

<b>Title of report</b>	Future Proofing Programme consultation analysis
<b>Summary/purpose of report</b>	The report provides a summary of the consultation responses and sets out the next steps.
<b>Recommendations</b>	The Council is asked to note the report.
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<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Maree Allison, Director, Regulation
<b>Link to Strategic Plan</b>	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: People who use services are protected by ensuring the regulated workforce is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: The SSSC supports and enhances the development of the registered workforce to deliver high standards of practice and drive improvement.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Our workforce planning activities support employers, commissioners and policy makers to deliver a sustainable, integrated and innovative workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: The social work, social care and early years workforce is recognised as professional and regulated and valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
<b>Link to Risk Register</b>	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p>
<b>Impact assessments</b>	1. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was not required.

	<p>2. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) was not required.</p> <p>3. A Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) was not required.</p>
<b>Documents attached</b>	<p>Appendix 1: Registration, qualification and skills consultation analysis</p> <p>Appendix 2: Breakdown of responses by group and register part</p>
<b>Background papers</b>	None

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The Future Proofing Programme (the programme) started in November 2021 with a series of aims spanning registration, qualifications, and the Codes of Practice. The first phase of programme activity involved consulting with the sector to understand their views about our registration, qualifications and skills proposals.
2. The consultation ran for 12 weeks from December 2021 to March 2022 featuring questions framed around several key areas. We experienced a high level of engagement and 6533 responses were received.
3. Respondents agreed with most of our proposals. Some concerns expressed included potential expansion of the information available on the public facing Register and possible changes to qualifications.
4. This report focuses on the consultation proposals which did not attract strong agreement and sets out future areas of work. Appendices 1 and 2 provide details of the consultation responses and breakdown by respondent group type.
5. As part of our ongoing engagement with the sector about the programme, we will publish the extent of our analysis to date.

## **AREAS OF FOCUS**

### **Public Facing Register**

6. Our proposals under this topic include showing the following information on the public facing Register:
  - level of role
  - whether a registrant has the qualification for their role
  - whether there is a fitness to practise warning and/or condition (information currently published on our website but not linked to the public facing register entry)
  - whether a registrant holds a specialist qualification such as a mental health officer award or a practice teaching award.
7. Agreement with these proposals from registrants, individuals, employers/service providers, service users, carers, organisations who represent people who use social services/carers and other organisations was between 51% – 62%.
8. The proposals did not garner the same degree of support as other questions such as, for example, whether to reduce the number of register parts where 88% of respondents from these groups agreed. However,

service user and carer respondents registered higher levels of support for these proposals.

9. Most submissions from organisations forming part of the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) were not in agreement with the proposals. The concerns expressed centred around registrant privacy and the potential for the information to be used inappropriately by the public. None of the respondents agreed that the public Register should show fitness to practise warning and conditions.

### **Adult Social Care Qualifications**

10. We asked questions in the consultation about whether:
  - to set the qualification requirement for support workers in housing support services and care at home services at SCQF level 7
  - we should introduce an additional Register part for practitioners at SCQF level 7 to allow employers to decide what level is most appropriate.
11. Agreement with these proposals from registrants, individuals, employers/service providers, service users, carers, organisations who represent people who use social services/carers and other organisations fluctuated between 59% - 66%.
12. Most respondents to these questions who identified as registrants within housing support and care at home services expressed agreement ranging between 50%-78%.
13. All respondents to questions about the adult social care qualifications from care at home and housing support register parts agreed with the introduction of a new Register part for practitioners at SCQF level 7. Although there was majority agreement with changes to the qualification level, it was not significantly over 50% for each category of housing support and care at home registrant.
14. Responses from SAG members were much clearer. Most SAG respondents did not agree with our proposals with written submissions setting out concerns relating to support workers in these settings gaining the necessary evidence to meet the SCQF 7 requirements, the financial impact on both workers paying for the qualification and the sector then finding the funds to remunerate them accordingly based on a higher level of qualification.

## **FURTHER PLANNED WORK**

15. Our detailed analysis of the consultation results continues and we will use the information to form the focus of workshops with SAG members and others over the Summer.
16. The workshops will allow us to explore stakeholder views about all aspects of our consultation in more detail but crucially provide us with an opportunity to better understand specific concerns raised regarding qualification levels and the information we present on the public facing Register.
17. Subject to plans progressing as scheduled, we will continue to finalise our analysis, working with stakeholders over the summer, before presenting Council options for consideration and decision in November 2022.

## **CONSULTATION**

18. During the consultation we worked closely with the sector. We held a series of engagement sessions facilitated by the Head of Registration and the Acting Director of Development and Innovation.
19. We ran 13 online events and 256 people attended the events with an average of 21 people at each. We reached people using our social media platforms including 5,000 through Facebook, 7,000 via Twitter, 70,000 views on our website and 55,000 people accessing the consultation space via SSSC News emails. We reached out to service user and carer groups to bring their perspective. The level of response is sufficient to provide us with statistical confidence.
20. We responded to requests for specific meetings from the Scottish Out of School Care Network and the National Day Nurseries Association. We also met with Scottish Care for both care home and care at home services and the Coalition of Care Providers in Scotland (CCPS).
21. We recognise the ongoing development of the National Care Service (NCS) and its connection to our work in relation to the programme. We continue to engage in national discussions regarding the NCS and SAG membership includes NCS representation.
22. We acknowledge that each group of respondents presents their own distinct profile and our forthcoming options regarding registration, qualifications and skills will be made after careful consideration of all submissions.

## **RISKS**

23. The Sponsor Group has oversight of the risks associated with the programme. The risk to highlight in relation to the analysis of the consultation responses relates to weighting.
24. SAG members queried how we would weight responses from different stakeholder groups varying in size. Weighting ensures that our final proposals are arrived at fairly and there are reputational risks if we fail to demonstrate that we have treated responses appropriately. We will carefully consider this as part of our work developing options for Council in November 2022.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Resourcing and Compliance**

25. The programme's Sponsor Group has oversight of the governance structure, including resource implications and risk as agreed by Council in 2021. The content of this report does not create any resourcing or compliance implications.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

### **Equalities and Data**

26. The consultation proposals have equality, diversity, data and other business implications identified as part of the impact assessment developed prior to the consultation launching. We have gathered further information from respondents about impacts.
27. As we progress with our analysis, we will have a stronger understanding of the potential impacts as expressed by stakeholders and customers by Council's November 2022 meeting. We intend to provide a detailed report to support and inform Council's decision making by this time.

## **CONCLUSION**

28. The registration, qualification and skills consultation generated significant engagement, diverse responses and provided evidence of agreement with most of our proposals under these areas. The consultation also identified areas of concern.
29. Subject to there being no emerging requirements or issues which change our plans, over the Summer we will work with SAG and others to develop proposals and options in time for November Council, supported by analysis of equality and other impacts.