



Response to Skills Development Scotland on contribution rates for Modern Apprenticeships (April 2015)

Introduction

This response is from the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The SSSC is a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) and was established by the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. We are responsible for registering people who work in social services, regulating their education and training and the collation and publication of data on the size and nature of the sector's workforce. We are also the Scottish partner in Skills for Care and Development, the Sector Skills Councils for the care sector in the UK.

Our work increases the protection of people who use services by ensuring that the workforce is properly trained, appropriately qualified and effectively regulated. We aim to protect people who use services, raise standards of practice, strengthen and support the professionalism of the workforce and improve the outcomes and experience of people who use social services. The social service workforce provides care and support for some of the most vulnerable people in Scottish society. These workers often deal with complex care needs and make a real difference to individuals' lives. The social service workforce employs more than 189,000 people in Scotland (Scottish Social Services Council, 2014).

Our vision is that our work means the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce. Our purpose is to raise standards and protect the public through regulation, innovation and continuous improvement in workforce planning and development for the social service workforce.

Contribution rates for Modern Apprenticeships

The SSSC welcomes the opportunity to respond to this paper. The SSSC is responsible for the Modern Apprenticeship (MAs) frameworks outlined in Appendix A. Our investment in the MA frameworks and the support of employers is reflected in the take up rates. For example, there have been over 2,300 MA registrations in this sector during the past year.

For some of our job functions the frameworks clearly identify career paths and progression within the social service sector. We welcome the focus on developing MA access processes and progress pathways (Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, 2014). We have aimed to make sure that learning is firmly established as an essential component of work and clearly defined as a means to progression.

The SSSC welcomes the extension of funding for the over 25 age range. This decision takes into account the age and complexity of role for many workers in the social service sector. However, we believe that more needs to be done to make sure that the social service workforce develops the right skills at the right time. We return to this area throughout our response.

Our response to this proposal is based on our experience of developing MA frameworks and other qualifications for the social service sector. Where possible we use the headings in the paper as the basis for this response. We also comment on a number of areas which do not naturally fit under these headings.

Rationale for change

We accept in principle the rationale for these changes. However, we would note the following points:

- Appendix A identifies that our frameworks are at consistently higher SCQF levels than those in other sectors. For example, SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare is at SCQF Level 6 and SVQ 3 Social Services and Healthcare and Social Services (Children and Young People) is at SCQF Level 7. In other sectors similar SVQ levels are at lower SCQF levels - SVQ 2 at SCQF level 5 and SVQ 7 at SCQF level 6.
- Our MA frameworks are primarily designed to support the learning of staff in promoted positions, such as supervisor and manager. This is not generally achievable before the age of 25. Maintaining a focus on financially supporting the under 25s means that many employers cannot access funding support for the higher level MAs.
- The success of the integration of health and social care agenda is largely dependent on the ability of employers to support people in the community for longer. Many workers will require new skills, knowledge and competencies to achieve this objective.
- We also need to continue the establishment of a supply chain of new workers in care settings. We actively encourage school leavers and younger people to join the social service workforce. For example, we are developing a Foundation Apprenticeship in Care in partnership with Skills Development Scotland.
- We also need to encourage 'career changers' to work in care. We need to make sure that there is sufficient level of financial support to support their training. There are some roles in this sector where it may not be appropriate or possible to employ younger workers. For example, it can be difficult or inappropriate for young people to fill some roles in residential childcare

settings where there can be a need for a clear differentiation in age between a looked after young person and a worker.

- We welcome the emphasis on supporting young people but we would also reiterate the points about the benefit of supporting older workers.

In summary, the social service workforce should be a high priority area for existing and potential expenditure on MAs to make sure that we a) avoid the development of a skills gap in the sector b) are able to attract new people into the workforce.

We note that the information in the paper is based on SVQ level 3 at SCQF level 5 upwards. The SSSC has consistently developed Apprentice frameworks at a of higher SCQF level.¹ These levels reflect the complexity of skills and knowledge necessary to carry out these key roles within the social service sector.

Key inputs from Delivery Partners

We reiterate our earlier point that the changes to the MA frameworks continue to recognise, as the paper does, that not all MAs can or should be completed within a standardised timescale. We have a concern that any potential incentive to shorten the completion time may reflect negatively on the learning of those undertaking MAs, and we would want to avoid this if at all possible.

Our competency based frameworks do not require formalised off the job learning. However, learning providers have established a range of resources to support candidates to achieve the considerable knowledge requirements they must need to satisfy the requirements of the framework. Additionally the SSSC have developed mobile learning resources to enhance the embedding of learning within the workplace. For example, we've developed a series of apps which help provide underpinning knowledge and learning to support the SVQ core units.²

The SCQF levels reflect the complexity of knowledge whether it be on the job or off the job learning. As already stated the social service sector has a consistently higher SCQF level attached to the frameworks than within other sectors. Therefore we request that Skill Development Scotland make sure that contribution rates are firmly associated with the SCQF level as this will ensure parity of the complexity of knowledge required.

Principles and Methodology

The SSSC agrees with the three principles in the proposal. We believe that the methodology may need to be amended to reflect these principles. We reiterate some of our earlier points about the supply of workers and the need to ensure that funding is available for workers who are aged 20-24 or 25 plus.

¹ See appendix A.

² The apps are available from our Workforce Solutions website, <http://workforcesolutions.sssc.uk.com/index.html>

The paper and the 'Education workforce for all!' report both reinforce the need for MAs to be closely aligned to the skills required to support economic growth (Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, 2014). The social service sector has a critical role to play in this agenda. For example, the Scottish Government's Economic strategy highlights the link between investment in childcare and inclusive growth in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2011; Scottish Government, 2015). The economic contribution of public services was a key theme throughout the work of the Christie Commission (Commission on the future delivery of public services, 2011). The social service sector also plays a vital role in enabling people to work in other industries. For example, the sector allows parents to return to work and carers to continue their career.

The economic contribution and value of social services is reiterated in the new Vision and Strategy for the sector:

"The life changing and challenging work undertaken by those in the sector cannot be underestimated. This essential work is underpinned by the sector's core values – focused on promoting enablement and participation, understanding each individual in the context of family and community and identifying and building on the strengths of individuals and communities."

(Scottish Government, 2015)

The Strategy also highlights the "growing professionalism" of the wider social service workforce (Scottish Government, 2015). Modern Apprenticeships play a vital role in supporting this sector to develop and maintain these vital services.

We note that longer duration frameworks which require additional taught learning will attract higher contribution levels. Our one concern about this approach is that it does not fully consider the importance of taught learning which is delivered by service providers themselves. The knowledge requirement for our frameworks is substantial and those frameworks at SCQF levels are equivalent to other studies at this level. The ability to achieve these frameworks requires a complex assessment process that is reflected in the SCQF levels and the volume of study required for each framework. The application of knowledge needs to be demonstrated by apprentices who are required to reflect on and apply the knowledge gained and demonstrate this in practice.

Work based learning is fundamental to Scottish Government policy and should be reflected by an appropriate level of Apprenticeship contributions. Work based learning also has the potential to support the delivery of MAs in rural and remote locations. Technology also has a vital role to play in the delivery of services in these areas.

The paper highlights the need to make sure that funding levels fit with the policy priorities. The success of policy objectives such as the integration of health and social care is dependent on the development of a workforce which can support people to stay at home for longer. There is a need to continue to upskill the workforce to make sure that it can deliver these vital services.

Impact on Gender

The Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce highlighted the gender imbalance in some areas:

"There have been some improvements in gender balance over the years in a number of areas such as the legal and accountancy professions, but for example we still have only 3% females into engineering Modern Apprenticeships and only 3% males into Modern Apprenticeships in children's care."

(Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, 2014)

We welcome the call for an ongoing action plan to address gender disparities within MAs (Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, 2014).

We need to continue the drive towards a diverse workforce which better reflects the Scottish population. The vast majority of the early years workforce is female. There is a need for more positive male role models within this sector. There have been a number of initiatives which have sought to address this balance such 'All About Men'³ and Kibble's 'Men Can Care' projects (Smith et al, 2008). We have noted that there is a need to ensure that funding is available to allow older workers and 'career changers' to access training in this sector. We need to continue recruiting the people with the right skills and competencies to work in early years and the wider social service sector.

In our evidence to the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce we noted the following:

"In recent years the Health and Social Care (HSC) MA Framework has gone from a situation where it had the highest number of new registrations among individuals aged 25 years and over to a position where there is no funding available for older workers to undertake this Framework"

(Scottish Social Services Council, 2013)

In conclusion we welcome the proposals to maintain funding for the over 25 group. We need to ensure that the overall impact of the proposed challenges⁴ do not lead to a detrimental impact on the wider social service sector. These points may reinforce the need to revisit the criteria used to determine MA funding.

Once contribution rates are determined the SSSC would welcome a communication strategy to provide all parties involved in developing Apprenticeship frameworks the opportunity to plan accordingly.

Scottish Social Services Council
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³SSSC News, 7 July 2014: Redressing the balance in childcare:
<http://ssscnews.uk.com/2014/07/redressing-balance-childcare/>

⁴Please see appendix B

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Appendix A

Frameworks	SCQF Credits	Possible Target Audience
Social Services and Healthcare (SSH)(SVQ 2) SCQF Level 6 (Modern Apprenticeship)	Minimum 51and Maximum 58	Support Workers in Care Home Services for Adults (CHSA), Housing Support Services (HSS) Care at Home (CAH)
Social Services and Healthcare (SSH)(SVQ 3) SCQF Level 7 (Modern Apprenticeship)	Minimum 69and Maximum 94	Practitioner in CHSA Supervisors in CHSA HSS CAH (additional qualifications required for registration of supervisors)
Social Services and Healthcare (SSH)(SVQ 4) (SCQF Level 9) (Technical Apprenticeship)	Minimum 78 and Maximum 89	Manager in CHSA,HSS, CAH & Managers of Day Care Services for Adults (DCSA) (additional qualifications required for registration of managers)
Social Services Children and Young People (SS(CYP))(SVQ 3) SCQF Level 7 (Modern Apprenticeship)	Minimum 68 and Maximum 93	Workers in Residential Childcare School or House staff in Independent boarding schools Worker in School Hostel or residential special schools (additional qualifications required for registration for the above) Practitioners in Day Care of Children Services (DCCS)
Social Services Children and Young People(SS(CYP)) (SVQ 4) (SCQF Level 9) (Technical	Minimum 71 and Maximum 101	Supervisor in RCC and Worker in a school hostel or a residential special school with supervisory

Apprenticeship)		responsibilities Manager of RCC School hostel or residential special school Independent boarding school (additional qualifications required for registration of managers)
Professional Development Award Childhood Practice (SCQF Level 9) (Technical Apprenticeship)	120	Manager/Lead Practitioner in DCCS
Care Services Leadership and Management (SVQ 4) (SCQF Level 10) (Professional Apprenticeship)	Minimum 84 credits and maximum 92	Managers in CHSA HSS CAH RCC DCSA

Appendix B

Framework	Age range	Percentage change in funding	2015/16	2019/20
Social Services Children and Young People (CYP) (SVQ 3 SCQF Level 7)	16-19 years	25% reduction	£6000	£4,500
Social Services and Healthcare (SSH) (SVQ 3 SCQF Level 7)	16-19 years	46% reduction	£6000	£3200
Social Services Children and Young People	20-24 years	13% reduction	£2000	£1750

(CYP) (SVQ 3 SCQF Level 7)				
Social Services and Healthcare (SSH) (SVQ 3 SCQF Level 7)	20-24 years	40% reduction	£2000	£1200
Social Services CYP and SSH SVQ 3 (SCQF Level 7)	Over 25	0% change	£700	£700
Social Services CYP & SSH SVQ 4 (SCQF Level 9).	Over 25	0% change	£1500	£1500
Children and Young People and Social Services and Healthcare Level 4 (SCQF Level 9)	16-19 years	0% change	£3800	£3800
Children and Young People and Social Services and Healthcare Level 4 (SCQF Level 9)	20-24 years	0% change	£1750	£1750
Social Services and Healthcare SVQ 2 (SCQF level 6)	16-19 years	15% reduction	2500	2200
Social Services and Healthcare (SCQF level 6)	20-24 years	15% reduction	1000	850