed in social work, social care or children and young people's services by a private company	3
Employed in social work, social care or children and young people's services by an agency	4
Employed in social work, social care or children and young people's services by family member (eg. as a Personal Assistant)	5
Self-employed in social care	6
On secondment/placement in social work, social care or children and young people's services	7
Working on a voluntary basis in social work, social care or children and young people's services	8
Currently not working as suspended/subject to investigation for example by the SSSC, Disclosure Scotland or Police Scotland	9

THOSE NOT WORKING (D1=9) NOW SKIP TO E4

D2. Which of these best describes you? I work...

SINGLE CODE	Code
Full time for one employer on fixed hours and receive a salary	1
Part time for one employer on fixed hours and receive a salary	2
For one employer on flexible hours	3
For an agency on fixed hours	4
For an agency on flexible hours	5
For an agency as well as for one or more employers directly	6
For different employers with two or more part-time roles	7
For different employers with one full-time role and one or more part-time roles	8
Self-employed for one individual	9
Self-employed for different individuals	10

ASK IF WORK FOR MORE THAN ONE EMPLOYER (D2=6,7,8)

D3. Do you also currently work in any roles outside social work, social care or children and young people's services? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE FOR 1/2	Code
Yes – in a health care role	1
Yes – not in a health care role	2
No	3
Prefer not to say	4

ASK IF YES (D3=1,2)

D4. Is your pay higher, lower, or about the same in your other job or jobs compared to your job in social work, social care or children and young people's services?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Higher level of pay	1
Lower level of pay	2



Level of pay around the same	3
Don't know/not sure	4
Prefer not to say	5

D5. How many hours, in total, are you contracted to work per week in your main job in social work, social care, and children and young people's services? Please exclude any overtime or your work in any other jobs – just think about contracted hours for your main job.

____ [QUANTITY VARIABLE] ____ per week

D6. If you have more than one job, or if you regularly work overtime, how many **additional** hours per week do you work in social work, social care or children and young people's services? Please include additional hours you regularly work over and above your main job's contracted hours. If the number of hours varies, give an answer for a typical week.

____ [QUANTITY VARIABLE] ____ per week

Provide an option for: 'Not applicable – I do not regularly do additional work above my contracted hours for my main job'

ASK UNLESS D2=1,2,4,9,10 (I.E. DO NOT ASK IF SINGLE EMPLOYER ON FIXED HOURS WITH SALARY/AGENCY ON FIXED HOURS OR SELF EMPLOYED)

D7. Are you employed under a 'zero hours contract,' meaning you don't have a fixed number of hours each week, and your employer offers you work when it becomes available?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know/not sure	3

ASK IF YES (D7=1)

D8. If you had the choice, would you prefer to work a zero hours contract or would you rather have more fixed or regular hours?

SINGLE CODE	Code
I would prefer a zero hours contract	1
I would prefer a fixed/regular hours contract	2
Don't know/not sure	3

D9. Which of the following, if any, do you receive in your main job in social work, social care or children and young people's services? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE (FIX DK)	Code
28 or more days' paid holiday (or pro rata for part time staff)	1
Sick leave with pay when unable to work due to illness	2
A workplace or company pension scheme contribution from your employer	3
Access to family-friendly policies such as flexible working, carers leave, enhanced parental leave	4
Enough money to cover your work-related travel expenses	5
Access to a company car	6
None of the above	7
Don't know/not sure	8

D10. To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the terms and conditions of your employment in your main job in social work, social care or children and young people's services?

SINGLE CODE/INVERT	Code
Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2



Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5
Don't know/not sure	6

SECTION E

ASK SECTION E UNLESS LEFT ROLE (S2=11)

Section header: Income

E1. Are you paid an annual salary, or are you paid by the hour? If you have multiple jobs, please consider all of them when answering.

SINGLE CODE	Code
Annual salary	1
Paid by the hour	2
Annual salary and by the hour for different jobs	3
Prefer not to say	4

E2. What is your total gross annual income? Please include typical overtime and bonuses, but before any deductions for tax. If you have more than one job, please consider all of them. If your pay varies each month or week, or if you have recently started working, please estimate what your average annual income would be.

SINGLE CODE	Code
Less than £10,000	1
£10,000 - £14,999	2
£15,000 - £19,999	3
£20,000 - £24,999	4
£25,000 - £29,999	5
£30,000 - £39,999	6
£40,000 - £49,999	7
£50,000 - £59,999	8
£60k or more	9
Don't know/not sure	10
Prefer not to say	11

ASK IF PAID BY THE HOUR (E1=2,3)

E3. What is your hourly rate of pay? If you are paid a different amount for different jobs, please think about how much you are paid for your main role (if this role is paid by the hour). Please enter the number only, don't include a £ sign.

£ [ENTER QUANTITY]	1
Don't know/not sure	2
Prefer not to say	3

ALSO ASK E4 AND E5 FOR THOSE NOT WORKING (D1=9)

E4. How well would you say you are managing financially?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Living comfortably	1
Doing alright	2
Just about getting by	3
Finding it quite difficult	4
Finding it very difficult	5



Don't know/not sure	6
Prefer not to say	7

E5. Compared to this time last year, are you finding it easier or more difficult to manage financially?

SINGLE CODE/INVERT	Code
A lot more difficult	1
Slightly more difficult	2
About the same	3
Slightly easier	4
Much easier	5
Don't know/not sure	6
Prefer not to say	7

E6. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current level of pay?

SINGLE CODE/INVERT	Code
Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5
Don't know/not sure	6
Prefer not to say	7

SECTION F

ASK SECTION F ONLY IF LEFT ROLE (S2=11)

Section header: Leaving social work, social care or children and young people's services

F1. Why did you leave the social service sector? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE (FIX DK)	Code
Wanted to do something else	1
For personal reasons (eg. childcare/caring responsibilities, sickness or disability, moved abroad)	2
Retirement	3
To study/gain further qualifications	4
Didn't enjoy the job	5
No prospects of career progression	6
There was too much studying involved	7
Poor employment and working conditions in general	8
Lack of job security	9
Wanted more flexibility	10
Overworked	11
Pay was too low/needed a higher-paying job	12
Experiencing discrimination, such as racism	13
Relationships with managers/senior staff	14
Relationships with colleagues	15
Other	16
Don't know/not sure	17

F2. What is your current work situation?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Working full time	1



Working part-time	2
Unemployed and looking for work	3
Not working - on maternity/paternity/shared parental/adoption leave	4
Not working - retired	5
Not working - looking after the home/children/relatives	6
Not working - long term sick or disabled	7
Not working - temporarily sick or injured	8
Student/training - studying for a recognised qualification	9

ASK IF WORKING FULL OR PART-TIME (F2=1,2)

F3. What type of work do you currently do?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Education	1
Hospitality	2
Health	3
Retail	4
Other (please specify)	5

SECTION G

ASK SECTION G OF ALL

Section header: Working in social work, social care or children and young people's services

G1. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means not likely at all and 10 means extremely likely, how likely would you be to recommend working in social work, social care or children and young people's services, to a friend or family member?

SINGLE CODE/INVERT	Code
0 – Not at all likely	1
1	2
2	3
3	4
4	5
5	6
6	7
7	8
8	9
9	10
10 – Extremely likely	11
Don't know/not sure	12

G2. What do you enjoy, and like, about working in social work, social care or children and young people's services? If you have left the sector, what did you enjoy, and like about your work?

[OPEN ENDED RESPONSE – ALLOW A 'NO COMMENTS' OPTION]

G3. What do you think should be done to make the sector an attractive and rewarding place to work?

[OPEN ENDED RESPONSE – ALLOW A 'NO COMMENTS' OPTION]

SECTION H**ASK SECTION H OF ALL****Section header:** About you

The last section asks some questions about you to help with our analysis. You do not have to answer these questions, but it helps us to analyse and interpret your responses. The information you provide will not be shared with your employer or anyone else and you do not have to answer if you do not want to.

H1. Which age group are you in? If you do not want to answer, please select 'prefer not to say'.

SINGLE CODE	Code
16-24	1
25-34	2
35-44	3
45-54	4
55-64	5
65+	6
Prefer not to say	7

H2. What term best describes your sex?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Male	1
Female	2
Something else (if you would like to, please use space below to specify)	3
Prefer not to say	4

H3. The following questions focus on equality, diversity and inclusion and ask about things like ethnicity, religion, health conditions and trade union membership. This helps us to know that we have spoken to a representative cross-section of people working in social care. As a reminder, there is a 'prefer not to say' option for all of these questions. The information you provide will not be shared with your employer or anyone else. Are you happy to answer these questions on equality, diversity and inclusion?

SINGLE CODE	Code	
Yes	1	
No	2	SKIP TO FURTHER RESEARCH QUESTION (H12)

ASK H4~H11 IF YES (H3=1)

H4. What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?

SINGLE CODE	Code
None	1
Church of Scotland	2
Roman Catholic	3
Other Christian (please specify)	4
Muslim	5
Hindu	6
Buddhist	7
Sikh	8
Jewish	9
Pagan	10
Another religion or body (please specify)	11
Prefer not to say	12



H5. What is your ethnic group?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian	1
African, Scottish African or British African	2
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	3
White	4
Caribbean or Black	5
Other ethnic group (please specify)	6
Prefer not to say	7

H6. Do you have any of the following, which have lasted, or are expected to last, at least 12 months? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE	Code
Deafness or partial hearing	1
Blindness or partial sight loss	2
Full or partial loss of voice or difficulty speaking (a condition that requires you to use equipment to speak)	3
Learning disability (a condition that you have had since childhood that affects the way you learn, understand information and communicate)	4
Learning difficulty (a specific learning condition that affects the way you learn and process information)	5
Developmental disorder (a condition that you have had since childhood which affects motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills, and speech and language)	6
Physical disability (a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying)	7
Mental health condition (a condition that affects your emotional, physical and mental wellbeing)	8
Long term illness, disease or condition (a condition, not listed above, that you may have for life, which may be managed with treatment or medication)	9
Other	10
No condition	11
Prefer not to say	12

ASK UNLESS HAVE NO CONDITION (H6=11)

H7. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which lasted, or is expected to last at least 12 months?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to say	3

H8. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Heterosexual/straight	1
Gay/lesbian	2
Bisexual	3
Other	4
Prefer not to say	5

H9. Outside of your job, do you look after, or give any help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of either: long-term physical/mental ill-health/disability or problems related to old age? Do not count anything you do as part of paid employment.



SINGLE CODE	Code
No	1
Yes, 1 to 19 hours a week	2
Yes, 20 to 34 hours a week	3
Yes, 35 to 49 hours a week	4
Yes, 50 or more hours a week	5
Prefer not to say	6

H10. Are you a member of a Trade Union?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to say	3

ASK IF YES (H10=1)

H11. Which Trade Union(s) are you a member of? Please select all that apply.

MULTICODE/RANDOMISE	Code
GMB	1
Scottish Association of Social Work	2
Royal College of Nursing	3
Social Workers Union	4
Unison	5
Unite	6
Other (please specify)	7
Prefer not to say	8

ASK IF REGISTERED WITH SSSC (S1=1)

H12. SSSC is establishing a group of registered persons interested in helping them with service development. This could mean testing a new website, taking part in a focus group or giving feedback on new ideas or proposals. Would you like to be involved in this group and be invited to take part in further research?

SINGLE CODE	Code
Yes	1
No	2

ASK IF YES (H12=1)

Please confirm your name and contact details below so that SSSC can invite you to take part in service development / research opportunities.

Name: _____

Email address: _____

Thank you for taking time to participate in this important survey. Please now press the **submit** button to register your responses.



Appendix 2: Sample profile

Sample profile: job role

	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Registration				
Registered with SSSC	6327	96%	6346	96%
Not registered	254	4%	235	4%
Job role (summary)				
Social work	651	10%	584	9%
Social care	3785	58%	3881	59%
Children and young people	2045	31%	2016	31%
Has left role	100	2%	100	2%
Job role (full breakdown)				
Social Worker	492	7%	438	7
Social Care Worker	3088	47%	3183	48
Children and Young People's Worker	1813	28%	1793	27
Other paid social work role	157	2%	144	2
Other paid social care role	676	10%	681	10
Other paid children and young people's worker role	223	3%	213	3
Other voluntary social work role	2	<1%	2	<1%
Other voluntary social care role	21	<1%	17	<1%
Other voluntary children and young people's worker role	9	<1%	10	<1%
Has left role	100	2%	100	2%
Base (all)	6581	100%	6581	100%
Time in the sector				
Less than 1 year	300	5%	466	7%
1-2 years	566	9%	880	14%
3-5 years	909	14%	1413	22%
6-10 years	939	14%	1460	23%
More than 10 years	3767	58%	2261	35%
Time in current role				
Less than 1 year	818	13%	1058	16%
1-2 years	1348	21%	1629	25%
3-5 years	1581	24%	1748	27%
6-10 years	1070	17%	1047	16%
More than 10 years	1664	26%	999	15%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	100%	6481	100%
Social work: service type				
Criminal justice	52	8%	50	9%
Adults	266	41%	263	45%
Children and Families	178	27%	146	25%
Mental health	69	11%	59	10%
Care Inspectorate	7	1%	5	1%
Other	79	12%	61	10%
Base (all in social work)	651	100%	584	100%
Social care: level				
Manager	386	10%	283	7%
Supervisor	359	9%	309	8%
Practitioner	465	12%	471	12%
Support worker	2257	60%	2485	64%



Other	318	8%	333	9%
Social care: service type				
Housing support	805	21%	796	21%
Care at home	1447	38%	1496	39%
Care home services for adults	1207	32%	1280	33%
Adult day care	127	3%	117	3%
Care Inspectorate	7	<1%	5	<1%
Other	192	5%	187	5%
Base (all in social care)	3785	100%	3881	100%
Children & young people: level				
Manager	381	19%	270	13%
Supervisor	192	9%	160	8%
Practitioner	1103	54%	1138	56%
Support worker	311	15%	380	19%
Other	58	3%	67	3%
Children & young people: service type				
Residential Child Care	199	10%	197	10%
Day Care of Children	1569	77%	1528	76%
Care at home	15	1%	14	1%
Housing Support	33	2%	40	2%
School Care Accommodation	57	3%	56	3%
Care Inspectorate	7	<1%	5	<1%
Out of school care	86	4%	96	5%
Other	79	4%	81	4%
Base (all in CYP work)	2045	100%	2016	100%
Managers (as a proportion of all)				
All managers	767	12%	553	8%
Social care managers	386	6%	283	4%
CYP managers	381	6%	270	4%
Base (all)	6581	100%	6581	100%
Likelihood to leave the sector in next 12 months/5 years				
Likely to leave	3188	49%	3035	47%
Not likely to leave	3293	51%	3446	53%
Base (all excl. left role)	6481	100%	6481	100%

Sample profile: demographics

	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Gender				
Female	5478	83%	5426	82%
Male	935	14%	981	15%
Other	14	<1%	19	<1%
Prefer not to say	154	2%	155	2%
Age				
16-24	241	4%	371	6%
25-34	752	11%	1003	15%
35-44	1273	19%	1345	20%
45-54	1746	27%	1648	25%
55-64	2048	31%	1748	27%
65+	315	5%	257	4%
Prefer not to say	206	3%	208	3%
Base (all)	6581	100%	6581	100%

Sample profile: equality, diversity and inclusion

	Unweighted No.	Unweighted %	Weighted No.	Weighted %
Ethnicity				
Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian	149	2%	179	3%
African, Scottish African or British African	257	4%	371	6%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	51	1%	56	1%
White	5388	89%	5159	86%
Caribbean or Black	30	<1%	44	1%
Other ethnic group	75	1%	95	2%
Prefer not to say	96	2%	107	2%
Religion				
None	2965	49%	2964	46%
Church of Scotland	1269	21%	1119	19%
Roman Catholic	971	16%	953	16%
Other Christian	416	7%	510	8%
Muslim	64	1%	84	1%
Hindu	24	<1%	36	1%
Buddhist	20	<1%	20	<1%
Sikh	2	<1%	2	<1%
Jewish	3	<1%	3	<1%
Pagan	40	1%	43	1%
Another religion or body	60	1%	59	1%
Prefer not to say	212	4%	219	4%
Health conditions				
Deafness or partial hearing	261	4%	240	4%
Blindness or partial sight loss	48	1%	41	1%
Full or partial loss of voice or difficulty speaking	3	<1%	4	<1%
Learning disability	119	2%	139	2%
Learning difficulty	204	3%	219	4%
Developmental disorder	38	1%	39	1%
Physical disability	362	6%	326	5%
Mental health condition	891	15%	937	16%
Long term illness, disease or condition	1058	17%	934	16%
Other	150	2%	134	2%
No condition	3417	57%	3476	58%
Prefer not to say	372	6%	374	6%
Day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability				
Yes	739	12%	693	12%
No	1556	26%	1538	26%
Prefer not to say	334	6%	305	5%
N/A – no health condition	3417	57%	3476	58%
Sexuality				
Heterosexual/straight	5414	90%	5358	89%
Gay/lesbian	178	3%	171	3%
Bisexual	146	2%	172	3%
Other	31	1%	37	1%
Prefer not to say	277	5%	274	5%
Do any unpaid care (outside job)				
No	3443	57%	3554	59%
Yes, 1 to 19 hours a week	1540	25%	1401	23%
Yes, 20 to 34 hours a week	293	5%	281	5%
Yes, 35 to 49 hours a week	148	2%	142	2%

Yes, 50 or more hours a week	255	4%	257	4%
Prefer not to say	367	6%	376	6%
Member of Trade Union				
Yes	2936	49%	2664	44%
No	2904	48%	3113	52%
Prefer not to say	206	3%	234	4%
Base (all answering equalities questions)	6046	100%	6011	100%
Trade Union membership				
GMB	395	13%	351	13%
Scottish Association of Social Work	33	1%	26	1%
Royal College of Nursing	58	2%	51	2%
Social Workers Union	44	1%	34	1%
Unison	2096	71%	1921	72%
Unite	260	9%	231	9%
Other	41	1%	36	1%
Prefer not to say	52	2%	50	2%
Base (all in a Trade Union)	2936	100%	2664	100%

Appendix 3: Technical appendix

Method

Quantitative

1. The data was collected by online survey.
2. The target group for this research study was people working in the social work, social care and children and young people's service sector.
3. The sample type was non-probability.
4. The sample source was the SSSC database of registrants.
5. Invitations were sent to all registrants, so no sample selection was undertaken.
6. No target sample size was set. The final achieved sample size was 6581.
7. Fieldwork was undertaken between 15 January and 14 February 2025.
8. Respondents to self-completion studies are self-selecting and complete the survey without the assistance of a trained interviewer. This means that Progressive cannot strictly control sampling and in some cases, this can lead to findings skewed towards the views of those motivated to respond to the survey.
9. It is not possible to estimate an overall participation rate, as the survey was shared with an unknown number of people via employers and other organisations.
10. The sample is judged to represent the target population well.
11. Data was returned anonymously, so there was no opportunity for validation of data.
12. All research projects undertaken by Progressive comply fully with the requirements of ISO 20252, the GDPR and the MRS Code of Conduct.

Data processing and analysis

13. The final data set was weighted to reflect SSSC registrant data in relation to length of employment. The sample base, both before and after weighting, is 6581.
14. The sample type is non-probability which means we cannot provide statistically precise margins of error or significance testing. The margins of error outlined below should therefore be treated as indicative, based on an equivalent probability sample. The overall sample size of 6581 provides a dataset with an approximate margin of error of between $\pm 0.24\%$ and $\pm 1.21\%$, calculated at the 95% confidence level (market research industry standard).
15. The following methods of statistical analysis were used: Z-tests.
16. The data processing department undertakes a number of quality checks on the data to ensure its validity and integrity. For online questionnaires, these checks include:
 - Raw data is monitored throughout fieldwork to check for flatlining responses, quality of open-ended responses and speed of completion.
 - Every project has a live pilot stage, covering the first few days of fieldwork. The raw data and data holecount are checked after the pilot to ensure questionnaire routing is working correctly and there are no unexpected responses or patterns in the data.
 - A computer edit is carried out prior to analysis, involving both range (checking for outliers) and inter-variable checks. Any further inconsistencies identified at this stage are investigated by reference back to the raw data where possible.
 - Where an 'other – specify' codes is used, open-ended responses are checked against the parent question for possible up-coding.
 - Responses to open-ended questions will be spell and sense checked. Where required these responses may be grouped using a coding frame, which can be used in analysis.
17. A SNAP programme was set up with the aim of providing the client with useable and comprehensive data. Crossbreaks were discussed with the client in order to ensure that all information needs are met.



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

If you would like this document in another format,
please contact the SSSC on 0345 60 30 891

Comparison of SSSC and Social Care Wales (2024) Have Your Say surveys

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Summary

Similarities

Respondents to both surveys expressed similar motivations for joining the sector. They enjoyed similar aspects of working in the sector and recommended similar things to attract people to the sector. Both samples cited similar reasons for leaving/being likely to leave the sector. Reported levels of turnover were similar between surveys, and similar effects of turnover were observed. Reasons for difficulty in recruitment were also similar between surveys.

Differences

Scottish respondents were less likely to believe it was possible for them to become a leader (36%) than Welsh respondents (60%). Scottish workers in each group were less likely to say they felt safe in their workplace (50-62%) than Welsh workers (60-72%). Scottish respondents were less likely to say they were able to meet needs of service users (65% vs 75%). Welsh respondents were more likely to say they experienced **no** barriers to training (65%) than Scottish respondents (31%).

Working in the sector

How they heard about the sector

- **Similarity:** Friends and family were the most common way people learned about the sector in both surveys.
- **Difference:** In Scotland, 38% of respondents heard about the sector from friends/family, and 32% through online/newspaper sources. In Wales, 48% cited friends/family, and 31% cited online sources.

Motivation to join

- **Similarity:** Making a difference was the most common reason for joining the sector in Scotland (65%) and Wales (69%).
- **Difference:** In Scotland, 59% were motivated by feeling they would enjoy the role, compared to 45% in Wales.

Likelihood to leave the sector, reasons to leave

- **Similarity:** 22% of Scottish respondents were quite/very likely to leave in the next 12 months, and 25% of Welsh respondents were looking to leave on average within 13 months. Reasons for intending to leave or having left in both surveys included low pay, high workload/being overworked, poor working conditions. and lack of progression opportunities.
- **Difference:** Specifically, of Scottish respondents, 13% of social work, 10% of social care, and 8% CYP workers were **very** likely to leave. Of Welsh respondents, 25% of care workers, 24% of managers, and 23% of social workers were looking to leave on average within 13 months.
- In Scotland, 45% were likely to leave within 5 years.

Staff turnover

- **Similarity:** High turnover was indicated by both surveys: 48% of Scottish respondents said there was high turnover, and 43% of Welsh respondents did **not** say that they mostly/always have appropriate staffing.
- Of specific groups, a similar balance was seen between those who reported high turnover or not having enough staff. Of Scottish

respondents, 55% of social workers, 48% of care workers, 45% CYP said there was high turnover, Of Welsh respondents, 52% of social workers, 42% of care workers, and 35% of managers did **not** feel they mostly had appropriate staff in place.

- Effects of turnover in both surveys included increased workload for staff, stress, and detrimental impact on the support service users receive.

Recruitment difficulties

- **Similarity:** Both surveys highlighted low pay offered and a lack of qualified/experienced candidates.
- **Difference:** The Welsh survey also highlighted difficulty attracting candidates due to the combination of low pay and unsociable hours.

Views of management/leadership

- **Difference:** A smaller proportion (30%) of Scottish than Welsh (47%) respondents said they would like to be in a management/leadership role. This was fairly similar across social work, social care, and CYP workers in Scotland, whereas differences were seen between groups in Wales (44% of care workers vs 53% of social workers, and 65% of managers).
- In Scotland, only 36% believed it was possible to become a manager, compared to 60% overall in Wales. Belief they could progress to a leadership role was lower in each specific group in the Scottish (30-32%) than Welsh (57-80%) survey.

Health and wellbeing

Satisfaction with job

- **Difference:** In Scotland, 36% were completely/mostly satisfied, while 35% were dissatisfied. Among Welsh respondents, overall job satisfaction was not quantified.

Views of the workplace

- **Similarity:** Overall, 60% of Scottish respondents and 66% of Welsh respondents felt safe in their role.
- **Difference:** of specific groups, Scottish workers were less likely to say they felt safe (50% of Social, 62% of Social Care, 59% of CYP workers) than Welsh workers (60% social workers, 67% of Social Care workers, 72% of managers).

Colleagues and morale

- **Similarity:** 75% of Scottish respondents said colleagues help/support them, and 79% of Welsh respondents felt they always/mostly have good peer support.
- **Difference:** In Scotland, only 40% rated their colleagues' morale as good. In Wales, 77% felt morale was always/mostly positive.

Feeling valued

- **Similarity:** Respondents in both regions felt most valued by individuals and families they supported and were less likely to feel valued by the general public or partner agencies.

Aspects of wellbeing at work

- **Similarity:** Challenges in switching off, meeting service user needs, and managing stress were shared. Of Scottish respondents, 60% found it difficult to switch off after work, compared to 57% of Welsh respondents. In both surveys, social workers were least likely to feel they had enough time to do their job well or were able to meet the needs of people they support.
- **Difference:** In Scotland, 65% of respondents felt they were able to meet service user needs, compared to 75% in Wales; 43% of Scottish respondents felt they had enough time to do their job well, compared to 55% of Welsh respondents.

Causes of stress at work

- **Similarity:** Workload/bureaucracy, stress, high responsibility and lack of support were highlighted in both surveys.

Sources of health and wellbeing information

- **Similarity:** Managers and employer intranets were common sources of information in both regions.

Bullying, harassment, and discrimination

- **Similarity:** In Scotland, this was most common in social workers- 45% had experienced any of these issues. In Wales, social workers were specifically most likely to say they had experienced bullying or discrimination from managers, individuals or families, and harassment from individuals or families.
- **Difference:** In Scotland, 37% overall had experienced bullying or harassment at work. Wales reported the proportion who had experienced this within 12 months (54%).

Skills and training

Desire to improve skills/training opportunities

- **Similarity:** 51% of Scottish respondents and 47% of Welsh respondents felt they needed more training to progress in their career.
- **Differences:** A higher proportion of Welsh (87%) than Scottish (69%) respondents felt they get the right training to do their job well. A lower proportion of Scottish (52%) than Welsh (83%) social workers agreed with this.

Barriers to training

- **Similarity:** Scottish and Welsh respondents cited lack of time as a barrier to training. Specifically, 24% of Scottish respondents who said there were barriers said they were not allowed time off for training, whereas Welsh respondents said it was difficult to fit in additional training on top of their job and commitments at home. Respondents to both surveys also cited a lack of available training.
- **Difference:** 31% of Scottish respondents said there were no barriers to training, compared to 65% of Welsh respondents. A lower proportion of Scottish respondents (69%) than Welsh respondents (80%) felt they had enough training to fulfil CPD requirements.

Terms and conditions

Terms and conditions of employment

- **Similarity:** Overall, respondents did not have enough to cover work-related expenses (19% of Scottish and 20% of Welsh respondents). A similar proportion (25% of Scottish and 26% of Welsh) of respondents had access to family-friendly policies, and 28+ days of holiday (72-78%).
- **Difference:** In Scotland, 58% had sick pay, compared to 38% of Welsh respondents. Overall, a smaller proportion of Scottish respondents (54%) were fairly/very satisfied with their terms and conditions than Welsh respondents (68%). This was fairly consistent across groups in the Scottish survey, whereas in the Welsh survey, managers (77%) and social workers (72%) were more likely to be satisfied than care workers (66%).

Current employment status

- **Difference:** In Scotland, 46% worked for local authorities, 34% a private company, 15% a 3rd sector body. In Wales 86% were employed by social care organizations which included Local Authority, 3rd sector or private provider (not broken down further in report).

Type of contract

- **Similarity:** Full-time salaried positions were most common in both samples. In Scotland, 60% were employed full-time and 12% had zero-hours contracts. In Wales, 67% worked full-time, and 11% had zero-hours contracts, with 33% of these people not preferring this arrangement (would prefer fixed hours).

Income

Satisfaction with pay

- **Similarity:** A similar proportion of Welsh and Scottish respondents said they were finding it quite/very difficult to manage (23-24%) and living comfortably/doing alright (40-42%) financially. In both surveys, social care workers were least likely to agree that said they were living comfortably/doing alright financially.
- **Difference:** A slightly higher proportion of Welsh (59%) than Scottish (52%) respondents said it was slightly/a lot more difficult than last year. In open-ended responses, Welsh participants highlighted a lack of pay increases that came with career progression.

Views of the sector

Positive aspects working in the sector

- **Similarity:** when asked what they enjoyed about the sector, making a difference and building relationships with service users and colleagues were prominent themes in both surveys. Respondents also enjoyed the dynamic aspect of their role (variety of challenges).

Attracting people to the sector

- **Similarity:** When asked how we could make the sector an attractive place to work, better/more fair pay, better working conditions (including reduced time pressure/workload), improved

staffing levels/having enough staff, and better opportunities for progression were highlighted in both surveys.

Summary tables

Working in the sector

Subsection	Scottish result	Welsh survey equivalent (page no.)	Welsh result
How they heard about the sector	Friends/family in the sector (38%), found online/newspaper (32%).	20	Friends/family in the sector (48%), found online (31%).
Motivation to join	Main motivation was making a difference (65%), feeling they would enjoy it (59%), feeling they would be good at the job (50%).	Joining (and leaving) the social care sector (19)	Making a difference (69%), felt they would enjoy it (45%).
Likelihood to stop working in the sector, reasons to leave the sector	22% quite/very likely to leave in the next 12 months, 45% within 5 years. 53% of SW and 52% of CYP staff likely to leave in 12m or 5 years. Reasons: overworked (50%), low pay (40%), poor conditions (33%).	Intentions to leave the sector (32).	25% of overall sample looking to leave, on average within 13 months. 25% of care workers, 24% of managers, 23% of social workers likely to leave within 13 months. Children & family social workers (31%), 'other social work managers (30%).

	<p>Main reasons for having left ($N=100$): overworked (24%), retired (23%), poor conditions (22%), relationships with managers (21%).</p>		<p>Reasons (open response): low pay, lack of appreciation from employer, understaffing, poor working conditions, lack of progression opportunities.</p> <p>Having left ($N=41$): 35% said being overworked, low pay (28%), poor working conditions (23%).</p>
<p>Staff turnover- whether there is high turnover and impact of high turnover</p>	<p>48% said there was high staff turnover in the workplace: 55% of social workers, 48% social care, 45% CYP.</p> <p>Respondents likely to leave within 12m-5 years more likely to report high turnover.</p> <p>Most common impacts: increase in staff stress (87%), increase workload (82%), lower morale (80%).</p>	<p>Turnover and recruitment issues (21)</p>	<p>57% always/mostly have appropriate staffing (lowest in social workers-48%, only 58% of care workers and 65% of managers).</p> <p>(open-ended) Challenges in recruitment: low pay, turnover-trouble recruiting and retaining staff, lack of adequate applicants, unsociable hours.</p> <p>Impact of turnover: detrimental impact on service users,</p>

			lack of trained staff, staff staying late to compensate for understaffing, not being able to operate safely due to low staff.
Recruitment to the sector, reasons for difficulty in recruitment	Most frequently mentioned issues: quality of candidates (79%), availability of staff (57%) and pay/conditions (32%).	Organisational recruitment difficulties- 21	(open-ended) Low pay, lack of skilled/experienced candidates. Unsociable hours.
Views of management/leadership, diversity in management, ability to become a manager	41% agreed managers come from different backgrounds, 30% would like to be in a management position, 36% believed this possible (35% of care workers).	Leadership, training, and development (37)	47% overall would like a leadership role, 60% believed this was possible overall (only 57% of care workers). Managers more likely to want a leadership role and believe it is possible. Black and Asian respondents most likely to want and believe they could progress and have sought progression.

Health and wellbeing

Subsection	Scottish result	Welsh survey equivalent (page no.)	Welsh result

Satisfaction with job	36% completely/mostly satisfied, 35% dissatisfied. 43% of SW, 31% of SC, 38% of CYP dissatisfied.	Reasons for thinking about leaving the social care sector (35)	Can find satisfaction with T&Cs but not with overall job.
Views of the workplace- whether they feel safe, whether they would recommend their organisation to work in,	<p>Overall, 60% felt safe in work environment: 50% SW, 62% SC, 59% CYP.</p> <p>Ratings of safety lower in those likely to leave the sector than not (47% vs 72%).</p> <p>47% would recommend their organisation as a great place to work (lowest in SW-33%).</p>	Poor working conditions (34), Presenteeism, safety in role, and psychoeducation (48)	Overall, 34% had displayed presenteeism 2-5x, 18% 5+ times. Fairly common across groups. Overall, 66% felt safe in their role- highest in managers (72%) and care workers (67%), lowest in social workers (60%).
Colleagues and morale- whether they have support from colleagues, whether their job gives them satisfaction, morale in themselves and in colleagues	<p>75% said colleagues help/support them, only 58% said manager supports them.</p> <p>Overall, 60% said job gives them satisfaction, only 44% of SW and 53% of CYP.</p> <p>56% said own morale is good (lowest in social work-37%), 40% said morale in colleagues is good (lowest in social work-28%).</p> <p>Only 48% said the right staff are in place to deliver services</p>	Working conditions 1 (63)	Overall, 77% felt they always have positive morale (lowest in social workers-70%). 79% always/mostly have good peer support.

	(lowest in social work-37%).		
Feeling valued: whether they felt valued by colleagues, public, etc.	Most likely to agree their work is valued by people/families they support (81%), followed by colleagues (76%) and managers (59%). Only 46% agreed partner agencies, 42% general public and 40% their employer, 20% Scottish government. Social work staff felt least appreciated by people/families (66%), general public (24%), employer (14%) and Scotgov (14%).	Working conditions 1 (63)	Overall, most likely to feel valued by colleagues, individuals or families (80%). Least likely to feel valued by general public (51%) or partner agencies (57%).
Aspects of wellbeing at work-being able to switch off, being able to meet needs of people they support, etc.	<p>Overall, 65% felt able to meet needs of service users (only 43% of social workers), 60% found it difficult to switch off, 43% had enough time to do their job well (31% of SW), 30% said enough support was in place to deal with stress (24% of SW).</p> <p>Those more likely to leave were less likely to agree with being able to meet needs, having enough time, and being able to switch off.</p>	Working conditions 1 (63)	<p>Overall, 57% found it hard to switch off, 55% had enough time to do their job well, 41% felt there was enough support for stress, 75% felt able to meet needs of individuals they support.</p> <p>Social workers least likely to have enough time (40%), feel there is enough support (34%), or</p>

			meet needs of individuals (55%).
Causes of stress at work.	Most common was too much work/not enough time (51%), paperwork/bureaucracy (48%), lack of support if I need help (34%).	Working conditions 1/2	Workload, admin duties, home/personal stress, lack of support from managers, expenses from work, high level of responsibility. Social workers in particular most likely to say workload (58%) and admin (52%).
Sources of information on health and wellbeing.	Most frequent responses: SSSC or manager (42%), internet search (38%), employer website/intranet (36%). Those in management roles more aware of most information sources.	Question 3: Support for working conditions and wellbeing (75)	Overall, most common sources would be manager (46%) or employer website (43%).
Bullying, harassment, and discrimination -whether they had experienced any.	37% overall and 37% of social workers had experienced bullying, discrimination or harassment; bullying (27%) most likely to be mentioned. Most common in social workers-45% had experienced any of these issues.	Bullying, harassment, and discrimination (41)	Overall, 54% had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination . Of the instances experienced, 46% were reported. Only 24% of these people felt it had been dealt

			<p>with appropriately.</p> <p>Of those who experienced one of these things from a colleague and reported it, 33% felt it was dealt with appropriately.</p>
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Skills and training

Subsection	Scottish result	Welsh survey equivalent (page no.)	Welsh result
Desire to improve knowledge/skills, opportunities available, etc.	<p>69% said they get the right training to do their job well, 85% want to improve skills and knowledge. Only 52% of social workers said they get the right training to do their job well (vs 73% SC, 66% CYP). Managers tended to be more positive about training.</p>	<p>Leadership, training, and development (37)</p>	<p>87% said they have the right training for their role, 47% wanted more training to be promoted.</p>

Barriers to training-time, availability of courses, etc.	<p>31% said there were no barriers to training. Most commonly mentioned: lack of time (29%), not allowed time off for training (24%), availability of courses (24%).</p> <p>Those likely to leave the sector within 12m/5 years more likely than others to mention most of the barriers on the list.</p>	Leadership, training, and development (38)	<p>Managers (26%) and social workers (37%) most likely to say they faced barriers to training. 26% of white respondents said they experienced barriers to training, vs 6% of black and 8% of Asian respondents.</p> <p>22% overall reported barriers to training (37% of social workers, 26% of managers). Barriers to training (open-ended): time constraints (overworked and work/life responsibilities), cost, availability/accessibility, reported bias in who gets offered training.</p>
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Terms and conditions

Subsection	Scottish result	Welsh survey equivalent (page no.)	Welsh result
Current employment status-local authority, private company, etc.	Overall, most likely to be employed by a local authority (46%), private company (34%) or a 3rd sector body (15%). Only 34% of care	Who took part? (15)	86% overall employed by social care organisation (e.g, LA, 3 rd sector, or private provider); 8% of care workers and 9% of social workers employed by an agency.

	workers employed by LA, whereas only 12% of social workers were employed by private company. Overall only 2% employed by an agency.		
Type of contract	60% employed FT by 1 employer salaried, 25% PT by one employer salaried. 9% for 1 employer on flexible hours. Social workers (76%) most likely to be FT, CYP most likely to be PT fixed hours (28%), care workers (12%) most likely to be on 0 hours.	Who took part? (15)	67% employed FT for 1 organisation, 18% PT for 1 organisation. 22% of care workers were part-time, and 14% were on 0 hours. 11% overall had a 0-hours contract (most of these were care workers). Of those on 0 hours contract, around 33% did not want this type of contract.
Other roles outside social care work		Who took part? (14)	36% were unpaid carers, compared to 8.9-10.5% of Welsh population.
Contracted hours	Average 31 hours, majority (30%) worked 26-35h), 31% worked 36-39h. Social work staff had higher average hours (33.5), vs 30.8 social care and 30.7 CYP.		Q28d asks about this, but can't find it in report.

Additional hours	66% did not regularly work additional hours (above contract at main job or additional job). 10% worked up to 5h a week, 10% additional 6-10h a week. On average, those who did additional hours did 14 hours. 25% of CYP, 63% of SW, and 59% of SC staff did additional hours.		
0 hours contracts	Of those not on a fixed hours contract, 50% were on a 0 hours contract. Of these, 52% would prefer a fixed hours contract. 74% of those on 0 hours were social care workers.	Zero-hours contracts (57)	11% overall had a 0-hours contract (most of these were care workers).
Terms and conditions of employment	Overall, 19% had enough to cover work-related travel. 58% had sick pay, 25% had access to family-friendly policies. Social work staff most likely to say they had access to all	Contractual offerings (59)	94% of managers had 28+ days holiday (similar across other groups); 82% had workplace/company pension. Only 20% overall had enough to cover work expenses (lowest in care workers); 26% overall had family-friendly

	benefits. Social care staff least likely to have sick pay (54%).		policies (16% of care workers).
Satisfaction with T & Cs	Overall, 54% fairly/very satisfied with T&Cs. Social care staff more likely to be very satisfied (21%) compared to 14% of other groups. 68% of managers were satisfied overall.	Contractual offerings (60)	Satisfaction with T&Cs: 68% overall, highest in managers (77%). 94% of managers were aware of employment rights compared to 78% of care workers and SWs.

Income:

Subsection	Scottish result	Welsh survey equivalent (page no.)	Welsh result
Payment-how they are paid	47% paid annual salary, 47% hourly pay. Social workers (78%) and managers (81%) likely to receive a salary, whereas 57% of social care staff were paid hourly.		
Annual income	Overall sample: 31% total income < 20k, 51% between 20-39,999k. 32% of social care and 34% CYP staff reported <20k,		

	compared to 9% of SW. 53% of SW earning 40+k.		
Hourly rate	Average hourly rate was £13.10.		
How they are managing financially, and compared to last year-	<p>Overall, 40% said they were living comfortably/doing alright (52% of SW, 38% SC, 41% CYP).</p> <p>Overall, 24% finding it quite/very difficult to manage.</p> <p>25% of CW and CYP, 18% SW, finding it quite/very difficult to manage.</p> <p>Since last year: overall, 52% found it slightly/a lot more difficult to cope financially.</p>	Managing financially (61)	<p>Overall, 10% said they are living comfortably, 32% doing alright (38% SC, 54% managers, 49% SW).</p> <p>Overall, 23% finding it quite/very difficult to manage.</p> <p>25% of Care Workers, 13% of managers, and 23% of Social Workers finding it quite/very difficult to manage.</p> <p>Since last year: overall, 59% found it slightly/a lot more difficult to cope financially.</p>
Satisfaction with pay-	Overall, 28% were satisfied with current pay, 5% said very satisfied. 54% dissatisfied, 24% very dissatisfied.	Managing financially (61)	Open responses: Overwhelmingly dissatisfied with pay. Lack of pay increases even when progressing

	Of those likely to leave the sector, 63% were dissatisfied, 46% of those not likely to leave.		upwards. Unpaid travel time.

Leaving the sector

Subsection	Scottish result	Welsh survey equivalent (page no.)	Welsh result
Length of time in the sector	Of 100 respondents who had left, 55% had been in their role for >10 years, whereas 14% had been in role for <1 year, 21% 1-5 years.		
Reasons for leaving	Most common reasons: overworked (24%) retired (23%), poor employment/working conditions (22%), poor relationships with managers (21%).	Those who have left social care (16)	
Current work situation	Of those who had left, 28% working FT, 26% PT, 24% retired.	Those who have left social care (16)	

Views of the sector

Subsection	Scottish result	Welsh survey equivalent (page no.)	Welsh result
Whether they would	All respondents were asked this. Overall, 40%		

recommend the sector	were likely to recommend working in the sector, 28% neutral, and 30% not likely to recommend it. Fairly similar across groups.		
What they enjoyed about working in the sector	Open-ended: of those who answered this question, 78% said making a difference/the job being rewarding, 19% said the quality of care/caring for people. 64% said the service users they work with. 29% said working with children specifically.	What you enjoy about working in social care (24)	Open-ended: Making a difference was the most frequent theme. Building relationships with service users and peers at work, variety/challenges.
How to make the sector an attractive place to work	58% of those who answered said pay should increase, 21% said improvements in recognition and support of staff, 19% mentioned workload/time pressure, 18% said better staffing levels.	Question 6: Improvements in social care (78)	Open-ended: Better pay, better working conditions, workload and long hours, better career progression, improved respect and public recognition, resources and government support.

Comparing conclusions of reports

	SSSC	SCW
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Joining the sector	Motivated by wanting to make a difference in people's lives, because they thought they would be good at the job; learned about job from family/friends/adverts.	Attracted through people they know in the sector, stay because it is rewarding.
Likelihood of leaving/staff turnover/management	<p>1/5 said they were likely to leave in 12 months, almost 1/2 said within 5 years. Reasons were being overworked, low pay, poor employment T&Cs.</p> <p>Turnover high in 1/2 of responses-led to increased stress, workloads, and lower morale.</p> <p>Issues hiring and keeping staff-quality of candidates, availability, and pay/conditions.</p> <p>2/5 said managers come from different backgrounds; small proportion thought they could become a manager, or would like to be.</p>	Recruitment challenges-low pay, lack of staffing, long hours.
Satisfaction with job	Just over 1/2 were satisfied; majority felt safe at work, under 1/2 said they would recommend their organisation to work in.	
Wellbeing at work	2/3 felt able to meet needs of people they support; 3 in 10 said enough support is in place dealing with stress.	5-8% had experienced bullying-more common in those with disabilities. Over half of our respondents attended work at least twice in the past 12

	2/5 had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination.	months when they were so ill they should have taken time off (presenteeism).
Skills and training	Most common barriers- lack of time, not allowed time off, availability of courses	
Terms and conditions	<3.5 received paid sick leave, ¼ have access to family friendly policies, 1/5 said they had enough money to cover travel expenses.	
Views of the sector	2/5 said they would be likely to recommend the sector. Making the sector more attractive- better pay, improvements in recognition and support of staff. Reducing workload/time pressure.	Improved pay, better support, greater progression opportunities, greater respect, more provision of resources would make it more attractive.

Title of Report	Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation (IRISR)
Summary/purpose of report	Following our recent internal audit, to provide Council Members with an update on our progress with implementation of the actions from the IRISR
Recommendations	The Council is asked to endorse our progress with implementation.
Author	Neil Macleod, Policy and Equality Manager
Responsible Officer	Maree Allison, Chief Executive
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
Link to Risk Register	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.</p> <p>Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p>
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.

Documents attached	Appendix 1: IRISR recommendations and SSSC activity, May 2025
Background papers	<u>Council, 25 March 2024, Item 05 Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation of Social Care in Scotland (IRISR)</u>

INTRODUCTION

1. This paper has an update on the Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation of Social Care in Scotland (IRISR).

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF INSPECTION, SCRUTINY AND REGULATION

2. On 23 September 2022 the Scottish Government announced an independent review of inspection, scrutiny and regulation (IRISR). The SSSC informed the review which was published in September 2023. The final report explores five key themes.
 - Theme 1 – A person centred approach
 - Theme 2 – What need to be inspected, scrutinised and regulated?
 - Theme 3 – How should inspection, scrutiny and regulation be carried out?
 - Theme 4 – How will we know systems are working?
 - Theme 5 – How will systems of inspection, scrutiny and regulation support the workforce?
3. On 6 March 2024 the Scottish Government accepted all 38 recommendations in the IRISR. We reported to Council in March 2024 the actions we are taking in response to the recommendations.
4. This paper is an update on progress since March 2024. The appendix summarises our current and planned activity on the relevant recommendations.

IRISR RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Key recommendations to highlight:
 - a. Recommendation eight, bespoke scheme of registration for Personal Assistants: We await further updates from the Scottish Government on the next steps. Our understanding is that the work on an education and training framework is continuing.
 - b. Recommendation nine, universal requirement to obtain registration: we are progressing work to scope the expansion of registration to new groups, which is reported elsewhere on the agenda.
 - c. Recommendations 15 (service types and service definitions) and 33 (review of the Health and Social Care Standards): The SSSC, Care Inspectorate and Scottish Government co-chair a working group on these recommendations. The group is about to undertake an engagement exercise to identify the next steps. The group will

engage with the sector and aims to hear from seldom heard voices. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by June.

- d. Recommendations 37 and 38 around qualifications, training and development of the workforce: we continue to develop an improving evidence base and action plan which is reported elsewhere on the agenda.
6. The appendix sets out other areas of our work and contributions to the IRISR recommendations, such as steps to build a person-centred approach in Fitness to Practice and the new Social Care Career Options Tool.
7. There is no formal process established for regulatory bodies to report on the status and implementation of the IRISR's recommendations to Scottish Government. We are actively tracking the status of recommendations, and priorities are documented in the Operational Plan 24/25, with progress of relevant work monitored via monthly Assurance reports and at quarterly Audit and Assurance Committee meetings.

CONSULTATION

8. No specific consultation has taken place as this report brings together our activity in relation to the IR. recommendations.

RISKS

9. The Scottish Government is committed to implementing the IRISR recommendations. We have a cautious approach to policy changes that impact on regulation of the workforce. We have an open appetite for areas of our work that create opportunities to support workforce development, initiatives and policies designed to improve the delivery of social work, social care and children and young people services.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

10. There are no resourcing requirements identified as part of this report.

Compliance

11. A recent internal audit of our IRISR activity received a good rating. There were no recommendations.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

12. This report is for noting and does not require an Impact Assessment. Many of the actions identified in our summary of the recommendations have or will require an impact assessment.

CONCLUSION

13. The internal audit of our progress was good. Whilst the recommendations are very broad and some not relevant for the SSSC we are satisfied that the significant areas that have specific relevance for us are in progress as set out at paragraph five, and we will reflect broader themes in our new strategic plan. We ask Council to endorse our progress.

IRISR recommendations and SSSC activity May 2025

This paper is a summary of our progress and role in the recommendations in the Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation (IRISR). It is a snapshot as of 1 May 2025.

We continue to review our planned work. We may revise further to reflect the next steps for the Care Reform Scotland Bill, the Promise Bill (still to be introduced to Parliament) and any further changes following the publication of the Programme for Government 2025-2026 on 6 May 2025.

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
1. It is recommended that inspection, scrutiny, and regulatory bodies consistently apply a human rights-based approach that places people at the centre of the process.	<p>We are reviewing our Fitness to Practise and Hearing processes to identify how we build on a person-centred approach. We have an action plan and are taking steps to implement changes, such as updates to factsheets and guidance to make them more accessible. We also contributed to Open University's Witness to Harm research report.</p> <p>We reviewed the Fitness to Practise Decisions Guidance and are proposing more detail on our duties under the Human Rights Act 1998; equality, diversity and inclusion; trauma informed practice and improved layout and navigation. A revised version should be ready by Spring 2025.</p> <p>In May 2024 we published the revised Codes of Practice for Social Service</p>	<p>We may identify further changes as part of the Scottish Government's review of the Public Sector Equality Duty and – if introduced in the next Parliamentary session – the Human Rights Bill.</p> <p>A working group is exploring how we further promote a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) in the SSSC In May we will take a paper to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group (EDIG) on our plan for carrying out an organisational self-assessment of how we embed an HRBA.</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
	<p>Workers and Employers. The revised Codes have a greater focus on relationships, staff wellbeing and trauma informed practice.</p> <p>In April 2025 we launched our new learning resource for people working with children and young people. The resource promotes the Codes, rights and the drive to Keep the Promise.</p> <p>In April 2024 we introduced a new Impact Assessment (IA) process. The IA has a focus on equality duty and children's rights. We continue to look at how we treat care experience as a protected characteristic and have a Care Experience Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS). In April 2025 we updated the IA to include the new Consumer Duty.</p> <p>In 2024 we used an Improvement Service resource to do a light touch audit of how we meet the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 in our work.</p>	
2. It is recommended that matters of trust, respect, relationships, ethos and	In May 2024 we published revised Codes of Practice for Social Service	We will be developed a learning resource in 2025 that will focus on

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
<p>culture be placed at the heart of inspection, scrutiny, and regulation and should be reflected in reports.</p>	<p>Workers and Employers. The Codes make clearer links to the Health and Social Care Standards, and reflect the importance of kindness, compassion and involvement in decision making.</p> <p>We support Scottish Government and our partners to develop a trauma informed workforce and services. We work with NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and others to promote the National Trauma Training Programme resources. We want to embed trauma informed practice in qualifications, CPL requirements and programme delivery. We want our learning resources to be accessible to all and to increase access to wellbeing support.</p> <p>We want to be a trauma informed organisation. We want to use language that is inclusive, welcoming and follows trauma informed practice. Fitness to Practise staff have had trauma informed training and a session on the Trauma Informed Justice Framework.</p> <p>We have established an internal Trauma Informed Champions Group. The Group used a trauma informed lens to consider implications for the SSSC. Panel members receive training and</p>	<p>relationship-based practice.</p> <p>We are finalising an anti-racism learning resource for social workers and will publish it soon.</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
	<p>awareness sessions on trauma informed practice. Members have also had training on the Trauma Informed Justice Framework and trauma informed questioning.</p> <p>We are working with the Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser (OCSWA) and the Trauma Responsible Social Work Service Programme in Scottish Government to help shape the development of supervision across social work.</p>	
<p>3. It is recommended that inspection, scrutiny, and regulatory bodies must set out clearly in their annual report how they have led and cultivated a culture of openness and trust.</p>	<p>The Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) informed our changes to registration (IRISR recommendation 37.) We continue to work closely with several groups and partners such as the Coalition of Care and Support Providers (CCPS) and Scottish Care.</p> <p>We contributed to the work of the Improving Wellbeing and Working Cultures Strategy via supporting the Leading to Change programme.</p>	<p>We will continue to highlight in our annual report the work we do to support our interactions with the sector and our work with partners across the sector to promote how we can work together and build trust in us as a regulator.</p> <p>We will work with the Care Inspectorate to consider a review of the guidance on raising a concern.</p>
<p>4. It is recommended that inspection, scrutiny, and regulatory bodies make appropriate arrangements to engage people with lived and living experience in co-designing engagement tools and</p>	<p>We actively engaged people with lived and lived experience as part of the development of our Future Proofing Programme. These include changes to Registration, qualifications and the</p>	<p>We will develop an updated version of Involving People – Our engagement strategy and framework 2023-2026.</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
developing the inspection and regulatory frameworks.	<p>review of the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers. Organisations such as the Health and Social Care Alliance contributed to our Stakeholder Advisory Group and people with lived experience contributed to our consultations on the programme.</p> <p>We created a resource to promote the link between the Codes and children's rights, recommendation one.</p>	
<p>5. It is recommended that a strengthened system be put in place for people to have a formal role as lay inspectors in the process of inspection, scrutiny, and regulation, including young people with care experience. An appropriate level of remuneration should be made available.</p>	<p>This recommendation does not relate to the SSSC, although panels for fitness to practise hearings have a lay member.</p> <p>In 2025 we will introduce a new procedure for paying people with lived experience to participate in our work. It is aimed at people who may be out of pocket when they participate in our work such as people with lived experience.</p>	
<p>6. It is recommended that inspection bodies' approach to engagement must be flexible, inclusive and appropriate. This includes allowing sufficient time for responses to be made and making suitable arrangements for conversations to take place with individuals, family members and staff, ensuring consistency and accessible information</p>	<p>Our Involving People engagement and strategy framework 2023-2026 supports meaningful engagement. We consider accessibility as part of activities such as promoting a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) and reviewing the impact of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024,</p>	<p>We will review our Involving People engagement strategy framework 2023-2026.</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
is available.	<p>see recommendation one.</p> <p>We engage with registrants, people with lived experience and carers. We regularly consulted people throughout the development of the Future Proofing Programme. We ask for feedback through consultations and surveys.</p>	
<p>7. It is recommended that independent advocacy is available for people to help them exercise their rights, and when necessary, to provide support to navigate complaints and any escalation process.</p>	<p>We had put on hold plans to secure an advocacy and intermediary service for fitness to practise witnesses and members of the public complainants as we awaited the next steps for the National Care Service. We are now progressing with plans to develop a service for members of the public.</p> <p>We continue to work with law clinics to support registered workers to access free representation when they participate in our fitness to practise investigations and hearings.</p> <p>We signpost people to where they can take their concerns further. This may be relevant if they have referred a worker to us, but where we cannot take regulatory action.</p>	<p>We await further information from the Scottish Government on the next steps for improving complaints. The Scottish Government has removed the section on complaints from the Care Reform (Scotland) Bill (previously National Care Service (Scotland) Bill.) On 23 January the Scottish Government indicated that it has worked closely with key stakeholders to improving complaints and redress and will set out an updated programme to improve complaints processes.</p> <p>Meanwhile we have procured support for people who make referrals and witnesses in our fitness to practise process. This is to support their wellbeing rather than advocacy but will provide important support.</p>
<p>8. It is recommended that a co-produced and bespoke scheme of</p>	<p>We remain in favour of exploring the registration of PAs. PAs can be carrying</p>	<p>We await further updates from the Scottish Government on the next steps.</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
<p>registration for Personal Assistants (PAs) which recognises their skills and role, and opens up access to training and development, should be developed. Such a scheme would expressly seek to not create barriers, and through coproduction, would create positive opportunities for both the Personal Assistant and their employer.</p>	<p>out the same role as regulated staff, and we think it is important for the protection of service users.</p> <p>There are challenges with how PA registration with the SSSC – if the Scottish Government chose to do this - would fit our current system of regulation.</p>	<p>Our understanding is that the work on an education and training framework is continuing.</p>
<p>9. It is recommended that there should be a universal requirement to obtain registration with a regulatory body for all social care support staff appropriate to their role and setting and that this should be a condition upon joining the social care workforce.</p>	<p>In April 2025 we published our latest Registrant Survey. One of the findings is that approximately 79% of registrants are positive about the benefits of registration.</p> <p>We regulate most of the social care workforce. A consultation on registration of further groups concluded In April 2025 and we will report on the outcome to Council in May. The groups are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Worker, Adult Day Care Service - Practitioner, Adult Day Care Service - Supervisor, Adult Day Care Service - Practitioner, Offender Accommodation Service - Supervisor, Offender Accommodation Service 	<p>We continue to support expansion of registration groups such as healthcare support workers.</p> <p>We will – subject to the outcome of the recent consultation on registering new groups - begin work on costing and preparing for the implementation.</p> <p>An issue whereby people registered with another regulatory body cannot register with the SSSC remains unresolved.</p> <p>There is a need to examine a situation around non-SSSC registered managers. These managers hold or obtain a management qualification at degree level. This requirement recognises the skill and knowledge necessary for individuals to effectively manage care services. Non-SSSC registered</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manager, Offender Accommodation Service - Social Work Assistants 	managers are usually nurse managers in care homes and registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council or teacher managers in children's services and registered with the General Teaching Council for Scotland. We anticipate that there may be other. The Care Inspectorate does not require these managers to hold or work towards a management qualification.
10. It is recommended that inspection, scrutiny, and regulation should be extended to areas not part of the current system, including agencies who provide social care support staff, to help drive continuous improvement and deliver better outcomes.	No work identified	No work identified
11. It is recommended that further development of stronger links between regulatory bodies across all areas within and out with the borders of Scotland should be established to ensure better regulation, transparency and accountability of providers of social care support services.	We have an Alliance with the other social work and social care professional regulators across the UK and have strong links with the professional health regulators and the GTCS. We have a partnership agreements with the Care Inspectorate. We continue to work closely with other regulators such as Healthcare Improvement Scotland, and Education Scotland. We work closely with partners such as the Mental Welfare Commission and Skills	

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
<p>12. It is recommended that the best practice from other nations' regulatory landscape is explored and considered with a view to enhancing transparency and accountability, particularly in relation to there being a named, accountable link to registration, inspection and local employees.</p>	<p>Development Scotland.</p> <p>There are statutory requirements that care services have a manager. If the manager is registered with the SSSC we can take regulatory action if they do not ensure that the staff in their service are registered and adhering to the Codes.</p> <p>The Care Inspectorate have statutory powers to enforce the Code of Practice for Employers.</p> <p>Staff sit on decision review groups of both the Social Work England (SWE) and the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC). In addition to meeting their oversight goals these are useful opportunities to discuss and see different regulatory models in practice. We continue to maintain links with other UK and international regulators. We have particularly close links with the Care Inspectorate which include shared services and members on our respective Boards.</p>	
<p>13. It is recommended that The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 be reviewed to ensure consistent, effective and</p>		<p>We would welcome steps to ensure that all managers are registered as this will support professional regulatory oversight.</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
comprehensive applicability of the fit and proper person provisions across social care support services in Scotland.		
14. It is recommended that Scottish Ministers make appropriate arrangements for market oversight and sustainability in the social care sector.	We support the Care Inspectorate's position on regulating providers.	
15. It is recommended that the list of care service types and set of corresponding definitions as set out in Schedule 12 of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 are assessed for fitness for purpose.	There is a group reviewing the care service definitions and the National Health and Social Care Standards. The group is co-chaired by the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate and SSSC. There are two short life working groups attached to this group. The timescales for this work are still to be confirmed.	The SSSC and Scottish Government co-chair a working group on this recommendation. The group is about to undertake an engagement exercise to identify the next steps. The group will engage with the sector and aims to hear from seldom heard voices. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by June.
16. It is recommended that inspection, scrutiny, and regulation processes more fully take account of an individual's experience of service delivery and their overall care journey to understand, follow and evaluate the person's social care support experience over time and their impacts.	<p>We set out our current and future approach to involving people under our response to recommendation four.</p> <p>We are one of the partners for the delivery of the Care Experience Improvement Model (CEIM) We and our partners have developed the CEIMI into a coach development programme (to encourage & test wider use of the approach, with cohorts split between adult social care and health.</p>	We continue to consider how lived experience and a person's experience of care services can inform our work. We continue to try to find a balance between involving people and using existing evidence where appropriate. For example, we will involve people in our work to revise the National Occupational Standards, the statements of best practice which underpin key qualifications for the workforce. As part of that approach we are largely drawing on existing evidence and reports

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
	<p>The CEIM takes a specific approach to building service user experience into improvement activity in a service, led by the service delivery team who is supported by the CEIM Leader in a coach role. Experience discovery conversations help the delivery team to understand people's actual experiences of the service and use this to focus on improvements that will make a real difference to people lives. An adult social care service has shared that following a colleague taking part in a previous cohort they are currently looking at how they embed people's experience of their service into their next internal quality framework.</p> <p>Our Quality Assurance programme explores how universities and providers involve people with lived experience and carers in the delivery of programmes. We also involve people with lived experience in our quality assurance panels.</p>	<p>including feedback as part of the recent Review of the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers.</p>
<p>17. It is recommended that clear and accessible information about the agencies and their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities is provided for all those who require social care support services.</p>	<p>Further information on our approach to accessibility is covered under recommendation six.</p>	<p>We continue to take steps to improve accessibility of resources. We aim to use plain English, and we are developing a new website. We create easy read documents where it is proportionate and appropriate to do so. A development</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
		<p>session with Council members in October will explore further.</p> <p>The Codes of Practice are available in several languages and formats. We continue to explore how we can promote inclusive communications. We will review our approach following the Scottish Government's 2025 campaign on inclusive communications.</p>
<p>18. It is recommended that Scottish Government work with the regulators to clarify roles and responsibilities between organisations to streamline inspection activity, remove repeat inspections by different agencies and to reduce duplication and omission. This should include reviewing how joint inspections are currently carried out, encouraging more partnership working and joint inspections, and greater involvement of people in receipt of social care support in inspection, scrutiny, and regulation.</p>	<p>Not directly relevant to SSSC as about inspection of services.</p>	
<p>19. It is recommended that inspectors and regulators, whilst fulfilling their statutory duty to identify shortcomings in improvement, should also place equal weight on identifying good practice, innovation and improvement across the</p>	<p>Our workforce development function is about improvement and we share good practice and innovative approaches in our learning resources. We specifically support the development of the workforce in respect of quality</p>	<p>We continue to support the development and implementation of the Scottish Learning and Improvement Framework for adult social care and community health services.</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
sector.	<p>improvement.</p> <p>We are developing our approach to the use of data to assist us identify and amplify good practice.</p> <p>We will continue to develop our partnerships with other regulators and improvement organisations to deliver more joined up improvement support such as the Care Home Improvement Programme.</p>	<p>We work with partners to increase access to quality improvement learning and support partnerships, services and workers to drive improvement.</p> <p>We are working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and a Health and Social Care Partnership to develop learning resources to support care at home workers to raise concerns about fire and safety for people living in their own homes. We believe this is an innovative approach and is an example of how we support improvement and innovation across the sector and wider community.</p>
<p>20. It is recommended that an emphasis on outcomes and continuous improvement becomes a central focus of inspection, scrutiny, and regulation.</p>	<p>The new Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) model means registrants must confirm that they have completed their CPL every year as part of their annual declaration. In May 2024 we launched a new web resource to support the implementation of the new CPL model.</p>	
<p>21. It is recommended that there should be a duty on the regulator/inspector to work more closely with the provider on agreeing action plans and timescales for continuous improvement recommendations that are</p>	<p>We have supported the Care Inspectorate where appropriate in terms of improvement learning or leadership development and will continue to do so. This includes the Care Home Improvement Programme.</p>	

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
additional to regulatory requirements and improvement notices.		
<p>22. It is recommended that the Scottish Government updates and clarifies its expectations regarding the National Performance Framework (NPF) in relation to publicly funded delivery bodies, particularly with respect to outcomes for social care support services.</p>	<p>No direct actions for the SSSC. We did respond to a 2023 Scottish Government consultation on the National Outcomes review. We highlighted the need for an outcome referencing the role of social work and social care. We also highlighted the need for the outcomes to reflect evolving policy and language such as the Promise.</p> <p>Our Strategic Plan set outs how our work contributes to the Scottish Government's National Outcomes.</p>	<p>We await further information from the Scottish Government on changes to the NPF, outcomes and any implications for outcomes.</p>
<p>23. It is recommended that Scottish Ministers should review legislation to ensure that regulatory bodies have adequate enforcement power.</p>	<p>In March the Care Reform (Scotland) Bill (amended at Stage 2, and previously known as the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill) was published. Section 41B gives the SSSC powers to require information to inform Fitness to Practise investigations. This is a welcome addition and will help us to deliver a critical part of our public protection role.</p> <p>We supported the rollout of the Duty of Candour guidance and continue to provide support as required.</p>	

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
<p>24. It is recommended that a duty to self-report should be reviewed to ensure that self-reporting is inherently linked to continuous improvement, whilst also ensuring the regulatory bodies have appropriate powers to act when issues are identified.</p>	<p>There are statutory requirements on employers to report dismissals for misconduct.</p> <p>Social service workers and employers must adhere to the Code of Practice which requires them to refer themselves/or make referrals about staff to us in accordance with our fitness to practise guidance. We do not have a concern about self-reporting of the registered workforce, or employer reporting of dismissals.</p>	
<p>25. It is recommended that there is clear and accessible public information about how to raise a concern and systems of complaints. Those systems of complaints should be easy to use, have accessible detail about routes of escalation with clearly defined outcomes that can include redress for people.</p>	<p>We continue to contribute to wider work as part of the development of the National Care Service (NCS) on improving the handling of complaints. The improvements aim to enable people to make complaints in what is currently a cluttered and confusing landscape.</p> <p>We continue to make improvements to our process for making referrals to FTP. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reviewing our fitness to practise and hearings process to identify 	

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
	<p>where we can take a more person centred approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - revising our Decisions Review Guidance (DRG) with a view to publishing an updated version in Spring 2025 - continuing to implement actions following the Open University's Witness to Harm study. 	
<p>26. It is recommended that the Scottish Government should make arrangements to ensure appropriate oversight of regulatory provision of social care support and consider whether there should be separate arrangements put in place for Scotland, in this respect.</p>	<p>We do not think that further scrutiny is necessary for the SSSC as the professional regulator of the social service workforce.</p> <p>We are an NDPB accountable to government and subject to the remit of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.</p>	
<p>27. It is recommended that qualitative measures should be codesigned by the regulatory agencies and people with lived and living experience to ensure that they include elements of services that are important to people.</p>	<p>No work identified</p>	

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
<p>28. It is recommended that the sharing of data is examined, with the people at the centre of the process having access to their own data in formats that facilitate their understanding of it in order to support decision making and their involvement in this. This data should also be utilised for service planning and improvement, both strategic and operational.</p>	<p>We do not collect data on people who use services.</p>	
<p>29. It is recommended that data is utilised for social care planning and individuals, and their advocates, have access to this to inform their choices.</p>	<p>As an official and accredited official statistics provider we continue to publish data on the social service workforce in Scotland. This data informs workforce planning. These include reports on Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and an interactive Social Work Data Tool. Users can also create their own data using the explore the data section of our data website. We also publish the annual Register and Fitness to Practise reports.</p>	<p>We are redeveloping our data website to make our workforce and registration data more accessible.</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
	<p>As part of the Future Proofing Programme we made several improvements to the Public Facing Register (PFR). We now include information on specialist qualifications such as the Mental Health Officer Award (MHOA.) We also highlight whether Registrants are currently suspended.</p>	
<p>30. It is recommended that there is a 'duty to co-operate' placed upon service providers to share data appropriately and equally upon regulatory bodies to work together to avoid duplication in their requests for information.</p>	<p>We welcome proposed information sharing provisions in the Care Reform Scotland Bill. See our response to recommendation 23.</p>	
<p>31. It is recommended that the type of data collected, and its purpose, is reviewed to ensure that the right data is collected for the right reasons, with a focus on data supporting performance management and service improvement.</p>	<p>We are part of the Sharing Intelligence for Health and Care Group chaired by HIS. We work closely with OCSWA and Social Work Scotland to provide data to support planning in social work and the development of the National Social Work Agency. We are also part of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Strategy Delivery sub-board which has been established to support the implementation of the Health & Social Care Data Strategy • Health and Social Care Data 	<p>We will lead the workforce workstream of the National Social Care Data and Intelligence Programme Board. We are already members of the Programme Board and several of its other workstream groups.</p>

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
	Standards sub-board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Care Data & Intelligence Programme Board - care home data workstream. Established by Scottish Government. • Social Care Data & Intelligence Programme Board – workforce data workstream. We have been asked to lead this work by the Board and we are at the beginning stages of establishing the working group. • ASP Data Reference Group • Personal Assistant Programme Board • ELC Data Delivery Development Group. 	
32. It is recommended that a more tailored and contextualised approach is developed to how GDPR is used and interpreted within the regulatory landscape. It is also recommended that an Information Governance (IG) group is established to support the effective and proper use of information and engagement with IG experts.	No work underway or identified. We continue to share data on referrals where relevant, legal and required to support public protection.	
33. It is recommended that a review of the Health and Social Care Standards takes place to ensure they are based on human rights, ethical commissioning and are outcomes focused. The	There is a group reviewing the care service definitions and the National Health and Social +Care Standards. The group is co-chaired by the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate and	The SSSC, Care Inspectorate and Scottish Government co-chair a working group on this recommendation. The group is about to undertake an engagement exercise to identify the

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
Standards should be the basis on which social care support services are inspected, scrutinised and regulated.	SSSC. There are two short life working groups attached to this group. The timescales for this work are still to be confirmed.	next steps. The group will engage with the sector and aims to hear from seldom heard voices. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by June
34. It is recommended that Scottish Ministers should review the powers of intervention and enforcement currently in place, where providers fail to meet workforce registration obligations or fail to follow the codes of conduct and consideration be given as to where powers of enforcement should lie.	<p>The Care Inspectorate has the statutory responsibility to consider the Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers when carrying out its regulatory function.</p> <p>There is an anomaly where managers of services who are registered with another professional regulator cannot register with the SSSC. This means that the manager will not have the requirement to obtain a management qualification in the same way that managers registered with the SSSC are required to do so.</p>	
35. It is recommended that regulators and providers examine ways in which the workforce can become more actively involved in the inspection process, on a basis of mutual trust and respect.	We are working with CI, NES and HIS to deliver the Care Experience Improvement Model (CEIM) leaders programme. The programme supports teams across health, social work and social care to develop, embed and maintain a process and culture that systematically identifies and makes meaningful improvements based on the	

IRISR Recommendation	Work complete or underway	Planned work / no progress
	<p>feedback of people who use their services.</p> <p>Registrants have and continue to contribute the development of our approaches and activities, such as the changes to Registration, the revised Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers and the review of the National Occupational Standards. We continue to ask registrants for views directly through surveys, and indirectly via representative bodies and the Stakeholder Advisory Group.</p>	
<p>36. It is recommended that Scottish Ministers align the social care workforce in a coherent model, based on fair work, to support the sustainability of the workforce and to help drive continuous improvement.</p>	<p>We contribute to work streams under the Fair Work agenda to improve outcomes of workers in the sector. We have made available relevant learning resources to support the delivery of the Effective voice pilot in which employers and workers are testing the implementation of EV standards.</p> <p>We contribute to the Adult Social Care Ethical Commissioning Group, led by IRISS which is working to establish an agreed set of principles underpinning ethical commissioning and corresponding implementation plan.</p>	

<p>37. It is recommended that Scottish Ministers should review the sufficiency, quality and availability of resources for training, development and improvement.</p>	<p>We are working with partners across the UK to review the National Occupational Standards (NOS). Revised NOS due December 2025.</p> <p>We have introduced a new model of CPL, see recommendation 20.</p> <p>We wrote to the Minister for Higher and Further Education to raise concerns about access to qualifications and the need to make sure that workers achieve the qualifications they need to register with us.</p> <p>In March we published the latest Workforce Skills Report, and in April we published the latest Have your Say Survey and the Leavers Survey. These reports add to our wider understanding of the quality and availability of resources for training, development and improvement.</p> <p>In February 2025 we published the Economic and Social Value of the UK Adult Social Care Sector report. The report helps to evidence the critical role of the sector and the need for sustained economic investment in it.</p> <p>In May 2025 the SSSC and NHS Education for Scotland (NES) launched</p>	<p>The multi-agency adult social care skills group is exploring actions in relation to funding, system capacity and learning and we are continuing with our work to use the evidence base we have developed to pin-point areas of risk and solutions.</p>
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	<p>the Social Care Career Options Tool. The Tool will make it easier for people to find out about the wide range of roles and careers available in social care. We also launched a toolkit for employers and stakeholders.</p> <p>We continue to support the workforce to achieve qualifications. These include wider acceptance of qualifications and using the annual declaration to develop a better understanding of progress towards achieving qualifications. We use data to make sure that we target the Voluntary Sector Development Fund (VSDF) on support workers in Adult Social Care.</p>	
<p>38. It is recommended that steps are taken to ensure that nationally recognised qualifications that reflect the skills required to work in the social care sector are developed and are portable across the social care sector.</p>	<p>We are working with UK sector skills partners to review the National Occupational Standards (NOS). The NOS describe knowledge, skills and understanding that a worker needs to be competent at their job. The review will identify skills gaps such as trauma informed practice. It will revise language and strengthen elements of the current qualifications to meet ambitions in the Promise such as upholding and promoting rights and compassionate care. There will be a formal consultation before the updated NOS are finalised in December 2025.</p>	<p>The SVQ Integrated Award (Health and Social Care) is ready for delivery by training providers in the New Year. We are working with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and NHS Education Scotland (NES) to support and promote the rollout.</p> <p>We have developed the National Induction Framework with NES to provide a portable induction approach which will count towards qualifications.</p>

	<p>We work with Scottish Government and others to promote career pathways. We continue to scope graduate apprenticeship routes and new pathways for senior phase pupils.</p> <p>We also working with NES to finalise a National Induction Framework for adult social care staff.</p> <p>We are taking a more flexible approach to qualifications for registration to allow people to move between social care and children and young people services without having to gain two different qualifications. We now accept either of the standard qualifications for registrants working in both adults and children's services. We ask registrants moving to another type of service to complete extra training as relevant rather than doing another qualification.</p>	
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Title of Report	Partnership Agreement with the Care Inspectorate
Summary/purpose of report	To update Members on the new arrangements for partnership working with the Care Inspectorate and to seek approval of the Partnership Agreement
Recommendations	The Council is asked to approve the Partnership Agreement
Responsible Officer	Maree Allison, Chief Executive
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
Link to Risk Register	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.</p> <p>Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p>

Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required. Impact Assessments are carried out on specific pieces of joint work as required.
Documents attached	Appendix 1: Partnership Agreement
Background papers	None

BACKGROUND

1. The SSSC and Care Inspectorate have a formal partnership agreement dating back to 2011. We have reported progress on joint work under the agreement to Council for a number of years.
2. Over the last year we have worked with the Care Inspectorate leadership team to improve our approach to partnership working. This report sets out the new approach, reminds Members of their involvement and seeks approval of the Partnership Agreement.

GOVERNANCE

3. The Council and Care Inspectorate Board will meet once a year to review the Agreement, joint work achieved in the previous twelve months and provide direction for the next year.
4. Council will approve the Partnership Agreement
5. Directors develop an Operational Workplan.
6. The Convener, Care Inspectorate Chair and Chief Executives of both organisations will meet quarterly to discuss progress, resolve any blockers and horizon scan.
7. The Chief Executive's report will provide updates on progress during the year.

CONSULTATION

8. The joint Council and Board met on 19 March and discussed the draft Partnership Agreement. The feedback for changes or additions to the Agreement were:
 - a. To include the reporting arrangements
 - b. Emphasise the commitment to promote joint work to the wider public
 - c. Include joint work on national initiatives such as the Promise
 - d. Emphasise the learning from each other's data and intelligence.
9. These comments are incorporated into the attached Agreement which was endorsed by the Convener, Care Inspectorate Chair and Chief Executives at their first quarterly meeting on 6 May 2025.

RISKS

10. The Care Inspectorate and SSSC were established to have complimentary responsibilities and powers in relation to the regulation of services and the

workforce. It is essential that the two organisations have effective arrangements for partnership working to ensure the proper fulfilment of those responsibilities and that the safety and welfare of people who use services is protected and enhanced.

11. We have a cautious appetite to regulatory quality and an open approach to engaging with our stakeholders.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

12. There is no specific resourcing associated with this report.

Compliance

13. The SSSC and Care Inspectorate have statutory responsibilities to consult each other on relevant work.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

14. An impact assessment is not required. Assessments are drafted for specific pieces of joint work.

CONCLUSION

15. Members having had an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft Agreement at the meeting in March are now asked to approve the finalised Agreement.
16. Given the varying risk appetites and the focus on regulatory quality, effective partnership working plays a significant role in achieving that quality. Members are encouraged to regard this Agreement as establishing a proper governance framework and oversight mechanism to facilitate scrutiny of partnership working with an important stakeholder.



Partnership Agreement between the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Care Inspectorate.

The SSSC and the Care Inspectorate: A commitment to partnership in improving the experience and outcomes for people who use social services in Scotland.

Introduction

The SSSC and the Care Inspectorate have a shared aim to improve the experience and outcomes for people who use social services in Scotland. This partnership agreement supports our strategic joint working. We also have separate agreements covering data sharing, data processing and shared services.

The SSSC has a statutory duty to register and regulate the social service workforce and its education and training. It is also the Scottish partner of the sector skills council, Skills for Care and Development, with the responsibility for workforce development and planning.

The Care Inspectorate is the everyday name for Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland, the scrutiny body created by the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010. The Care Inspectorate regulates and inspects individually registered social care services and carries out inspections of aspects of social work practice and joint inspections of the work of strategic partnerships, including children's services partnerships, public protection committees and integrated health and social care partnerships. The Care Inspectorate has a statutory duty to identify, promulgate and promote good practice, as part of supporting quality improvement in services.

The SSSC and Care Inspectorate are independent bodies with separately defined statutory duties and powers for regulating different aspects of the social services sector. We adopt a shared approach to regulation which promotes the rights, independence and wellbeing outcomes for people experiencing care, with a focus on relationships rather than just compliance with technical inputs. We jointly promote quality improvement and innovation across the sector. We will continue to adopt a rights-based approach to regulation and quality improvement and ensure that our work fully upholds

the developing human rights legislation, policy and practice.

We support each other to fulfil our statutory responsibilities and identify opportunities to work together to achieve our mutual aims.

We align our respective vision, purpose and outcomes and we mutually contribute to reviewing these.

Vision

The SSSC: Our work means the people of Scotland can count on social work, social care and children and young people services being provided by a trusted, skilled, confident and valued workforce.

The Care Inspectorate: The Care Inspectorate's vision is for world-class social care and social work in Scotland where everyone, in every community, experiences high-quality care, support and learning that is tailored to their rights, needs and wishes.

Purpose and mission

The SSSC: We protect the public by registering social workers, social care workers and the children and young people workforce, setting standards for their practice, conduct, training and education and by supporting their professional development. Where people fall below the standards of practice and conduct, we can investigate and take action.

The Care Inspectorate: We will provide public assurance about the quality of social care, social work and early learning services, promote innovation and drive continuous quality improvement. We will collaborate and take action where experiences and outcomes are not meeting individual needs.

Outcomes

The SSSC:

- People who use services are protected by ensuring the regulated workforce is fit to practise.
- The SSSC supports and enhances the development of the registered workforce to deliver high standards of practice and drive improvement.
- Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.
- The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.

The Care Inspectorate:

- High quality care for all
- Improving outcomes for all
- Everyone's rights are respected and realised
- Our people are skilled, confident, and well supported to carry out their roles.

This partnership agreement sets out the following.

- The principles of how we work together.
- The benefits of us working together.
- Areas where we have a shared interest and can add mutual value.
- Making it happen.

1. Principles of how we work together

We follow common principles to help us work together.

Purpose: Partnerships work well when purpose, objectives and roles of agencies are mutually shared and understood, reviewed on a regular basis and clearly set out in relevant documents.

Value: Partnerships work well when agencies share resources, skills and experience to enhance their impact and deliver more effectively. Organisations can contribute to policy making and broader shared priorities. There is a focus on innovation and quality improvement and how agencies work together to deliver best value for money.

Engagement: Partnerships work well when relationships between agencies, departments and stakeholders are open, honest, constructive and based on trust. There is mutual understanding about each other's objectives and clear expectations about shared interests.

The principles ensure that our collaborative actions:

- are in the best interests of people who use services and carers
- are proportionate
- reduce bureaucracy and duplication
- recognise that we are equal in partnership but different/distinct
- organisations with specific and complementary roles in improving the quality of practice and care in Scotland's social services.

2. The benefits of us working together

- Improved outcomes for people who use services and carers by reinforcing and strengthening our regulatory protection roles with our shared commitment to protection and quality improvement

- Less duplication and more consistency for the sector as we share data and intelligence and influence each other's development and quality improvement work, and produce and promote joint guidance where appropriate
- Ensuring we influence through our ability to amplify and reinforce each other's messages where appropriate,
- Increasing public understanding of our shared aims and recognition of the value and role of social care, social work and early learning and childcare workforce to attract high quality staff and improve outcomes.
- Reviewing and developing our work together in line with statutory requirements, national policy and reviews such as Corporate Parenting, the Promise and the Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation (IRISR) and the actions and recommendations that come from these.
- Delivering Best Value

The overarching message to people who use services, carers and the public is that we are partner organisations working closely together to improve the quality of care, the protection of vulnerable people and public confidence in social services.

3. Shared areas of interest/purpose and added value to the sector

These are the priority areas in which we have a shared interest and/or we can bring added value.

SSSC Providing public assurance and raising standards in the workforce	Area of work	Care Inspectorate Providing public assurance and raising standards in services
Stronger position to influence and inform	Strategic policy and advice to government and engagement with the sector and people who use services Work to ensure our policy positions and responses complement and enhance each other's work, as far as possible. Where appropriate develop joint policy positions and jointly engage with major stakeholders and where	Stronger position to influence and inform

	appropriate users of services.	
<p>Ensure all workers are registered and achieve the relevant qualifications in the required timescales.</p> <p>Inform the Care Inspectorate of service providers whose workforce is not meeting registration requirements and/or where there are other significant issues in relation to their workforce.</p>	<p>Registration.</p> <p>Work together to ensure that workers and employers comply with and understand the value of meeting the required timescales and supporting employees to gain qualifications that maintain registration and improve practice</p> <p>Work together (SSSC & CI) to identify and quantify the workforce.</p> <p>Work together (SSSC & CI) to identify gaps in the workforce or in training</p>	<p>Promote the Codes of Practice with employers as part of signposting good practice.</p> <p>Work with employers to make sure they have in place plans for the registration of their workforce. Ensuring that employers understand the importance of a registered and qualified workforce in relation to the inspection and grading process.</p> <p>Work together (SSSC & CI) to identify and quantify the workforce.</p> <p>Work together (CI & SSSC) to identify gaps in the workforce or in training.</p>
<p>Ensure the workforce adhere to the Codes.</p> <p>Promote the Codes to all stakeholders.</p> <p>Work with the Care Inspectorate to increase sector awareness of and compliance with the SSSC Codes of Practice for Employers.</p> <p>Inform the Care Inspectorate of non-compliance with Standards by services</p>	<p>Regulating and supporting improvement of service quality and the workforce.</p> <p>Supporting services to provide care aligned to the Health and Social Care Standards</p> <p>SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers of Social Service Workers</p>	<p>Promote the Codes of Practice as part of signposting good practice and help ensure employers adhere to the Code.</p> <p>Inspectors may make Fitness to Practise referrals to SSSC, where appropriate, if they directly observe or assess referral may not be made by provider.</p> <p>Inspectors can access MySSSC when appropriate.</p>
<p>Provide leadership in delivering better ways of ensuring high quality social services.</p>	<p>Innovation, change, quality improvement and development.</p> <p>Use our data, intelligence, insights, knowledge,</p>	<p>Promote leadership of the provider to facilitate better ways of delivering high quality social services.</p>

	expertise and position in the sector to lead, innovate and plan.	
<p>The SSSC analyse and publish official and national statistics.</p> <p>The SSSC and the Care Inspectorate share data and intelligence to assist in planning for the future and identifying trends.</p>	<p>Workforce and service development and planning including the publication of National and Official Statistics.</p> <p>Identify and develop sources of information and sharing data, which result in intelligence products for both internal and external benefit. Develop and follow the Data Sharing Agreement and Data Processing Agreement.</p> <p>Themes from scrutiny, quality improvement and fitness to practise inform the development of joint resources and joint quality improvement activity.</p>	<p>Identify opportunities to share data and intelligence to assist in planning for the future and identifying trends.</p>

We will identify a way to bridge these areas where we have links and shared interests.

At the same time, we will recognise each other's right to hold a separate view on issues, including those set out in the table. We are also key stakeholders for each other, and we will keep each other up to date and seek their insights. This agreement sets out how we will develop arrangements for sharing information and insights.

4. Making it happen

- The SSSC Council and the Care Inspectorate Board meet together annually to discuss this agreement and hold wider discussion and debate about our partnership and how we implement and promote it externally. Our Chair/Convener are members of the respective Council and Board, which hold regular joint events.
- Provide a joint report to annual Board/Council on joint work over the preceding 12 months and delivery plan for the following 12 months.
- Chair/Convener and Chief Executives to meet quarterly and agree and oversee progress of the annual delivery plan by Directors from both organisations.

Jackie Irvine
Chief Executive
The Care Inspectorate

Maree Allison
Chief Executive
Scottish Social Services Council

Date:

Title of Report	Digital Annual Report
Summary/purpose of report	To provide an update on the delivery of the SSSC Digital Strategy for 2024-25.
Recommendations	Council is asked to: Endorse the progress made in relation to the delivery of the digital strategy.
Author and Responsible Officer	Laura Shepherd, Director, Strategy and Business Services
Link to Strategic Plan	The information in this report links to: Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise. Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice. Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce. Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.
Link to Risk Register	Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers. Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration. Risk 5: We fail to develop and support SSSC staff appropriately to ensure we have a motivated and skilled workforce. Risk 8: We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks.

Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Documents attached	None
Background papers	Digital Strategy 2024 -2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. We report to Council annually on the progress of work that supports the delivery of the SSSC Digital Strategy.
2. This report covers the delivery of digital projects, cyber security and any other issues worth noting for the 2024/25 period.

INFORMATION

3. Digital Programme Board approved nine projects for 2024/25. Eight of these were completed in year and the remaining one, website replacement will conclude in 2025/26. Benefits realisation for these projects were submitted, approved and are monitored by our Programme Management Office and regularly reported to Digital Programme Board.
4. These projects supported the delivery of our Digital Strategy 2021-2024 under the following themes:

User experience

- Website replacement
- Learning Zone refresh
- MyLearning badges
- Practice learning fee bursary
- Joint Social Services Taskforce (JSST) Careers pathways
- JSST National Induction Framework
- Children and Young People (CYP) platform development

User informed & Data Informed

- Post future proofing (wave 5)
- MyLearning badges upgrade
- CYP platform development

Intelligence automation

- Co-pilot AI pilot
- JSST Careers pathways

Technology architecture

- Website replacement
- Post future proofing (wave 5)
- Mattersphere upgrade
- D365 fee changes
- Practice learning fee bursary
- CYP platform development

Digital inclusion

- Website replacement
- Post future proofing (wave 5)

- JSST Careers pathways
- MyLearning badges upgrade

DIGITAL ACTIVITY

5. In November 2024 Council approved a refreshed Digital Strategy and we published this in April 2025. We retained the same themes as the previous strategy as they fit well with the future focus for our digital development.
6. Council approved the budget for 2025/2026 digital developments. The focus will be case management systems development. We will also look at developing our AI tools and use over the coming year.

DIGITAL SECURITY

7. Cyber-crime continues to threaten the digital landscape across the UK. We actively monitor the external threat landscape and always assess if further controls are required.
8. We carry out annual penetration testing on our systems. We tested our key operational systems Dynamics 365 (includes MySSSC) and MatterSphere (includes MatterSphere customer portal) in April 2025. The outcome of all tests originally carried out was positive. No critical priority risks were found.
9. We maintained cyber essential accreditation which runs until October 2025.
10. Mandatory cyber security training is in place for all staff and staff are expected to complete this yearly on the anniversary of their commencement of employment. 90% of staff had completed the training at the end of April 2025. Compliance by directorate is as follows:

Directorate	Sum certified	Sum not certified
Strategy and Business Services	49	*2
Regulation	172	*14
Workforce, Education and Standards	58	*5
EMT and Support	7	0
Council Members	8	0

* denotes staff being absent from work for a variety of reasons such as, leavers, secondments, maternity or long-term sick.

11. We carry out regular phishing tests in the form of simulated emails to establish how effective training is. In 2024/25 we carried out 12

campaigns. Of those tested, 151 individuals were compromised, a percentage rate of 3.61%. When staff take the wrong action on receipt of a test we follow up with further training. If they continue to take the wrong action on further simulation a member of the Digital Services team contacts them and their line manager to discuss further.

CONSULTATION

12. The Digital Programme Board has been involved in the development of this report.

RISKS

13. We maintain a cautious risk appetite towards sustaining appropriate operational processes, systems and controls to support operational delivery. Therefore, we continue to implement controls around cyber security and business continuity that does not increase our risks of system failure. However, we have an open risk appetite for the development and enhancement of these systems subject to effective testing and implementation controls.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

14. Our digital development costs for 2024/25 were £641k.

Compliance

15. There are no compliance requirements as part of this report.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

16. This report is for endorsing and does not require an impact assessment.

CONCLUSION

17. This report asks Council to endorse the progress made to date.

Title of Report	Information Governance Annual Report
Summary/purpose of report	To provide Council with an update on the organisation's performance in complying with its obligations under the data protection, freedom of information and records management legislation.
Recommendations	The Council is asked to endorse the organisation's performance in information governance compliance in the 2024/25 financial year.
Author	Anne Stewart, Head of Legal and Corporate Governance
Responsible Officer	Laura Shepherd, Director, Strategy and Business Services
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
Link to Risk Register	Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Documents attached	None
Background papers	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report summarises the performance of the SSSC in relation to information governance for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. We identify any issues of concern that Council needs to be aware of in relation to the organisation's compliance with data protection, freedom of information and records management legislation.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

2. The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 requires Scottish public authorities to produce and submit a records management plan setting out proper arrangements for the management of public records for the Keeper of Records for Scotland (the Keeper) to agree. The Keeper agreed the SSSC's records management plan in 2014.
3. We are working on a long-term project to ensure the organisation complies with its records management obligations. Over the next year, the SSSC Records Manager will progress a plan with support from colleagues across the organisation to review our records management structure and processes to ensure we have effective records management.
4. We provide records management training to all new starts during their induction period, and we provide refresher training to all staff annually. As of April 2025 we have a completion rate of 85% for records management training. We have asked for the support of line managers to manage their team's compliance, and we have issued reminders to all members of staff who have outstanding training.

DATA PROTECTION

5. Individual rights requests Individual rights requests received in the reporting period include the right of access (commonly referred to as a Subject Access Request), the right to erasure (also known as the right to be forgotten), the right to rectification, and the right to object. The organisation must respond to these types of requests within one calendar month.
6. We responded to 35 requests in the reporting period with 85.7% responded to within the statutory timescales. Last year we responded to 31 requests (83.87% within statutory timescales).
7. Under data protection legislation, an individual has the right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if they remain dissatisfied with our handling of a rights request. We had no complaints raised during the reporting period.

Third Party requests

8. The Registration Department continue to deal with straightforward Third Party Requests from Social Work England, Social Care Wales and the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. While we no longer collate the number of requests within Legal and Corporate Governance (LCG), in the last year we responded to 31 complex requests and requests from other types of third-party organisations, for example international regulators and local authorities.

Data security incidents

9. The organisation is under a statutory duty to report certain personal data breaches to the ICO within 72 hours of becoming aware of the breach, where feasible. The organisation has a data breach management process. This includes carrying out a risk assessment to determine whether a breach is reportable and an investigation to identify the cause and to recommend actions to prevent recurrences.
10. 80 data security incidents/breaches were reported over 2024/25, a reduction of 5% in comparison to the financial year 2023/24, where we had 84 reports. We assessed these as 10 near misses, 12 security incidents and 58 breaches. We categorise an incident as a breach where there was a failure in our security procedures. The majority, 48 breaches occurred where data was emailed to the wrong recipient. We monitor breaches and review our processes to reduce risks as far as possible. A security incident is one where information has been disclosed but there was no failure in our security procedures e.g. the employer has not updated counter signatory details..
11. The Information Governance team has and will continue to encourage early reporting of data security incidents across the departments within the organisation through awareness raising of the reporting requirements and training as detailed at paragraph 17.
12. As part of the risk assessment process, we categorise data security incidents as low/green, medium/amber, or high/red, dependant on factors such as the volume of data released, the sensitivity of the information released and the risk to the affected individuals. We report those categories classified as high/red to the ICO within 72 hours.
13. We reported two data security incidents to the ICO in the reporting period. The incidents concerned the following.
 - Incorrect updates made to individuals registration statuses on the Public Facing Register.
 - An urgent system change which led to endorsers being able to see all active individuals on the Register.

We took remedial action for both incidents and the ICO took no further action.

Delivery of data protection training

14. We appoint and train data champions for each team to provide bespoke training to all staff. As of April 2025 we have a 93% completion rate for data protection training. Last year the figure was 80%. We note that these figures do not take account of staff who are on long term sick or maternity leave. We continue to ask for the support of data champions to make sure that the remainder complete the training as soon as possible.

Data security procedures

15. We review and update the data security procedures where necessary following our security incident recommendations. We have also combined and streamlined the data security procedures for Registration, Fitness to Practise and Regulatory Improvement and Hearings into one.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Requests for information

16. The organisation must respond to freedom of information requests within 20 working days.
17. We responded to 25 requests in the reporting period with 100% responded to within the statutory timescales. Last year we responded to 26 requests.
18. Under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, an individual has the right of appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner if they remain dissatisfied with our response following a request for a review. There were no appeals raised to the Scottish Information Commissioner during the reporting period.

Publication Scheme

19. We have made improvements to the information provided on our website under the publication scheme.

Retention Schedule

20. We reviewed our Retention Schedule in 2024 which EMT approved in August 2024.

CONSULTATION

21. We did not carry out any consultation in the preparation of this report.

RISKS

22. We have an averse risk appetite towards governance matters. The ICO can impose sanctions for failure to meet data protection statutory obligations. There is also a risk of criminal or civil proceedings and reputational risk.
23. The Keeper of Records for Scotland has powers to undertake records management reviews and issue action notices for improvement, and the Scottish Information Commissioner has power to issue formal practice recommendations and enforcement notices.
24. It is important that the SSSC is a well governed organisation. If the organisation does not meet its information governance obligations this would impact on the confidence of people who use services and their carers that the SSSC is effectively discharging its legal duties.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

25. There are no resource implications arising from recommendations in this report.

Compliance

26. The organisation must comply with our obligations under the data protection, freedom of information and records management legislation. This report provides assurance that the organisation has sufficiently met those obligations during this reporting period. There are no compliance implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

27. An IA is not necessary as this report relates to internal governance matters.

CONCLUSION

28. This report asks Council to endorse the organisation's performance in information governance over the reporting period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. There are no concerns about the organisation's compliance with the statutory requirements.

Title of Report	Complaints Performance – annual update for period 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025
Summary/purpose of report	This report presents annual complaints performance information for 2024/25.
Recommendations	The Council is asked to: 1. approve the publication of the annual complaints performance report on our website.
Author	Anna Fairweather Quality and Improvement Officer
Responsible Officer	Laura Shepherd, Director, Strategy and Business Services
Link to Strategic Plan	The information in this report links to: Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise. Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice. Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce. Outcome 4: Valued The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people’s lives.
Link to Risk Register	Risk 3: We fail to meet governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.
Impact Assessment	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
Documents attached	Appendix 1: Complaints performance – 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025
Background papers	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. We follow the model complaints handling procedure (CHP) as defined by the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO).
2. This report forms part of our wider reporting commitment which includes quarterly reporting (discussed at Operational Management Team (OMT) and thereafter published online).
3. We adopted the SPSO's revised model for complaints handling in April 2021 and have reviewed and updated our Complaints Handling Procedure in April 2024. In practice there are few material changes to the model and our reporting commitment remains the same as at present.
4. This annual report summarises our performance in 2024/25 in responding to complaints at each stage of the procedure.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

5. Areas of performance of note this year include the following:
 - We responded to 93% of stage one complaints within five working days.
 - We have remained consistent with time to respond to a stage one complaint.
 - The number of stage one complaints upheld, not upheld and partially upheld closely aligns with last year's performance.
 - Of the stage one complaints closed, 52% (191 complaints) were about one of our processes and 24% (89 complaints) were about an aspect of the Future Proofing Programme.
 - We responded to 53% of stage two complaints within twenty working days.
 - We have seen an increase in the average response time for stage two complaint from 16 to 40 working days.
 - The number of stage two complaints upheld has significantly increased, from 5% in 2023/24 to 49% in 2024/25.
 - One significant incident primarily caused the increase in upheld complaints and the extended response times related to these. In August and September 2024, we received 19 stage two complaints related to a technical issue where registered workers were removed from the register for non-completion of their Annual Declaration without having received a Notice of Decision to inform them, of their removal. This resulted in a loss of earnings for some of the complainants. We gave all 19 complaints extensions due to the

complexity and legal issues in finding a solution to these complaints. We closed these complaints on 13 December 2024.

CONSULTATION

6. We involved OMT and Executive Management Team (EMT) in the development of the report.

RISKS

7. We must publicly report on our complaints handling performance. Failure to produce this annual report and publicise it to members of the public, including our stakeholders, may put the SSSC at risk of breaching SPSO guidance. Additionally, failure to report may have a negative impact on the SSSC's reputation as a public body.
8. We have a cautious risk appetite towards sustaining appropriate operational processes, systems and controls. As we have a statutory responsibility to manage complaints, we apply this cautious approach to the systems of managing complaints. Our complaints handling procedure allows us to maintain the approach to managing risks around complaints and timescales.

IMPLICATIONS

Resourcing

9. There are no resourcing requirements identified as part of this report.

Compliance

10. There are no compliance issues identified as part of this report. Production of this report forms part of our responsibilities in complying with the SPSO's model.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

11. This is a noting report and does not require an Impact Assessment.

CONCLUSION

12. This report asks Council to note our performance as described in Appendix 1 and approve the report for publication on our website.

Complaints Performance 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

April 2025

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Introduction

1. We seek to provide excellent customer service across our organisation. Complaints are an opportunity to make improvements and learn from where we have fallen short.
2. We follow the model complaints handling procedure (CHP) developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). If complainants remain unsatisfied with our response once they have gone through our process, they can complain to the SPSO. The SPSO will then decide whether to open an investigation or not.
3. Our complaints handling procedure is on our [website](#).
4. In addition to this annual performance report, we publish a quarterly summary of performance on the complaints we receive, the actions we take and areas for improvement we have identified. We also report on our performance in responding to complaints in terms of timescales and process.
5. This report covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. Some totals do not equal 100% due to rounding.

Performance summary

6. We received 412 complaints in 2024/25, compared to 337 complaints in 2023/24, 458 in 2022/23 and 400 in 2021/22.
7. The number of stage one complaints remains consistent with previous years, however we saw an increase in stage two complaints, with 45 received in 2024/25 compared to 23 in 2023/24, 14 in 2022/23 and 16 in 2021/22.
8. Almost half (47%) of our complaints were about our registration process, which affects all 176,000 registrants every year. 27% of complaints were about an aspect of the Future Proofing Programme. We also received a high proportion of complaints about our fees process, qualification requirements and Fitness to Practise processes.
9. We had two significant programmes of work during 2024/25, the launch of the Future Proofing Programme in June 2024 and the consultation to increase registration fees in November 2024.
10. There are a few reasons for the increase in complaints, which were largely the results of technical work carried out with the changes brought about by Future Proofing. However, these were attributed to a small number of changes compared the significant amount of work carried out across the programme. The increase in



extensions agreed to stage 2 complaints noted in paragraph 13, were in relation to the complex nature of some the complaints received due the technical issues experienced and these were all agreed with the complainant.

11. In contrast we carried out the consultation and ultimately increased registration fees during 2024/25 and we received no complaints about the decision. The increase to registration fees could have an impact on registrants which would have been highlighted had complaints been made.
12. We generally respond to our complaints within the agreed timescales. We responded to 98% of all stage one complaints within the agreed timescales, consistent with the previous year.
13. However, due to a complicated issue relating to the Future Proofing Programme, our ability to respond to stage two complaints within the allocated timescale decreased from 95% in 2023-2024 to 53% in 2024-2025.
14. The increases in upheld complaints and in the time taken to respond to stage two complaints were primarily due to one significant incident. We received 19 stage two complaints in August and September 2024 which were all related to a complex technical issue noted at paragraph 10. All complaints were given extensions as they required a detailed investigation and decisions by Council about how to resolve them. These complaints were closed on 13 December 2024.

Lessons learned from complaints

15. We always apologise when we get things wrong. Whether we uphold a complaint or not, we always look for ways to make improvements to our service and products.

What happened	How we resolved things
Registrant missed a deadline to go on a course to gain requested qualification because of not receiving information regarding the qualification condition imposed on their register part.	System error meant that the registrant was not removed in July 2023 and the system thought we had not dealt with the qualification condition.
System error resulted in the registrant not being removed last year when they failed to provide further information during the process for seeking information about a due condition at renewal stage.	Further information was not received and an automated removal notice wasn't sent. Applications were in progress at the same time as renewal form and this could have caused the issue as the applications were rejected and the condition deactivated.
	Condition information document was issued again to avoid removal but still not submitted to us.
	We granted an additional seven days

	before removal.
<p>Multiple complaints had arisen due to the launch of the Future Proofing Programme on 3 June 2024.</p> <p>The website speed was extremely slow from the point of go live on 3 June for three days meaning that customers were experiencing a lot of difficulties getting into MySSSC and actioning anything, such as completion of an annual declaration.</p>	<p>This issue was escalated with Microsoft and resolved on 5 June.</p>
<p>Complainant has made an FTP referral about a social worker who is either not registered at all or is registered under a false name. The complainant is complaining about the SSSC as we have allowed this person to misrepresent themselves and have therefore failed to ensure registrants are registered under the name they are giving to the public, and have failed in our duty of care. Complainant feels as part of our registration process, we should instruct all registrants that they must be registered under the same name they are using in public.</p>	<p>While we ask workers applying for registration to ensure that they keep their details up to date, it would be helpful for us to highlight to registrants that they should ensure their registration is in the name they go by in their workplace to allow the public to easily identify them on the Public Facing Register. We have this highlighted in our newsletter.</p>
<p>An applicant complained about the International Social Work Qualification assessment process, including the time taken to assess the qualification, the result of assessment and clarity of advice given about compensatory measures.</p>	<p>From this complaint we have identified an immediate improvement to the process which is that Advisers will contact applicants by telephone near the beginning of the process to advise they are dealing with the case and to explain the process. We are also encouraging Advisers to speak to applicants about the process where they believe it will assist.</p> <p>We have started a full review of the assessment of international qualifications that may identify further potential improvements to the process.</p>
<p>Registrant complained as she received an SMS text message from Registration at 5am which disturbed her sleep and caused concern that there may be an emergency due to someone contacting her at that time in the morning.</p>	<p>We appreciate the impact receiving an SMS during the night could have on customers and would rather avoid this. A change is being taken forward so that automated SMS messages will not go out during the night.</p>
<p>A technical issue during the launch of the Future Proofing Programme caused individuals who had been removed due to</p>	<p>A solution was sought immediately when the issue was discovered and a temporary solution was deployed to ensure Removed</p>



<p>Fitness to Practise cases - but later restored - to incorrectly appear on the Public Register as "Removed by Fitness to Practise/Removed by Panel."</p>	<p>Registrations for people who have since been restored were not visible on the Public Facing Register.</p> <p>A permanent solution for this issue has now been deployed.</p>
<p>Around 3,000 workers were removed from the Register for non-completion of their Annual Declaration. These workers did not receive Notice of Decision letters or had the right to appeal the removal.</p> <p>All workers who were impacted were reinstated to the register.</p> <p>Complaints where workers were not able to work or were unpaid during the time were directly escalated to Stage Two.</p>	<p>A process was developed to allow the impacted workers to put in a reimbursement claim for lost earnings.</p>
<p>A complaint was received from an MSP on behalf of their constituent, a social work student. The complaint was relating to student grants and additional award for students with financial difficulties.</p> <p>There was a delay in us being able to make payments as Scottish Government introduced a new finance system and the part used to make these payments was not available at the time the complaint was made.</p>	<p>We developed a manual workaround to allow us to make payments and made the payment of students a top priority at that time.</p> <p>Bursary payments were processed within a week of the complaint being closed.</p>
<p>A countersignatory complained about the inability to have both a work and personal email address on record, and that if he were to choose to have all of his emails go to his work email address, his personal registration would need to be managed by his work email account while his social work registration is not a requirement for his current employment.</p> <p>At present our systems do not allow a countersignatory to use separate email addresses if they are also a registrant and therefore we do not have the ability to identify different email addresses for specific types of communications. This type of change would require considerable change to the infrastructure of the current system.</p>	<p>We are looking into this for future systems development. This will be explored as a development for 2025-26.</p>

Our complaints performance for 2024/25

16. Here is a detailed breakdown and tables showing information about our complaint numbers, timescales and comparisons to previous years.

Table one: summary of complaints performance for 2024/25 and comparison to 2023/24

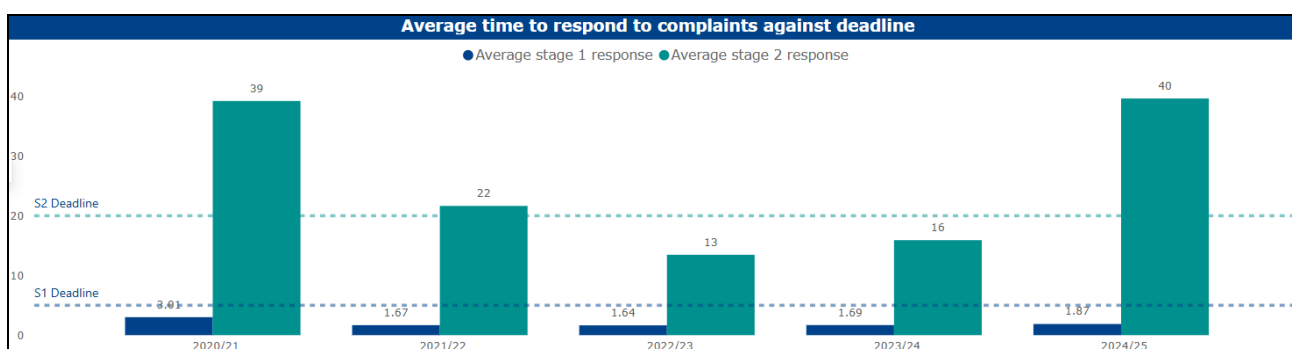
No.	Indicator	Performance April 2023 – March 2024	Performance April 2024 – March 2025	Comments on current performance
1.	Complaints received per 1,000 registrants	1.9	2.3	On 1st April 2025 there were 175,883 individual registrants on the Register. We received 412 complaints in 2024/25
2.	Percentage of complaints closed at stage one	93%	90%	We closed 370 stage one complaints
3.	Percentage of complaints closed at stage two	7%	10%	We closed 45 complaints at stage two. This includes 16 complaints which were escalated from stage one to stage two
4.	Average working days to respond at stage one	1	2	Our agreed timescale to respond to a stage one complaint is five working days
5.	Average working days to respond at stage two	16	40	Our agreed timescale to respond to a stage two complaint is 20 working days
6.	Stage one complaints closed within five working days	99%	98%	We closed 364 stage one complaints within five working days
7.	Stage two complaints closed within twenty working days	95%	53%	24 of the 45 stage two complaints were closed within 20 working days. Not all complaints received in 2024/25 received a response in the same year (as some were received at the end of March 2025)
8.	Stage one complaints with an extension	1%	0.5%	We extended the deadline in two stage one complaints
9.	Stage two complaints with an extension	0%	51%	We extended the deadline in 22 stage two complaints
10.	Proportion of	90%	88%	Due to reporting methods, this



	complaints where complainant was satisfied			figure is indicative only. See para 24 for detail
11.	Stage one complaints upheld	4%	8%	29 stage one complaints were upheld
12.	Stage one complaints not upheld	25%	18%	68 stage one complaints were not upheld
13.	Stage one complaints partially upheld	4%	6%	22 stage one complaints were partially upheld
14.	Stage one complaints resolved	67%	68%	'Resolved' is an outcome introduced on 1 April 2021. 251 stage one complaints were resolved
15.	Stage two complaints upheld	5%	49%	22 stage two complaints were upheld
16.	Stage two complaints not upheld	55%	36%	16 stage two complaints were not upheld
17.	Stage two complaints partially upheld	36%	16%	7 stage two complaints were partially upheld

17. Our agreed timescales are to respond to stage one complaints within five working days, and stage two complaints within 20 working days. The following set of charts presents key information relating to our ability to respond within these timescales.

Figure one: Average working days to respond to complaints

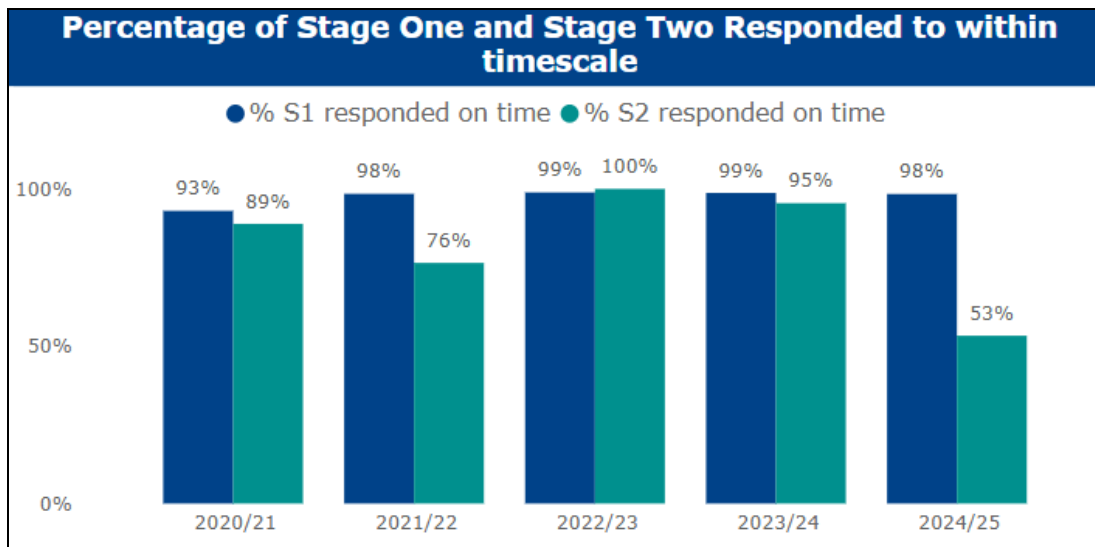


18. We have remained consistent with time taken to respond to a stage one complaint.

19. The number of stage one and two complaints upheld has increased significantly compared to the previous year's performance.

20. Our average time to respond to a stage two complaint has increased from 16 to 48 working days.
21. The change in these averages is reflected in the percentage of complaints we respond to within the respective timescales, shown in Figure two.

Figure two: Percentage of complaints with response within timescale



22. We responded to 98% of all stage one complaints within the agreed timescales, consistent with the previous year. Our ability to respond to stage two complaints within the allocated timescale decreased from 95% in 2023-2024 to 53% in 2024-2025.
23. The increases in upheld complaints and in the time taken to respond to stage two complaints were primarily due to one significant incident. We received 19 stage two complaints in August and September 2024 which were all related to a technical issue where registered workers were removed from the register for non-completion of their Annual Declaration without having received a Notice of Decision to inform them they would be removed. For many of the complainants, this resulted in a loss of earnings. All 19 complaints were given extensions due to the complexity and legal issues in finding a solution to these complaints. These complaints were closed on 13 December 2024.
24. We do not currently ask complainants how satisfied they are with the outcome or handling of their complaint. We consider a customer to be unsatisfied with the outcome of their complaint where they have either told us directly that they are not satisfied, or where they have escalated their complaint to the next stage of the process. We consider customers to be satisfied in all other circumstances.
25. We have gathered data from other public bodies overseen by SPSO to give a sense of how our complaints handling performance compares to other public bodies.

Table two: complaints handling figures for other public bodies in Scotland.

No.	Indicator	SSSC 2024-25	Care Inspectorate 2023-24*	Social Security Scotland 2023-24*	Scottish Qualifications Authority 2023-24*
1.	Number of stage one complaints received	369	37	3,330	99
2.	Percentage of stage one complaints closed within five working days	98%	74%	70%	85%
3.	Percentage of stage one complaints upheld or partially upheld	14%	0%	52%	5%
4.	Average number of days to close a stage one complaint	2	5.8	4	4
5.	Number of stage two complaints received	33	24	1,120	5
6.	Percentage of stage two complaints closed within 20 working days	53%	82%	94%	80%
7.	Average number of days to close a stage two complaint	40	20.4	19	29
8.	Percentage of stage two complaints upheld or partially upheld	65%	34%	76%	2%

*Data for 2024-25 has not yet been published for this organisation.

What are these complaints about?

26. We received 412 complaints between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

- 90% (369) were received at stage one of the CHP
- 4% (16) were received directly at stage two
- 6% (27) were stage two complaints escalated from a previous stage one complaint.

27. Over the same period, we responded to 415 complaints. Note that not all complaints received in 2024-2025 received a response in the same year (as some were received at the end of March 2025 and have not yet been responded to) and some responses were to complaints received in 2023-2024.
- 89% (370) were at stage one
 - 11% (45) were at stage two.
28. Of the stage one complaints closed, 52% (191 complaints) were about one of our processes. Of those, the most frequent topics involved:
- 45 about the fees process (for example, requesting a refund)
 - 30 about the processing timescales
 - 21 about qualification requirements
 - 19 about Fitness to Practise investigation processes and timescales
 - 17 about our removal process
 - 17 about our conditions not met process
 - other process-related complaints included those about our change of details processes, our processes for removals or withdrawn applications, processing errors, and our application further information request processes.
29. 24% (89 complaints) were about different aspects of the Future Proofing Programme. Of those, the most frequent topics involved:
- 45 about the annual declaration process, including stage one complaints related to the issue outlined in paragraph 12
 - 26 about issues related to “go live” – the launch of the programme
 - 12 about our communications relating to the programme
 - other Future Proofing-related complaints included those about the new Codes of Practice, qualification timescales, and the new Register structure.
30. The comparatively high number of complaints about processes is expected given that these relate to areas of high-volume and high-impact work where we are in most contact with registered workers and stakeholders.
31. The high number of complaints about the Future Proofing Programme were also to be expected considering the scale of this piece of work and the impacts the initial change had on registered workers and employers.
32. The table below provides information about the volume of work received in the areas above to give a sense of scale for the number of complaints received compared to the work carried out.

Table three: volume of work processed compared to stage one complaints received.

No.	Indicator	Total number	Number of related complaints	Proportion of complaints received in relation to total number processed
1.	Unique individuals on the register on 1st April 2025	175,883	414	0.2%
2.	Applications received	35,169	127*	0.4%
3.	Annual declarations submitted	126,159	66	0.05%
4.	Annual fees paid	120,649	51	0.04%
5.	Fitness to Practise referrals received	4,837	39	0.8%
6.	Qualification assessments created	442	26	5.9%
7.	Removals from the register	35,630	16	0.04%

*This figure includes all complaints about processes relating to applications, including processing timescales, the condition not met process and the further information process.

33. We can categorise the other complaints as follows:

- 48 about MySSSC (for example, the service not working as expected)
- 20 about communications (for example, the tone of our letters or the methods we used)
- 15 about customer service (for example, poor customer service or inaccurate information provided)
- 6 about the Fees Consultation
- 1 about our website.

34. Of the stage two complaints closed, the most common categories are:

- the annual declaration issue outlined in paragraph 12
- qualification requirements
- Fitness to Practise processes.



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

If you would like this document in another format,
please contact the SSSC on 0345 60 30 891

Task Name	Meeting Action Generated	Progress	Assigned To	Due Date	Description	Checklist Items
C6 Joint development session with CI	Council 25 August 2022	Completed	Corporate Governance Coordinator	Spring 2025	Minute 9.2: A joint dev session with CI about the promise 9.11.22 AW in correspondence with CI counterpart about possible date: also to include discussion on the Independent Review 16.1.2023: CI Conv and CEx in discussion re options date of 18 Jan 2024 confirmed with CI. 18 Jan session cancelled/postponed due to bad weather 15.5.2024 in correspondence re identifying another date August update: possibly looking at end of this fin year/early next year. Scheduled for 19 March 2025	
C23/26 Partnership agreement	Council 24 August 2023	Completed	Chief Executive	Feb-24	Minute 20.5.2: Submit a further report on revised principles to the Council meeting in February 2024. 15.5.2024 agreement not yet concluded will report to August 2024 meeting August update:We are reviewing the Partnership Agreement as part of wider work on partnership working and will report to November Council: Nov update: Review ongoing CEx will report on this at a future meeting TBD Feb update: to be discussed on 19 March 2025 On agenda for 22 May 2025	
C24/11 Change to March 2025 budget meeting date	Council 21 November 2024	Completed	Corporate Governance Coordinator	Feb-25	Following further communication, new date to be agreed at Council in Feb 2025	
C24/17 Corporate Gov document updates	Council 27 February 2025	Completed	Head of LCG		Min 11.5: approved the Executive Framework; approved revised Code of Corporate Governance; approved schedule of meeting dates/ set revised budget meeting date.	Docs updated and published as necessary
C24/15 Decision opn review of registration fees	Council 27 February 2025	Completed	EMT	Apr-25	Min 8.6 Approve option 2 increase in fees for registration £8 a year increase for social workers introduce a care service managers fee and freeze it at £80 no fee increase year one for practitioners/supervisors and £4 a year for the following four years no fee increase year one for support workers and £3 a year for the following four years no increase for student social workers delegated authority to the Convener to sign the Registration Rules required to implement the increase	Rules signed by Interim Convener and published

Council Calendar of Business 2025/26

Report/meeting dates	22 May 2025	21 August 2025	4 November October 2025 (ARA)	27 Nov 2025	26 February 2026	26 March 2026 (budget)
Quarterly reports						
Interim Convener's Report	✓					
Convener's report		✓		✓	✓	
Chief Executive's Report	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Audit and Assurance Committee Report (<i>inc assurance report, risk register and link to minutes</i>)	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Action Record	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Annual reports						
Audit and Assurance Committee Annual Report (<i>part of Annual Report and Accounts process</i>)	✓					
Risk Appetite Statement	✓				✓	
People Strategy Annual Report (<i>include staff survey results, HR annual report and agile working updates</i>)		✓				
Complaints Annual Report	✓					
Digital Strategy Annual Report	✓					
Information Governance Annual Report	✓					
CI Partnership Agreement	✓					
Annual Health and Safety report				✓		
Annual Report and Accounts			✓	✓		
Draft Annual Report and Accounts		✓				
Chief Executive Appraisal (Private Report)		✓				
Draft Budget 2026/27					✓	
Budget Setting 2026/27						✓
Policies – see link below	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	✓					
All other items (<i>ad hoc or requested matters</i>)	✓					
Qualifications	✓					
English Language requirement	✓					
New Registered Groups	✓					
Have your say report	✓					
IRISR and Care Reform Bill	✓					
FtP panel Member reappointment	✓					
NSWA				✓		