

**Date issued: 18 March 2025**

Members of the Scottish Social Services Council are advised that a meeting of the Council is to take place at **2pm on Tuesday 25 March 2025 by Teams meeting.**

**Peter Murray**  
**Interim Convener**

**AGENDA**  
**PUBLIC SESSION**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Report no</b>
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence	
2.	Declarations of interest	
3.	Budget 2025/26	<b>10/2025</b>
4.	Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report and Data Annex 2025	<b>11/2025</b>
5.	Date of next meeting – the next scheduled meeting of the Council will be held at 10 am on Thursday 22 May 2025.	

<b>Title of Report</b>	Budget 2025/26
<b>Public</b>	Public
<b>Summary/purpose of report</b>	To outline the budget for 2025/26 to Council
<b>Recommendations</b>	The Council is asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. approve the budget and</li> <li>2. approve changes to the reserve tolerance levels</li> </ol>
<b>Author</b>	Laura Shepherd Director, Strategy and Performance
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Laura Shepherd, Director, Strategy and Performance
<b>Link to Strategic Plan</b>	The information in this report links to: <p>Outcome 1: <b>Trusted</b> People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: <b>Skilled</b> Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: <b>Confident</b> Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: <b>Valued</b> The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
<b>Link to Risk Register</b>	Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers. <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and</p>

	<p>employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p> <p>Risk 6: The SSSC fails to secure sufficient budget resources to fulfil the financial plans required to deliver the strategic plan.</p>
<b>Impact Assessment</b>	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
<b>Documents attached</b>	<p>Appendix 1 Budget</p> <p>Appendix 2 Movement</p> <p>Appendix 3 Staffing</p> <p>Appendix 4 Forecast</p> <p>Appendix 5 Reduction scenarios</p>
<b>Background papers</b>	None

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The SSSC's new financial year starts on 1 April 2025 and we are entering the final year of our current Strategic Plan. Following the successful conclusion of the Future Proofing Programme we have focused our budget planning on investment in:
  - Engaging and involving people in our work, being recommendations from both the Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation and the Promise.
  - Our digital security, implementing and improving our key platforms and increasing our AI capability.
  - Our work with key stakeholders, including Scottish Government to improve the education, training and development of the workforce.
2. The public sector funding environment is extremely challenging and whilst 80% of our operational spend remains on staff costs, we have set the draft budget on the basis of reducing overall headcount, reshaping our workforce to focus on strategic priorities, and maintaining digital investment.
3. This paper sets out the background to the budget, the approach taken by Officers in setting the budget, key points to highlight and a specific issue relating to our reserves.

## **BACKGROUND**

4. Council must approve the annual budget each year, as required by our Code of Corporate Governance. Council also approves increases to the permanent staffing establishment. Our Executive Framework sets out that the Scottish Government Sponsor (Sponsor) must confirm our funding before the new financial year starts.
5. Due to the challenging public sector financial position, we have not received an uplift in our grant in aid (GIA) allocation in the Spring Budget Revision (SBR) announced on 20 December 2024. Our Sponsor has verbally advised that the funding deficit will be managed as a resource pressure in 2025/26 and our Sponsor will work with Scottish Ministers, aiming to permanently increase GIA in future years.
6. We are currently projecting to end the year with an estimated general available reserve of £1.7m.
7. Our overall budget includes money that we use to support the sector. Postgraduate Bursaries (PG), Practice Learning fees (PL), Workforce Development Grant (WDG) and Voluntary Sector Development Fund (VSDF) budgets do not affect the GIA allocation.

8. Sponsor confirms GIA by letter before the end of the financial year. It is expected that this will be with us before 31 March 2025 and we will advise Members when this is received.

## **APPROACH**

9. We have prepared the budget for 2025/26 that includes business as usual and developments that Executive Management Team (EMT) considers necessary to effectively deliver our statutory functions and the Strategic Plan 2023-2026.
10. We reviewed each budget item to take account of actual costs from previous years and the latest budget monitoring information. We applied inflationary uplifts where we know of increases.
11. Table 1 in Appendix 1 shows the sources of our operating and disbursement income of £24.212m and expenditure of £28.414m resulting in a funding deficit (shortfall) of approx. £4.202m. Appendix 2 details the movements of the key areas between 2024/25 and 2025/26.
12. Our Sponsor has verbally confirmed that they have approved the budget pressure of £4.202m.
13. The budget excludes specific grant funding such as the WDG and the VSDF as Scottish Government has yet to agree this. We have included indicative budgets for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29 in Appendix 4 for information. These are subject to change and only include an estimate for any pay awards of 3%. Appendix 5 provides an overview of the scenarios created by a reduction in GIA if that were to happen in future years.

## **OVERVIEW OF BUDGET KEY POINTS**

### **Changes to Fees**

14. Council approved an option to increase fees on the 27 February 2025. The change to fee levels has been reflected in this final budget for 2025/26.
15. This will generate extra income and there is a change to the figures which were presented to Council in February 2025. The spending pressure reduces to £4.202m.

### **Staffing changes**

16. The most significant shift in staffing costs is driven by staff going up the increments within the pay scale, the national insurance (NI) increase to 15% and reduction in threshold at which NI is paid and the application of provisional 3% pay award. This increases staffing costs by £1.08m between years.

17. The budget proposes a reduction of 4 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) but increase to permanent headcount of 4.4 FTE giving a net permanent increase of 0.4FTE.
18. The reduction in permanent FTE includes reducing Director headcount from four to three posts. Additional permanent FTE are targeted at:
  - Increasing our in-house digital capabilities to support our digital strategy.
  - Increasing our senior capacity to influence Scottish Government policy and lead and deliver around our education, standards and development of the workforce.
  - Increasing our communications, research and policy capacity to improve our stakeholder reach.
19. However, with efficiencies created across the organisation due to Future Proofing Programme (FPP) and improvements to the way we work, with the removal of both permanent and temporary posts and repurposing of existing posts the budget sees a total net reduction overall in FTE of 16.4 (Appendix 3).
20. We continue with the over recruitment within the Fitness to Practise Department (FtP) that was approved at Council in 2022/23, which we use to support turnover to ensure we create stability to manage the throughflow of cases within FtP.

### **Operating costs**

21. Operating costs account for 20% of our budget. The most significant shift seen in the budget around these is £230k increase in digital business as usual (BAU) costs reflecting increases in licensing and inflation. There are also much smaller additional costs for practicing certificates for FtP staff and research for the strategic plan and further sector wellbeing surveys.
22. Our digital development cost for 2025/26 is £586k which includes (but is not an exhaustive list)
  - significant work on a new legal case management system required due to supplier changes
  - new data website
  - upgrades and developments to MySSSC and D365.
23. In comparison our 2024/25 digital development costs are projected to be £356.5k from GIA, £150k from other grant funding on behalf of Scottish Government driven work, plus £136k for FPP digital work giving a total of £641K. Compared to actual spend on digital development there is a reduction in planned costs for 2025/26.

## **Rationale for operating and staffing proposals**

- Pay award parameters are set by Scottish Government therefore we have limited scope to provision for anything less than the 3% proposals.
- We are required to absorb the NI increase to 15% and the reduction of the threshold at which this is paid.
- Investment in our digital capacity, safety and technology is key to delivering our business. We are focusing on the increased BAU and digital development to maintain robust cyber security, ensure we develop the website, continue the development of Registration systems and replace the legal case management system.
- Increased capacity at Head level in Workforce Education and Standards (WES) to meet the increasing demand on our regulatory functions to support national policy, Social Work Education Partnership (SWEP) developments, National Social Work Agency (NSWA) planning and student funding disbursement and at advisor level to support the review of the National Occupational Standards and consultation on new register groups.
- Increase our research, policy and communication capacity to reach our audiences, understand the national policy landscape and develop our work in direct relation to that need. Such as involving people, Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation (IRISR), The Promise and our public sector equalities and diversity duties.
- Ensure we maintain our levels of throughput for case management and FtP needs are met with the appropriate tools and continued developments in place. The current provider of our legal case management system has indicated they will be moving the product to open source with a sunset on support. Therefore, we require to procure and implement a replacement system. We cannot deliver our statutory FtP function without a legal case management system.

## **Reserves**

24. Based on projections, we estimate an available general reserve of £1.7m by 31 March 2025. We will ringfence funds within this reserve for expenditure into 2025/26 due to ongoing work.
25. We have an internally set target for available reserves of 2%-2.5% of gross budget. Through discussion with Council, Sponsor and auditors it has been determined that a reasonable position would be that we have enough cash in the bank to cover one to three months running costs of the organisation including paying staff salaries. The advice is that this is good practice to mitigate against emergency situations when drawdowns from main funds might be delayed or not available and to ensure the organisation can cover the costs of extenuating circumstance such as

additional legal service without the need to request additional GIA. For the SSSC this would sit around 5% to 6% of gross budget.

26. Therefore, we now recommend to Council that we replace the set target of 2%-2.5% reserves with a tolerance position of around 5-6% to bring us in line with the advice received.
27. We are currently projecting an estimated underspend in Postgraduate Bursaries of £1.2m, of which, £250k has been agreed in principle to fund students in hardship and £474k for PL fees. We will discuss with our Sponsor whether carry this forward in addition to our general reserve if the underspend remains at the end of February 2025.
28. We are projecting an estimated underspend for WDG of £269k, Practice Learning Student Support Grant of £100k and other grants of £24k. We are in discussion with Sponsor about carry forward and the use of this underspend in 2026/25.
29. Our Sponsor has already confirmed that where work is committed and ongoing, the funds are to be retained in reserves to be carried forward for use as proposed.

## **CONSULTATION**

30. Operational Management Team (OMT), EMT and Sponsor have been involved in developing our budget plans.
31. A development session was held with Council Members in December 2024 to discuss the proposed budget.
32. Council considered and endorsed a draft of this budget in February 2025.

## **RISKS**

33. Risk 7 in the strategic register is that SSSC fails to secure sufficient budget resources to fulfil the financial plans required to deliver the Strategic Plan. Our appetite to risk for our budget is cautious.
34. Our 2025/26 and future years GIA allocation does not meet the level of funding require to deliver our statutory responsibilities and strategic plan as set out in this report. There is very little of our operational spend which is discretionary and non-contractual and therefore an increasing budget gap represents an increasing risk. Sponsor has provided verbal assurance of spending pressure for 2026/25 and will continue to review our permanent GIA for future years with Ministers.



35. Other risks to the budget are set out below.

- We are only funded year-to-year from Scottish Government, we do not have the ability to make future strategic financial decisions and we have no investment decisions to make out with our GIA, without the support of Scottish Government.
- 80% of our budget is allocated to staffing and Scottish Government pay strategy includes a commitment to a no-compulsory redundancy policy.
- Significant changes to policy and changes to our regulation process or legislation governing regulation must be approved and funded by Scottish Government. We are not able to fund or invest in significant change within the limitations of GIA.
- Inflation is included where known for example digital contracts, but no general inflationary uplift is included, meaning costs may be higher than the budget.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Resourcing**

36. The resourcing required to delivery out statutory functions and strategic plan are set out in this report.

### **Compliance**

37. There are no compliance issues as part of the report.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

38. An impact assessment was not required. Work contained within the budget will be impact assessed are necessary.

## **CONCLUSION**

39. Council is asked to approve the budget and the change to the tolerance level of reserves.

**Table 1**

	Approved Budget 2024/25 £000	Draft Budget 2025/26 £000	Movement 2024/25 to 2025/26 £000
Staff costs	16,097	17,180	1,083
Panel member fees	617	617	0
Accommodation	192	193	1
Administration	1,149	1,019	(130)
Travel	58	57	(1)
Supplies & Services	451	473	22
Digital BAU	1,534	1,764	230
Digital developments	356	586	230
<b>Operating expenditure</b>	<b>20,455</b>	<b>21,890</b>	<b>1,435</b>
Postgraduate bursaries	2,655	2,655	0
Practice Learning Fees	3,852	3,852	0
Skills for Care & Devt	15	17	2
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>26,978</b>	<b>28,414</b>	<b>1,436</b>
Grant in aid	(11,028)	(11,028)	0
Postgraduate bursaries	(2,655)	(2,655)	0
Practice Learning Fees	(3,852)	(3,852)	0
Registration fees	(3,310)	(3,724)	(413)
LA Reg Fee refund	(2,593)	(2,593)	0
Other income	(344)	(361)	(17)
<b>Total income</b>	<b>(23,782)</b>	<b>(24,212)</b>	<b>(430)</b>
<b>Spending pressure</b>	<b>3,196</b>	<b>4,202</b>	<b>1,006</b>
Required funding from SG (excludes additional £1.5m PLF)	<b>21,823</b>	<b>22,830</b>	<b>1,006</b>

**Table 1**

	2025/26 £000
<b>Staff costs</b>	
Permanent staff	254
Temporary staff	366
Savings	(624)
Pay award and annual increments	774
NI increase	311
<b>Non-staff costs</b>	
Savings	(223)
Other expenditure	116
Digital BAU	230
Digital Development (movement)	230
Registration fees	(413)
Other income	(15)
<b>Movement from 2024/25 budget</b>	<b>1,006</b>

Total digital development is projected to reduce from the 24/25 figure of £641k and 25/26 figure of £586k, but spend in 24/25 is across different budget lines including the Future Proofing Programme budget. Further information is at paragraph 23 of the cover report.

**Table 1 – Deleted Posts**

	<b>FTE</b>	<b>25/26 £k</b>
<b>Permanent posts – recurring total</b>	<b>(4.0)</b>	<b>(70)</b>
<b>Temporary posts – non-recurring total</b>	<b>(22.6)</b>	<b>(554)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>(26.6)</b>	<b>(624)</b>

**Table 2 – New Posts**

	<b>FTE</b>	<b>25/26 £k</b>
<b>Permanent posts – recurring total</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>Temporary posts – non-recurring total</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>366</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>620</b>

<b>NET DECREASE</b>	<b>(16.2)</b>	<b>(4)</b>
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**Future years**

	<b>2026/27 £000</b>	<b>2027/28 £000</b>
GIA	16,035	16,035
Budget required	20,094	19,757
Spending pressure	4,059	3,722

**GIA reduction scenarios**

	<b>2025/26 £000</b>	<b>2025/26 £000</b>	<b>2025/26 £000</b>
	<b>3% reduction</b>	<b>5% reduction</b>	<b>10% reduction</b>
GIA	15,554	15,233	14,431
Budget required	20,237	20,237	20,537
Spending pressure	4,683	5,004	5,805

<b>Title of Report</b>	Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes report and Data Annex 2025
<b>Public/Confidential</b>	Public
<b>Summary/purpose of report</b>	To share our draft Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2025 and data annex.
<b>Recommendations</b>	The Council is asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. endorse the progress we have made to achieve our equality outcomes</li> <li>2. approve the report and data annex (Appendix 1 and 2) for publication.</li> </ol>
<b>Author</b>	Neil Macleod, Policy and Equality Manager
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Laura Shepherd, Director, Strategy and Performance
<b>Link to Strategic Plan</b>	These reports links to all strategic themes and outcomes in our Strategic Plan 2023-2026.
<b>Link to Risk Register</b>	Risk 3: We fail to meet corporate governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.
<b>Impact Assessment</b>	An Impact Assessment (IA) was not required.
<b>Documents attached</b>	<a href="#">Appendix 1: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Mainstreaming and Outcomes report, 2025-2029, April 2025</a> <a href="#">Appendix 2: EDI mainstreaming and Outcomes Report, 2025-2029, Data Annex, April 2025</a> <a href="#">Appendix 3: Summary, EDI Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report, 2025-2029</a>

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 places duties on us to:
  - report progress on mainstreaming the general equality duty
  - publish equality outcomes and report progress
  - assess and review new or current policies and practices
  - gather, use and publish employee information
  - publish gender pay gap information and an equal pay statement.
2. By 30 April 2025 we must publish a report which has:
  - a review of our 2021-2025 equality outcomes
  - our 2025-29 equality outcomes
  - workforce information such as our gender pay gap.
3. Once approved the report will be published on our website. We will also publish a shorter summary on the website. A draft is attached as Appendix 3.

## MAINSTREAMING REPORT 2025-2029

4. Appendix 1 has our draft Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2025. It sets out activities which contribute to our equality duties and outcomes such as the review of Codes of Practice. It also highlights activities that are more clearly linked to our equality duties. Since 2023 we have:
  - published [the Analysis of registrant equality data report](#)
  - introduced a new Impact Assessment (IA) process for policies, procedures, strategies and projects
  - published the revised Codes of Practice in several languages and formats.
5. Our internal actions include:
  - revising the remit and membership of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group (EDIG)
  - creating an Equality Forum for all employees
  - implementing the [Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework \(SCQF\) Inclusive Recruiter scheme](#)
  - achieving [Disability Confident level 3 Leader](#) status and introducing a [Care Experience Guaranteed Interview scheme](#).
6. The mainstreaming report has our draft outcomes for 2025-2029.
  - Outcome one: We will improve our understanding of the diversity of the registered social work, social care and children and young people workforce.
  - Outcome two: We will improve the way that we involve people in our work and how we consider our impact.



- Outcome three: We promote an inclusive culture within our organisation.
7. Each proposed outcome has activities that contribute to the priorities. These include finalising the Fitness to Practise Decisions guidance and implementing actions in the People Strategy 2024-2027. The report also lists activities that are more directly linked to our equality duties and values. We will:
- continue to gather and publish data on the diversity of register.
  - consider the key findings of the [workforce wellbeing survey](#) and key messages for our work to mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion
  - revise our Impact Assessment form to include new the new [Consumer Duty on public bodies](#)
  - publish an anti-racism learning resource for social workers
  - introduce a procedure for paying expenses and time for people who support our work
  - explore how we can further involve people with lived experience in our work.

## **EMPLOYEE DATA**

8. Appendix 2 has the report's data annex and has information on areas such as employee protected characteristics, recruitment, retention and development and gender pay gap data.
9. We continue to work closely with Performance and Improvement, Organisational Development and HR departments to improve the way that we collect and present this data. Much of this information is now available via Power BI dashboards.

## **CONSULTATION**

10. We developed the initial draft of the mainstreaming report and outcomes following a session with our equality forum. In November 2024 the EDIG approved the draft outcomes for consultation. We revised the outcomes following that consultation and an Equality and Human Rights Commission session on setting outcomes.

## **RISKS**

11. We have an averse risk appetite towards legal compliance. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 places a duty on the SSSC to develop and publish these reports.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Resourcing**

12. There are no new resourcing requirements identified as part of this report.

### **Compliance**

13. There are no compliance issues identified as part of this report.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

14. We did not develop an Impact Assessment (IA) for this report. This report sets out how we mainstream equality and the progress on our equality outcomes. Many of the actions in this report have or will require an IA.
15. We have developed a Data Protection Impact Assessment for some of the activities in this report such as collecting registrants' data.

## **CONCLUSION**

16. We recommend that the Council:
- endorse the progress we have made to achieve our equality outcomes
  - approve the report and data annex (Appendix 1 and 2) for publication.

# **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming and Outcomes report, 2025-2029**

**April 2025**

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# Foreword

Our **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming report** sets out how we continue to make sure equality, diversity and inclusion are at the centre of our work. This report reviews the progress on our 2021-2025 equality outcomes. It also sets out our outcomes for the next four years.

The two years since the publication of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming Progress in April 2023 have been a challenging period for everyone. Social work, social care and children and young people workers continue to provide high quality, critical services every day. They make sure that people's needs are met and rights are upheld in every part of Scotland.

As the regulator for the social work, social care and children and young people workforce in Scotland, we protect the public and set standards for practice, conduct, training and support workforce and professional development. In May 2024 the Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise, Natalie Don MSP, launched the revised **SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers** (the Codes). The revised Codes have a greater focus on relationships and help to ensure people's needs and rights are respected. In June we introduced sweeping changes to registration which aim to make us processes easier to understand and help people to see the benefits of Registration.

We continue to promote equality, diversity and inclusion within our organisation. This report set out several steps that we are taking to improve the way we recruit, retain and develop our employees. It also highlights our new People Strategy for 2024-2027.

Our outcomes for the next four years set out challenging priorities for us. As the regulator we are uniquely placed to continue developing high quality information on the diversity of the workforce and to deliver high quality learning resources. We are reviewing the National Occupational Standards which underpin the key qualifications for registered workers. We want to continue improving the way that we consider lived experience throughout our work. We also need to continue promoting an inclusive approach within the SSSC.

This report sets out how we will work towards these critical objectives and continue to mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion within our organisation and the wider registered workforce.

Maree Allison  
Chief Executive, Scottish Social Services Council

# 1. Introduction

## About the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and this report

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 work, social care and children and young people services and their employers
- register this workforce and make sure they adhere to our codes of practice
- promote and regulate their learning and development
- lead workforce development and planning for this workforce in Scotland and provide national statistics.

This report summarises progress since 2023 and our 2025-2029 equality outcomes.

## The Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty

As a public body, we comply with the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). We pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not.

## Protected characteristics

The Act introduces [nine protected characteristics](#). It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of a protected characteristic.

Age  
Gender reassignment  
Pregnancy and maternity  
Religion or belief  
Sexual orientation

Disability  
Marriage and civil partnership  
Race  
Sex



## Mainstreaming and Equality outcomes, 2021-2025

We use this definition of mainstreaming from the [Scottish Government's consultation on an Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Strategy](#).

'.. mainstreaming means putting equality and human rights at the core of your business.'

'In practice, this means that equality and human rights are key to how:

- decisions are made
- policies are designed and developed
- services delivered
- money is allocated and spent.'

## Data annex

Alongside this report we publish a separate [data annex](#) which has information on:

- our employees' protected characteristics
- the recruitment, retention and development of SSSC employees
- our pay gap and data on grades. □

## Our Strategic plan 2023-2026

Our [Strategic Plan for 2023-2026](#) sets out our priorities. We have four strategic themes and outcomes that will have a positive impact on the safety and wellbeing of people using social work, social care and children and young people services.

### 1. **Trusted**

People who use services are protected by a regulated workforce that is fit to practise.

### 2. **Skilled**

Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.

### 3. **Confident**

Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.

### 4. **Valued**

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

## Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

In August 2023 the Council approved our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#). The policy applies to all employees, secondees, agency staff and anyone else working on behalf of the SSSC. The next scheduled review of our policy is in August 2026.



We are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. Our work actively promotes human rights and core principles such as dignity, fairness, equality, respect and autonomy.

- 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 a diverse workforce brings to our work.
- We treat everyone fairly and with respect, including registrants, staff, applicants and all other key stakeholders.
- We will go beyond minimum statutory duties when considering and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion for people with characteristics not protected by law.
- We are supporting initiatives to increase the diversity of our workforce and the social service workforce in Scotland.

### **Human rights, children's rights and Corporate parenting**

- It is good practice to consider equality and human rights together when drawing up equality and human rights policies. This report sets out the steps we take to promote a human rights based approach.
- We also report on our steps to promote children's rights and our role as a corporate parent.
  - [SSSC Children's Rights Report 2023](#)
  - [SSSC Care Experience Report 2024-2026](#)



## 2. Equality Forum and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group

### Equality Forum

All employees can attend our Equality Forum. The Forum:

- promotes our approach to mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion
- encourage employees to reflect on how their role contributes to our outcomes
- is a safe space for employees to share best practice, raise concerns or discuss topical issues with colleagues
- learns from guest speakers

The forum has a charter for inclusion and contributed to development of our equality outcomes. As of February 2025 the forum has had seven sessions. The forum has explored several topics such as taking an anti-racist approach, translating human rights into practice and understanding neuroinclusion at work. The forum has also explored how we can better support disabled students.

An anonymised summary of the group's sessions – along with any suggestions for improvements – is considered at our quarterly Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group (EDIG) meeting.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group (EDIG)

The EDIG's membership includes all Heads of Department and it is chaired by a member of our Executive Management Team (EMT). Our EDIG supports the mainstreaming of equalities within the SSSC.

The EDIG has additional roles such as:

- promoting and mainstreaming good practice throughout SSSC
- supporting the development and implementation of our mainstreaming and equality outcomes
- being a source of advice on the development of Impact Assessments (EQIAs) and to track actions
- updating, monitoring and reviewing an action plan which includes the actions in our mainstreaming and care experience reports.

## 3. Registration is changing, June 2024

In June 2024 we made several changes to the register. We changed:

- the Register to four parts
- the timescales that new workers must apply for, and gain, registration
- the qualifications we accept and timescales for gaining qualifications
- the way registrants update us as they now complete an annual declaration
- how registrants update their account via our Registration portal, My SSSC
- [return to practice requirements for social workers](#) who have been off the Register for more than two years
- our approach to [Continuous Professional Learning \(CPL\)](#).

### Registration is changing – mainstreaming equality

- We developed Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) for these changes. These assessments consider the equality needs and the feedback from people with different protected characteristics. We commissioned an independent analysis of the equality and business impact of the changes.
- In May 2024 we published the new [Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers](#). Revising the Codes is a part of our commitment to [Keep the Promise to Scotland's children and young people](#). The new Codes also reinforce the connection with the [National Health and Social Care Standards](#).
- [As part of our consultation on the Codes](#) we asked respondents whether the new language promote equality, diversity and inclusion. Over 80% of respondents indicated that they do this 'well' or 'very well.'
- The Codes are available in several languages including Cantonese, French, Polish, Romany and Sinhalese. We have a British Sign Language (BSL), Braille and easy read version. A full list is available from our website and we will provide other languages on request.
- We asked people about proposed changes to the structure of register, registration periods and the delivery of qualifications. We asked whether these proposals would promote equality, diversity and inclusion. Most respondents said that the proposals would be neutral or that there would not be a negative impact. Some people identified positive impacts. Two examples follow.
  - Most respondents [welcomed a reduction in the number of Register parts](#). These changes aim to help make registration more straightforward and easier to understand.
  - Most respondents [welcomed changes to make it easier for workers to move between adult and children's roles](#). Our view is that increased flexibility of qualifications can support career pathways and opportunities for workers.

## 4. What we did: reviewing our equality outcomes, 2021-2025

### **Outcome one: To promote diversity in the social care workforce, including disabled people, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with care experience.**

#### **Context**

We had four activities to support this outcome.

- 1a. Develop an enhanced approach to collecting and using workforce equality data to inform our understanding of the sector.
- 1b. Review and update the 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 sector
- 1d. Continue our relevant activities to support wider participation in the social service sector.

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

As the regulator for the social work, social care and children and young people workforce, we are in the unique position of holding reliable information on the registered workforce in Scotland.

- In 2023 and 2024 we published reports on Registration and Fitness to Practise data. The reports are available from our [Data website](#).
- In November 2024 we published [Analysis of diversity data and research report](#). This is the first time we have published information on areas such as sexual orientation and religion. The equality report has several key findings. For example, it tells us that at least 88% of registrants define as straight or heterosexual. It also confirms that at least 37% of registrants have no religion.
- We continue to publish Official Statistics on the Scottish Social Service Sector. The [Workforce Data Reports \(WDRs\)](#) combine our data and administrative data from the Care inspectorate. The WDRs include data on age, gender, disability and ethnicity. We publish reports on several other areas such as vacancies and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs.) All reports are on our [data website](#).
- We continue to gather qualitative and quantitative data from registrants and employers. In January we launched a survey to develop a better understanding of areas such as health, wellbeing and what it is like to work in social work, social care and children and young people services.

## **1b. Review and update the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers**

- We cover the Codes in section three of this mainstreaming report.

## **1c. Continue our work with the Care Inspectorate and other key stakeholders to promote equality within the wider social service sector and 1d. Continue our relevant activities to support wider participation in the social service sector.**

We continue to work with the Care Inspectorate, NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and other key stakeholders to achieve our equality outcomes and priorities.

- We worked with the Scottish Refugee Council to create a guide on Pre-Employment and [Induction for Employers of Overseas workers, Refugees and Asylum Seekers](#).
- We worked with the Care Inspectorate to create [Safer Recruitment through Better Recruitment](#). The guidance covers several areas such as statutory obligations, equality monitoring and the role of values-based recruitment.
- Our [careers in care website](#) has resources such as [Ten steps to a career in care](#) and a [Careers Toolkit](#).
- We work with others to develop learning resources for people working in social work, social care and children and young people services. We support initiatives which promote equality of opportunity such as [dementia resources](#).

## **National Qualified Social Work, Supported Year and the Social Work Education Partnership**

As of October 2024 the supported year for newly qualified social workers (NQSWs) is mandatory for all social workers, as it is for many other professions. The supported year helps social workers to know what support they will receive from employers as they move from education into being a critical part of the workforce. We work with local authorities and partners to support the implementation of the supported year.

Further information is on our [dedicated NQSW website](#). Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is central to the implementation of the NQSW supported year.

- [The core learning elements for social workers: NQSW descriptors and mandatory learning activity \(January 2024\)](#) highlight the importance of understanding intersectionality, anti-discriminatory practice, rights based practice and applying a knowledge of social inequality and systematic oppression. The descriptors and learning activities set out critical priorities for the social work role such as:

'seeking to understand and reflect on people's values and beliefs, diverse backgrounds, cultural characteristics, language requirements, needs, experiences, and presences, understanding how these interact with the societal structures and adjusting my practice as required.'

- The [Definitions of employer support 2023](#) set out the mandatory requirements for all employers and are part of our ambition to create a strategic framework from qualification education through to advanced practice. The definitions reinforce the employers' commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.



- We support the development of an Advanced Practice Framework for Social Workers and the development of a Graduate Apprenticeship route into Social Work.

### **Social Work Education Partnership and National Social Work Agency**

- We are a key partner in the [Social Work Education Partnership](#), the professional leadership body for the social work and social care partnership. We are also supporting the development of a National Social Work Agency.

## **Outcome two: Increasingly demonstrate how our work is shaped by our key stakeholders including people who care experienced.**

### **Context**

We developed three activities to support this outcome.

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

In 2023 we published [Involving People: our engagement strategy and framework 2023-2026](#). The framework sets out key principles and a systematic approach to involving people from the outset of our work.

People with lived experience contributed to our review of the [Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers](#). We involve registrants and others in social work, social care and children and young services in several areas, such as

- developing the new [National Induction Framework for Adult Social Care staff](#),
- revising the [Decisions Guidance for Fitness to Practise Panels and SSSC staff](#)
- supporting the implementation of the [Newly Qualified Social Work \(NQSW\) supported year](#).

We are mindful of the need to avoid over consulting people when there is already a range of evidence on key priorities. Our work on the revised Codes of Practice, the new approach to [Continuous Professional Learning](#), the [Integrated Award](#) and the review of the [National Occupational Standards \(NOS\) 2024/25](#) are all informed by key reports and studies such as the work of The Promise and our Registrant's survey.

We recognise that there is more to do and we are examining how we better involve people in our work. There are differing views on the strengths and weaknesses of a



forum for involving people and we continue to do so on a project by project basis for now. We also had an internal review of how we meet the requirements of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\) Scotland Act 2024](#).

We contributed to [Open University's Witness to Harm research report](#) and we are considering how we can improve our processes and the way we support witnesses. Our screening team considers public referrals and we continue to look at how we can improve the accessibility of our website.

We want to take a trauma informed approach to our work. We did an initial [trauma informed lens](#) assessment of our organisation. Key improvements include the following.

- Some employees have completed Law Society of Scotland's trauma informed lawyer certification.
- We developed and provided training to our wider legal staff group and our independent fitness to practise members. We continue to raise awareness of a trauma informed approach throughout the organisation.
- We renovated our Hearing and witness rooms.

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

Impact Assessments (IA) help us to make sure that we follow legal obligations and other priorities. In April 2024 we introduced a new IA process covering six areas:

- Equality Impact Assessment
- Children's Rights and Care Experience Assessment
- Trauma Informed Assessment
- Islands, Fairer Scotland and vulnerable people Assessment
- Employer Assessment
- Sustainability Assessment

We complete an IA when we create or reviewing policies, procedures, strategies and projects. Our IAs show how we consider these areas and made any changes throughout the development of our approach. For example, our IA on Complaints Handling highlights how we are working towards a child friendly process. We will update the IA to include the new Consumer Duty for public bodies and we will continue to publish assessments on [our website](#).

## **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**

### **Context**

We developed four activities to support this outcome.

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

Some of these activities overlap so we report on 3a, 3b and 3c together, before summarising activities under 3d.

### **3a. Improve our approach to recruiting SSSC from minority ethnic backgrounds, 3b. Improve our approach to recruiting SSSC staff from a range of backgrounds and 3c: Establish new ways of ensuring our approaches reflect wider perspectives.**

- We need to do more to develop a diverse workforce. The data annex for this report has information on the diversity of our employees, registrants and Census data on the overall population. We need this information to understand our progress. We will continue to encourage applicants and our employees to share their equality information and to look at how we can improve our approach.
- In 2024 we introduced the [Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework \(SCQF\) Inclusive Recruiter scheme](#). Using SCQF helps candidates to identify whether are suitable for a role.
- In 2025 we achieved [Disability Confident Level 3 Leader status](#). We offer a guaranteed interview for anyone who identifies as disabled and meets our essential criteria for a job. We actively identify and make reasonable adjustments to the assessment and interview process.
- In 2024 we introduced a [Care Experience Guaranteed interview scheme](#). The scheme offers care experienced candidates an automatic interview if they meet the essential criteria outlined in the specification. We plan for and make reasonable adjustments to the assessment and interview process as required. Our recruitment team can also offer pre-interview support.
- We worked with a local employability organisation to share our recruitment adverts and help candidates prepare for interviews. We participate in recruitment fairs and events where we share examples of interview questions and share tips and advice.
- We support our employees where possible or appropriate to undertake public duties or undertake voluntary work. This can include local government work, children's panel or a community council. It also includes school mentoring programmes.





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

- In November 2023 we achieved the Silver Investors in Young People (IYP) award. The IYP's Feedback Report recognises our work to develop a collaborative and cohesive approach. We are considering how we can implement the recommendations such as developing a Talent Management initiative and extending our coaching and mentoring programmes. In November 2024 we retained our gold Investors in People Award.
- We continue to add to our extensive range of mandatory and optional courses on our employee learning hub. Since 2023 we have introduced essential courses for on unconscious bias, protecting people and children's rights. Employees can also access programmes on areas such as pre-retirement, menopause awareness and neuroinclusion at work.
- In 2025 we introduced a new course for our employees on understanding care experience and the Promise. Many employees or people complete additional courses or specialist training. For example, Fitness to Practice colleagues completed training on Unconscious Bias and trauma informed approaches.
- We continue to provide several resources for our employees such as a network of Mental Health First Aiders and an Employee Assistant Programme. We encourage and support employees to setup employee networks.
- Our People Strategy 2021-2024 covered areas such as how we recruit people and invest in young people. Key developments include a leadership and management programme on areas such as managing change, remote teams and Effective Communication. It also covers Insights Discovery, focusing on profiling and leadership.



## 5. What we'll do next: our equality outcomes, 2025-2029

### 5.1 Developing our equality outcomes 2025-2029

Our new outcomes:

- build on activities where we have aimed to make progress between 2021-2025, such as a better understanding of the profile of our registrants
- are informed by feedback such as our registrant surveys, a consultation on the Codes of Practice, the consultation on the review of registration fees and a small scale survey of registrants in December 2024
- are informed by internal engagement with our Equality Forum and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, and feedback and sessions with external organisations as part of events for our equality forum
- align with our priorities in our [Strategic Plan 2023-2026](#) and our plans for [involving people](#), supporting [care experienced people](#), [promoting children's rights](#) and the People Strategy 2024-27 for our employees
- aim to reflect the [three aims of the public equality duty](#), namely eliminating discrimination, advancing equal opportunities and fostering good relations
- link to priorities in key reports and initiatives such as the Promise's [Plan 24-30](#) and the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\) Scotland Act 2024](#).

### 5.2 Equality outcomes, 2025-2029

This section has our equality outcomes for 2025-2029. We briefly set out the context, what the data tells us and activities for each outcome. A final section sets out how we will demonstrate progress on each outcome.

## **Outcome one: We will improve our understanding of the diversity of the registered social work, social care and children and young people workforce.**

As the regulator for the social work, social care and children and young people workforce, we are in the unique position of holding reliable information on the registered workforce. This includes data on the diversity of the registered workforce.

### **Why collect information of the diversity of the workforce?**

The data inform activities such as regulation and developing learning resources and help employers to recruit, retain and develop a diverse workforce.

- We will continue to gather data and publish reports which inform our understanding of the challenges for the workforce and the impact on different protected characteristics.
- We will implement updated Fitness to Practice Decisions Guidance, which brings discrimination into the category of behaviours where sanctions are more likely to be appropriate, particularly where the discrimination relates to protected characteristics. A revised version should be in force by Spring 2025.
- We will continue to respond to or participate in Scottish Government or other initiatives as appropriate, including any actions following the Scottish Government's review of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- We continue to explore measures which help us to understand the diversity of the register, such as the percentage of registrants who provide unpaid care.
- We will continue to develop our understanding of how people move across education and the workforce. This data will help us understand some of the barriers to working in social work, social care and children and young people.
- We will explore the data that we collect for the approved programmes that we [quality assure](#). This information can help us to develop a better understanding of the diversity of the current and future workforce.

### **How we will measure our progress on Equality Outcome one**

- We particularly want to improve our data on disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and sexual orientation. We will make progress if we:
  - continue to see improvements in the number of registrants sharing their equality data
  - publish more data on the registered workforce
  - continue to improve the data we collect and publish on the register.
- We will continue to publish information which can help employers to recruit, retain and develop their workforce. Data also inform the development of our own approaches to regulation and workforce development. We develop Impact Assessments for many of our policies, procedures and activities. The data will help us to show we consider evidence and how we to improve our approach.

## **Outcome two: We will improve the way that we involve people in our work and how we consider our impact.**

- We will introduce a new procedure for paying expenses and paying for participants' time, demonstrating our recognition of the vital contribution and making sure that nobody is out of pocket when they support our work.
- We will develop and publish an updated version of our Involving People Engagement Strategy and Framework 2023-2026 which supports our employees to consider how they can involve people within their work.
- We will continue to identify ways of involving a diverse range of registrants' views in our work, building on our use of surveys and other approaches.
- We will look at how we can further improve the accessibility of our resources. A key priority is to develop child friendly or easy read resources.
- We are currently reviewing our Fitness to Practise and hearing process to identify where we can improve our person-centred approach. We also have a short life working group exploring how we can promote a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). We promote the PANEL (Participation, Accountability, Non Discrimination, Empowerment and Legality) principles within our work.
- We will amend our Impact Assessment process respond to the implementation of the Consumer Duty and – if introduced in future – a Human Rights Bill.
- We will identify further ways of involving people and stakeholders in our work, which may include existing groups such as our Stakeholder Advisory Forum (SAF) and exploring how we can better sustain our approach to supporting and promote people to participate our work. This also includes organisations which focus on promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in Scotland.

### **How we will measure our progress on Equality outcome two**

- We regularly involve people with lived experience in our work. We recognise that we need to do more. We will report on the steps that we have and are taking in our next outcomes and mainstreaming report. An initial priority will be to review our new procedure for paying people to participate in our work.
- We will continue to gather examples of how people with lived experience contribute to our work and feedback on their experiences. We will provide updates in statutory reports such as our next mainstreaming and children's' rights reports.

## Our learning strategy 2024-2027

We promote and regulate learning and development and lead workforce development and planning for people working in in social work, social care and children and young people services. Our [Learning Strategy 2024-2027](#) set out the following vision:

'The social work, social care and children and young people's workforce in Scotland is appropriately qualified and engaged in high quality, continuous professional learning (CPL).

As a result, workers are part of a trusted, skilled, confident and valued workforce, enabled to develop the knowledge and skills required to deliver services of the highest standard and grow as professionals across a rewarding career.'

- We are working with NES to create a National Induction Framework for Adult Social Care Staff. The resource covers themes such as respecting rights, delivering person centred care and mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion. We are also working to create a career opportunities tool for adult and children's social care. The resource will set out the skills and knowledge that people need to deliver high quality services.
- We have commissioned the Scottish Association of Social Workers (SASW) to create an anti-racism learning resource for social workers. It will promote continuous learning and critical reflection on anti-racism in social work. We are a member of and endorse the [statement of intent by the Social Work Anti-racism Oversight Group](#), which includes the following definition of anti-racism:

'By anti-racism, we mean actively standing up against racism, challenging and changing the policies, practices, beliefs and behaviours that unjustly disadvantage people from minority ethnic groups. We also mean being proactive in creating a more inclusive and fair culture in social work'

- The [Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation \(IRISR\)](#) made two recommendations on reviewing the [National Health and Social Care Standards](#) and reviewing the [Care Service definitions](#). We are working with Scottish Government, the Care Inspectorate and others on both actions.
- We are developing practice guidance for workers on relationship-based practice and will publish this in 2025.
- Our Learning Strategy for 2024-2027 also sets out priorities for our learning and development activity over this period. These include supporting the Promise Scotland's Plan 24-30, the proposed National Care Service and National Social Work Agency and the Improving Wellbeing and Working Cultures plan.

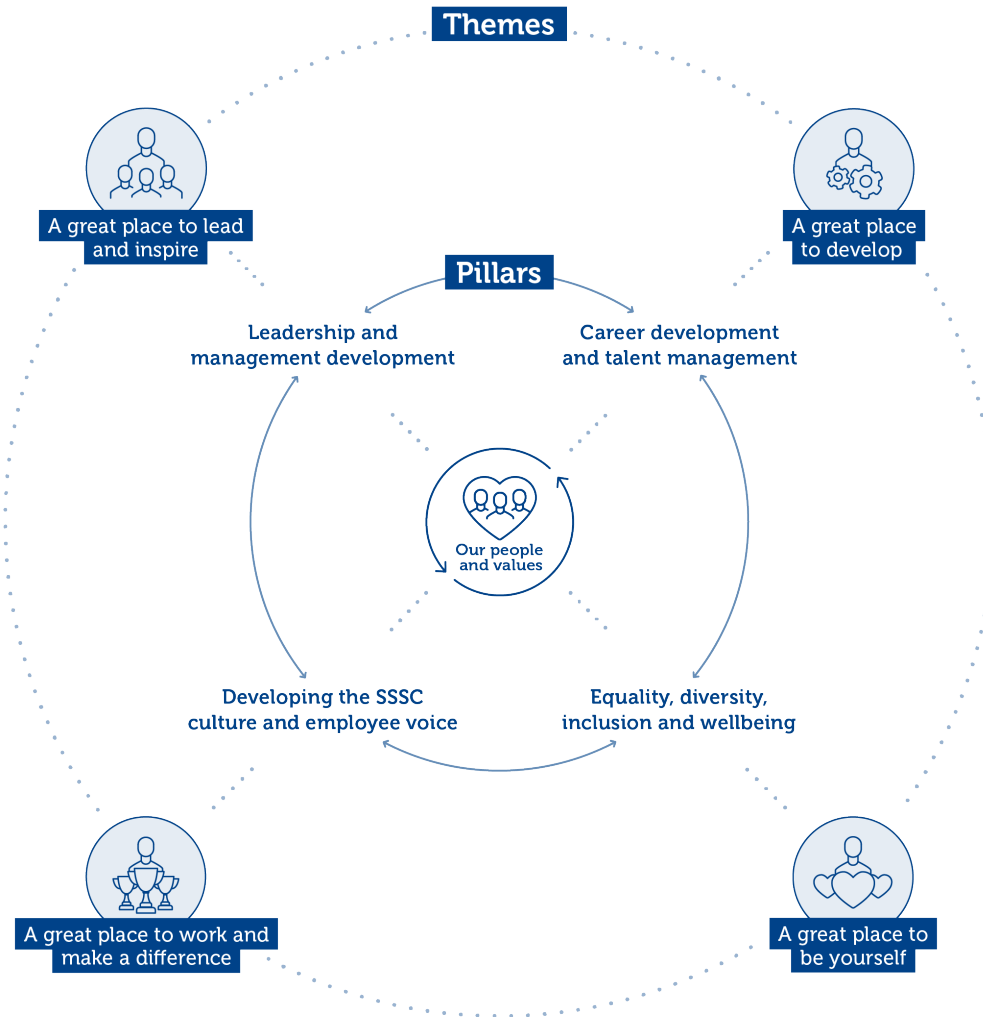
## **Outcome three: We promote an inclusive culture within our organisation.**

- We will implement our People Strategy 2024-2027, which includes a dedicated pillar on equality, diversity, inclusion (EDI) and wellbeing. We will review our approach to person specification and recruitment policies and procedures to explore how we can remove any barriers to a career with us.
- We will progress and implement initiatives such as our Disability Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS), the Care Experienced GIS, the Disability Confident scheme and the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) inclusive recruiter initiative. We continue to build our equality forum for all employees and explore how we can create or support further forums for our staff. We are building a better picture of our existing employees and the diversity of people who apply for our roles. We will use this data to identify how we can make our processes more inclusive. Further information on our approach and a list of our accreditations is available from [the recruitment section of our website](#).
- We will continue to provide regular wellbeing and other courses for our employees on areas such as the menopause and preparing for retirement.
- We will continue to identify and consider recommendations as part of our commitment to Investors in people (IIP) and Investors in Young People (IYP) and findings from other key sources such as our employee survey.
- We continue to make reasonable adjustments at interview and when people begin working with us. We have an agile working policy. We have several ways that we can help people such as occupational health, Mental Health First Aiders and an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP.) We continue to explore how we can do more to support people from the moment they apply for a role with us.

### **How we will measure our progress on Equality outcome three**

- Our People Board monitor the effectiveness of our People Strategy 2024-2027 and provide annual reports to our Council. We get feedback from staff and implement recommendations as part of our Investors in People and Investors in Young People accreditations.
- We review and gather data on the numbers of people who apply for roles at the SSSC. We will explore how we can do more to develop a better understanding of the number of applicants, the numbers of people who are shortlisted and the numbers who are successful as part of the recruitment process.
- We monitor data on areas such as the percentage of employees who have completed relevant mandatory training courses. We will report on organisational development data in our equality outcomes and mainstreaming reports.
- We continue to measure our performance against this outcome by asking and reporting on relevant questions within our internal staff surveys.

## SSSC People Strategy 2024-2027, themes and pillars



**People Strategy 2024-2027: selected themes and actions**

<b>Strategic Theme</b>	<b>Pillar</b>	<b>Aims</b>	<b>New initiatives / actions to support aims</b>	<b>Starting measure June 2024</b>	<b>Progress measure</b>
A great place to be yourself	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing	<p>To support our people to better understand equality, diversity and inclusion at work.</p> <p>To support and develop a culture of feedback, openness and challenge.</p> <p>To respond to emerging national policies, legislation and initiatives in this area of our work.</p> <p>To enable employee networks or communities of practice that support our people to connect on topics that matter to them.</p>	<p>1. Support staff and managers to better understand and support equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing at work.</p> <p>2. Further raise awareness of our whistleblowing policy and procedures and support a culture of speaking up.</p> <p>3. Enable Employee networks, communities of practice and interest groups, including for our young people.</p>	<p>1. 2023/24: nine separate development sessions on a range of topics offered to all staff.</p> <p>2. 2022 staff survey results of 86% positive rating on inclusion and wellbeing question.</p> <p>3. Two active networks (EDI Forum &amp; PMO Community Of Practice)</p>	<p>1. Maintain or increase our offering of EDI based development initiatives by August 2025.</p> <p>2. Delivery of awareness sessions and increased or maintained staff survey score.</p> <p>3. Increase in number of active employee networks.</p>

# Appendix 1: Profile of our employees, the Register and the Scottish Social Services Workforce

## Our employees

As of December 2024 we employ 308 people. Further information on the diversity of our employees is in the data annex published alongside this report.

## The registered workforce

We collect and publish a range of data on our registrants and the workforce. An explanation of the differences between registration and workforce data is available from our data website: <https://data.sssc.uk.com/what-we-do/registration-and-workforce-data>. Due to rounding errors some of the figures in these reports do not add up to 100%. Further information on the data including any guidance notes or advisory notes can be found in the individual reports.

## Registration data

In November 2024 we published our [Analysis of registrant equality data report \(the equality Report\)](#). The Equality report is a snapshot as of January 2024. A summary of the findings is contained in the data annex published alongside this report.

The report also includes data on Fitness to Practise and qualifications, although caution is advised due to the small numbers involved in many instances. See the equality report for further information.

## Social Service Workforce data

In August 2024 we published [Scottish Social Service Sector: Report on 2023 Workforce Data](#). This is the 16th 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 2023.

- The number of social service workers (headcount) increased slightly to 212,780, an increase of 0.6% since 2022. The social service workforce makes up approximately 8.1% of all Scottish employment.
- The whole time equivalent (WTE) measure of the workforce is 161,750, an increase of 0.5% since 2022.
- The stability index of the workforce is 74.4%. This means just under three-quarters of the workforce remained in the same post since last year.
- Approximately 82% 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, more than 30 hours per week.



## Appendix 2 – Terminology used in the report

The Scottish Government's [2022 guidance on collecting data on ethnic groups notes:](#)

- 'Ethnicity is a complex issue. There is no consensus about what constitutes an 'ethnic group.' Research shows that it means different things to different people, which can depend on the context or situation, and understanding of the term evolves over time. It encompasses aspects of identity, race, ancestry, history, culture, and it is very diverse'

We also recognise that there are significant and complex sensitivities around sex and gender data. Our approach is informed by guidance published by the Scottish Government's Sex and Gender data guidance. We continue to look at how we can improve the way we collect this information.

We use 'people with lived experience' broadly to refer to people who use or have used social services and people who are carers. We recognise that this term is complex and that there is no universal term which capture all experiences. It is critical that we involve people from a range of backgrounds, experiences and needs.



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# **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming and Outcomes report, 2025-2029**

**Data annex, April 2025**

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# 1. Introduction and purpose of this annex

This data annex has information on Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) employees as December 2023 and December 2024. It has information on:

- employees' protected characteristics
- recruitment, retention and development
- staff grades, our pay gap and equal payment statements.

It also has a summary of our staff survey and investors in people results.

As of January 2025 we employ just over 300 people. This means that we cannot publish some data as we have small numbers for some protected characteristics. We are also unable to publish some data on recruitment or by staff grade. We publish what we can although we do not disclose figures fewer than five, and it is important to bear in mind the smaller numbers involved when considering some data.

From section three onwards we typically provide data on selected protected characteristics such as age or sex. This is because we tend to have better data on these areas.

Some figures in this report may not total correctly due to rounding.

## 2. Detailed employee monitoring information

### Declaration rates

We ask staff to report their protected characteristics our MyView self-service system. The following table has a snapshot of the proportion of staff who provided this information as of December 2023 and 2024. This figure represents the proportion of staff who responded to the question. It includes staff who tell us that they would prefer not to answer the questions.

### SSSC employees' data, disclosure rates. 2023 and 2024

	December 2023	December 2024
Age	100%	100%
Disability	73.85%	70.78%
Marriage or civil partnership	32.09%	33.44%
Race / Ethnicity	74.77%	71.75%
Religion	73.85%	70.45%
Sex	100%	100%
Sexual orientation	74.45%	71.43%
Trans status	72.59%	69.48%
Gender identity	74.45%	71.43%

In 2025 we will run a campaign reminding employees to share their protected characteristic data. We will highlight why we ask for this information and how we use it. We also remind employees to complete this information when they join the SSSC.

The percentage of employees who have completed the marriage or civil partnership question is lower than other protected characteristics. We think this is because that question is on a separate part of our HR form. We have seen an improvement in this figure since the previous report and we are looking at how we can improve this. Employees can also share information on their gender identity.

We invite our employees to share information on whether they provide unpaid care or have experience of care. The information informs our approach to developing flexible terms and conditions. It will also help us to monitor the effectiveness of our Disability and [Care Experience Guaranteed Interview schemes](#).

## Overview of SSSC employees by protected characteristics

All employee tables have an asterisk where there are fewer than five employees in each category. In some cases we anonymise more figures. This is so that it is not possible to work out the missing figures.

- Data from the [2022 Scottish Census](#) helps us to understand whether our employees is representative of the overall population. These figures do not provide a direct comparison as Census data include children, people who are retired and others who are not in employment. This section references Census data on [disability](#), [ethnicity](#) and [religion](#).
- Our [Workforce Data Website](#) has equality data on registrants, the wider social service workforce and Mental Health Officers (MHOs.) The data on SSSC registrants is from our [Analysis of registrant equality data report](#) and is a snapshot as of January 2024.

## Age

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	% of employees	Headcount	% of employees
Under 25	*		*	
25-34	59	18.38%	56	18.18%
35-44	106	33.02%	110	35.71%
45-54	78	24.30%	77	25.00%
55-64	66	20.56%	58	18.83%
65+	*		*	
Total	321	100.00%	308	100.00%

- As of December 2024, approximately 36% of our employees are between 35-44 years of age.
- Scotland's overall population continues to age. Between 2011 and 2022 the 15 to 64 year population decreased by 37,000, down 1.1%. The 65+ population increased by 200,700, up 22.5%.

- As of January 2024, [Approximately 44% our registrants are aged between 30 and 49](#). Those under 20 years old and over 65 are the least represented at 2.4% and 3.8% respectively.
- [Is Scotland Fairer \(November 2023\)](#) notes that 'Young people aged 16–19 were more likely to be in education, employment or training in 2022 than they were in 2016. The proportion of 16–19-year-olds in education, employment or training increased from 90.4% to 92.4% over this period.'

## Disability

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	% of employees	Headcount	% of employees
Don't know	*		*	
No	177	55.14%	166	53.90%
Prefer not to say	*		*	
Yes	39	12.15%	36	11.69%
Unknown	79	24.61%	90	29.22%
Total	321	100.00%	308	100.00%

- As of December 2024, approximately 12% of our employees tell us that they have a disability. This figure is largely unchanged since 2023.
- The [number of people in Scotland](#) who have a long term illness, disease or condition increased from 18.7% in 2011 to 21.4% in 2022. The figures show that the number of people who have a mental health condition more than doubled between 2011 and 2022.
- As of January 2024, approximately 5.4% of SSSC registrants (when we exclude not reported) [have a disability with the overwhelming majority, 94.6%, reporting they have do not have disability](#).
- [Is Scotland Fairer \(November 2023\)](#) notes that 'despite increasing levels of employment, disabled people in Scotland are more likely to earn a lower hourly wage and / or be in low-paid employment than are non-disabled people, with the gap widening.' We do not explore whether we have a disability pay gap in this report due to relatively small numbers of employees who tell us that they have one. We will continue to explore how we can report on this in future reports.

## Marriage or civil partnership

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	% of employees	Headcount	% of employees
Civil Partnership	*		*	
Cohabiting	16	4.98%	16	5.19%
Divorced/ Dissolved	*		*	
Married	63	19.63%	61	19.81%
Other	*		*	
Prefer not to say	16	4.98%	16	5.19%
Separated	*		*	
Single	*		*	
Widow	*		*	
Unknown	218	67.91%	205	66.56%
Total	321	100.00%	308	100.00%

## Race / Ethnicity

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	% of employees	Headcount	% of employees
White	223	69.47%	202	65.58%
Any mixed of multiple ethnic groups (please specify below)	*		*	
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	6	1.87%	7	2.27%
African, African Scottish or African British	*		*	
Caribbean or Black	*		*	
Other ethnic group (please specify)	*		*	
Prefer not to say	7	2.18%	8	2.60%
Unknown	76	23.66%	87	28.25%
Total	321	100.00%	308	100.00%

- As of December 2024, approximately 66% of our employees define as white, approximately 3% fewer than the previous year. Approximately 2.3% define as Asian, Asian or Scottish or Asian British. We do not include data on many categories due to the relatively small numbers involved.



- As of 2022, approximately [12.9% of people in Scotland are from a minority ethnic background](#). This is an increase from 8.2% in 2011. This increase in people across minority ethnic backgrounds is driven by increases across several groups. This includes a near 3% increase in the numbers of people defining themselves as 'other White', a 1.67% increase in Polish people and more than 1% increase in the percentage of people describing themselves as African, Scottish African or British African. These figures are for the whole Scottish population. See table 5 in the 2022 [Census data](#) report for further information and notes on comparing this data.
- As of January 2024, [most people on our Register identify as White \(84.2%\), with smaller representations from African, Scottish African or British African \(7.1%\) and Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian \(3.8%\) categories](#). Some parts of the Register such as support workers for care homes have a greater percentage of registrants who define as African (17.3%) or Asian (8.3%).
- We do not explore whether we have an ethnicity pay gap in this report due to relatively small numbers of employees who tell us that they have one. We will continue to explore whether we can meaningfully report on this in future reports.

## Religion

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	% of employees	Headcount	% of employees
Buddhist	*		*	
Church of Scotland	49	15.26%	39	12.66%
Hindu	*		*	
Jewish	*		*	
Muslim	*		*	
None	129	40.19%	124	40.26%
Other	*		*	
Other Christian	*		*	
Roman Catholic	25	7.79%	23	7.47%
Sikh	*		*	
Prefer not to say	20	6.23%	22	7.14%
Unknown	79	24.61%	91	29.55%
Total	321	100.00%	308	100.00%

- As of December 2024, approximately 40% of our employees tell us that they do not have any religion. This figure is largely unchanged since 2023.
- As of 2022, [approximately 51% of people in Scotland indicate that they have no religion](#). The Church of Scotland remains the largest group among those who said they had a religion.

- As of January 2024, [approximately 37.4% of SSSC registrants \(when we exclude not reported\) do not identify with a religion or body](#). Other Christian and Roman Catholic have the next higher representations at 23.5% and 10.2% respectively.

## Sex

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	% of employees	Headcount	% of employees
Female	239	74.45%	236	76.62%
Male	82	25.55%	72	23.38%
Total	321	100.00%	308	100.00%

- As of December 2024, approximately 77% of our employees are female, a drop of 2% since December 2022.
- As of 2022, there were 2,794,900 (51.4%) females and 2,641,800 (48.6%) males in Scotland.
- As of January 2024, [approximately 84.8% of our Register \(when we remove the 3.3% of registrants who have not told us their sex\)](#) define as female. The percentage of females is greater in some parts of the sector such as Early Learning and Childcare services.

## Sexual orientation

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	% of employees	Headcount	% of employees
Bi / bisexual	*			
Gay / lesbian	*		6	1.95%
Heterosexual / straight	214	66.67%	196	63.64%
Other	*			
Prefer not to say	*		16	5.19%
Unknown	77	23.99%	88	28.57%
Total	321	100.00%	308	100.00%

- As of December 2024, approximately 64% of employees define as heterosexual or straight, approximately 3% fewer than the previous year. Approximately 34% of our employees have not completed this question or indicated that they would prefer not to say.
- As of 2022 there were [183,860 LGB+ people in Scotland, 4.0% of people aged 16 or over](#). Around two in five LGB+ people (80,260 people) identified as bisexual. A similar number of people (80,100) identified as

gay or lesbian. This was the first time that the Census has collected and published information on sexual orientation.

- As of January 2024, [approximately 88.3% of our registrants \(when we exclude not reported\) identify as straight or heterosexual \(88.3%\)](#). Smaller percentages identify as bisexual (2%) and gay or lesbian (2.2%).

### Trans status / Gender reassignment

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	% of employees	Headcount	% of employees
No	225	70.09%	205	66.56%
Yes	*		*	
Prefer not to say	*		*	
Unknown	83	25.86%	94	30.52%
Total	321	100.00%	308	100.00%

- As of December 2024, approximately 66% of our employees indicated that they are not trans, although at least 31% of employees have not completed this question.
- In 2022, [Scotland's Census found that 19,990 people were trans or had a trans history](#). This is 0.44% of people aged 16 and over.
- We have recently started to collect data on registrants' trans status. The data is steadily improving and we will publish the findings in future.

### Gender identity

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	% of employees	Headcount	% of employees
Female	177	55.14%	171	55.52%
In another way	*		*	
Male	52	16.20%	39	12.66%
Prefer not to say	*		*	
Unknown	77	23.99%	88	28.57%
Total	321	100.00%	308	100.00%

- As of December 2024 approximately 56% of employees tell us that they are female, although over 29% did not answer this question.

## 3. Recruitment

### Recruitment (applicants)

The following tables report on the number of applicants we have received for roles at the SSSC. We share this data by protected characteristic.

We publish data on age, disability, race / ethnicity, religion, gender identity and sexual orientation. Our data currently focuses on applications. We are exploring how we can also publish meaningful information on successful applicants given the relatively low number of appointments per year.

#### Age

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Under 25	61	16.80%	56	11.45%
25-34	93	25.62%	141	28.83%
35-44	86	23.69%	144	29.45%
45-54	69	19.01%	100	20.45%
55-64	27	7.44%	37	7.57%
65+	*		*	
Unknown	*		*	
Total	363	100.00%	489	100.00%

#### Disability

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Don't know	*		*	
No	293	80.72%	400	81.80%
Prefer not to say	20	5.51%	21	4.29%
Yes	43	11.85%	67	13.70%
Unknown	*		*	
Total	363	100.00%	489	100.00%

## Marriage or civil partnership

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Civil Partnership	7	1.93%	8	1.64%
Cohabiting	53	14.60%	81	16.56%
Divorced/ Dissolved	10	2.75%	14	2.86%
Married	125	34.44%	208	42.54%
Other	*		*	
Prefer not to say	14	3.86%	14	2.86%
Separated	10	2.75%	8	1.64%
Single	134	36.91%	148	30.27%
Widow	*		*	
Unknown	6	1.65%	*	
Total	363	100.00%	489	100.00%

## Race / Ethnicity

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
White	295	81.27%	398	81.39%
Any mixed of multiple ethnic groups (please specify below)	9	2.48%	*	
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	20	5.51%	30	6.13%
African, African Scottish or African British	16	4.41%	38	7.77%
Caribbean or Black	*		*	
Other ethnic group	*		6	1.23%
Prefer not to say	12	3.31%	11	2.25%
Unknown	8	2.20%	*	
Total	363	100.00%	489	100.00%

## Religion

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Buddhist	*		*	
Church of Scotland	45	12.40%	60	12.27 %
Hindu	*		*	
Jewish	*		*	
Muslim	7	1.93%	11	2.25%
None	184	50.69%	273	55.83%
Other	6	1.65%	6	1.23%
Other Christian (Please Specify)	25	6.89%	38	7.77%
Roman Catholic	41	11.29%	45	9.20%
Sikh			*	
Prefer not to say	39	10.74%	43	8.79%
Unknown	8	2.20%	*	
Total	363	100.00%	489	100.00%

## Gender identity

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Female	243	66.94%	350	71.57%
In another way	*		*	
Male	107	29.48%	128	26.18%
Prefer not to say	*		6	1.23%
Unknown	6	1.65%	*	
Total	363	100.00%	489	100.00%

## Sexual Orientation

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Bi / bisexual	25	6.89%	29	5.93%
Gay / lesbian	10	2.75%	24	4.91%
Homosexual / straight	297	81.82%	411	84.05%
Other	*		*	
Prefer not to say	20	5.51%	21	4.29%
Unknown	*		*	
Total	363	100.00%	489	100.00%

## New starts

This section has information on people who are joining the SSSC. We include tables on sex and age only due to the relatively small numbers involved.

### Sex

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Female	21	67.74%	20	68.97%
Male	10	32.26%	9	31.03%
Total	31	100.00%	29	100.00%

### Age

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Under 25	*		*	
25-34	12	38.71%%	7	24.14%
35-44	*		9	31.03%
45-54	6	19.35%	7	24.14%
55-64	*		*	
65+	*		*	
Total	31	100.00%	29	100.00%

## 4. Retention

This section has data on several areas such as the number of employees who are on maternity or have flexible working applications. It also has data on people who join or leave the SSSC. Due to the small numbers we only publish data for some protected characteristics, typically sex and age.

### Paid related absences

- For the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 – 31 December 2023 there were six employees who went on maternity leave (2%). There were also 64 employees who took paid absence (17%)
- For the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 – 31 December 2024 there were 14 employees who went on maternity leave (4%). There were also 55 employees who took paid absence (15%)

### Flexible working applications

This section has data on flexible working applications and percentage of working with a flexible working application by age. We include total number of applications rather than headcount as some people will have had more than one application. The tables includes employees who have a part-time contract.

The SSSC has a family friendly approach and we have several policies to support our employees. Further information is available from our website.

### Successful flexible working applications by Age

	2023			2024		
	Successful Applications	Headcount	% of successful applicants	Successful Applications	Headcount	% of successful applicants
Under 25	*			*		
25-34	31	25	28.44%	16	15	22.54%
35-44	31	23	28.44%	25	18	35.21%
45-54	23	22	21.10%	15	9	21.13%
55-64	22	20	20.18%	15	14	21.13%
65+	*			*		
Total	109	92	100.00%	71	55	100.00%



### Headcount and % of the employees with a flexible working pattern

	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023			31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024		
	Headcount	%	% of employees	Headcount	%	% of employees
Under 25	*			*		
25-34	20	14.39%	33.90%	19	14.50%	33.93%
35-44	44	31.65%	41.51%	45	34.35%	40.91%
45-54	36	25.90%	46.15%	31	23.66%	40.26%
55-64	34	24.46%	51.52%	34	25.95%	58.62%
65+	*			*		
Total	139	100.00%	43.30%	131	100.00%	42.53%

### Successful flexible working applications by Sex

	2023			2024		
	Successful Applications	Headcount	% of successful applicants	Successful Applications	Headcount	% of successful applicants
Female	88	72	80.73%	61	46	85.92%
Male	21	20	19.27%	10	9	14.08%
Total	109	92	100.00%	71	55	100.00%

### Headcount and % of the employees with a flexible working pattern

	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023			31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024		
	Headcount	%	% of employees	Headcount	%	% of employees
Female	123	88.49%	51.46%	118	90.08%	50.00%
Male	16	11.51%	19.51%	13	9.92%	18.06%
Total	139	100.00%	43.30%	131	100.00%	42.53%

## Promotions

The following tables contain data on internal promotions by age and sex. We have had to suppress some figures due to the relatively small numbers involved.

### Promotions by Age

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Under 25	*		*	
25-34	12	29.27%	*	
35-44	8	19.51%	10	52.63%
45-54	9	21.95%	*	
55-64	10	24.39%	*	
65+	*		*	
Total	41	100.00%	19	100.00%

### Promotion by Sex

	2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Female	35	85.37%	12	63.16%
Male	6	14.63%	7	36.84%
Total	41	100.00%	19	100.00%

## Leavers

These tables have data on people who leave the SSSC. People leave us for various reasons such as redundancies, dismissals and resignations. This data includes people who leave us at the end of a fixed term contract. These tables include everyone who left the SSSC in 2023 and 2024.

[Our Annual Report and Accounts 2023-2024](#) has figures for the number of employees who leave with a severance package during each financial year (three in 2022/23, and none in 2023/24.)

## Age

### Leavers by Age

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Under 25	*		*	
25-34	18	39.13%	11	28.95%
35-44	7	15.22%	*	
45-54	*		8	21.05%
55-64	13	28.26%	11	28.95%
65+	*		*	
Total	46	100.00%	38	100.00%

### Leavers by Sex

	December 2023		December 2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Female	32	69.57%	21	55.26%
Male	14	30.43%	17	44.74%
Total	46	100.00%	38	100.00%

## 5. Learning and Development

### Mandatory courses

All SSSC employees must complete mandatory learning and development courses. Some courses must be completed once.

The following tables sets out the proportion of all SSSC employees who have completed selected training courses as of December 2024. We do not have a robust picture for 2023.

#### SSSC employees, mandatory training completion rates, December 2024

Course	As at December 2024
Diversity and equality	91%
Handling workplace stress	86%
Staying safe with DSE	82%
Three mottos for equality, diversity and inclusion	95%
Unconscious Bias in the workplace	94%
Protecting people	82%
Introduction to Children's Rights	87%

### Non-mandatory courses

The following tables cover completions of non-mandatory courses. In these tables completions means the number of completed training program, course, or session. There will be double counting as many employees will complete more than one course while some people may not have completed any.

We provide a wide mix of courses identified to meet skill gaps and development needs such as Professional Qualifications, Job Specific and Digital Skill training, Personal Development, Leadership & Management and additional equalities and wellbeing courses. Courses cover several topics such as protecting people, understanding discrimination, children's rights and care experience.

We only publish data on age and sex due to the small numbers involved for many other protected characteristics.

### Completed Training by Age

	2023			2024		
	Number of completions	Headcount	%	Number of completions	Headcount	%
Under 25	9	6	1.39%	*	*	
25-34	93	50	17.09%	118	37	17.83%
35-44	229	98	34.70%	226	76	35.87%
45-54	203	70	30.76%	180	59	28.57%
55-64	116	58	17.58%	98	45	15.56%
65+	10	8	1.52%	*	*	
Total	660	290	100.00%	630	222	100.00%

### Completed Training by Sex

	2023			2024		
	Number of completions	Headcount	%	Number of completions	Headcount	%
Female	497	216	75.30%	505	172	80.16%
Male	163	74	74%	125	50	19.84%
Total	660	290	100.00%	630	222	100.00%

## 6. Staff grades

This section has data on SSSC employees by grades. This table includes internal and outward secondments. It also includes staff who are on long term absence.

We continue to explore how we can publish further data on grades, occupational segregation and protected characteristics, particularly race and disability.

### Grades by Sex

	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023					
	Female			Male		
	Headcount	% of Sex	% of Grade	Headcount	% of Sex	% of Grade
SCCEO	*	*	*	*	*	*
A2	*	*	*	*	*	*
B3	*	*	*	*	*	*
C4	8	3.35%	57.14%	6	7.32%	42.86%
C5	37	15.48%	68.52%	17	20.73%	31.48%
D6	36	15.06%	80.00%	9	10.98%	20.00%
D7	35	14.64%	64.81%	19	23.17%	35.19%
E8	13	5.44%	*	*	*	*
E9	17	7.11%	*	*	*	*
F10	52	21.76%	82.54%	11	13.41%	
F11	31	12.97%	72.09%	12	14.63%	
Total	239	100.00%	74.45%	82	100.00%	

	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024					
	Female			Male		
	Headcount	% of Sex	% of Grade	Headcount	% of Sex	% of Grade
SCCEO	*	*	*	*	*	*
A2	*	*	*	*	*	*
B3	6	*	*	*	*	*
C4	9	3.81%	60.00%	6	8.33%	40.00%
C5	36	15.25%	70.59%	15	20.83%	29.41%
D6	38	16.10%	77.55%	11	15.28%	22.45%
D7	41	17.37%	68.33%	19	26.39%	31.67%
E8	14	5.93%	*	*	*	*
E9	16	6.78%	*	*	*	*
F10	44	18.64%	83.02%	9	12.50%	16.98%
F11	28	11.86%	*	*	*	*
Total	236	100.00%	76.62%	72	100.00%	23.38%

## 7. Staff survey and Investors in People results

### Staff survey

We usually carry out a staff survey every two years. Our staff survey is based on the Civil Service People Survey and we last ran it in November 2022. The following statements are taken from the 2022 survey. The number in brackets after each statement represents the percentage of employees who agreed or strongly agreed with that statement. The figures are rounded to the nearest 1%

- I can access the right learning and development opportunities when I need to.' (78%)
- Learning and Development activities in the last 12 months have helped me to improve my performance. (71%)
- There are opportunities for me to develop my career at the SSSC. (49%)
- Learning and development activities I have completed while working at the SSSC are helping me to develop my career. (55%)
- I am treated fairly at work (86%)
- I am treated with respect by the people I work with (91%)
- I feel valued for the work I do (77%)
- I think that the SSSC respects individual difference (such as cultures, working styles, backgrounds, ideas etc) (88%)
- I feel able to challenge inappropriate behaviour in the workplace (79%)
- The SSSC is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace (85%)

### Investors in People (IIP)

In November 2024 we had confirmation that we had successfully maintained our IIP Award. We continue to look at the detailed report and to discuss any further improvements that we can make in line with our 2024-2027 People Strategy.

## 8. Pay gap and equal pay statement, December 2024

Our overall gender pay gap is based on a snapshot date as of 31 December 2023 and 31 December 2024. For transparency this section provides the data for both years.

### 31 December 2023

The data confirms that as of 2023:

- men earn more than women when we use the mean
- women earn more than men when we use the median.

31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023		
Mean female hourly	Mean male hourly	Mean gender pay %
20.59	21.42	1.04%

31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023		
Median female hourly	Median male hourly	Median gender pay
23.95	23.02	3.88%

In 2023 we had the following pay gaps:

- Full time median pay gap: 7.64%
- Part-time median pay gap: 17.13%
- Full-time mean gap: 4.21%
- Part-time mean Gap: -2.04%

31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023			
Full time male		Part-time male	
Mean	Median	Mean	Median
21.69	22.12	19.19	20.43



31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023			
Full time female		Part-time female	
Mean	Median	Mean	Median
21.06	20.02	19.45	16.59

### Pay gap by quartile

The following tables divide our employees with into four quartiles, with an equal number of employees in each section. From the highest paid to the lowest paid and including all SSSC employees. Percentages may not add up due to rounding.

### 2023

Quartile 1	Female		Male		Gap
	%	68.33	%	31.67	
	Median	13.6%	Median	13.21	-2.95%
	Mean	13.26	Mean	13.46	1.51

Quartile 2	Female		Male		Gap
	%	72.58%	%	27.42%	
	Median	16.48	Median	16.48	0
	Mean	16.7	Mean	17.72	6.11

Quartile 3	Female		Male		Gap
	%	63.79	%	36.21	
	Median	23.08	Median	22.12	4.34
	Mean	23.23	Mean	22.68	-2.37

Quartile 4	Female		Male		Gap
	%	53.7	%	46.3	
	Median	28.28	Median	28.28	0
	Mean	29.97	Mean	28.92	-3.50

### 31 December 2024

The data confirms that as of 2024:

- men earn more than women when we use the mean
- we have no pay gap when we use the median.

31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024		
Mean female hourly	Mean male hourly	Mean gender pay %
22.02	23.75	7.28

31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024		
Median female hourly	Median male hourly	Median gender pay
23.05	23.05	0%

In 2024 we had the following pay gaps:

- Full time median pay gap: -1.99%
- Part-time median pay gap: 21.9%
- Full-time Mean gap: 4.7%
- Part-time Mean Gap: 12.57%

31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024			
Full time male		Part-time male	
Mean	Median	Mean	Median
23.82	22.6	23.07	22.6

31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024			
Full time female		Part-time female	
Mean	Median	Mean	Median
22.7	23.05	20.17	17.65

## Pay gap by quartile

The following tables divide our employees into four quartiles, with an equal number of employees in each section. The lowest paid are in quarter 1 and the highest in quartile 4. The table includes all SSSC employees.

### 2024

Quartile 1	Female		Male		Gap
	%	83.78	%	16.22	
	Median	14.7	Median	14.99	1.93
	Mean	15.2	Mean	15.13	-0.46

Quartile 2	Female		Male		Gap
	%	77.03	%	22.97	
	Median	17.75	Median	20.86	
	Mean	18.97	Mean	20	

Quartile 3	Female		Male		Gap
	%	72.97	%		
	Median	24.46	Median	23.05	-6.12
	Mean	24.42	Mean	24.11	-1.29

Quartile 4	Female		Male		Gap
	%	69.33	%	30.67	
	Median	29.46	Median	29.46	0
	Mean	30.97	Mean	30.7	-0.88

## 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 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 between women and men, people and irrespective of whether people are disabled or their ethnic background. We are committed to equality for all employees irrespective of protected characteristics or background.

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

- examine and keep under review existing and future pay practices
- continue to actively monitor the impact of our pay policy
- continue to develop policies which are inclusive, family friendly and aim to address some of the wider societal trends which can cause inequality
- 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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**Summary, Equality, Mainstreaming and Outcomes report, 2025-2029**

**Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Equality mainstreaming and outcomes, April 2025**

We have a key role and opportunity to promote equality. We aim to remove barriers which stop people from using services and we must look to remove disadvantages. We must also promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This report sets out how we mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion in our work. It shows what we did since 2021 and our plans (outcomes) for 2025-2029.

**2021-2025 outcomes: what we did**

**Outcome one:** To promote diversity in the social care workforce, including disabled people, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with care experience.

- We made it easier for registrants to share equality information on [MySSSC](#). In 2024 we published the findings in our [Analysis of diversity data and research report](#). Our [Workforce Data Reports](#) continue to have information on age, gender, disability and ethnicity.
- We create resources for employers on areas such as [Pre-employment and Induction for Employers of Overseas workers, Refugees and Asylum Seekers](#) and [Safer Recruitment through Better Recruitment](#). They help promote equality and diversity 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 care experienced.

- People with lived experience informed our review of the [Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers](#). We involved registrants and others in other areas, such as [changes to Registration](#), creating a [National Induction Framework for Adult Social Care staff](#) and introducing a supported first year for [Newly Qualified Social Workers \(NQSW\)](#).

**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.

- We are part of the [Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework \(SCQF\) Inclusive Recruiter scheme](#). This scheme helps people to identify if they have the qualifications or experience for a role with us.
- We have [Disability Confident Level 3 Leader status](#) and created a [Care Experience Guaranteed interview scheme](#) and introduced training for our employees on areas such as understanding discrimination, unconscious bias and children's rights. We also maintained our Investors in People Gold award. These initiatives help us all to think about equality in our work.

### Summary, Equality, Mainstreaming and Outcomes report, 2025-2029

In 2024 we made [changes to Register](#). We involved registrants and asked them to help us consider how we can promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

- Most people welcomed the reduced number of Register parts and steps to make it easier for people to move between adult and children's roles.
- We revised the [Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers](#). The new Codes say more on the importance of relationships and are part of our commitment to [Keep the Promise](#) to Scotland's children and young people. We have versions in Gaelic, easy read and other versions. We create other versions as requested.

### 2025-2029 outcomes: what we'll do next

**Outcome one:** We will improve our understanding of the diversity of the registered social work, social care and children and young people workforce particularly disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and sexual orientation.

- We continue to publish equality data on people who register with us. We recently ran a survey on the health and wellbeing of people who work in social work, social care and children and young people services. We will explore what we can do following that survey.
- We will publish new guidance to support Fitness to Practice decisions.
- We will explore how people move through education and into the workforce. We help to [quality assure](#) and approve courses such as the degree in social work. We will explore how providers promote equal opportunity.

**Outcome two:** We will improve the way that we involve people in our work and how we consider our impact.

- We will have a new procedure for paying expenses and participants' time. We will look at how we better involve people with lived and living experience in our work.
- We will aim to make our reports to be easier to read and understand.

**Outcome three:** We promote an inclusive culture within our organisation.

- We continue to develop and support our employees. This includes guaranteed interview schemes and reasonable adjustments when people apply for a role and work with us.
- We have Investors in People (IIP) Gold Status and the Investors in Young People award. The IIP review highlighted the need for our people to feel valued and to get the best from learning and development opportunities. We will look at how we can do more to support that.

Main report: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Mainstreaming and Outcomes report, 2025-2029, April 2025 Data annex, April 2025