



Department
for Education



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Social Work England Secondary Legislative Framework

Government consultation response

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Ministerial Foreword

In February, we wrote to encourage everyone with an interest in social work and professional regulation to respond to the consultation on the regulatory framework for Social Work England. Thank you to all of you who took the time to give us your views.

The consultation offered the opportunity to influence the core elements of the regulatory framework for the future regulator of social workers in England, Social Work England, and shape the future of the social work profession. It demonstrated our commitment to working with a wide range of stakeholders, as well as our confidence that the impact of the new regulator will be positive for not only the social work profession, but also the vulnerable adults, children and families with whom social work professionals work. At its heart, social work is a profession that is concerned with promoting social change, individual and collective well-being and challenging social injustice.

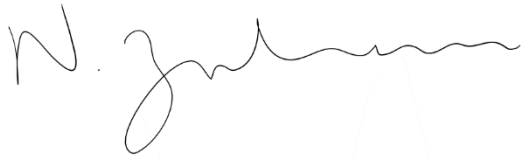
There can be no doubt that social work is a highly challenging profession. Our vision is a profession where social workers will be able to benefit from the highest quality initial education and training delivered by experts who ensure graduates are prepared for the challenges of frontline social work; a profession with improved capability through clear expectations about continuing professional development throughout a social worker's career; and, a profession where frontline practitioners are highly skilled, confident and have strong, supportive supervision and leadership. Establishing Social Work England is a core part of making this vision a reality.

The aim of the regulatory framework, on which we consulted, is to enable Social Work England to operate streamlined, proportionate and efficient systems and processes which adapt to emerging opportunities, challenges and best practice, ensuring professional regulation reflects the changing reality of delivering social work practice safely and effectively – building public trust and confidence in the profession. We are taking clear and practical steps to respond to what both experts, professionals and the sector are saying to us and have engaged extensively with stakeholders throughout the consultation period.

We have already made significant progress in establishing the regulator. At the end of last year, we announced that Social Work England will be based in Sheffield. In April, we announced that Lord Patel of Bradford had been appointed as the Chair of Social Work England. As a former social worker, trainer, tutor, and lecturer in social work – we are confident that Lord Patel of Bradford will ensure that Social Work England is established as an effective, innovative and modern regulator with public protection at its heart, able to understand the unique challenges faced by social work professionals.

Finally, we see establishing Social Work England as a partnership with you. Your responses show that many of you also see that this is about working in partnership, about expressing your views and influencing how we deliver our vision. We want to

encourage you to continue to work both with us, and with Lord Patel of Bradford and Social Work England.



Nadhim Zahawi
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
for Children and Families



Caroline Dinenage
Minister of State
for Care

Introduction

Background

The Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care both published policy documents¹ in July 2016, which set out the Government's reform vision for social work. These reforms aim to promote a strong, consistently effective social work profession that is well trained, competent and properly supported to transform the lives of those who are most vulnerable.

At the heart of our vision for the social work profession is establishing a new specialist social work regulator, Social Work England, which will focus on public protection and ensuring quality within the social work profession.

Social Work England

In January 2016, the then Secretary of State for Education and the Health Secretary of State announced that, as part of our social work reform programme, we would establish Social Work England as the new regulator for social workers in England.

Social Work England will, as a separate legal entity in the form of a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), operate at arm's length from Government. It will take over the regulation of social workers in England from the current regulator, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). HCPC regulates social workers in England alongside 15 other professions, which means that it cannot develop the same in-depth understanding of the profession as we believe a specialist regulator can.

Social Work England's central focus will be public protection. It will achieve this by:

- setting profession-specific standards that clarify expectations about the knowledge, skills, values and behaviours required to become and remain registered as a social worker in England;
- setting profession-specific standards for initial education and training to ensure that newly qualified social workers are prepared for the challenges of direct practice with service users;

¹The Department of Health and Social Care published *Strategic statement for social work with adults in England* ([Department of Health strategic statement for social work with adults in England 2016-2020](#)) and the Department for Education published *Putting children first, delivering our vision for excellent children's social care* ([Putting Children First](#))

- ensuring that all social workers maintain their fitness to practise by setting out expectations for continuous fitness to practise and operating a system to identify and support those social workers that are not meeting the standards; and
- having the power to set standards and approve and recognise post-qualification specialisms, helping to bring consistency to social work career pathways.

Approach and vision

In developing the legal framework for Social Work England, we undertook extensive engagement with stakeholders, including sector representative organisations, such as the British Association of Social Workers, regulatory experts and social work professional networks. We also drew on evidence and recommendations for effective professional regulation from the Government's reform proposals for healthcare regulation², the Law Commissions' recommendations on health and social care regulation³ and the Professional Standards Authority's (PSA) Right-touch reform Report.⁴

Our ambition has been to create a flexible model of professional regulation with public protection at its core, which fosters professionalism, can adapt swiftly to future developments and enables proportionate, targeted and efficient regulation. It aims to benefit social workers and service users through a profession-specific design that will support public protection and practice improvement through consulting the profession and developing strong links with employers and training providers. It will also be able to facilitate the use of regulatory data to identify and overcome the challenges facing the social work profession in England. In meeting these objectives, Social Work England aims to bring increased public confidence, raise the status of the profession and put the interests of service users at the heart of the system.

Consultation

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (the 2017 Act) establishes Social Work England. In order to operate as the regulator, however, Social Work England also needs a secondary legislative framework which sets out the core elements of how its regulatory functions will operate. The policy underpinning Social Work England's secondary legislative framework was subject to public consultation from 8 February to 21 March 2018.

² The Government is currently consulting on these proposals in *Promoting professionalism, reforming regulation* - [Promoting professionalism, reforming regulation](#)

³ The Law Commissions published a comprehensive review of the legal framework for the regulation of health and social care professionals in the UK in 2014 - [Law Commission: regulation of health and social care professionals](#)

⁴ The PSA's most recent right-touch reform paper was published in November 2017 - [PSA: Right-touch reform - a new framework for assurance of professions](#)

We received 198 responses to the consultation from a wide variety of interested stakeholders, including representatives from social worker networks, local authorities, unions, charities, education providers, service user groups, regulatory bodies and individual social workers. During the consultation period, officials also held 11 events, consulting with social workers, education providers and interested parliamentarians. A summary list of these events can be found at **Annex A**. As we did when we developed the draft regulations prior to consultation, officials met with representatives of our Regulatory Expert Group and Advisory Group. A summary list of members for each of these groups can be found at **Annex B**.

This document summarises the results of the consultation, and sets out the Government's response. A list of the organisations which responded to the consultation (and did not opt for their response to remain confidential) is available at **Annex C**.

Many of the respondents who commented on the proposed provisions for the draft regulations also provided wider comments on the way in which Social Work England will operate as the regulator on a day-to-day basis, and how it might consider effective and efficient ways to discharge its functions. While these comments fall outside of the scope of this consultation, Social Work England will have rule-making powers to set out its operational procedures and processes. The draft regulations require that Social Work England consult when making rules, and we would hope that respondents will welcome the opportunity to contribute further to any future consultation to help shape the way Social Work England operates.

Summary of responses received

The consultation sought feedback on the policy underpinning the secondary legislative framework for Social Work England, focussing on the regulator's core regulatory functions and other functions concerned with the operation and oversight of the regulator.

Overall, respondents supported the majority of proposals. A few areas of concern were also highlighted through the consultation responses. The key themes addressed by respondents to the consultation are summarised below, with a detailed numerical analysis and the Government response in the next section.

Core regulatory functions

An accurate and transparent register is crucial for effective regulation. We consulted on proposals to allow Social Work England to register social workers with conditions, introduce English language controls, and annotate sanctions and additional qualifications, specialisms or accreditations on the register. Overall, a significant majority of respondents broadly supported all our proposals on **registration**, including proportionate English language controls, annotation of current and expired fitness to practise sanctions on the register, and permitting Social Work England to annotate additional qualifications, specialisms and accreditations where this supports public protection. Whilst the majority supported conditional registration, some respondents expressed concerns, including limiting a registrant's scope of practice. The regulations provide a power for Social Work England to attach conditions as a proportionate means of supporting social workers to ensure they can remain practising safely. Conditional registration is specific to registration eligibility and not intended to support restricting the practice of social workers generally. Social Work England will be required to set out the circumstances in which it may grant registration subject to a condition, in rules.

The approval of **education and training** courses and qualifications is concerned with maintaining the quality of professional education and ensures that students meet the necessary standards for registration and public protection. We consulted on proposals to allow Social Work England to determine the criteria for the approval of education and training courses and qualifications and post-qualifying courses in regulatory rules, and to suspend or attach conditions to education and training course approval. The majority of respondents supported these proposals, particularly regarding the flexibility to allow Social Work England to respond and adapt with the profession. There were some concerns regarding the power to suspend approval of education courses as a remedial measure. We have subsequently decided that Social Work England will not have this power, as we are confident that the quality of social work education can be maintained through the power to attach conditions to course approval.

An effective **fitness to practise** system is critically important both in terms of public protection and public confidence in regulated professions. We consulted on whether the fitness to practise proposals provided for a number of essential elements, including a clear right of appeal and separation between the investigation and adjudication functions. We also consulted on proposals to introduce a number of new, more streamlined processes within Social Work England's fitness to practise system. The majority of responses supported these proposals, including providing for more efficient means of resolving cases and expedited processes where registrants have been convicted of certain very serious offences or other criminal offences resulting in custodial sentences.

A particular concern was raised about the proposed process for making interim orders and whether this was compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Respondents were also clear that the framework should ensure a clear separation between investigation and adjudication. In response to these concerns, we have provided that interim orders can only be made by adjudicators. We have also created a clearer separation between the investigation, case examination and adjudication functions in the draft regulations, and clarified registrants' rights to a hearing.

Operation and oversight of the regulator

We consulted on proposals to allow Social Work England to set out the detail about how it will charge **fees** in relation to registration and for education and training course approval in rules. The large majority of respondents agreed with these proposals, which have been taken forward in the draft regulations. Some respondents were concerned about the potential for increased registration fees and specifically requested that the process for setting fees should be transparent and that fees should be proportionate. Social Work England is required to consult on rules, therefore respondents will have further opportunities to respond on fees.

We consulted on several oversight options for Social Work England's **regulatory rules**. The majority of respondents thought that oversight should apply to all rules, with the preferred oversight option being that rules are submitted to the Secretary of State for a minimum approval period of 28 days and then come into force. A refined version of this procedure features in the draft regulations. We are confident that this process will provide sufficient oversight without unnecessary delay, allowing Social Work England to operate more efficiently.

We consulted on proposals relating to the bodies that Social Work England should be placed under a **duty to co-operate** with, in addition to those already required under the 2017 Act. A significant majority of respondents agreed that Social Work England should be required to co-operate with relevant inspectorates, the police, NHS bodies and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The draft regulations reflect this.

The 2017 Act provides **default powers** for the Secretary of State to take action where the regulator has, or is likely to, default in performing its functions. We consulted on whether the level of detail in the draft regulations about how these powers would be exercised was sufficient. Three quarters of the respondents that answered the question agreed that there was sufficient detail in the regulations. Some concerns were raised about the threshold for regulatory failure and the potential for political interference if the Secretary of State is able to take over regulatory functions. In response to these concerns, the draft regulations restrict the Secretary of State from making fitness to practise determinations or decisions about an individual social worker's registration status.

We consulted on the **PSA oversight** role and whether the level of detail in draft regulations about its scope was sufficient. A significant proportion of the respondents who provided a definitive response agreed with the level of detail provided but many were unsure. The PSA raised concerns about the lack of oversight of accepted outcome fitness to practise cases. This is covered in more detail in the main consultation analysis section. The draft regulations will provide that the PSA will have the same oversight role as it has for the other health and care regulators.

We also consulted on the **impacts** the regulatory proposals were likely to have. Overall, we do not believe that these provisions create any new additional financial burdens. We recognise the concerns raised about the cost of regulation increasing. Government is making a significant investment in establishing Social Work England. It will ensure that any set up and transition costs do not fall on social workers, or any of the other professions regulated by HCPC. We have also taken this opportunity to establish Social Work England in the current legislative framework for equality and diversity. Taking account of views offered through the consultation, we have ensured that Social Work England will be subject to the public sector equality duty in respect of all its functions.

Among the **other issues** raised by respondents were the need for further clarity on the role of Government in relation to Social Work England, strong support for collaboration between Social Work England and the sector and the importance of minimising disruption to the profession during the transfer of regulatory functions. Many recognised the potential benefits a specialist, single profession regulator will bring to social workers and for the social work profession. While these responses fall outside of the scope of the consultation on the secondary legislative framework, we do expect Social Work England to work closely with the sector through its consultation on standards and regulatory rules, and as it establishes itself as the new regulator for social workers in England.

Government action

Key changes as a result of the consultation are summarised in the box below.

Summary of key changes

- The investigation, case examination and adjudication roles in the fitness to practise system must be separate.
- Interim orders can now only be made by adjudicators, rather than case examiners.
- Social Work England will not have power to suspend approval of education courses or training as a remedial measure.
- All rules will be subject to a minimum 28-day oversight period, coming into force on a date determined by the regulator at the end of this period, unless the Secretary of State objects. The regulations also provide that the regulator and Secretary of State can agree an earlier date and clarify that the Secretary of State can use their existing power to seek independent advice from the PSA.
- Under default powers, the Secretary of State will have the power to appoint an independent person to take over the regulator's functions or give effect to a remedial direction.
- The Secretary of State, or person appointed under default powers, will not be able to make a decision to make, amend, remove or restore an entry in the register.
- Modern slavery offences have been added to the list of fitness to practise automatic removal offences.
- Social Work England will be required to co-operate with NHS bodies, the police, the Disclosure and Barring Service and relevant inspectorates.

Response and analysis

A total of 198 written responses to the consultation were received, including 43 from organisations (social worker networks, social work and social care representative organisations, local authorities, unions, charities, education providers, regulatory bodies and service user groups amongst others). A full breakdown of individual respondents by category is provided in the table below.

Category	Number of responses	Percentage of individual responses ⁵
Children's social care - social worker	40	27%
Children's social care - other	4	3%
Adults' social care - social worker	38	26%
Adults' social care - other	6	4%
Local authority	3	2%
Service user	4	3%
Mental health services	13	9%
Other health services	3	2%
Higher education institution/academia	15	10%
Charity or non-governmental organisation	1	1%
Education	4	3%
Regulatory	0	0%
Prefer not to say	5	3%
Other (please state)	13	9%
Not Answered	0	0%

As the consultation covered a wide range of regulatory policy areas, not every respondent provided responses to all of the questions. The number of responses analysed below therefore varies from question to question; and in all cases the amount is lower than the total number of respondents.

⁵ Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Regulatory functions

The following paragraphs set out a summary of the responses received to each question, or group of questions, outlining whether these align with the consultation proposal and any changes made as a result.

Registration

Summary of findings

Do you agree that Social Work England should have the power to register social workers in England with conditions?

Responses	Total	Percent
Yes	148	79%
No	23	12%
Don't know	16	9%
	187	

A significant majority supported the proposal to give Social Work England the power to register social workers in England with conditions, providing flexibility to grant individuals the opportunity to meet eligibility criteria, rather than refusing registration. One organisation recognised that this approach would allow Social Work England to adopt a proportionate response to concerns and maximise retention in the workforce, whilst protecting service users. One social worker identified that conditions may in fact allow a worker to address any worries without losing their status, rather than it just being seen as a punitive measure.

Some respondents raised questions about whether registration was appropriate if registrants don't meet standards, the fair application of conditions and the importance of ensuring sufficient oversight and transparency of the procedure. In particular, respondents noted that any provisions should be clearly articulated and published by Social Work England. There was some confusion about the intention of introducing conditional registration to restrict the scope of practice of an individual social worker. We have made clear in the regulations that the ability to attach conditions to an individual's registration is linked to that individual's ability to meet eligibility criteria and requires their consent. Regulations will require Social Work England to register applicants who meet the eligibility and procedural requirements but provide flexibility to register with conditions to ensure they can remain practising safely. Social Work England will be required to make rules in relation to conditional registration, including circumstances in which the regulator may grant registration subject to conditions and review, vary and remove

conditions. Whilst in practice Social Work England could limit a registrant’s scope of practice, this is not the intention. Setting the circumstances in rules will ensure clarity about the process and how Social Work England will use its power. The regulations require a registrant’s status to be recorded appropriately on the public register.

Do you agree with the proposal to introduce proportionate English language controls as a registration requirement?

Responses	Total	Percent
Yes	159	85%
No	17	9%
Don't know	11	6%
	187	

The vast majority of respondents were in favour of introducing proportionate powers to ensure social workers have the necessary knowledge of English language. Many agreed that proficiency in both written and spoken English is fundamental to safely and effectively engage with service users and represent them. We therefore intend to take forward this proposal and provide Social Work England with proportionate powers to ensure registrants have sufficient English language skills.

It is important to note that some respondents raised questions about safeguarding against discrimination and ensuring a fair and proportionate approach. As we intend to implement the same approach as introduced for other healthcare regulators and comply with the relevant European Economic Area requirements⁶, regulations will provide for language controls to be applied proportionately in respect of EEA applicants. It is also important to note that the Immigration Act 2016 has already introduced English language requirements for public sector workers in public-facing roles. Social workers employed by local authorities will therefore already be subject to such provisions. Social Work England will be required to set the English language criteria in rules, allowing them to take a proportionate approach and use internationally accepted measures, such as the International English Language Testing System, to determine proficiency, in line with other regulators.

⁶ Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC

Do you agree that Social Work England should have the power to annotate additional qualifications, specialisms, and accreditations?

Responses	Total	Percent
Yes	134	71%
No	29	15%
Don't know	25	13%
	188	

A significant majority of respondents supported Social Work England having a power to annotate the public register with details of further qualifications, specialisms or accreditations, where this is in line with its public protection objective. Respondents acknowledged that recording post-qualification information would enable the register to provide more transparent and meaningful information on the breadth and depth of social workers' skill levels to employers and the public.

A key policy driver for this proposition was to allow for annotation of the established roles of Approved Mental Health Professionals and Best Interest Assessors in adult social care and the need for a public record of social workers in England that are qualified to undertake these roles. Annotation will also enable improved, up-to-date data on the scope of practice, which can be used to support practice improvements and more proportionate and targeted regulation. Respondents recognised this and broadly welcomed this approach.

In developing this proposition, we were mindful that the Law Commissions recommended in their 2014 Report that annotation should be proportionate and serve the regulator's public protection objective. The regulations therefore require Social Work England to set out in rules any qualifications, specialisms or accreditations that will be annotated on the register, along with the procedure for doing so. Such rules will be consulted on.

Do you agree that current fitness to practice sanctions should be annotated on the register?

Do you agree that Social Work England should have a rule-making power to determine the length of time that expired sanctions are annotated on the register?

Responses	Totals and percentages			
	Annotating sanctions		Length of time	
Yes	149	78%	127	69%
No	26	14%	31	17%
Don't know	17	9%	26	14%
	192		184	

The majority of respondents supported the annotation of current and expired sanctions on the register, with rule-making powers to determine annotation periods for expired sanctions. Many recognised that annotating current and expired sanctions was in the public interest and felt that the public and employers should have access to a transparent record of a registrant's fitness to practise sanctions.

However, some respondents suggested that details should be limited and a number raised concerns about stigmatising registrants by publishing sanctions on the register unnecessarily, referring to compliance with legal requirements on data protection. Others noted that the annotation of expired sanctions should be proportionate and consistent with other regulators.

In taking forward this proposition, the regulations require Social Work England to annotate current sanctions where fitness to practise is found to be impaired and provide powers for the regulator to set out in rules the time periods that expired sanctions will be annotated on the register. The regulations will provide an additional safeguard by specifically requiring that annotation of expired sanctions must be proportionate. This will ensure that registrants are not unduly penalised, while providing for transparency and supporting public protection.

Education and Training

Summary of findings

Do you agree that Social Work England should be able to determine the criteria for the approval of education and training courses and qualifications in regulatory rules?

Responses	Total	Percent
Yes	153	81%
No	26	14%
Don't know	11	6%
	190	

The majority of the responses were in favour of Social Work England having the power to determine the criteria for education and training approval in rules, on the basis this was the right approach to ensure consistency and quality. One regulatory body pointed out that there is significant change across the education landscape. Therefore, building flexibility into the legislative framework will allow Social Work England to respond to future challenges and emerging research. Ensuring that the criteria for the approval of education and training courses and qualifications is set in rules will provide for consistency and the appropriate level of scrutiny and consultation where changes are proposed. During consultation events, respondents raised the option of requiring Social Work England to inspect placements as part of the approval process. Whilst we recognise that there is some inconsistency in the quality of placement provision across England, the regulator will have scope to address this issue, in consultation with the sector and others, when setting standards for education and training for social workers.

In developing these propositions following consultation, we have ensured that the regulations set out clearly what Social Work England must cover in the education and training approval scheme (within rules). In particular, we have taken forward the proposition that Social Work England will re-approve courses on a cycle of no more than six years, ensuring proportionate assurance that providers continue to deliver the highest quality education, without being overly burdensome. We have also made clear that Social Work England must make rules requiring the regulator to consult students, social work service users and others involved in the delivery of courses when approving or re-approving initial education and training courses. This will mean that the approval scheme is developed in collaboration with those parties who are key to ensuring the process is fit for purpose.

Do you agree that Social Work England should have the power to suspend education and training course approval?

Do you agree that Social Work England should have the power to attach conditions to education and training course approval?

Responses	Totals and percentages			
	Suspend approval		Apply conditions	
Yes	143	75%	145	76%
No	27	14%	25	13%
Don't know	20	11%	17	9%
	190		187	

Whilst the majority of responses supported the proposal to introduce powers for Social Work England to suspend education and training course approval, a number of respondents, including higher education institutions and local authorities, expressed concerns about the possible implications for students. These concerns included the impact on the student's ability to study and on the ability to register on completion of study, where an approved course has been suspended for a specific period.

The majority were also in favour of the proposals to provide legislative powers for Social Work England to apply conditions to course approval. Respondents acknowledged that this would be an effective way to give providers the opportunity to work with the regulator to meet standards, and ensure that Social Work England could take a proportionate approach to timely improvements where appropriate. Many stated that the framework should require Social Work England to review, update and renew conditions as necessary, and ensure that the approach aligns with other quality and inspection assurance processes that providers are subject to – particularly those in the higher education sector.

While the majority of respondents supported the proposition to provide Social Work England with powers to suspend course and qualification approval, we have also considered the concerns respondents expressed about the possible adverse implications for students on suspended courses. With these concerns in mind, we have decided not to take this proposition forward into the regulations. We are confident that providing for conditional approval will achieve the same objective, supporting a proportionate approach to improvement within specified timescales without the potential for a negative impact on students undertaking a course that is subsequently suspended. Social Work England will have powers to refuse and withdraw approval of a course of education and training and qualifications. These powers are similar to those that HCPC currently has.

Do you agree with the approach to allow Social Work England to approve other post-qualification specialisms relating to social work using the approval scheme for initial education and training set out in regulations and regulatory rules?

Responses	Total	Percent
Yes	138	74%
No	25	13%
Don't know	23	12%
	186	

The majority of respondents were in favour of allowing Social Work England to use the education and training approval scheme to approve post-qualification social work courses. Respondents recognised the value of providing for the regulator to adopt a proportionate role in this area, ensuring national consistency in training provision for certain post-qualifying specialisms. A number of respondents also welcomed the intention to transfer the approval of courses for Approved Mental Health Professionals and Best Interest Assessors to Social Work England and acknowledged the positive steps that Social Work England could take in this area. However, participants in the consultation engagement events also recognised the importance of Social Work England focussing on effectively delivering its core functions as a first priority. A number of sector organisations offered support to work alongside the regulator as it develops its approach in this area. Regulations will therefore allow for Social Work England to approve post-qualifying courses through using the existing approval process set out in regulations and rules.

Fitness to Practise

Summary of findings

Do you agree that the proposed fitness to practise enquiry approach provides for a:

- a. Robust investigation process?**
- b. Clear and transparent mechanism for hearings?**
- c. Clear separation between investigation and adjudication?**
- d. Clear right of appeal?**

Responses	Totals and percentages							
	Robust investigation		Clear and transparent hearings		Separation between investigation and adjudication		Right of appeal	
Yes	116	63%	110	60%	107	58%	109	60%
No	21	11%	28	15%	28	15%	21	12%
Don't know	47	26%	45	25%	49	27%	51	28%
	184		183		184		181	

In developing a more efficient and proportionate fitness to practise regime, it is also crucial to ensure a fair, accountable and consistent system. The draft regulations aimed to do this through setting a robust investigation process, a clear and transparent mechanism for hearings, clear separation between investigation and adjudication functions and a clear right of appeal for registrants. A strong majority of responses to these questions agreed that the proposed fitness to practise framework achieved this balance.

Generally, respondents welcomed measures that built on existing HCPC regulations helping to deliver public protection in a more efficient, fair and effective way. A few respondents stated the need for Social Work England to establish clear thresholds for fitness to practise action in order to identify malicious or inappropriate accusations. The need for fitness to practise proceedings to take into account the individual and their context also featured in responses.

Many respondents also emphasised the need for fitness to practise proceedings to be timely, fair and proportionate, in line with our policy proposals. Some respondents also recognised that clarity of rules and guidelines can greatly contribute to transparency and accessibility. Respondents also stressed the need for separation between investigating a fitness to practise concern and determining the outcome of a case (adjudication), particularly in relation to the process for making interim orders.

In response to the feedback received, we have strengthened the proposed regulations to make absolutely clear that the investigation, case examination and adjudication functions are separate. In particular, we have responded to potential European Convention on Human Rights concerns that registrants must have a fair hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal. Regulations now specify that interim orders can only be made by adjudicators, with a clear right to a hearing. This will enable Social Work England to operate a fitness to practise system that is efficient, proportionate and robust.

Do you agree with the inclusion of provisions for:

- a. Accepted disposal?**
- b. Automatic removal?**
- c. Criminal convictions resulting in custodial sentences?**

Responses	Totals and percentages					
	Accepted disposal		Automatic removal		Criminal convictions	
Yes	99	53%	123	65%	130	70%
No	31	17%	36	19%	28	15%
Don't know	57	30%	30	16%	29	16%
	187		189		187	

The majority of responses to these questions were in agreement with these proposals. Respondents supported regulations providing specific processes to deal with cases where registrants accept findings of fact and the outcome proposed by the regulator (called 'accepted disposal' in the consultation). They also supported accelerated processes to deal with those convicted of certain very serious criminal offences ('automatic removal') and for those convicted of less serious criminal offences that have resulted in custodial sentences.

Some concerns were raised by respondents about the language of 'accepted disposal' being clinical and not representative of the objective behind the policy. Further, many who responded stressed the need to ensure that registrants retained the right to have a hearing if they wanted one. Respondents also emphasised that sufficient procedural detail was needed to ensure these proposals were effectively applied, and to avoid unforeseen consequences. The draft regulations reflect these points.

The proposals consulted on have been taken forward in the draft regulations, with changes made to take account of the feedback received so regulations are absolutely clear that cases with accepted outcomes⁷ can only be dealt with without a hearing when it is in the public interest to do so and the registrant has agreed.

⁷ Language changed from 'accepted disposal' reflecting feedback received through the consultation.

Do you agree with the proposed list of offences that would result in automatic removal?

Responses	Total	Percent
Yes	123	66%
No	23	12%
Don't know	39	21%
	185	

A significant majority of responses agreed with the proposed list of offences that would result in automatic removal. In reviewing the list during the consultation period, we have also decided to include modern slavery offences, as these are similar in nature to other offences listed, such as trafficking. The revised list of offences is set out in schedule 3 of the draft regulations.

Operation and oversight of the regulator

Advisers

Summary of findings

Do you agree that advisers should be able to provide the following to the regulator on matters relating to any of its functions:

- Information;
- Specialist or expert advice; and
- Recommendations?

Responses	Totals and percentages					
	Information		Specialist or expert advice		Recommendations	
Yes	158	86%	160	87%	144	79%
No	11	6%	10	5%	19	10%
Don't know	14	8%	13	7%	20	11%
	183		183		183	

A significant majority of the responses to these questions welcomed the use of specialist advisers for Social Work England. This will allow Social Work England to appoint individuals or groups of individuals, other than as the regulator's staff, to act as advisers to provide specialist or expert knowledge or recommendations to support the delivery of any of its regulatory functions.

Do you think there are other advisory roles that advisers could usefully undertake in supporting the regulator to undertake its functions? If so, what?

Do you think there should be any limitations on the role that advisers can play in supporting the regulator to deliver its functions? If so, what?

Do you agree that Social Work England should have a rule-making power to set out the detail about the appointment of advisers?

Responses	Totals and percentages					
	Roles		Limitations		Rule-making	
Yes	65	36%	94	53%	129	70%
No	20	11%	32	18%	32	17%
Don't know	94	53%	53	30%	22	12%
	179		179		183	

Examples of the roles advisers could be appointed to include inspectors as part of the education and training approval scheme, investigators, case examiners and adjudicators within the fitness to practise process, and adjudicators within the registration appeals process.

Some respondents suggested other roles that advisers might usefully be able to fulfil. These included providing advice on education and training, providing legal advice and acting as performance assessors, examiners and panel members. The majority agreed there should be limitations on the role of advisers. This included proportionate use of advisers, clarity and transparency of their role and ensuring that advisers should be independent and free from political influence. One of the regulatory respondents was also clear that the draft regulations should not set out a list of potential roles that advisers might fulfil as this would be overly prescriptive and could become limiting in the future. Responses were also clear that the use of advisers should not weaken the responsibility of Social Work England as the decision maker in matters of regulation.

A number of respondents emphasised the need for transparency in relation to the process for appointment and the role of the Secretary of State, and that there should be a good breadth of experience amongst advisers, drawing on relevant sector expertise. Many respondents also pushed for clarity surrounding the role of advisers, particularly when acting as adjudicators and having clear and consistent rule-making frameworks and decision-making processes.

The majority of responses agreed that Social Work England should be required to set out the detail as to how advisers are appointed and for what purpose.

We will therefore be taking forward the consultation proposal that regulations will allow Social Work England to appoint external advisers to provide information, specialist or expert advice and recommendations on matters relating to any of its functions. We believe the current proposals provide sufficient clarity and transparency through the requirement to set appointment procedures in rules. Regulations will also require advisers to declare any conflict of interest.

Our view is that it is important that Social Work England has the freedom to appoint advisers without prescription about roles, in line with our approach to creating a flexible

framework. In order to ensure Social Work England can benefit from external expertise which will support it to operate flexibly, proportionately and efficiently, we are not providing for limitations on the scope of advisors' roles or for other specific advisory roles. Regulations will also make clear that advisers can, however, be appointed for specific roles including to act as adjudicators, inspectors and to assist with remedial action. Regulations will require advisers appointed to these roles to act within the parameters set in regulations or rules. We would expect Social Work England to take into account considerations about clarity, transparency of adviser roles and relevant experience through sector engagement and through public consultation when developing rules. Social Work England, as the regulator, will at all times retain responsibility for the delivery of regulation and public protection.

Information and Advice

Summary of findings

Do you agree that Social Work England should be required in regulations to provide specific information about its core regulatory functions for:

- a. The public?
- b. Registrants?
- c. Education providers?

Responses	Totals and percentages					
	The public		Registrants		Education providers	
Yes	175	94%	179	96%	176	94%
No	8	4%	5	3%	8	4%
Don't know	4	2%	2	1%	3	2%
	187		186		187	

The vast majority of responses supported the requirement for Social Work England to provide information about its core functions, as an essential part of transparency. One respondent argued that including such requirements for transparency in the regulations demonstrates that it will be a core part of how Social Work England will operate. Another respondent also pointed out that this transparency is a key feature of supporting its relationship with the public, registrants and employers and that provision of information and advice will promote public protection and public confidence.

We will therefore be taking the consultation proposal forward without any amendment.

Do you agree that Social Work England should be required in regulations to prepare and publish a strategic plan?

Do you agree that Social Work England should be allowed through regulations to determine the relevant period to which its strategic plan will apply?

Responses	Totals and percentages			
	Publication		Relevant period	
Yes	169	90%	130	70%
No	10	5%	32	17%
Don't know	9	5%	24	13%
	188		186	

An overwhelming majority of respondents supported the proposal to require Social Work England to publish a strategic plan. Some argued that this would provide stakeholders with a clear idea about the sense of direction of the regulator.

The majority of respondents also agreed that Social Work England should be able to determine the period for which its strategic plan should apply, stating that it would provide flexibility for the regulator. Some of those who agreed said that targets were important to keep Social Work England focused and suggested that an independent body or the Government should set the period for Social Work England's strategic plan.

Respondents commented again on the need for transparency and raised questions regarding clarity of content, collaboration with the sector and relevant parties and the publication of other information, such as annual accounts. Social Work England is already required to lay annual reports and accounts before Parliament under the 2017 Act. The draft regulations therefore take forward the propositions outlined in the consultation without amendment.

Fees

Summary of findings

Do you agree that the regulations should provide for Social Work England to set out the detail about how it will charge fees in relation to registration in regulatory rules?

Do you agree that the regulations should provide for Social Work England to set out the detail about how it will charge fees in relation to approval for education and training courses in regulatory rules?

Responses	Totals and percentages			
	Registration		Education and training	
Yes	157	85%	144	78%
No	19	10%	20	11%
Don't know	9	5%	21	11%
	185		185	

The significant majority of responses supported a requirement for Social Work England to set out the detail for charging registration and education approval fees in rules, whilst emphasising the need for transparency and clarity when setting fees. Respondents emphasised that registrant fee levels should be reasonable and proportionate. Respondents also commented on the need for transparency and a clear explanation and rationale for the level of fees set in relation to approvals of education and training courses. A small number of respondents voiced concern about perceived potential consequences of charging the higher education sector for course or qualification approval, such as the potential for increased student course costs and reduced availability of courses across the country. Some respondents also requested further consultation to set the level and detail of fees.

In taking forward this proposal, the regulations will provide powers for Social Work England to charge fees in respect of registration and fees for the approval of education and training courses. Regulations will also require Social Work England to make rules in relation to the charging of fees. These rules must include circumstances in which fees can be charged or waived, and the steps the regulator can take where fees are not paid within the time set. We would expect any fee for registration and education approval to be proportionate through the requirement in the 2017 Act for Social Work England to consult before determining the level of fees and seek approval from the Secretary of State. Social Work England is prohibited by the 2017 Act from making a profit, is accountable to Government and subject to independent oversight by the PSA who will report on its performance and highlight any concerns.

While future fee levels will, of course, be a matter for Social Work England, Government have committed that any set-up costs will not fall on social workers.

Regulatory rules

Summary of findings

Do you agree that there should be an oversight process only for certain rules?

Which regulatory rules should be subject to oversight process?

Responses	Total	Percent
Yes	44	24%
No	71	39%
Don't know	65	36%
	180	

Overall, responses indicated that respondents did not think that the oversight process should only apply to certain rules and should instead apply to all rules. Respondents commented that this will ensure transparency and consistency across Social Work England's regulatory functions. Some responses suggested that the level of scrutiny within that oversight could be tiered, depending on the type of rule.

Which of the three possible processes outlined do you think is most appropriate?

Do you have any suggestions for alternative oversight processes for Social Work England's regulatory rules?

Responses	Total	Percent
1. Secretary of State approval	62	36%
2. Secretary of State review	82	47%
3. Secretary of State gateway	29	17%
	173	

Respondents, on the whole, supported the second of the three possible oversight procedures outlined. This involves public consultation followed by a specified period for Secretary of State review, with rules coming into force after that period unless the Secretary of State objected. Respondents felt that this provided a good balance between meaningful public consultation and oversight. It was pointed out that this process would allow Social Work England to plan clear timescales for rule changes.

Those who suggested alternative approaches focused on involvement of, predominately, social workers or representatives of the sector, and to a lesser extent service users. Our view is that this crucial aspect is covered by the requirement that all rules, except minor or technical changes, should be publically consulted on. In response to feedback through the consultation, we have slightly amended the oversight procedure, making clear that the regulator can determine the date on which the rules come into force, following the 28 day review process. The regulations also now allow for the regulator and Secretary of State to agree an earlier date. These changes will allow for more flexibility in the implementation of new or amended rules. In order to strengthen oversight further, and provide an additional independent element, the draft regulations also reference the

Secretary of State’s existing power to request advice from the Professional Standards Authority. We envisage that this will happen in the ‘review period’.

Duty to co-operate

Do you agree that Social Work England should be required to co-operate with the range of organisations set out in the draft regulations?

In addition, do you think that Social Work England should be required to co-operate with:

- relevant inspectorates (e.g. Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission);
- the police;
- NHS bodies (e.g. the NHS Commissioning Board; clinical commissioning groups, and NHS trusts or NHS foundation trusts); and
- the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)?

Are there any other bodies that you think that Social Work England should be required to co-operate with?

Summary of findings

Question	Totals and percentages						
	Yes		No		Don't know		Total
Co-operate with specified organisations	163	88%	9	5%	13	7%	185
Relevant inspectorates	170	90%	9	5%	9	5%	188
The police	161	87%	16	9%	9	5%	186
NHS bodies	157	85%	16	9%	11	6%	184
DBS	171	92%	8	4%	7	4%	186
Any other bodies	72	40%	36	20%	70	39%	178

Many respondents emphasised the importance of co-operative working. A significant majority agreed that Social Work England should be required to co-operate with the specified organisations set out in the draft regulations, as well as relevant inspectorates, health bodies, the police and the DBS. Particularly high numbers supported a duty to co-operate with relevant inspectorates and the DBS.

Some respondents commented that, while collaboration is important, it must not negatively affect the regulator’s independence, become overly bureaucratic or detract

from Social Work England's focus on regulating the social work profession. A few respondents, while supportive, questioned the need for an explicit co-operation duty to be set in regulations. We have outlined below how we have taken a proportionate approach to the duty to co-operate requirement ensuring that this supports Social Work England to meet its public protection objective but is not overly burdensome.

Just over a third of respondents felt Social Work England should be required to co-operate with other bodies and provided a range of suggestions, including social work unions and charities. The PSA were clear there should be a specific duty for Social Work England to co-operate with them. This duty will be provided for under the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002, as amended by the 2017 Act.

In line with the feedback received through the consultation, and to support the regulator to meet its public protection objective, we will be taking forward the proposal to require Social Work England to co-operate with the organisations identified in the draft regulations, as well as relevant inspectorates, health bodies, the police and the DBS. Whilst we recognise the importance of collaboration with unions and charities, regulations will only reference statutory bodies. While we would expect Social Work England to work with other bodies in exercising its functions, our view is that it would be disproportionate to require co-operation with such bodies.

Default powers

Summary of findings

Do you think that the level of detail about the scope of the Secretary of State's powers with regard to default powers and remedial directions, including the power to appoint advisers, is sufficient?

If not, what further detail would you expect to see in regulations?

Do you agree that the Secretary of State should have powers to publish the remedial direction and the action required?

Do you agree that the Secretary of State should be required, through regulations, to appoint an independent person/s to take registration and fitness to practise decisions where they are delivering the functions of the regulator?

Responses	Totals and percentages					
	Level of detail		Publication powers		Independent person	
Yes	80	44%	101	57%	131	74%
No	27	15%	28	16%	29	16%
Don't know	73	41%	49	28%	18	10%
	180		178		178	

More respondents agreed that the level of detail provided about default powers was sufficient than those who disagreed. A large proportion of respondents were unsure, however, with many asking for further clarity, information and detail on default thresholds with contingency plans for failure.

Responses raised concerns about the thresholds for challenge of regulatory failure and potential political influence and interference in the Secretary of State's ability to take over functions. Some respondents questioned whether the PSA could provide an independent oversight role.

A majority of responses were in favour of the Secretary of State having powers to publish the remedial direction and action required. Many commented on the importance of openness and transparency in this area, with some raising concerns surrounding protecting privacy. The majority of respondents agreed with the requirement to appoint an independent person to take registration and fitness to practise decisions on behalf of the regulator.

Having considered the responses, the regulations have been amended to provide that the Secretary of State, or person appointed to carry out Social Work England's functions under default powers cannot make a decision to make, amend, remove or restore an entry in the register. We consider that this sufficiently addresses any potential for perceived or actual political interference in decisions about the registration of an individual social worker. We will therefore not be requiring the appointment of an independent person. We consider that Social Work England's operation on a day-to-day basis independently of Government, independent oversight by the PSA and the use of default powers only in the most serious circumstance of actual or likely failure to perform regulatory functions, addresses respondent concerns.

Role of the Professional Standards Authority and funding

Summary of findings

Do you think that the level of detail in regulations about the scope of the PSA's oversight role is sufficient?

If not, what further detail would you expect to see in regulations in relation to this area?

Do you agree that Social Work England should fund the PSA on the same basis as other health and care regulators?

Responses	Totals and percentages			
	Level of detail		Funding	
Yes	74	42%	109	61%
No	18	10%	14	8%
Don't know	85	48%	57	32%
	177		180	

Many more of those who answered this question agreed with the level of detail provided about the oversight role for the PSA, than those who disagreed.

The PSA was clear in its response that it wanted to have oversight of cases with outcomes that are accepted and finalised without being heard by adjudicators ('accepted disposal' in the consultation). Due to restrictions in the PSA's own primary legislation, the only oversight that could be made available for these cases would be the ability for the PSA to refer them to the High Court if they were concerned that the outcomes were not sufficient for public protection purposes. Our view is that this would be disproportionate in such cases.

We have, nevertheless, made it absolutely clear in the regulations that accepted outcome cases can only be dealt with without a hearing where the registrant has consented and it would not be in the public interest for the case to proceed to a hearing. This is designed to address any perception that serious cases could be "swept under the carpet". We also accepted the PSA's point that, in the future, it should have a clear oversight role in relation to these cases, but our view is that this should be short of referral to the High Court. Our intention is that we will seek to amend the PSA's primary legislation (the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002) at the earliest opportunity to provide for the PSA to have a power to review accepted outcome decisions made by Social Work England. We will also explore extending such a power to

the other regulators that utilise consensual disposals or accepted outcome decisions, over which the PSA does not already have a right of appeal.

The majority of respondents agreed that Social Work England should fund the PSA on the same, per registrant, basis as the other health and care regulators, so we have provided for this in the draft regulations.

Impact analysis

Summary of findings

How do you think that the proposed changes will affect the costs for your organisation or those you represent?

Response	Total	Percent
Increase costs	103	66%
Decrease costs	7	4%
No change	47	30%
	157	

Do you think that the proposed changes will bring particular benefits for your organisation or those you represent?

Do you think that any of the proposals would help achieve any of the following aims:

- a. Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010**
- b. Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it**
- c. Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it**

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the above questions, could the proposals be changed so that they are more effective?

If you have answered 'no' to any of the above questions, please explain what effect you think the proposals will have and whether you think the proposals should be changed so that they would help achieve those aims?

Response	Totals and percentages							
	Benefits		a. Equality Act		b. Equal opportunity		c. Good relations	
Yes	60	37%	58	32%	57	32%	51	28%
No	39	24%	57	31%	49	27%	52	29%
Don't know	64	39%	67	37%	74	41%	78	43%
	163		182		180		181	

Our consultation document invited views on the impacts the regulatory proposals were likely to have.

Consultation responses offered endorsement for the policy behind the regulatory framework we proposed. In response to the impact assessment questions, a range of likely benefits were cited, including that the draft regulations could lead to: better safeguarding for vulnerable children and adults; better, more consistent training for social workers; and, improved confidence in the profession.

At the same time, a number of responses argued that it would take time for impacts to be fully understood as it would depend on how Social Work England implements the draft regulations. Views given in response to the consultation's more targeted questions on impacts reflected this. While a majority (66%) felt that costs for their particular organisation would or could increase, 30% felt there would be no change. On the other impact-related questions, slightly more respondents chose "don't know" rather than "yes" or "no" when asked whether they thought the changes would benefit their particular organisation or would impact in a positive way on equality outcomes.

We welcome the response to these questions, particularly those that offered views on how the draft regulations could be developed to support the Equalities Duty. Taking account of the views expressed through the consultation, we have ensured that Social Work England will be subject to the public sector equality duty in respect of all its functions and updated our assessment of the impacts of the regulations now proposed. Our assessment of impact has been published alongside this Government consultation response.

We believe that the impact of the regulations will provide a positive outcome through enabling Social Work England to operate an efficient regulatory framework. The draft regulations provide for a modern, proportionate system, one that gives flexibility to the regulator to adapt and up-date its requirements as practice evolves. The regulations are also designed to embed firmly continuous improvement and an expectation of career-long development into the system. Provisions for the regulator to set stretching education, training and professional standards, to ensure social workers, once registered, continue to meet the standards and to approve and recognise post-qualifying courses

and specialisms are key to this. This has the potential to lead to improvements in practice and greater confidence in the social work profession bringing wide-ranging benefits for vulnerable children, families and adults, individual social workers, the profession and society as a whole.

On costs, we recognise the concerns raised through the consultation about the cost of regulation increasing. We are making a significant investment in establishing Social Work England. It will ensure that any set up and transition costs do not fall on social workers, or any of the other professions regulated by HCPC. Future fees, including those for course approvals, will be a matter for Social Work England. The draft regulations are clear that Social Work England will be required to consult on any proposals for change and to seek approval from the Secretary of State. We will work with Social Work England to enable it to become self-financing over time, bringing it into line with the operation of other regulators.

Next steps

The next steps in proceeding with the regulations and Social Work England are set out below.

Social Work England regulations:

- The changes set out in this response have been incorporated into the draft Social Workers Regulations 2018, which will be laid before Parliament for scrutiny. These regulations are subject to the affirmative Parliamentary procedure, so the statutory instrument will be debated and voted on by both Houses of Parliament before becoming law.
- The draft Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (Fees) (Social Work England) Regulations 2018 are subject to the negative procedure and will become law without debate unless there is an objection by either House.
- Regulations will come into force when Social Work England takes over the regulation of social workers in England from the current regulator, HCPC.

Implementation and development of Social Work England:

- Government will ensure all consultation feedback is provided to Social Work England to allow further engagement with the sector and other key stakeholders to gain a better understanding of how this will support more effective regulation and drive improvements in social work. In particular, Social Work England will be able to take forward those comments that fell outside the scope of the consultation questions, including emphasising the need for independence from Government and ensuring continued effective consultation with the sector.
- Government will continue to work closely with key stakeholders including the social work profession and representative organisations, employers, education providers, regulatory experts, service users and the Chair of Social Work England, Lord Patel of Bradford, in the development and implementation of Social Work England.

Annex A: Consultation events

Date	Event/Stakeholder group	Details
5 Mar 2018	Advisory Group	Discussion on Social Work England consultation
9 Mar 2018	Meeting with higher education Institutions/Education providers, Manchester	Official discussed the Social Work England consultation with higher education institution representatives
12 Mar 2018	Ministerial briefing	Officials provided briefing on Social Work England consultation in House of Lords
14 Mar 2018	Regulator Expert Group	Meeting to discuss Social Work England consultation
15 Mar 2018	Webinar run by officials in conjunction with the British Association of Social Workers (BASW)	Live consultation discussion with social workers, facilitated by officials and BASW representatives
15 Mar 2018	Adult PSW Network – focus group	Consultation focus group with adult social workers, facilitated by officials
16 Mar 2018	PSW Network North East meeting	Officials attended and spoke about Social Work England consultation
19 Mar 2018	PSW Network West Midlands meeting	Officials attended and spoke about Social Work England consultation
21 Mar 2018	Social Work conference, Trafford	Officials gave workshop session on Social Work England consultation
24 Mar 2018	Become Young People’s forum	Official met and spoke with young people about Social Work England
9 April 2018	London PSW Network meeting	Officials spoke about Social Work England and consultation

Annex B: Stakeholder groups

Social Work England Advisory Group

The Social Work England Advisory Group includes key organisations from across the social work sector, employer representatives, education providers and service users:

- Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
- Association of Directors of Children's Services
- Association of Professors of Social Work
- Become
- British Association of Social Workers
- General Pharmaceutical Council
- Joint University Council - Social Work Education Committee
- Local Government Association
- Principal Adult Social Worker Network
- Principal Child and Family Social Worker Network
- Professional Standards Authority
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
- Shaping Our Lives
- Unison

Regulator Expert Group

The Social Work England Regulator Expert Group membership includes representation from a number of professional regulators:

- Banking Standards Board
- General Medical Council
- General Optical Council
- General Osteopathic Council
- General Pharmaceutical Council
- Law Commission
- Legal Services Board
- Professional Standards Authority
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
- Solicitors Regulation Authority

Annex C: Organisational responses

Organisations that responded to the consultation

- Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS)
- Association of Professors of Social Work (APSW)
- Barnardo's
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Adult Services
- British Association of Social Workers (BASW)
- Canterbury Christ Church University
- Central Bedfordshire Council
- Cornwall Council Children and Family Services
- Creative Carers
- Cumbria Parent Carer Forum
- General Medical Council
- Hampshire County Council Adults Health & Care Department
- Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- Joint University Social Work Education Committee (JUCSWEC)
- Kent County Council
- Leicestershire County Council
- London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
- NAGALRO
- National Network of Parent Carer Forums
- Northamptonshire County Council
- Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
- Parents Against Injustice
- Plymouth City Children, Young People and Families Service
- Professional Standards Authority (PSA)
- Researching Reform
- Ribblecare Limited
- Scottish Social Services Council
- Social Care Wales
- Social Work Department - Sheffield Hallam University
- UNISON
- University of Central Lancashire
- University of Chichester
- University of Cumbria
- University of Huddersfield – Division of Social Care & Counselling
- Walsall Council
- West Sussex County Council



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