

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming Report

Progress report, April 2023



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Foreword

This is our sixth **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming report**. This report sets out how we continue to make sure equality, diversity and inclusion are at the core of our various roles which include being a public body and the regulator for the social work, social care and children and young people workforce in Scotland. This report summarises the progress we have made on our equality outcomes for 2021-2025.

The two years that have passed since the publication of our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming and Outcomes report 2021-2025](#) have been challenging for everybody. Pressures from the COVID-19 pandemic and the current cost of living crisis have put a strain on public services and those who provide them. Yet, through all the difficulties of the last two years, the people that work in social work, social care and children and young people roles in Scotland have continued to work with passion and dedication. This passion and dedication helps to make sure the people of Scotland receive the best possible care from a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

Through our work we protect people who use social services, strengthen the professionalism of the workforce and make sure the SSSC and the wider workforce promote and support equality, diversity and inclusion. In this report we show the progress we have made toward achieving our Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 over the last two years. We also highlight what we are planning to do to promote equality, diversity and inclusion for our registrants, our staff and our stakeholders over the next two years.

We welcome your feedback on the steps that we are taking and the changes or improvements that we need to look at as part of our next review of our outcomes. Our contact details are at the end of this report.

Maree Allison, Acting Chief Executive



Introduction

About our report

Our **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming Report 2023** shows what we have done to work toward meeting our Equality Outcomes over the past two years.

Our current Equality Outcomes were set in April 2021 in our **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2021-2025**. We have three outcomes.

- **Outcome one:** promoting diversity in the social care workforce, including disabled people, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with care experience.
- **Outcome two:** increasingly demonstrate how our work is shaped by our key stakeholders including people who are care experienced.
- **Outcome three:** people increasingly view us as an employer of choice which promotes equality, diversity and inclusion in our recruitment processes and our existing staff.

This report shows how the values of equality, diversity and inclusion are central to the strategic and operational decisions we make as an employer and as the regulator for the social work, social care and children and young people workforces in Scotland.

We are also publishing a separate data annex which gives information on:

- our employees' protected characteristics
- the recruitment, retention and development of SSSC staff over the last two years
- our gender pay gap figures
- our Equal Pay Statement and occupational segregation
- the diversity of our Council.

About the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

The SSSC is the regulator for the social work, social care and children and young people workforce in Scotland. Our work means the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

We protect the public by registering this 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.



We:

- publish the national codes of practice for people working in social services and their employers
- register people working in social services and make sure they adhere to the **SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers** (the Codes)
- promote and regulate the learning and development of the social service workforce
- are the national lead for workforce development and planning for social services in Scotland
- are an ONS statistics provider.

The SSSC was established by the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. Our Council is made up of a Convener and nine members who are appointed by Scottish Ministers.

We employ 342 staff (Headcount, December 2022) across four directorates:

- Strategy and Performance
- Workforce, Education and Standards
- Regulation
- Finance and Resources.

Our directorates are led by our Executive Management Team (EMT) who work closely with the Operational Management Team (OMT) who lead the various departments within each directorate. Together we achieve our strategic and operational goals in carrying out our statutory and workforce development roles and providing support to the workforce.

We also have a shared service with the Care Inspectorate for human resources, finance, estates and health and safety.



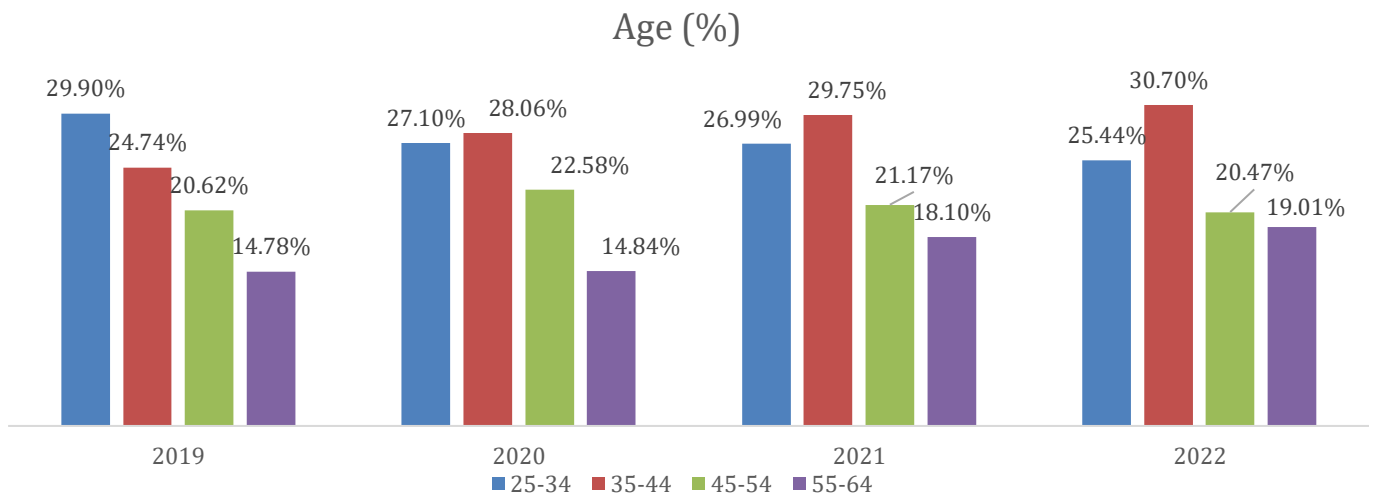
Information on the protected characteristics of SSSC staff

The following tables give an outline of the protected characteristics of the SSSC’s staff, except for pregnancy and maternity and trans status, over the last four years. Looking at the diversity of our staff over this period will allow us to identify areas where we can focus our improvement efforts.

The following tables set out the percentage of staff who have provided a positive response to a question. They do not include data on staff who did not disclose their protected characteristics or who indicated that they would prefer not to say, unless otherwise stated. For example, the 14% of staff who disclosed being married or in a civil partnership in 2022 does not include staff that did not complete their equalities information, or who preferred not to say. The we have 100% response data on sex and age. Further information on December 2021 and December 2022 available from the data annex published alongside this report. Further information on 2019 and 2020 data is available from our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming and Outcomes report, 2021-2025](#). Please note figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

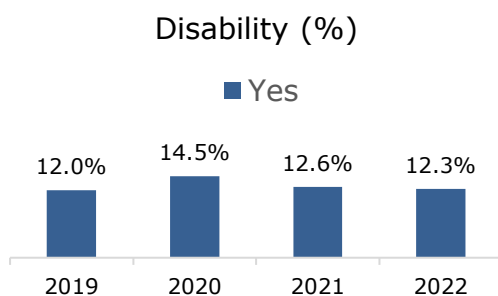
A very small number of people have disclosed their trans status. We have not disclosed this data and do not include a table below.

Table 1. Age



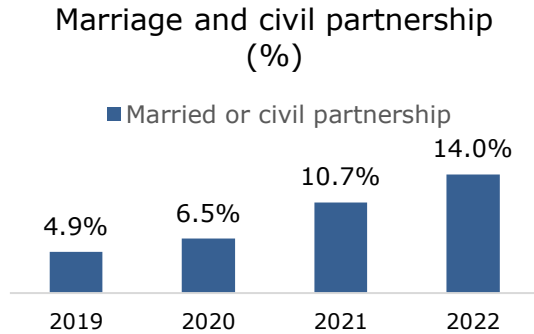
The under 25 and over 65 age groups have been suppressed due to low numbers.

Table 2. Disability



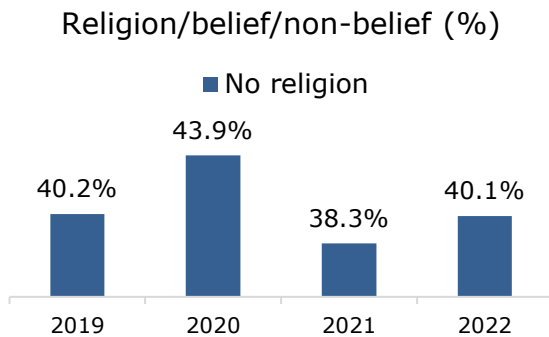
At December 2021, 76.38% of our staff had declared their disability status, at December 2022, 76.02% of staff had provided this information. These figures only relate to staff who declared having a disability. Prefer not to say and unknown responses have been suppressed.

Table 3. Marriage and civil partnership



The percentage of our staff who have shared their marital status with us is lower than for other protected characteristics. We believe that this is because we ask staff to provide this information on a separate part of our HR system. In December 2021, 20.86% of our staff had disclosed their marital status and in December 2022, 20.15% of staff provided this information. We are making changes to how we gather this data with a view to increasing disclosure.

Table 4. Religion/belief/non-belief



The declaration rates for religion for December 2021 and December 2022 were 76.69% and 75.44% respectively. In these years, staff identifying as having no religion made up the largest group in the SSSC. We have not disclosed information on several categories because of low numbers.

Table 5. Sex



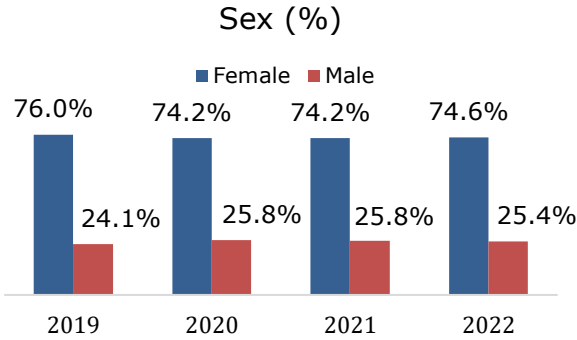
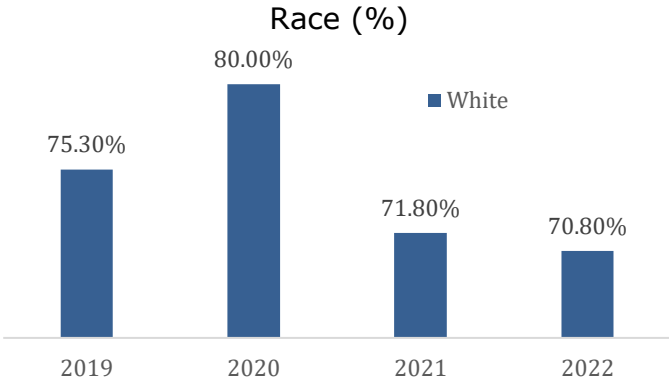
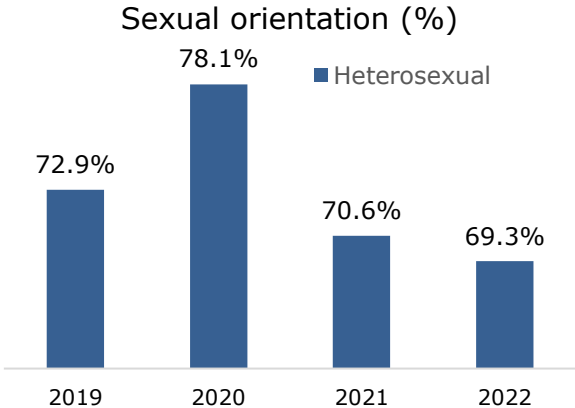


Table 6. Race



Staff declaration rates for race as at December 2021 and December 2022 were 76.69% and 75.72% respectively. We have not disclosed information on several categories because of low numbers.

Table 7. Sexual orientation



We have not disclosed several categories of sexual orientation data due to low disclosure rates.



The social work, social care and children and young people workforce

In August 2022 the SSSC published [Scottish Social Service Sector: Report on 2021 Workforce Data](#). This is the 14th workforce data report the SSSC has published and the 11th set of Official Statistics.

The report combines administrative data from the Care Inspectorate with data collected by the SSSC directly from local authorities to form a comprehensive picture of the paid workforce employed in the social service workforce in Scotland at the end of 2021.

From the **Scottish Social Service Sector: Report on 2021 Workforce Data** we can see that:

- the size of the workforce has dropped slightly to 208,360, a fall of 0.6% since 2020
- the social service workforce makes up approximately 7.9% of all Scottish employment
- the whole time equivalent (WTE) measure of the workforce is 159,150, a decrease of 0.1% since 2020
- the stability index of the workforce is 75.5% meaning just over three-quarters of the workforce remained in the same post since last year
- approximately 83% of the workforce is employed on permanent contracts
- the median figure for the typical weekly hours worked by staff is 33
- approximately 53% of the workforce work full time.

Information on protected characteristics of the social services workforce in Scotland

The Scottish Social Service Sector: Report on 2021 Workforce Data gives us an insight into the diversity of the social service workforce in Scotland. While the data collected does not cover all protected characteristics, we list some key figures below.

Age

The data from 2021 shows that the median age of workers in the social service workforce in Scotland was 43 for that period. This is higher than the median age for Scotland's working population, which is 41.

Some parts of the social service workforce have median ages significantly lower than the median national working age. For example, in care of children the median age is 35.

Sex

In 2021, approximately 83% of staff working in social service roles were female and 15% of staff were male. We don't know the sex of 2% of the social work, social care and children and young people workforce.

Race

In 2021, approximately 74% of the social work, social care and children and young people workforce in Scotland was white and 3% of the workforce were from ethnic minority backgrounds. We do not know the ethnicity of the remaining 23%.

Disability



In 2021, approximately 2% of workers in the social service workforce indicated that they have a disability, while 86% of staff indicated that they do not. We do not know the disability status of the remaining workers.

Key developments since 2021

Over the last two years we have worked on several major strategic developments. These areas of work aim to improve how we carry out our various roles now and in the future. We hope these areas of work will mean we can be even better at protecting people who use services, supporting the social work, social care and children and young people workforce and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

We discuss many of the work areas that are taking place in more detail later in the report. We have highlighted the following areas of work which will have a large impact on how we continue to make progress toward meeting our Equality Outcomes over the next two years.

SSSC Strategic Plan, 2023-2026

Our Strategic Plan for 2023-2026 will build on the work carried out under the previous strategic plan and sets our direction for the next three years.

Our Strategic Plan confirms our commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights in our varied roles which include being a public body, a regulator and an employer. Making sure equality and human rights considerations are central to our work allows us to make sure the needs of all people who use social work, social care and children and young people services, our registrants and our stakeholders are a focus of our actions.

Future Proofing Programme

In December 2021 we began our Future Proofing Programme. This has several aims such as streamlining regulation, reviewing qualification levels and making sure that the Codes meet the needs of the workforce now and into the future. Our Council approved our Future Proofing Plan in November 2021. Information about the programme is available on [our website](#).

The Future Proofing Programme will improve the way we carry out our various roles now and in the future. We recognise that the aims of the Future Proofing Programme have the potential to impact positively and negatively on our registrants and other stakeholders in the short term. To make sure we maximise the positive impacts of the Future Proofing Programme, and minimise the likelihood of potentially negative impacts, we are carrying out in depth equality impact assessments (EqIAs) for all the aims of the programme. The EqIAs we are developing for this programme are based on extensive consultation from a wide range of stakeholders including our registrants, employers, carers, users of services and workforce organisations.

We consulted on the proposed changes to the Register and qualifications in early 2022. This consultation focused on the impact the programme will have on promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and it received more than 6,500 responses. The feedback from this consultation has allowed us to identify areas of concern with our proposals and make changes to better meet the needs of the workforce. This has



allowed us to change our proposals for the timescales for achieving qualifications and also to develop a new register group to allow registrants more choice about which level of qualification was right for them.



SSSC Data and Intelligence Strategy 2022-2025

Our [Data and Intelligence Strategy 2022-2025](#) shows how we will develop and use data and intelligence both internally to improve the way we work. The strategy supports our aims to use our data and intelligence to enhance the safety and wellbeing of people who use services.

We developed this strategy to help our stakeholders understand their data and intelligence needs and allow us to take account of those needs in our future planning. This will make sure we have the right information and processes that create the right environment for effective, evidence-based decision making about the work we do. This work will also help national policy making, provide support to the workforce and support evidence-based decision making using the data and intelligence we hold as an organisation.

Using and sharing the knowledge, data and intelligence we hold to understand and improve how we support the social work, social care and children and young people workforce will help promote equality, diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

Stakeholder Engagement and Involvement Strategy

We want to make sure we take every opportunity to involve our stakeholders in our decision making. Our new Stakeholder Engagement and Involvement Strategy will provide a framework for us to do this. We launched our new Stakeholder Engagement and Involvement Strategy in early 2023.

Our Stakeholder Engagement and Involvement Strategy will help us deliver regulation that is informed by our stakeholders and which promotes a positive culture within the SSSC that focuses on involvement and co-design and that follows the principles of the [Scottish Approach to Service Design](#).

The priorities for the Stakeholder Engagement and Involvement Strategy are to improve and develop our approach to evidence-based decision making and to create an environment and culture of co-production, improvement and innovation across the organisation. We will do this by making sure our stakeholders are involved in our decision making processes and that we maintain a focus on how we gather and analyse information and intelligence.



Progress on Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

Outcome one

Promoting diversity in the social care workforce, including disabled people, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with care experience.

People working in the social work, social care and children and young people services in Scotland provide high quality care and support to thousands of people every day. The care and support these individuals provide is crucial in improving the life chances of people who use services and making sure that they receive the right care in the right way at the right time.

Outcome one supports our aim that social work, social care and children and young people services should reflect the communities they serve.

In our [2021-2025 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming and Outcomes report](#), we identified four priorities we felt would help us in our goal of improving the diversity of the social care workforce in Scotland. These are:

- 1a: develop an enhanced approach to collecting and using workforce equality data to inform our understanding of the workforce
- 1b: review and update the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers
- 1c: continue our work with the Care Inspectorate and other key stakeholders to promote equality within the wider social service workforce
- 1d: continue our relevant activities to support wider participation in the social service workforce.

In the following section we highlight the progress we have made so far toward each of these priorities and also our goals for the next two years.

1a. Develop an enhanced approach to collecting and using workforce equality data to inform our understanding of the workforce

Decisions that affect the social work, social care and children and young people services in Scotland must be based on good data. Our position as workforce regulator and an ONS national statistics provider means that it is our responsibility to make sure this data is collected and used in the best possible way. Our 2021-2025 report committed us to:

- introducing a new approach to collecting information on registrants in 2021-2022
- identifying ways of revising our approach to collecting data from the Care Inspectorate's annual returns and the Scottish Local Authority Social Work Services Survey (SLASWS)
- reporting on the steps that we have taken to use this data in our next mainstreaming report
- reviewing our approach to supporting people through Fitness to Practise by consulting key stakeholders as part of that process.



What we have achieved

In November 2021 we added a new equality section to our portal for registered workers, [MySSSC](#). This section includes updated equality questions based on the 2022 Census in Scotland. The diversity of our register and workforce is of interest to many stakeholders and we will publish a report on its composition.

We continue to work closely with umbrella bodies, membership groups, trade unions and others to raise awareness of why we are asking workers for their equality information. As of August 2022, approximately 40,000 registered workers have updated their information.

We want to develop a better understanding of the protected characteristics of students on all approved courses such as childhood practice, the degree in social work and postgraduate courses. Part of this work will involve revising how we collect information on the protected characteristics for all approved courses.

Our priorities for the next two years

We continue to develop our understanding of how people move across education and the workforce which will help us understand some of the barriers to working in social work, social care and children and young people.

1b: Review and update the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers

The [SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers](#) (the Codes) are key to making sure the people of Scotland receive the best care possible from a workforce that respects their rights and dignity. To make sure people continue to receive high quality care, we need to make sure the Codes are up to date and that they reflect the needs of society and the workforce. Our 2021-2025 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming and Outcomes report committed us to developing a plan for the Review of the Codes.

What we have achieved

The Codes set out the behaviours and values expected of social service workers and their employers, they were previously revised in 2016. We are now reviewing them to make sure that they are fit for the future and that they align with the Health and Social Care Standards, so they work better together.

The review of the Codes forms part of the SSSC's Future Proofing Programme. The review takes account of developments in the National Care Service and The Promise. Work on the review of the Codes includes consultation with key stakeholders including registrants, workforce partners and representative organisations. This consultation includes a focus on how equality is reflected in the Codes.

Our priorities for the next two years

We plan to launch the new Codes in early 2024.



1c: Continue our work with the Care Inspectorate and other key stakeholders to promote equality within the wider social service workforce

We committed to working with the Care Inspectorate to see if we can develop a shared approach to meeting some of the outcomes in our plan.

What we have achieved

We are working with the Care Inspectorate to update our guidance on safer recruitment. The revised guidance will reflect our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the entire recruitment process with the aim of improving career entry routes for people who experience barriers to employment.

Some of the highlights of our work with Care Inspectorate and other stakeholders are:

- our [Care Ambassadors](#) network which promotes the benefits of a career in the social work, social care and children and young people workforce
- our [inspiring care stories](#) which celebrate the workforce and its values
- our [Careers in Care website](#) which has case studies on working in the workforce
- in 2021 we launched [a care careers toolkit for employers, career advisors and employment support workers](#). The toolkit includes a podcast on PVG Scheme membership to help people with previous convictions explore a career in the workforce
- we have supported the new [Introduction to a Career in Social Care course](#) developed by Scotland's colleges
- we have added a new tool to [MySSSC](#) which helps colleges identify employers who know about the new course and can offer career opportunities to participants
- we hold monthly employability group meetings with employment support providers, employers and national providers.

Our priorities for the next two years

We know that we need to do more to raise awareness of careers in the workforce and to help people tackle some of the barriers to entry into those careers. In 2023 we will publish a resource for work coaches and employment support workers called '10 Steps to a Career in Care'. We will also publish four free learning resources to encourage and support people who are interested in a career in care but who have no prior experience or do not know where to start.

We worked in partnership with Public Health Scotland on one of these resources called **Staying Safe and Well**. The resource describes the role of social service workers in promoting public health, including recognising health inequalities. We are working with the Scottish Refugee Council to help employers understand more about recruiting refugees and how employers can provide further support.



1d: Continue our relevant activities to support wider participation in the social service workforce

The social work, social care and children and young people workforce in Scotland should be representative of the population it serves. As the regulator for the workforce, we are in a unique position to make sure that barriers to participation in the workforce are reduced. The key objectives we identified in our 2021-2025 report for meeting this priority were:

- providing a disability allowance for disabled students on the full time MSc Social Work course
- contributing to key priorities such as the Fair Work Convention
- continuing to publish an extensive range of learning resources on our Learning Zone website
- promoting a range of diverse and positive examples of people working in the workforce
- promoting the use of Equality Impact Assessments within the SSSC.
- implementing the actions in our Investors in People and Investors in Young People plans.

We will also implement the actions in our latest plans for supporting care experienced people and promoting children's rights. We will also continue to explore how we can make our resources more accessible. We will support our staff by providing further guidance and training on how to do this.

What we have achieved

[The SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers](#) say that all registered workers must undertake relevant learning to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills and contribute to the learning and development of others. We have special arrangements in place for newly qualified social workers (NQSWs) who must complete 24 days of training within their first 12 months of registration. Part time workers are given 18 months to complete this training. We are looking at ways we can support staff to give evidence of their continued professional learning. This includes looking at whether we can accept video submissions as evidence of training in British Sign Language (BSL).

We continue to develop learning resources for the workforce. For example, during the pandemic we developed a guide to person centre care, guidance for SVQ assessment centres. We consult with and involve our registrants and other interested parties in the development of many of our resources to make sure our resources meet real needs in the workforce. Further information is available from the [SSSC Learning Zone](#).

We regularly adapt our learning resources to meet the needs of specific parts of the workforce. For example, in September 2022 we launched our [23 things Leadership for the early learning and childcare workforce](#). This is available on our Step into Leadership resource and on the Learning Zone.

The Learning Zone has many resources such as the [Lady in Room 4](#) videos which provide thought provoking examples setting out what it's like to receive care. Each video includes views from the people providing care and an opportunity for viewers to reflect on the key messages.



We want to make it easier for asylum seekers and other displaced people to gain employment in the social work, social care and children and young people workforces in Scotland. This is part of a larger national package of support for Ukrainian refugees and other displaced individuals to gain employment and practice their profession within Scotland. We have in place a policy for people in this position to waive the fee for having a qualification assessed.

Our priorities for the next two years

We are developing new approaches gathering equalities information on the registered workforce to make sure that the information we hold provides an accurate understanding of the workforce. We will report on this data. This will allow the SSSC, Scottish Government and other national stakeholders to identify trends and potential issues in the social work, social care and children and young people workforce in Scotland.

Outcome two

Increasingly demonstrate how our work is shaped by our key stakeholders including people who are care experienced

Priorities for 2021-2025: In 2021 we identified three priorities for Outcome two, these are:

- 2a. support our staff to engage with and involve people who use services in the development of our approach and resources
- 2b. identify and establish a new forum for engaging with people who use services
- 2c. continue to promote and build upon our approach to raising awareness and the role of the Equality Impact Assessments.

2a. Support our staff to engage with and involve people who use services in the development of our approach and resources

In our last report we identified that developing guidance for user involvement in projects was a key way we could progress with this priority.

What we have achieved

We are working closely with a range of people and organisations in the delivery of our work.

Several stakeholders are supporting the development of our [future proofing programme](#) such as the Promise, trade unions and the Health and Social Care Alliance. More than [300 people who use or support people to use services contributed to our online survey on the proposals](#).

We have long-standing regulatory forums that involve people who use services and carers in the development of many of our resources and projects, including our work on [citizen leadership](#). For example, the Scottish Dementia Working Group regularly contributes to our activities. At a recent forum, the members of the group shared their experiences of diagnosis and receiving care at home.



Our priorities for the next two years

We are looking at how we can improve our fitness to practise approach for everyone, including witnesses. We provide support for everyone involved in the process and can make reasonable adjustments where required. As of August 2022, members of the public can now make a referral using an [online form on our website](#).

We are looking at how we can redesign the fitness to practise resources available on our website. This work will help people accessing information about our fitness to practise process to get the information they need in the most appropriate way for them. This work will streamline the way information is presented, allowing individuals to more easily navigate the site.

2b. Identify and establish a new forum for engaging with people who use services and carers.

In our last report we said we would consult with key stakeholders and develop options to establish a new forum for engaging with people who use services and carers by reflecting on experiences and good practice from others and consider some of the logistics such as purpose, membership and resources.

What we have achieved

We have established a Stakeholder Advisory Group to support our Future Proofing Programme. The group includes representatives from Scottish Government, coordinating bodies and trade unions and has informed and influenced our proposals.

It is critical that we involve and engage with experts in our work. We are exploring how we can involve more people in our work, particularly people with lived experience and registrants. We are looking at how we can tackle some of the key barriers to participation in this group such as cost. Our aim is to offer financial support to members where it is possible and helpful to do so.

We continue to use a range of methods and groups to ensure the views of people who use services and carers are considered throughout our work, including consultations with our registrants and other stakeholders.

Our priorities for the next two years

Our priority for the next two years is to formalise a new approach to involving registrants, people with lived experience and carers. Our intention is that these stakeholders will take an increasing role in influencing and informing areas of our work. We will also look at how we can do more to raise awareness of the way we currently work with people.

We are also looking at what other steps we can take to make sure key partners such as umbrella bodies and trade unions are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of our work. Many of these organisations already participate in several ways in our work in several ways such as throughout our regulatory stakeholder engagement forum.



2c. Continue to promote and build upon our approach to raising awareness and the role of the Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) are essential tools in making sure our work meets the three needs of the public sector equality duty (PSED). We want to make sure our staff have the tools necessary to produce high quality EqIAs that make real changes to the way we do things. To work toward this priority we said we would:

- consult staff on our process in early 2021-22 with a view to making further improvements to our assessment approach
- continue to encourage staff to share draft EqIAs with our equality group
- develop a process to enable the group to monitor progress on our actions.

What we have achieved

Following feedback from our staff we introduced a revised EqIA process in early 2022. The new process supports project leads to consider equality at the earliest possible stage of their project, that they have support from colleagues in developing EqIAs and that there are sufficient opportunities for the EqIA process to inform the development of projects. Our new EqIA process consists of three stages.

1. Initial assessment by project lead.
2. Equality Impact Discussion (EID).
3. Equality Impact Assessment.

To allow us to better monitor how staff are engaging with our EqIA process, we have developed a new approach to monitoring EqIAs across the SSSC.

Our priorities for the next two years

In 2023 we will develop a suite of new resources to help our staff engage more fully with our EqIA process. This will include updated guidance, video resources and a resources library. These resources will help staff to create more informed EqIAs and to make sure that equality, diversity and inclusion is considered from the outset of our work. We also continuing to share key evidence sources which can inform our activities.



Outcome three

People increasingly view us as an employer of choice which promotes equality, diversity and inclusion in our recruitment processes and our existing staff.

Priorities for 2021-2025: In 2021 we identified four priorities for outcome three. These are:

- 3a: improve our approach to recruiting SSSC from minority ethnic backgrounds
- 3b: improve our approach to recruiting SSSC staff from a range of backgrounds
- 3c: establish new ways of ensuring our approaches reflect wider perspectives
- 3d. maintain our focus on nurturing and developing our staff.

3a. Improve our approach to recruiting SSSC staff from minority ethnic backgrounds

Our 2021-2025 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming and Outcome report committed us to conducting a review of our approach to recruitment against the [Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit](#) and developing an action plan examining how we can improve the diversity of our workforce.

What we have achieved

In 2022 we used the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit to inform a review of our approach to recruitment. Following the review we reinforced our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in our recruitment materials. Our staff can also access a new unconscious bias training module. The module is available to all SSSC through our new staff learning resource called the SSSC learning hub. The SSSC hub has a range of learning content for staff including short courses and webinars. We have also achieved employer status on the [Disability Confident Scheme](#).

Our priorities for the next two years

Over the next two years we will look at how we can make our approach to recruitment more inclusive and welcoming. This will include making sure that interviewers only receive the information they need and sharing questions with applicants in advance, where it is appropriate to do so.

Our unconscious bias course initially focusing on recruitment. Over the next two years we will explore how we can consider the implications of unconscious bias more broadly across the SSSC.



3b: Improve our approach to recruiting SSSC staff from a range of backgrounds

We want to make sure that people from all backgrounds can succeed in a career with us. To work toward making this a reality, our 2021-2025 report identified the following priority actions:

- working towards our Investors in People Gold award and working with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group to identify further priorities and develop an action plan to achieve these
- identifying additional ways of understanding our current workforce profile by publishing our ethnicity gap and disability gap as well as looking at ways of learning lessons from other approaches such as the Scottish Government's Recruitment and Retention Plan for Disabled People.

What we have achieved

In 2022 we achieved the gold award for Investors in People. This award demonstrates our commitment to our staff and the dedication of everyone who works here and the values that drive us to ensure social work, social care and children and young people services in Scotland are provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

The newly introduced SSSC learning hub has courses covering the Equality Act and unconscious bias as well as a course developed specifically for the SSSC which covers topics such as fairness, discrimination, equality and understanding intent in conversations.

We expect our staff to have a good understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and to think about it what it means for their role. Several areas of the SSSC carry out additional training tailored to their needs of. For example, our fitness to practise staff regularly attend training courses on equality, professional boundaries, relationship-based practice, child protection and awareness of trauma.

We have also modernised how we gather equality data on our staff. We have introduced new approaches for capturing this information at key points such as induction. This process includes an updated approach to understanding applicants and our current staff. Further information on the composition of our workforce is included in our separate data annex.

Our priorities for the next two years

In 2022 we completed our Disability Confident self-assessment. Over the coming year we'll look at how we can do more to support disabled people to join and develop their career at the SSSC.



We have committed to the SSSC becoming a trauma informed organisation. To support this we are:

- identifying 'trauma champions' across the organisation
- supporting staff to become trauma informed by using the [National Training Trauma Programme \(NTTP\) resources – this](#) is a commitment in our People Strategy
- developing and delivering bespoke trauma training to all staff, identifying the right level of training depending on role
- carrying out a trauma lens assessment of the organisation
- reviewing and updating the SSSC Codes of Practice as part of the Future Proofing Programme
- working with partners and stakeholders to develop an understanding of what is meant by a trauma informed relationship-based workforce, supporting the workforce to develop their own trauma resources and supporting the workforce to use the NTTP resources to ensure staff wellbeing.

We will analyse the data gathered through our SSSC panel member selection to determine how successful the changes in our approach have been and how we can apply these lessons to our wider recruitment activities.

SSSC panel members

We are also improving our selection process for SSSC panel members. SSSC panel members are not employees of the SSSC but they play a key role in fitness to practise decisions, so it is important to us that they are as diverse as the workforce we regulate and about who they make decisions. In 2022 we began the selection process for several new members to our panels. Before the selection process for this we consulted key stakeholders including the Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations (CEMVO) to explore how we could make our process as inclusive as possible. Following this consultation, we amended our advertisements and specifically noted protected characteristics, encouraging applications from those from a BAME background as well as those with disabilities. Working with CEMVO, we held two information evenings to engage with potential applicants and share information on the selection process and to answer questions. The diversity information of the individuals who applied to become panel members will be reported to our Fitness to Practise Committee.

3c. Establish new ways of ensuring our approaches reflect wider perspectives

To establish new ways of ensuring our work reflects wider perspectives, we said we would develop a paper for our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group which set out a potential strategy for how we would do this.

What we have achieved

At meetings of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group we discussed how the SSSC could promote staff engagement groups across a range of protected characteristics. Ultimately, we want the development of these groups to be staff led and we are continuing to explore ways we can encourage this.

Our recently established Involvement and Engagement Coordinator role is supporting the SSSC to focus on ways we can do more to involve diverse voices in our work.



Our priorities for the next two years

We will continue our work on making sure that we consider the voices of our staff, registrants, stakeholders and the wider public in our actions.

3d. Maintain our focus on nurturing and developing our staff.

We have always focused on making sure our staff feel valued and that they have opportunities to develop their careers with us. Part of this focus is making sure we keep looking at how we can do better. In our last report we identified the following ways we could do this:

- continue to develop our external recruitment portal and add further stories and resources around our recruitment and working at the SSSC
- introduce our new induction programme and agile working approach
- continue to develop further training and development initiatives for staff
- create an action plan to further embed our values
- explore how we support and learn from staff moving on from the SSSC, including the development of an exit questionnaire
- continue to provide opportunities for young people such as apprenticeships and traineeships.

What we have achieved

In the last two years we have introduced a new learning management system for staff. Through this we have introduced a number of learning resources to make sure that new and existing SSSC staff can more easily access the training and resources they need to carry out their roles effectively in a way that reflects the SSSC's core values: work together, accept responsibility and accountability and recognition and respect for others. These resources include:

- a bespoke series of videos, 'Three Mottos for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion'
- diversity and equality training
- unconscious bias training
- handling workplace stress
- health, safety and wellbeing
- agile working
- working with others.

Our priorities for the next two years

We have recently conducted our annual staff survey. In early 2023 we will look at key areas of concern of our staff and look at ways we can address any issues that have come out of this survey. We will continue our work to explore how we can support staff moving on from the SSSC.



Annex: SSSC gender pay gap

We publish both a mean and a median gender pay gap figure - the median is not skewed by very low or very high rates of pay. However, since gender pay gap issues are most pronounced in the lowest paid or highest paid employees the median may fail to pick up gendered differences as effectively as the mean figure. Publishing both figures is useful as it gives an added perspective.

We publish the overall pay gap figure for the entire workforce - this includes full and part-time earnings and temporary employees as well as those on fixed term contracts. This gives the most complete picture across the whole workforce of any gender pay inequalities. We also provide data on part-time and full-time workers.

Gender pay gap, 2021 and 2022

	Mean female hourly	Mean male hourly	Mean gender pay gap
2021	£18.50	£19.19	3.59%
2022	£18.39	£18.84	2.37%

	Median female hourly	Median male hourly	Median gender pay gap
2021	£18.81	£19.19	1.98%
2022	£18.43	£19.19	3.96%

Organisational Full time and part time pay gap

	Full time male		Part time female		Pay Gap	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
2021	£35,995.92	£36,801.00	£30,743.00	£25,320.00	14.59%	31.20%
2022	£35,175.51	£35,727.00	£22,786.69	£20,394.90	35.22%	42.91%

2021: Pay quartiles by gender

This table shows our workforce divided into four equal-sized groups based on hourly pay rate. Band A includes the lowest-paid 25% of employees (the lower quartile) and band D covers the highest-paid 25% (the upper quartile).

All staff

Band A

Female		Male		Gap
%	73.91%	%	26.09%	
Median	11.94	Median	11.66	-2.42%
Mean	11.97	Mean	11.74	-1.91%



Band B

Female		Male		Gap
%	76.32%	%	23.68%	
Median	14.11	Median	15.15	6.84%
Mean	15.20	Mean	16.05	5.30%

Band C

Female		Male		Gap
%	79.01%	%	20.99%	
Median	21.19	Median	21.19	0.00%
Mean	21.15	Mean	20.95	-0.96%

Band D

Female		Male		Gap
%	66.67%	%	33.33%	
Median	26.03	Median	26.03	0.00%
Mean	27.46	Mean	26.87	-2.20%

Part-time staff

Band A

Female		Male		Gap
%	73.91%	%	26.09%	
Median	11.94	Median	11.29	-5.72%
Mean	11.17	Mean	11.61	3.78%

Band B

Female		Male		Gap
%	95.45%	%	4.55%	
Median	14.11	Median	13.57	-4.01%
Mean	14.51	Mean	13.57	-6.90%

Band C

Female		Male		Gap
%	93.33%	%	6.67%	
Median	21.40	Median	19.19	-11.52%
Mean	21.34	Mean	19.19	-11.20%

Band D

Female		Male		Gap
%	83.33%	%	16.67%	
Median	26.03	Median	23.78	-9.47%
Mean	26.38	Mean	23.78	-10.96%



2022: Pay quartiles by gender

This table shows our workforce divided into four equal-sized groups based on hourly pay rate. Band A includes the lowest-paid 25% of employees (the lower quartile) and band D covers the highest-paid 25% (the upper quartile).

Band A

Female		Male		Gap
%	70.11%	%	29.89%	
Median	11.94	Median	11.66	-2.42%
Mean	11.13	Mean	11.73	5.08%

Band B

Female		Male		Gap
%	82.76%	%	17.24%	
Median	14.16	Median	14.73	3.87%
Mean	14.95	Mean	15.84	5.59%

Band C

Female		Male		Gap
%	77.27%	%	22.73%	
Median	21.19	Median	20.37	-4.05%
Mean	21.21	Mean	20.55	-3.18%

Band D

Female		Male		Gap
%	67.50%	%	32.50%	
Median	26.03	Median	26.03	0.00%
Mean	27.64	Mean	26.37	-4.82%

Part-time staff

Band A

Female		Male		Gap
%	77.42%	%	22.58%	
Median	11.94	Median	11.38	-4.90%
Mean	12.00	Mean	11.52	-4.21%

Band B

Female		Male		Gap
%	84.21%	%	15.79%	
Median	13.99	Median	18.43	24.08%
Mean	14.75	Mean	17.12	13.81%



Band C

Female		Male		Gap
%	100.00%	%	0.00%	
Median	21.19	Median	0.00	0.00%
Mean	21.04	Mean	0.00	0.00%

Band D

Female		Male		Gap
%	78.57%	%	21.43%	
Median	26.03	Median	26.03	0.00%
Mean	25.89	Mean	26.30	1.56%

Pay Gap – Coverage

Our gender pay gap data includes the pay of all employees employed as of 31 December of 2021 and 2022 including those on the most senior grades, those on fixed-term contracts and those who are part-time or full-time. The data has been separated into the tables above and shows our workforce divided into four equal-sized groups based on hourly pay rate. Band A includes the lowest-paid 25% of employees (the lower quartile) and band D covers the highest-paid 25% (the upper quartile).

The Scottish Government Public Sector Pay Policy acts as a benchmark for all major public sector workforce groups across Scotland including the SSSC. As an NDPB, we must operate with the pay policy provisions set to meet our commitment to equal pay. Our pay ranges and reward policies are available to staff on the intranet. Pay and grading benchmark guidance is used when creating new posts, assessing an existing post or redesigning a post to ensure equal pay for work of equal value. This guidance is underpinned by analytical job evaluation, which is recognised as a sound basis on which to determine work of equal value. To avoid bias, evaluation focuses on the role rather than the individual, using established descriptions for each grade, and trained evaluators review cases.

Each pay range has a number of defined pay steps. Employees will enter a pay range at the relevant minimum. Employees will progress towards their maximum by one pay step on an annual basis. Pay reviews are negotiated with the recognised trade unions and cover all aspects of remuneration and terms and conditions.

Grading profile

- Staff are spread across an 11 grade pay structure.
- Roughly half our roles were professional/managerial with grades of D7 or above with the rest being more administrative in nature (up to E8).

Ethnicity pay gap

The Scottish Government’s review of the Public Sector Equality Duty proposes that public bodies should be required to report on their ethnicity and disability pay gap. We are reviewing the implications of this proposal and could provide this information in future.



Equal pay statement

We are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in our varied roles which include being a public body, regulator and an employer. We recognise and value the benefits that a diverse workforce brings to our work. We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity irrespective of protected characteristics. This includes other factors such as whether someone is a carer or their work pattern.

A key part of this commitment is the principle that staff should receive equal pay at all levels. At the heart of that is our commitment to have an approach to pay which is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from any bias relating to any of the protected characteristics. We are committed to equal pay for men and women. This principle extends to people in minority racial groups and people with a disability.

As part of our ongoing commitment to put equal pay into practice we will:

- examine and keep under review existing and future pay practices including continuing to use an objective job evaluation system as detailed above
- carry out regular monitoring of the impact of the organisation's pay practices
- provide guidance for managers directly involved in decisions relating to remuneration
- continue to work in partnership with Unison on all aspects of remuneration and terms and conditions.





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