



Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 2: Overview of year 1 (November 2019)



ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

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1. Executive Summary

Fair Start Scotland (FSS) is Scotland's first fully devolved employability support service. FSS was launched on 3 April 2018, with the aim of supporting 38,000 people into the labour market. The key focus for the service is to provide tailored and personalised support to all those who participate.

This is the second FSS evaluation report published by the Scottish Government. This report presents an overview of research relating to the first year of service delivery up to 31 March 2019, and includes a telephone survey¹ of over 1,000 participants, local area case studies² in Alloa, Wick and Irvine, and analysis of management information of the 10,063 participants who joined FSS in the first year.

Reach of services

- 10,063 participants started on FSS in year 1, equivalent to 58% of all referrals. A fifth of participants sustained employment for at least 13 weeks and 4.1% sustained employment for at least 26 weeks. A greater proportion of men, people aged over 35, people with a disability and people living in an urban area took part in FSS than are represented in the Scottish unemployed population. Additionally, FSS participants were more likely to be from the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland.
- **Having a conviction, being care experienced and being in receipt of benefits were significant barriers to work.** FSS participants in these groups were less likely to achieve and hold a job for 13 weeks than other participants. However, some of the hardest to reach groups are more likely to sustain employment once they've had FSS support. People from minority ethnic communities and those aged 16-24 are under-represented in the numbers starting on the service, but are proportionately more likely to sustain work for 13 weeks.

Values and principles

- **Most respondents were very positive about the support they received from FSS. Nine out of ten respondents felt they were treated with dignity and respect (92%)** and this did not differ by gender, ethnicity or presence of a health condition.
- **Around four fifths felt they had choices about the type of support they received, and felt that the service took account of their individual needs.** Most participants also agreed that **the service offered support to improve**

¹ <http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781839602979>

² <http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781839602962>

their general quality of life and wellbeing (78%), although some differences existed across different areas.

- While FSS participants overall had lower than average mental wellbeing scores, those participants in work, and receiving in-work support had the highest wellbeing scores, well above the wider population average. **This suggests that both work and FSS support have positive mental wellbeing effects.**

Moving towards work

- **Participants who had worked at one point in the last 5 years were more likely to be working at the time of the phone survey.** A participant's level of education was correlated with their working status, with those with higher levels of education were more likely to be in work.
- Of those in work, half were in full time employment (49%) and two fifths worked between 16 – 29 hours per week. **Woman were more likely than men to be in part time work**, reflecting national employment patterns.
- **FSS had a positive effect on motivation to find employment for two thirds of participants (65%), with 41% reporting their motivation to find work had increased “a lot”.** FSS appears to be less likely to have a positive effect on motivation levels for those with long term health conditions than other participants.
- **Having a health condition was the most commonly mentioned barrier to returning to work**, with a lack of skills, qualifications or experience the second most frequently mentioned.
- **Of those who moved into work, more than 8 in 10 started their job in the first 6 months of service delivery**, reflecting the 12 – 18 month pre-employment support period available to participants.

Awareness and motivation

- Most year 1 participants were referred to FSS through their local Jobcentre (70%).
- **Almost all phone survey participants were aware that the service was voluntary**, however those aged over 50 were slightly more likely to believe the service was mandatory.
- The most common reasons for engaging with the service were receiving support to go back to work (45%) and receiving additional help and support (40%). Men and those aged 16-34 were more likely to say receiving additional support was a key motivation.
- Interviews with people who had similar characteristics to FSS participants but were not engaging with the service suggest the two main reasons for lack of engagement were not being aware of FSS or that the individual was already receiving another form of employability support. These reasons suggest **there**

is nothing about the FSS service itself that is putting people off participating.

Process, referral and service delivery

- **Nine out of ten phone survey respondents felt it was very easy to engage with the service** (89%), with seven in ten rating the experience as 'very easy'.
- Those who were in work at the point of the interview were more likely to describe the service as straightforward (46% vs. 35%) and less likely to say the Jobcentre facilitated their FSS engagement (11% vs. 24%). Only 3% of participants considered the referral and engagement process difficult.
- **Across all of the local area case studies, participants reported very positive experiences of service delivery. Participants valued the voluntary, comprehensive and respectful nature of the service**, commonly reporting FSS was tailored to them and that their key workers provided them with support suited to their skillsets, interests and experience.
- **Most participants preferred FSS to their previous experience of other employability provision**, as key workers provided more personalised support and were more understanding of individual circumstances.
- **Participants reported various positive outcomes from taking part in FSS, including enhanced confidence, skills and experience as well as reduced isolation**. For some, this helped them get back into work, whilst others felt more confident and positive about their ongoing job search.

Employability support

- **Most respondents took up the offer of pre-employment support**. One to one appointments and a dedicated key worker were the most popular option (86%), with two thirds of those who took up the offer meeting their key worker about once a week.
- The survey suggested not all participants were offered all of the support available, with 46% saying they were not given access to work tasters or work experience opportunities. Fewer participants were offered support for a physical or mental health condition (39%) or help with an addiction (14%).
- Uptake of support varied across age groups: those aged 35-49 were more likely to decline the offer of a key worker and help with job searches.
- Around four fifths of respondents who received pre-work support of any kind felt it was useful. When asked what other support they would have wanted, almost three quarters felt no other support was needed.
- **The most common in-work support taken up by participants was a dedicated key worker (47%) and one to one appointments (36%)**. Not all participants were consistently offered all support available. Almost all respondents who received in-work support said it was useful.

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose

This report presents an overview of findings from three different data sources:

- Three local area case studies in Alloa, Irvine and Wick undertaken by Rocket Science UK Ltd and Blake Stevenson. These consider local FSS delivery and outcomes from the perspective of all those involved in providing and participating in services: FSS service providers; delivery partners (JCP); local support organisations and partners and FSS participants.
- A representative telephone survey of 1,005 FSS participants by IFF Research Ltd, including those who had started on the service between April and December 2018. Questions focused on peoples motivation to engage, attitudes to work, experiences of support to date and progress towards / into work.
- Analysis of FSS service provider management information on the demographic and background characteristics of FSS participants in the first year of delivery (April 2018 – March 2019).

Further information about the evaluation methods used to gather the findings reported here can be found in Appendix 1.

Full details of the findings from the local area case studies, and the participant telephone survey are published in two separate reports on the Scottish Government website alongside this overview report.

2.2 Background

Fair Start Scotland (FSS) is Scotland's first fully devolved employment support service. The Scottish Government took on employability powers in 2017 and exercised those powers through transitional services Work First Scotland and Work Able Scotland. The learning from those services and the overriding principles of dignity and respect were taken forward in FSS.

On 4 October 2017 the Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills, Jamie Hepburn MSP, announced the award of contracts up to £96 million to deliver FSS, with provision to be delivered by a mixed economy of public, private and third sector suppliers, in nine contract areas (Lots) across Scotland. See Appendix 2 for more detailed information on the FSS service providers and contract areas.

Launched on 3 April 2018, FSS aims to support a minimum of 38,000 people into work, including those facing barriers to entering the labour market. The key focus for the service is to provide tailored and personalised support for all those who participate.

Key elements of the service are:

- Participation is entirely voluntary;
- All participants can expect to receive in-depth action planning to ensure the support they receive is tailored for them and suits their individual needs and circumstances;
- The service will offer pre-work support of 12-18 months;
- The service will offer high quality in-work support for up to 12 months;
- Those who require specialist support to help them find work can expect to receive it;
- There will be national standards to ensure everyone receives a consistent quality of support across the nine geographic contract areas.

The service delivery model is based on evidence of what works in employability support and was developed in consultation with delivery partners, employability providers and the Scottish public³.

Scottish Ministers have committed to a “test and learn” approach to the long-term development and continuous improvement of devolved employability services and both the FSS service design and evaluation reflect this approach. The FSS evaluation plan will report annually on the process, outcomes and impact of service delivery, capturing the experiences of all those involved in FSS delivery and participation.

The first FSS evaluation report⁴ was published in June 2019, and covered FSS implementation and early delivery in the first six months of services (to September 2018). The key findings show evidence of:

- genuine partnerships established by key players across Lots;
- recognition by service providers and JCP/DWP staff of the benefits of a person-centred service model that treats participants with dignity and respect;
- participants seeing FSS as a way to move towards lasting and meaningful employment, and valuing the personalised and wide ranging support available to deal with issues at their own pace;
- the benefits of a wholly voluntary service for participants, service providers and delivery partners;

³ See: *Creating a Fairer Scotland: A new future for employability support in Scotland*. (2016): <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00498123.pdf>

⁴ *Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 1: Implementation and Early Delivery Review*. (June 2019): <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-start-scotland-evaluation-report-1-implementation-early-delivery-review-june-2019/pages/11/>

- recognition of the challenge involved in estimating the flow of referrals and starts to a voluntary service; and
- the importance of reaching and engaging with all eligible participants, particularly those from Minority Ethnic (ME) communities.

For further information on the overall FSS evaluation plan, see Appendix 3.

3. Reach of services: April 2018- March 2019

The following chapter shows how the demographic profile of those starting on FSS up to the end of March 2019 compared to the unemployed population in Scotland as a whole, using Management Information (MI), data from published employability statistics and the Annual Population Survey⁵ (APS).

This chapter looks to address three key questions:

- Who started on FSS in the first year and what barriers might they face?
- Who has moved into work in the first year?
- Who left the service early and why?

A full list of the eligibility criteria for FSS is included in Appendix 4.

To better understand who FSS services are reaching in the first year, and the kinds of barriers they might encounter, the analysis focused on:

- participant protected characteristics (as defined by the Equality 2010 Act; such as age and gender);
- FSS early entry⁶ groups, where entry to FSS after six months unemployed is open to people in specific situations that are linked to poorer employment outcomes. This includes, when people are from a minority ethnic community⁷; are a lone parent; have a conviction; are a refugee; are care experienced; or live in one of Scotland's most deprived areas (within the lowest 15% SIMD⁸ (2016)); and
- other demographic and social characteristics that are known to present barriers to employment, such as length of time spent unemployed and qualifications level.

The infographics on the next three pages provide a summary of our analyses.

⁵ Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec 2018, Office of National Statistics.

⁶ "Early entry" is at six months unemployed, in contrast to two years unemployed for those without disabilities or other barriers. See Appendix 4 for full details of FSS eligibility criteria.

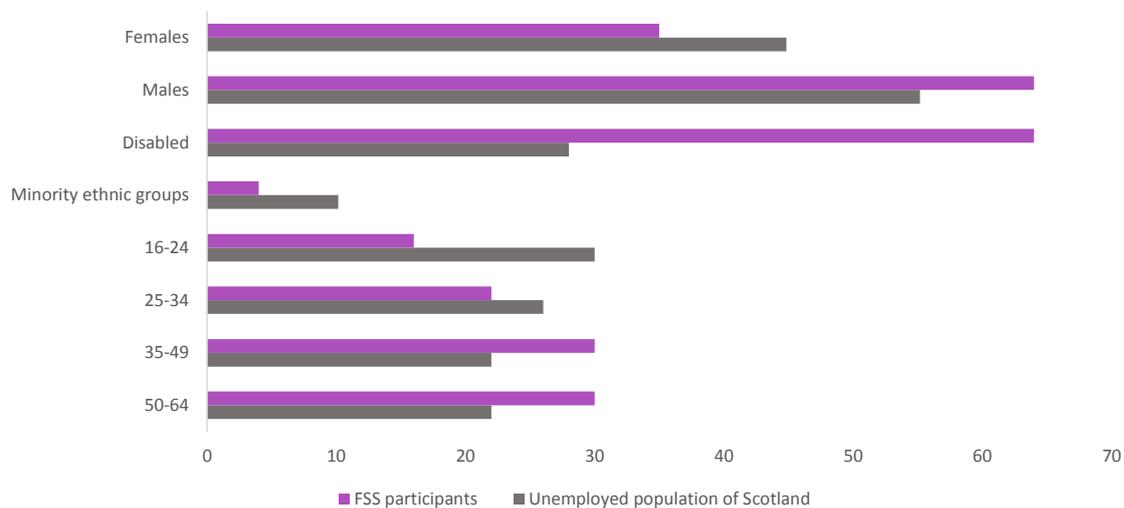
⁷ To note, ethnicity is an Equality 2010 Act Protected Characteristic, but is also an FSS early entry group, so is included here for FSS reporting purposes.

⁸ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2016).

Who started FSS and what barriers might they face?

FSS received 17,616 referrals in the first year, and 10,063 people joined (58%)

Demographics of new starts on FSS 2018/19 compared to Scottish unemployed population (APS Jan-Dec 2018, ONS)



Compared with the unemployed population in Scotland, FSS has:

- A **higher proportion** of men and a **lower proportion** of woman;
- A **lower proportion** of people from an minority ethnic background;
- A **higher proportion** of people aged 35 and over and a **lower proportion** of people aged 16 to 34; and
- A **higher proportion** of people with a disability.



7.1% were lone parents



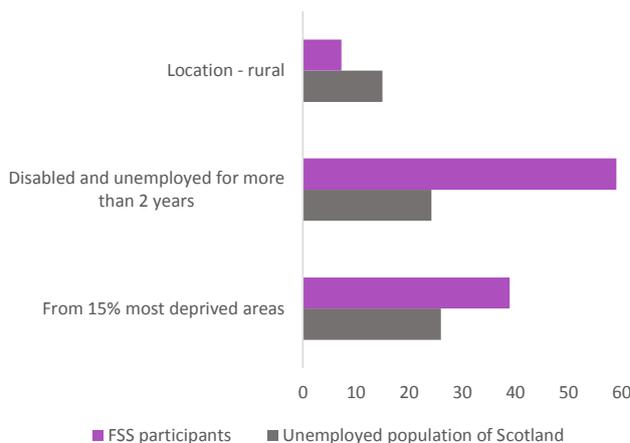
4.7% were care experienced



1.1% were refugees



13.1% had convictions



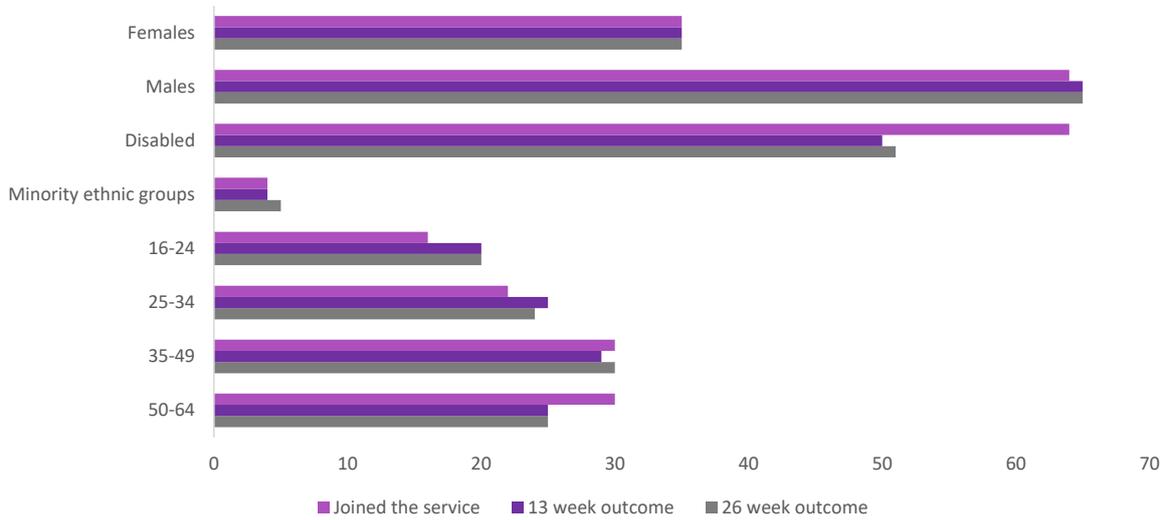
Compared with the unemployed population of Scotland, FSS has:

- A **lower proportion** of people living in rural areas;
- A **higher proportion** of disabled people who have been unemployed for more than two years; and
- A **higher proportion** of people living in the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland.

Who started (and sustained) work in the first year?

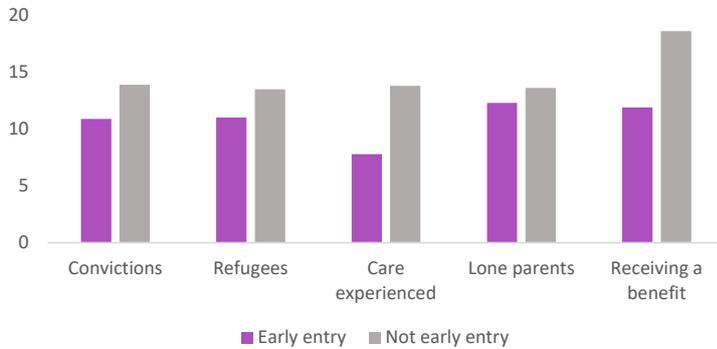
Of the 10,063 people who joined FSS in the first year, 2,013 got a job, 898 sustained a job for 13 weeks and 418 sustained a job for 26 weeks

Job outcomes for FSS participants across different demographic groups



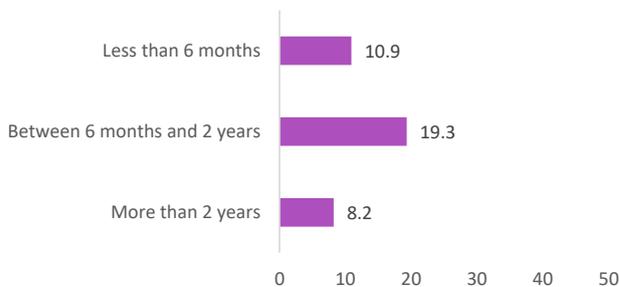
- Gender **did not make any difference** to the likelihood of sustaining work
- Participants from minority ethnic groups were **more likely** to sustain work for 26 weeks
- Older participants (aged 35 plus) were proportionately **less likely** to sustain their employment past

Proportions of participants from each early entry group who sustained work for 13 weeks



- Participants from all early entry groups were **less likely** to reach their 13 week job outcome than all others
- Having a conviction, being care experienced, and receiving benefits were all significant* barriers to sustaining work.

Proportion of participants who achieved their 13 week job outcome by length of time (previously) unemployed



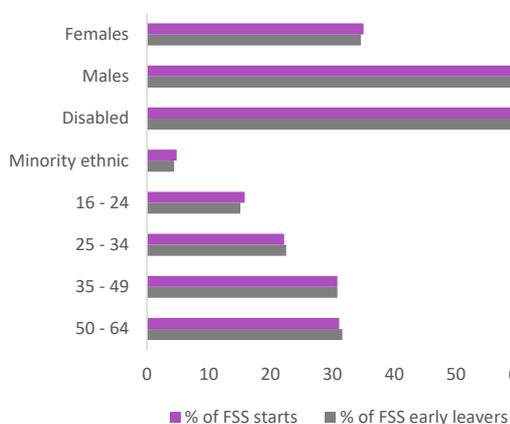
- Participants who were unemployed for between 6 months and 2 years were **more likely** to sustain work for 13 weeks than any other group.
- The group least likely to meet the 13 week job outcome were participants who had been unemployed for more than 2 years. This group accounts for 60% of all FSS starts in year 1

(* X² sig at p< .05 for all comparisons)

Who left the service early and why?

Of the 10,063 people who joined FSS in the first year, 2,838 left early

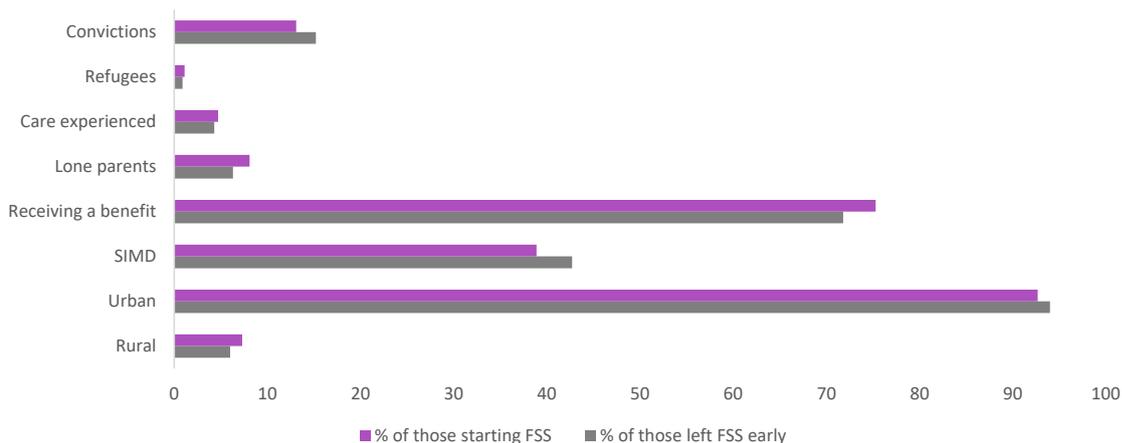
Proportion of participants who started and left early by protected characteristic (Equality Act (2010))



Across the protected characteristics:

- A slightly **higher proportion** of males left early than started;
- A slightly **lower proportion** of females left early than started;
- A slightly **higher proportion** of disabled people left early than started; and
- People aged between 25 – 34 and 50 – 64 made up a **higher proportion** of starts than leavers

Proportion of participants who started and left early across early entry groups and other barriers



Across the early entry groups:

- People with convictions were **more likely** to leave early*;
- Lone parents, refugees and people who are care experienced were **less likely** to leave early;
- People in receipt of a benefit were **less likely** to leave early*;
- People from the 15% most deprived SIMD areas, and people who live in urban areas were **more likely** to leave early*; and
- the **most common reasons for leaving early** were “disengaging with the service” (66%); health reasons (8%), and “other” reasons (4%). (Not shown on graphic)

(* X² significant @ p<.05)

What worked well?

FSS services are successfully reaching participants with a broad range of different personal, social and economic characteristics, including those that may present barriers to finding and sustaining work.

Once participants have started receiving FSS support, we see that gender and disability do not have any disproportionate negative effects on sustaining employment.

Some of the hardest to reach groups of participants are more likely to sustain employment once they've had FSS support. For example, people from Minority Ethnic communities and younger participants (aged 16-24) are under-represented in the numbers starting on service, but are proportionately more likely to sustain work for 13 weeks.

How could we improve?

Some people with particular barriers and characteristics are not as well represented as they could be, given the proportions in the wider national unemployed population. There is scope to improve on the proportions of women, young people (aged 16-24), people from diverse communities and rural residents who are engaging with FSS services. Similarly, there is also scope to improve our support for older (aged 50+) participants to sustain work as there are fewer alternatives by way of support available to them.

There is also scope to improve the proportions of participants from early entry groups who can sustain work for up to 13 weeks. For example, participants with a conviction, who were care experienced and who were receiving benefits were all significantly less likely to achieve their 13 week job outcome than those without these characteristics, suggesting that these groups of participants may need additional support to stay in employment.

The amount of time that a participant is out of work prior to engaging with FSS support also has a significant influence on their likelihood of sustaining employment. Participants who were out of work for more than two years make up 60% of all starts in year 1, but only just over 8% of them achieved a 13 week job outcome, compared to 13.6% across all FSS starts.

What are we doing?

Scottish Government is working closely with FSS providers, JCP and other partners to optimise the 'reach' of FSS services into more vulnerable and under-represented communities across Scotland. More specifically, we are working with JCP to run a series of pilots aimed at supporting the needs of specific groups as part of our shared improvement plan.

4. Awareness and Motivation

This chapter of the report focuses on how participants became aware of FSS and what motivated them to take part. The final section covers feedback from a separate group of individuals who are eligible for FSS support but are not currently participating.

The evidence presented here is a summary of findings from both the commissioned research activities.

4.1 Awareness

Our phone survey research suggests that most year 1 participants (70%) were referred to FSS through their local Jobcentre. This is broadly in line with FSS management information and is similar to the experiences of the individual participants interviewed in Alloa, Irvine and Wick as part of the local area case studies.

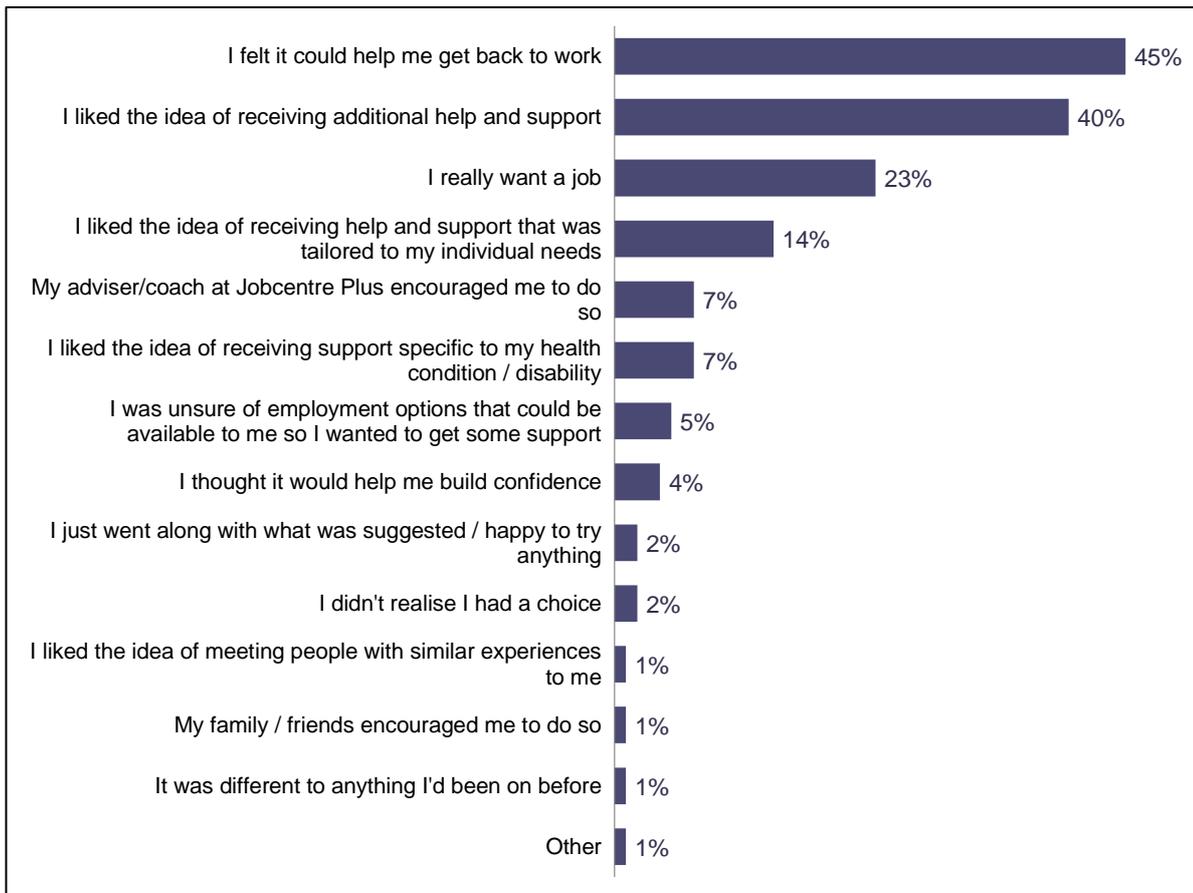
The phone survey findings suggested some differences in awareness, based on previous work experience, age and location:

- Those not who had not worked in the last 5 years were more likely (78%) to have learned about FSS from a Jobcentre Plus Work Coach, than those who had worked in the last 5 years (65%).
- Younger participants (those aged 16-24) were more likely to have heard about the service from friends or family members (13%), or other people receiving the support (11%) than other age groups (4%).
- Those from Tayside were less likely to hear about FSS from a Jobcentre Plus advisor (32%) than those in other areas (70%), and more likely than other groups to have heard about FSS through word of mouth (friends or family 16%; or other people receiving support, 16%).

4.2 Motivation

Phone Survey respondents were also asked why they decided to engage with the service (Figure 1), and if they were aware that it was voluntary. As Figure 1 shows, almost all (94%) respondents were aware that the service was voluntary. Those aged 50 or over were slightly more likely to think that the Fair Start Scotland service was mandatory (7%) than those in other age groups (4%).

Figure 1: Participant motivations to engage with FSS support



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

The most common reason mentioned by participants for engaging with the service was that they thought that the support could help them get back to work (45%). A further two-fifths liked the idea of receiving additional help and support (40%). Men were more likely than women to state this particular reason as a motivation for engaging (49% compared with 37%). Those aged 16-34 were more likely to say they liked the idea of receiving additional support than the other age groups (46% compared with 34% of 35 – 49 year olds and 37% of those aged 50 and over).

With regards to location, those in Tayside were more likely than those in other areas to say that they engaged because they really wanted a job (36% compared with 23% overall) or that they liked the idea of receiving help and support that was tailored to their individual needs (24% compared with 14%).

Local Area Case Studies

In keeping with the telephone survey findings, interviewed participants most commonly reported that they engaged with FSS because they wanted help in finding and/or applying for jobs. A small number had had positive experiences of being supported by the current providers in the past,

including one who had previously been helped to find a job, and decided to take part in the hope that Fair Start Scotland would be similarly helpful.

Some participants sought support help to build or regain their confidence and sense of motivation. For some this lack of confidence was work related, and for others it wasa about broader self-confidence. One participant said they “wanted [FSS] to help me get out of my shell a bit”.

A small number of participants engaged with the service because it gave them something to do, or to satisfy Jobcentre Plus.

4.3 Reasons for not participating in FSS

The published statistics⁹ for the first year of delivery show that just over a quarter (28%) of participants left the service before completing their pre-employment support or finding work. Similarly, analysis suggests that FSS is not reaching all of those eligible for support. It is important therefore that the reasons why people might choose not to engage with FSS are clearly understood, and that all those who are eligible are aware of the support on offer to them.

Rocket Science undertook a small number (n = 12) of interviews with individuals in Alloa, Wick and Irvine who shared eligibility characteristics with the FSS participant group, but were not participating on the service. The research identified two main reasons why individuals were not currently engaging with FSS:

- They were not aware of the FSS service offer in their area
- They were already taking part in other employability support

Two interviewees reported that, while they were made aware of FSS through leaflets provided by Jobcentre, they decided not to engage as they were already being supported by the local Jobcentre. These interviewees said that there was no particular reason for choosing this alternative support over FSS.

This feedback suggests that for these individuals at least, there’s nothing about the FSS service offer that is putting them off participating. As the “voluntary offer” is central to the Scottish Government approach to employability, we will continue to investigate and report on participants’ reasons for participating and not participating in FSS services throughout the evaluation. It is important to recognise that there is a range of local support available, some of which will be long established through Jobcentre Plus and local authorities, and which are likely to have an impact on individual’s choices.

⁹ *Scotland’s Devolved Employability Services: statistical summary. May 2019.*
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-devolved-employment-services-statistical-summary-2/>

What worked well?

As expected, most participants (70%) are referred to FSS by Jobcentre Plus staff. However, across Scotland we are now seeing growing numbers of referrals from third parties, including other local partners and through direct contact from participants themselves.

What could be improved?

There remains scope to improve awareness of FSS across all lots and across many of the groups eligible for support.

Also, there are opportunities to align and integrate the FSS service with existing local support provision, working with local authorities and the third sector to create a more joined up employability offering as outlined in the 'No One Left Behind' review of employability services.

What are we doing?

We will continue to use our evidence and analysis of management information, working with Providers, JCP and other local partners to develop more responsive promotional approaches and materials for Fair Start Scotland.

5. Process: referral & service delivery

This section of the report summarises key findings in relation to the *process* of delivering FSS services. Firstly, it briefly covers participant feedback on the referral process (from the telephone survey). The main feedback however is from the more detailed case study interviews with the FSS Service Providers, and their local partners in Alloa, Irvine and Wick and focuses on the strengths and challenges they have encountered in delivering FSS in each of these areas over the past year.

5.1 Referrals

Ease of engagement

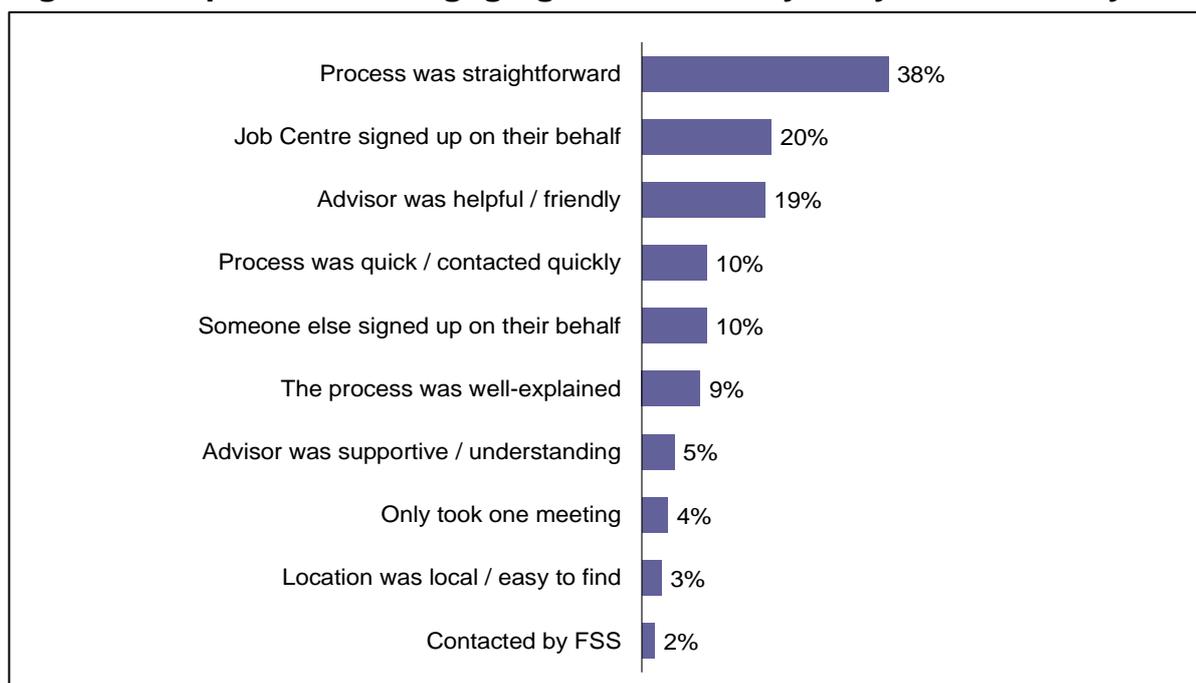
Respondents to the telephone survey were asked how easy they found it to engage with the service and about any difficulties they may have encountered. **Positively, nine out of ten respondents (89%) felt that it was easy to engage with, with 72% rating the experience as “very easy”.**

Of those that considered engagement to be easy, two-fifths (38%) stated that this was because the process was straightforward (38%). A further fifth said that the Jobcentre had helped them to engage with the FSS service provider (20%).

Those who were in work at the point of interview were more likely to describe the process as straightforward (46% vs 35%) and less likely to say the Jobcentre facilitated their FSS engagement (11% vs 24%) than those not in work. Those in work were also more likely to say that their FSS advisor was friendly (25% vs 16%), and the process was quick (16% vs 8%) compared with those not in work.

Figure 2 below shows the full range of responses on why participants found engaging with FSS services easy.

Figure 2: Experience of engaging with FSS: why did you find it easy?



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

Only three percent of participants considered the referral and engagement process to be difficult. The types of challenges this group mentioned included feeling that there had been too many questions asked of them at the initial meeting, or that the engagement process was slow. A handful felt that they had not received enough communication from their FSS Provider, whilst others felt that their learning condition had contributed to their difficulties in engaging.¹⁰

5.2 Service delivery – local area cases studies

The aims of the local area case studies were to:

- understand how FSS is being implemented across the different Lots in Scotland;
- understand the experience of FSS for lead providers, partner organisations, participants and employers;
- identify what is working well and less well in the implementation of Fair Start Scotland; and
- identify lessons learned and recommend changes to consider for the remainder of the FSS contract period, as well as shaping what the next iteration of employment support in Scotland might look like.

The research locations were chosen as they were large enough to provide a discrete, identifiable community within their larger FSS contract and local authority areas, were supported by a single Jobcentre and were representative of a range

¹⁰ Proportions not reported due to small base size (19). IFF Research Report (2019)

of different demographic characteristics, including ethnicity, population density, rurality and levels of deprivation.

See Appendix 2 for full details of the FSS lead and partner providers in each FSS contract area (Lot).

The following section sets out the headline feedback from those involved in delivering and receiving FSS services in Alloa, Wick and Irvine.

Full details of the case studies are published separately as: ***“Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 2: Local area case studies (year 1)”***.

This report is available on the Scottish Government and Employability in Scotland websites alongside this overview.

Fair Start Scotland in Alloa

Alloa is part of the FSS Forth Valley Lot which covers three local authority areas: Falkirk, Clackmannanshire and Stirling. The lead provider for Forth Valley is Falkirk Council, who are delivering FSS in partnership with the Clackmannanshire and Stirling local authorities and NHS Forth Valley.

The three councils operate FSS fairly independently, with each council responsible for the delivery of Fair Start Scotland in their area. FSS support in Clackmannanshire is delivered by the Council's own employability service "Clackmannanshire Works", known locally as "Clacks Works".

Strengths of the FSS delivery model in Alloa

- The operation of the service by the three local authorities in the contract area appears to be working well overall and staff from the two local authorities interviewed recognised the **benefit of taking a regional approach to planning, strategy and resourcing even if operationally the programme is run more locally.**
- It was noted by partners that FSS in Clackmannanshire seemed to be doing well in coordinating local effort already in place, and the **established relationships and reputation held by Clackmannanshire Works appeared to be helpful in establishing the service early.**
- There was a general consensus from those interviewed that, given low national unemployment rates, a service that focuses on health and work is an important focus.
- Clackmannanshire Works (and Falkirk Council as the lead provider) have valued their relationship with Scottish Government, in particular their openness with providers and focus on continuous improvement.
- The key worker model is seen as valuable.
- Providers viewed the **flexibility of the FSS delivery model around "pausing" support as particularly useful** as it allowed them to respond to unpredictability or setbacks in participants' lives.
- **Participants value the personalised and wide-ranging support that the service offers**, as well as the key workers' understanding and non-judgemental approach, which is in line with the Scottish Government's principles of dignity and respect.
- Employers reported positive interactions with FSS in Clackmannanshire, but felt that awareness of the service was still building amongst employers.
- Most employers felt that FSS participants had met or surpassed their expectations.

“At first, I thought there must be a catch, but there wasn’t. It was very flexible.”
(Employer)

- Employers also reported feeling that providing work experience was an important part of contributing to their community, and that it would have reputational benefits for them as well.

Challenges encountered delivering FSS in Alloa

- FSS providers and local partners felt that long term sustainability of the broader network of local services in the area required financial investment and support, and also mentioned that they **found it a challenge not to be able to use European Structural Funds to augment the budgets available for training.**
- For some participants, particularly those with complex needs, finding employment within 12 months is challenging. Progress towards employment, such as volunteering or full-time study are significant achievements for participants, but are not recognised within the FSS payment and outcomes structure.
- Similarly, local partners felt that, due to a range of factors the goal of 16 hours work per week may be too much for some participants to sustain, but that the FSS payment model did not recognise jobs of fewer than 16 hours per week.
- Providers suggested that early entry could be extended to other groups of individuals e.g. those leaving the armed forces, to allow more timely access to support.

“We have people who are work ready and want the help, but they’ve not been unemployed long enough” (JCP staff)

- Despite consultation on devolved employment services suggesting that referrals for support should not include too much historic detail on participants, **some [Provider] key workers had concerns that they did not have many details on participants prior to engaging with them.** This was felt to have an impact on the key workers’ ability to provide tailored support from the outset and meant that key workers had to rely on uncovering information themselves through working with the participant.
- Linked to the point above, **key workers would like the flexibility to have an early conversation with participants** and then give them a chance to think about whether Fair Start Scotland is for them before participation on the service starts.

- Providers were concerned that some participants could find the first induction meeting intimidating as the FSS process is very detailed, and the amount of information involved can feel overwhelming for some more vulnerable participants. **Providers emphasised the importance of having enough time over a number of weeks to build relationships with participants and explore their support needs.**

Lorna's Story

LORNA IS IN HER EARLY 40s AND LIVES IN AN AREA CLASSIFIED WITHIN SIMD DECILE 1



Lorna worked in the **HOSPITALITY AND RETAIL SECTORS** before she moved to the area about ten years ago.



Since then, her main focus has been **CARING FOR HER ELDERLY PARENTS** but she is keen to get into work.



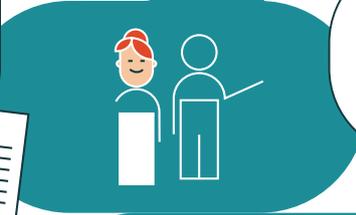
Lorna took part in another **EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME** between 2016 and 2018.

She felt that the support she received on the other programme was "rubbish... I felt like I was another number... they didn't listen to what you needed".



JCP referred her to FSS in July 2019.

FSS has given Lorna help with developing her CV and writing job applications, as well as arranging work placement and gaining qualifications in manual handling.



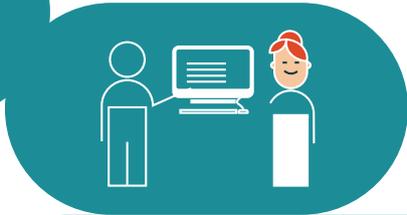
Emotional and practical support provided included help to move into her own flat. The key worker helped Lorna to access financial assistance to buy furniture and other necessities.



She preferred FSS, where her key worker "listened" with "care and compassion" and "seemed like she really cared".



Lorna is about to start a new job in **SOCIAL CARE** and reported that "I got the job as a result of confidence and self-esteem" developed through FSS.



The key worker also noted that Lorna's confidence increased through taking part in **PLACEMENTS** that they arrange for her and meeting new people, and this helped her to find the job.

Fair Start Scotland in Wick

FSS in Wick is contracted to People Plus as part of the Highlands and Islands Lot, and is delivered locally by Clearview 2020 Ltd. Both People Plus and Clearview 2020 Ltd are private sector employability providers.

Strengths of the FSS model in Wick

- The main strengths in Wick arise from the **established relationships between the very small number of local partners involved** in commissioning and delivery of employability services in this rural area.
- FSS exists alongside a separate employability support programme funded by the local authority, which providers felt was an invaluable ‘stepping stone’ to FSS. The initial support not only helps the provider to assess the commitment of the individual to a longer term period of support, but can also help individuals to develop the routines and practices that they will need to make the most of FSS.
- This combination of services makes referral from Jobcentre Plus much more straightforward as they trust the provider to make the best use of each service depending on the needs and situation of the individual.

“There has to be a good working relationship with DWP – we are all talking to the same people. I can pick up the phone and say have you referred X, I am working with Y, I have an issue, what do you think. Everything is done with really good intentions.” (Provider)

- Although the three hours face to face support is seen as a challenge for some participants, the Scottish Government has relaxed the earlier definitions around this, and the **provider has been creative in ensuring that experiences can be developed that meet the needs of each individual**. The issue is not so much about the time or distance involved, as about finding the appropriate kinds of engagement.
- There has been some confusion about the criteria for referral and although this now appears to be clearer, there is still scope for improved understanding across partners. Most difficulties have been resolved through the **close working relationship between the provider and the local Jobcentre Plus**.

Challenges arising in delivering FSS services in Wick

- **Challenges are mostly specific to the remote rural location.** There was general agreement from the provider and their partners that, while the voluntary approach had helped with many individuals, it wasn't sufficient to engage some potential participants. Local partners were aware of people who had benefitted from mandatory programmes in the past and who would not have participated in a voluntary programme. The feedback from providers and partners suggested that this was most likely due to the **distance some participants would have to travel to attend training and the lack of local childcare provision.**

“The main difference from Work Programme is that [FSS] is voluntary - and this is where problems begin. As soon as we mention it is voluntary, they decide not to come. They don't want to commit to 3 hours a week - there are real issues of travel and childcare.” (Provider)

- Many areas of the north Highlands have limited fixed and mobile coverage¹¹, which makes it difficult for both clients and providers to use online tools that would otherwise help provide a solution to some of the financial and practical challenges of providing support and working in a more remote area.
- **There are also financial issues for providers about the inflated costs of paying for travel, required certification and training for FSS participants in rural areas.** For example, the funding of CSCS [construction skills] cards is an issue, compounded by the only local provision being a private provider in Thurso charging £334, and the cheaper provision in Inverness being over 100 miles away.
- There are few other employability services in the local area and a lack of specialist provision, which means that the **support available to participants with more complex barriers is less comprehensive than elsewhere**, with longer waiting times for specialist support.

¹¹ 21% of rural households in Scotland are unable to receive a decent broadband connection. Source: Ofcom analysis of operator data. 21% is equivalent to 94,000 households. Ofcom (2018). *Connection Nations 2018 – Scotland Report*. [Online] Available: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0015/130821/Connected-Nations-2018-Scotland.pdf (Accessed 15 Oct 2019)

“There are not many providers left, so there is nowhere to refer clients to for specialist support. We can refer to a GP but any specialist help needs to be at the end of a [telephone] line.” (Provider)

“There are staff shortages in supporting those with anxiety and depression – there is a 2 year waiting list to see a Community Psychiatric Nurse.” (Provider)

- Participants highlighted the **lack of anonymity in the local area**, with some finding it hard to find work because of the reputation of their families.

Chris's Story



CHRIS IS IN HIS MID-20s AND HAS BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES. HE LIVES IN A NEIGHBOURHOOD DEFINED AS SIMD DECILE 2.

Chris has been unemployed since he left school.



Chris has a keen interest in gardening and has previously completed a gardening programme.



Prior to joining **FSS** he had never been in paid employment.

He was referred to **FSS** by **JCP** in September 2018.



Chris joined FSS as he knew about the programme and thought that they could help him find a job. He speaks positively of the support offered by FSS as they have been "supportive and encouraging" and have helped him to become more confident.



FSS has supported Chris to write his CV, perform job searches and write cover letters. He has attended various group sessions, including problem solving, communication, and interview techniques. He has also completed online learning modules such as English and Maths.



FSS also assisted Chris to complete an application to volunteer at a local cafe. His application was successful and he now volunteers at least once a week.

Chris's key worker stated that the main challenge was not to assist Chris with finding employment, but to help him with being comfortable in a social setting.

His key worker described him as "ultra quiet" and "even getting him to speak was a challenge in the beginning".



Both Chris and his key worker agree he has made great progress since. He now voluntarily speaks during group sessions, can present his work back to the group and has started enjoying the social interactions.



Since joining FSS, he has secured **SEASONAL WORK** as a casual gardener / landscaper.

Chris's key worker acknowledged that he is not yet ready to start full-time work and is happy with his casual gardening job.

Fair Start Scotland in Irvine

FSS in Irvine is contracted to Start Scotland as part of the South West Lot, and is delivered locally by The Lennox Partnership, a third sector employability provider. The South West Lot also includes South Ayrshire, East Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway.

Strengths of FSS delivery model in Irvine

- FSS in Irvine is **delivered from a building with strong community ownership and appeal**, where a range of other local support services are based. Interviewees saw this as important in ensuring that they are able to offer an appealing and accessible service. The building is seen as a place where local people can go for a range of activities, services and support, so it is an effective way of reaching those who are not engaging with JCP.
- The creation of a **'wrap around' service for employers** (as well as for participants) has been appreciated – this goes well beyond a focus on a particular individual and appropriate support for them in work to think more holistically about how the provider can support employers in the wider recruitment and workforce context.

“Follow up support is important – this can be quite a small issue (eg admitting that they can't afford to get to the site). Most of our LTU [long term unemployed] recruits have mental health issues - anxiety, depression, panic attacks – and we have lots of clubs and social activities to counteract this.” (Employer)

- The local FSS provider has developed a **careful support system for staff**, with a lot of peer support and regular check-ins by the manager. This is in response to two sources of stress: the situation of participants (“individuals can be suicidal”) coupled with the administrative demands of the service.
- **The [three hours] required contact time is seen as a useful discipline**, and providers recognised the importance of flexibility in being able to respond to an individual's situation, and how this may change over time.
- However, the vulnerability of participants is reflected in a lot of re-scheduled appointments. This is seen as part of their health condition –

“They can have a bad day and this allows us to recognise and respond to this.”

“It's important to work at their pace – they need to buy into it.” (FSS Provider)

Challenges of delivering FSS in Irvine

- The **cost to a provider of funding participant training** from within their FSS contract was cited as a challenge, although the local provider is able to place clients on locally funded catering and food hygiene courses:

“We can only fund training if there is a strong probability that the client will get a job as a result. Because we can’t fund training we need to rely on employers picking up the tab so we need to be open and honest with employers.” (FSS Provider)

- Both JCP staff and provider staff reported ongoing challenges around the nature of **customer referrals to FSS services**. One is the issue of eligible versus appropriate referrals from JCP, recognising that the provider has 12 to 18 months to work with a participant and move them into work:

“There has been feedback from Work Coaches that they have been told that FSS is not suitable for the clients they have referred. [JCP] Work Coaches are making a genuine referral but this is not meeting what the provider is looking for. Customers can play off one against the other – and it is very difficult to assess where the issues lie.” (JCP staff)

- Linked to this are issues arising from provider-sourced referrals (third party referrals), where a JCP Work Coach had not been aware of a customer’s health condition until they see [have to verify] a disability-related FSS referral for that individual:

“There has been a huge increase in direct referrals from providers – nearly all have been [referred under their disability] and the FSS eligibility criteria mean they can get direct access from day 1. Not all customers have told the [JCP] Work Coaches that they have a health issue – and we then see them with their own perception that they are disabled which is a bit surprising. Health has not been seen as a barrier before.” (JCP Staff)

- These issues have had an effect on the **quality of the relationship between the local FSS provider and JCP staff**. This has been compounded by staff being recruited from a previous provider that did not have a high local reputation, which appears to have influenced the perception of both Work Coaches and participants. The frequency and quality of feedback from the provider to Work Coaches is seen as really important in building an effective working relationship and currently Work Coaches report that they are not getting the feedback they feel would be helpful and appropriate to support participants.
- The **high number of local providers** for those seeking work means that it is particularly important for any new employability service to develop and

reinforce a clear and distinctive position, and to ensure that it is reaching those who can most benefit from its particular offer. However, the resulting competitive environment sometimes means that there is a lack of a collegiate and mutual support for services and inter-service referral is limited. In the words of a JCP staff member:

“There are 4 or 5 major ‘supermarkets’ – that is how I feel about the [employability] offer in Irvine - FSS is just one of these supermarkets. It is very hard to see the USP and to have good news stories – there is nothing from Irvine in the [JCP] newsletter.”

Reflections and next steps from Alloa, Wick and Irvine case studies

What worked well?

- Locating FSS services along with existing local employability services or support organisations is an effective way to make them more identifiable and accessible to the wider community.
- Building strong and trusting personal and organisational level relationships with delivery partners, particularly local Jobcentre staff, is crucial to effective service delivery for all parties involved.
- The FSS model of delivering services through an established local sub-contracted provider, with the lead contractor providing links across the lot to other partners and supply chain providers, appears to work effectively where there are clear roles and responsibilities, and flexibility at the local level.
- Participants report that they can see and feel the benefits of FSS support and that providers treat them with dignity and respect. Participants report an increase in their confidence, job-related skills and general well-being as a result.

What could be improved?

- Providers felt that FSS does not appropriately recognise jobs of less than 16 hours a week. Similarly, when the number of hours a participant will work can often vary from week to week, this can create administrative challenges for providers of ongoing (in-work) support and for payment schedules.
- Providers advised that achievements/ outcomes were only focused on sustained job outcomes. Volunteering/ studying can be considered a big step towards the labour market but these steps aren't financially recognised within the current FSS outcome structure.

- Travel costs when a participant starts work can be prohibitive to participants taking entry level work, especially in rural/ remote areas.
- Many non-participants interviewed were unaware of the service, suggesting that there remains scope for Jobcentre Plus and service providers to engage with other groups of potentially eligible participants in each area.
- More flexibility around disengaging and re-engaging, and the potential to delay a prospective participant's referral is important because unpredictability or setbacks in participants lives can mean it's better for them to commence support when they're ready, and to be able to take a break without losing the time from pre-employment support.
- Some work coaches feel they would value more frequent feedback and communication between JobCentres and service providers, This could potentially improve the support offered to participants and ensure those referred are suitable for the service.

What are we doing?

- The Scottish Government is committed to the continuous improvement of our services. We have already reviewed and implemented changes to a number of areas that were highlighted in the first evaluation report¹². Similarly, we have identified a number of actions around the participant experience, operational delivery and quality of service from this feedback and have included these in our Continuous Improvement Plan.
- We will continue to work with providers to ensure that everyone who takes part in FSS feels supported through the entire process. In particular, we will consider the experience of those who have more complex support needs, and how we can ensure the service has sufficient flexibility in adapting the delivery model to suit the requirements of these participants.

¹² Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 1: Implementation and early delivery review. (2019). Ibid.

6. Employability Support

This chapter summarises the feedback from participants on their experience of employability support through FSS. It covers views on pre-employment support, in-work support and some further feedback from participants who left the service early.

As part of the phone survey, IFF asked participants whether they were offered both pre-employment and in-work support by their FSS provider; whether they took up that offer and if they did, how useful they found each type of support. These findings are presented first for those receiving pre-employment support, and secondly for those receiving in-work support.

6.1 Pre-employment support

As shown in Figure 3, **most respondents took up the offer of one-to-one appointments with regular support and contact (86%), a dedicated key worker (86%), and help with job search activities (75%)**. A further two thirds (64%) took up the offer of the development of a personalised Employment Action Plan. Half of the participants (50%) were offered access to work tasters, work experience or apprenticeship opportunities but only a fifth (21%) overall took up this type of support. Given that such high proportions of participants are motivated to move into work, these intermediate steps could have been viewed as unnecessary by some participants.

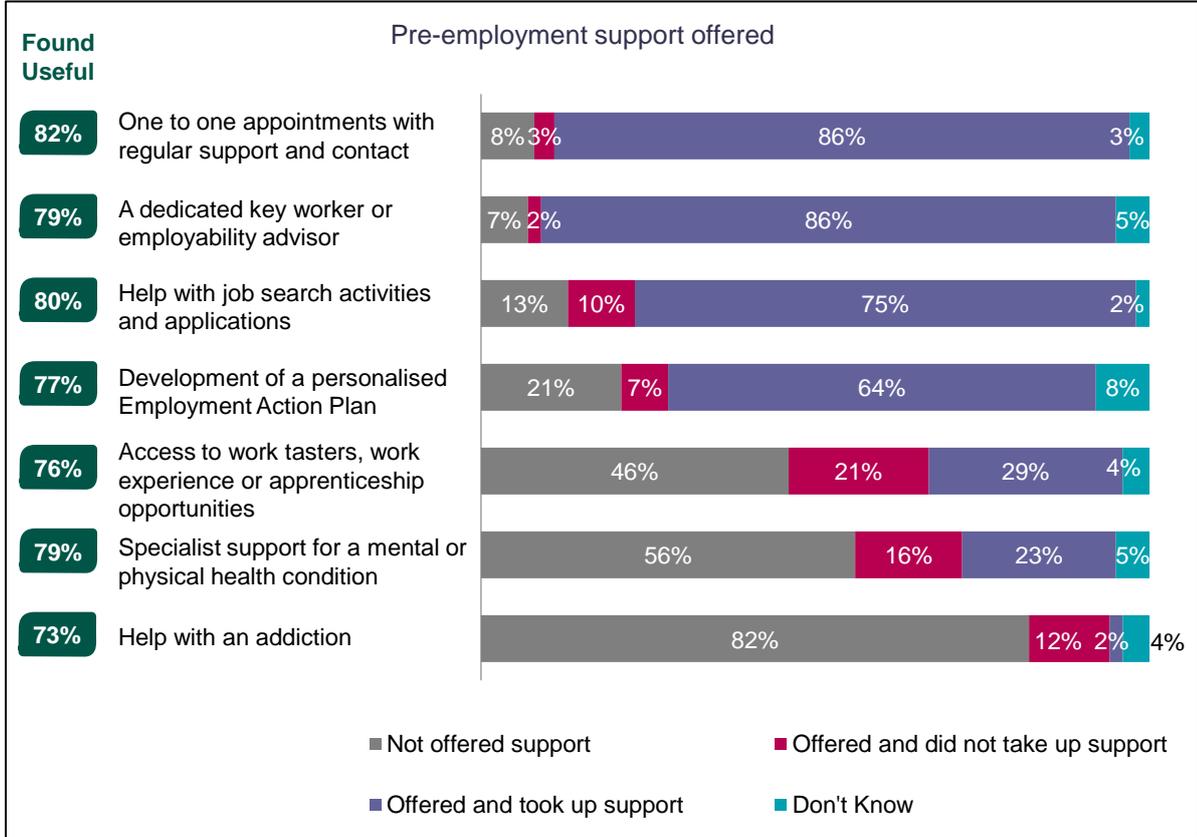
The survey findings also showed that not all participants were offered all of the support that was potentially available to them. For example, 46% report not being offered access to work tasters or work experience opportunities, and a further fifth (21%) report not being offered the development of a personalised Employment Action Plan, despite these being key elements of the support available. It's possible that some participants didn't recognise the way these services were described (for the survey), or that a small number had not been with the service long enough to be offered this support.

Fewer participants were offered specialist support for a physical or mental health condition (39%) or help with an addiction (14%). Two percent of respondents took up the offer of help with an addiction (15% of those offered this type of support).

There was some variation in the uptake of support by age group, perhaps reflecting difference levels of previous work experience. Those aged 35-49 were more likely to decline the offer of a dedicated key worker (5% compared with 3% declining overall) and help with job search activities (15% compared with 11%)

than the other age groups. Those aged 16-34 were more likely to take up access to work tasters (64%) than the other age groups (58%).

Figure 3: Offer, take-up and usefulness of pre-employment support for all respondents



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

Those who were working at the time of interview were also more likely to report having been offered each of the following types of support than those who were not working:

- A **dedicated key worker** or employability advisor (92% compared with 86%)
- **One to one appointments** (93% compared with 88%)
- **Specialist support for a mental or physical health condition** (45% compared with 37%)
- **Help with an addiction** (20% compared with 12%) and
- **Help with job search activities and applications** (89% compared with 83%)

This suggests that each of the above forms of support may have been particularly effective in helping respondents to move back into work.

Usefulness of pre-employment support

As also shown in Figure 3, survey respondents were generally positive about the usefulness of the support they received. **Around four fifths of respondents who received each type of support felt that it was useful.**

Generally, **women and those in work were more likely to say that the support was useful.** Women were more likely than men to say that the following were extremely useful: a dedicated key worker (71% vs 56%); the development of a personalised Employment Action Plan (59% vs 46%), one-to-one appointments with regular support and contact (73% vs 60%), specialist support for a mental or physical health condition (72% vs 57%). This difference may be due in some part to gender differences in social desirability response bias¹³.

As might be expected, those who were working were more likely than those not working to say that various support types were useful: a dedicated key worker (87% vs 76%); the development of a personalised Employment Action Plan (84% vs 73%); one-to-one appointments with regular support and contact (87% vs 80%); help with job search activities (88% vs 77%), access to work tasters, work experience or apprenticeship opportunities (88% vs 72%).

Around two thirds (65%) of respondents who took up the offer of support met with their key worker about once a week, with a further fifth (20%) meeting about once every two weeks. **Most of those who met with a key worker (85%) felt that the frequency of meetings was about right.**

All respondents were asked what other type of support they would have wanted to help move closer to work. **Almost three quarters of respondents felt that there was no other support needed (72%),** however small proportions of participants mentioned areas for improvement such as the desire to receive support that was more personalised or tailored to the respondent (4%), more opportunities to attend training courses (3%), or greater consideration of their health issues (3%).

6.2 In-work support

FSS participants who have found work and are receiving in-work support are entitled to up to 12 months ongoing support from their provider. The aim of this is

¹³ Social desirability bias refers to the fact that in self-reports, people will often report inaccurately on sensitive topics in order to present themselves in the best possible light. See for example: Fisher, R. J. (1993). "[Social desirability bias and the validity of indirect questioning](#)". Journal of Consumer Research, 20, 303-315.

to help job retention and progression in terms of skills and/ or income. The in-work support provided must include the following elements¹⁴:

- Weekly contact with a dedicated key worker, reducing over time;
- An In-work Support Action Plan detailing a timeline for workplace reviews with the employer and setting out future objectives;
- Support provided to the participant at their work induction;
- Financial guidance to the individual if necessary;
- Ensuring the participant is aware of changes to their benefit entitlement and that they are receiving all the possible in-work benefits;
- Support at other stages of work such as during training if necessary;
- Giving information about travel options to and from work considering the participants' needs; and
- An exit plan for leaving the FSS service.

Figure 4 shows that, **amongst those eligible for in-work support, the most commonly taken up support was a dedicated key worker (47%), followed by one-to-one appointments with regular support and contact (36%).** A further quarter took up support with a workplace induction (24%) and financial guidance (24%).

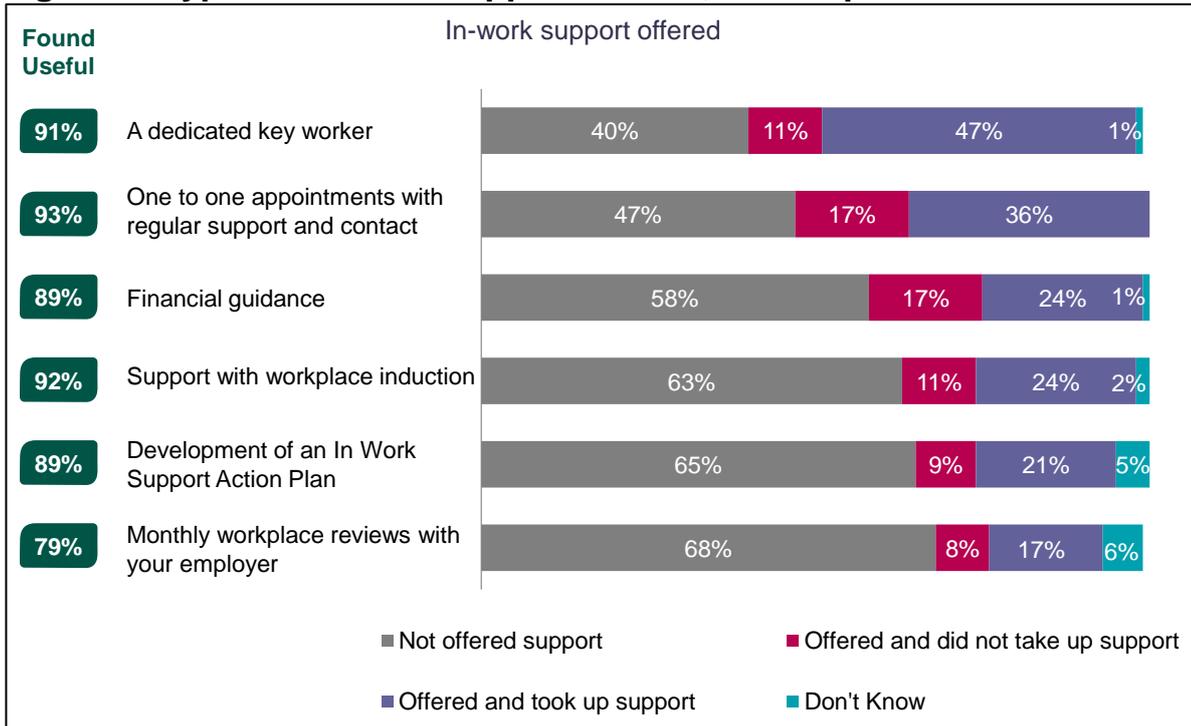
Again, those who were eligible for in-work support did not consistently report being offered it. Two thirds (67%) of those who were in work for at least 16 hours a week said they were offered in work support. Women were more likely than men to say that they had received in-work support (75% vs 62%).

Fewer respondents were supported to develop an “In Work Support Action Plan” (21%), or received monthly workplace reviews with their employer (17%). There were also some differences across Lots, perhaps reflecting the different service delivery models and participant characteristics.

Women were more likely than men to take up the offer of a key worker (90% of women offered this accepted it vs 74% of men), one-to-one appointments (79% vs 59%), work induction support (81% vs 57%) and financial guidance (75% vs 46%).

¹⁴ For participants with higher levels of need, providers should also provide Job and Task Analysis and deliver tailored support for the participant's needs in accordance with their Job Analysis.

Figure 4: Types of in work support offered, taken up and found useful



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

Although between two fifths and two thirds of those eligible were not offered each type of in work support, those who took up the support generally found it useful. **Almost all (79% - 93%) respondents found each type of support they received useful.**

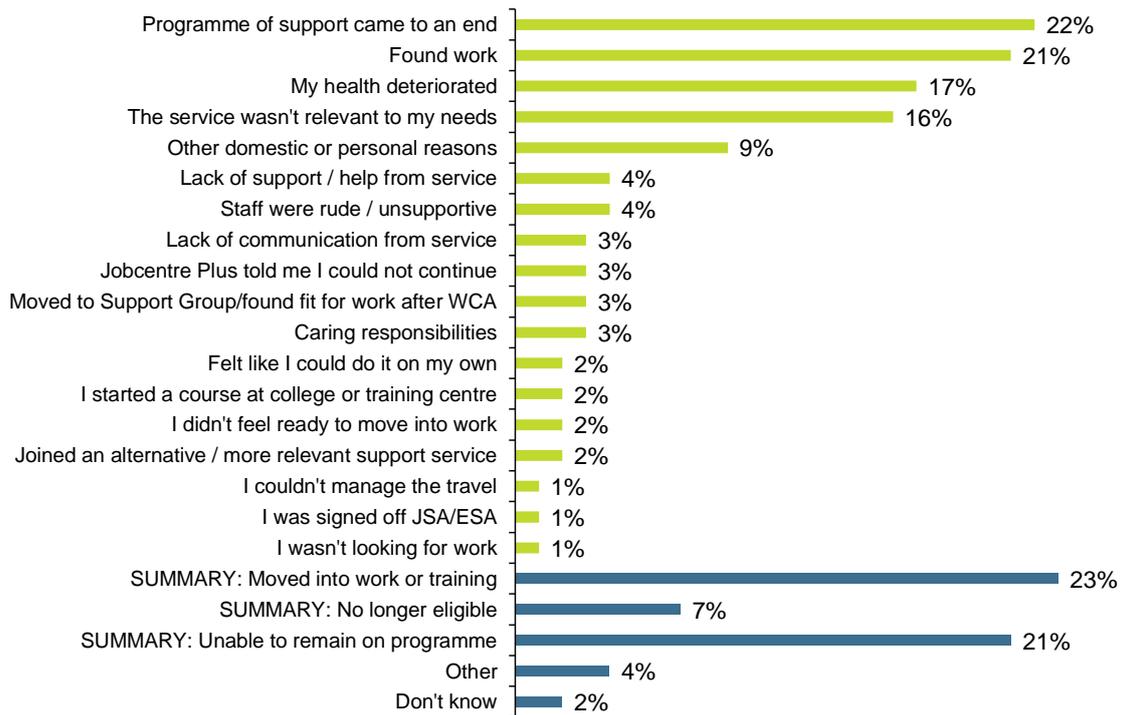
6.3 Early leavers

As mentioned earlier in the report, around a quarter (28%) of those who engaged with FSS left before completing their pre-employment support or finding work. The participant phone survey also identified that 46 % of participants said they were no longer receiving a service from FSS at the time they were surveyed in June 2019.

As shown in Figure 5 below, **participants who left most commonly reported that their support came to an end (22%) or that they had moved into work (21%).** A further 17% left because their health deteriorated whilst 16% felt the service was not relevant to their needs.

A small number of participants left due to issues with the service: 4% reported feeling staff were rude or unsupportive; 4% felt that the service did not provide enough support, and 3% stated there was a lack of communication from the service providers.

Figure 5: Reasons for leaving the FSS Service



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

Those who moved into work or training were more likely to be younger, as this reason was given by 37% of those aged 16 to 24, and 30% of those aged 16 to 34, compared to the average of 23% overall.

Older participants were more likely to say that they could no longer stay on the service (29% compared to 21% overall) and this was predominantly because their health deteriorated (27% gave this reason for leaving).

Local Area Case Studies

As FSS is a voluntary service, participants are free to leave before completing the 12-18 months of pre-employment support available to them, without incurring benefit sanctions. Six interviewees reported that they had left early, four of whom reported positive experiences of their time with Fair Start Scotland. They left due to reasons unrelated to the quality of support they received – for example, disabilities, caring responsibilities and childcare issues.

Two of these participants reported that they left because they moved on to disability benefits and are no longer looking for work. One explained that their disability benefits were re-approved following an appeal against an earlier failed assessment. This person described themselves as “long-term sick, not long-term unemployed”. Another described leaving Fair Start Scotland because they developed a medical condition as a result of surgery and now receive ESA payments.

What worked well?

The majority of participants are offered a wide range of pre-employment and in-work support experiences which most find useful.

Those in work recognise the benefits of key elements of the personalised FSS model, including: a dedicated adviser; one-to-one appointments; specialist support for mental health and addictions and job search skills.

What could be improved?

While the emphasis is on a personalised approach, it appears that some participants may not have been offered all the services available to them within the FSS model.

Some participants reported that their support could have been further personalised.

Most participants left as their support had ended or they'd moved into work, however there remains scope to improve on services for the 16% who felt that support was not relevant to their needs.

What are we doing?

SG are working closely with service providers and delivery partners to continually improve FSS services on the ground. FSS service providers are regularly monitored to ensure that they are following key delivery indicators and providing appropriate support and training to participants.

7. Values and Principles

The Fair Start Scotland service is built upon the Scottish Government's key values for public services¹⁵:

- Dignity and respect
- Fairness and equality
- Continuous improvement

Responses to the 2015 public consultation on the future of employability services in Scotland suggested that these underpinning values were driven by a desire for individuals to feel more in control over their journey through support services into work; that they as “service users” had a clearer voice in how services were designed and delivered; that they felt services were tailored to their individual needs; and that providers recognised their individual life circumstances and challenges.

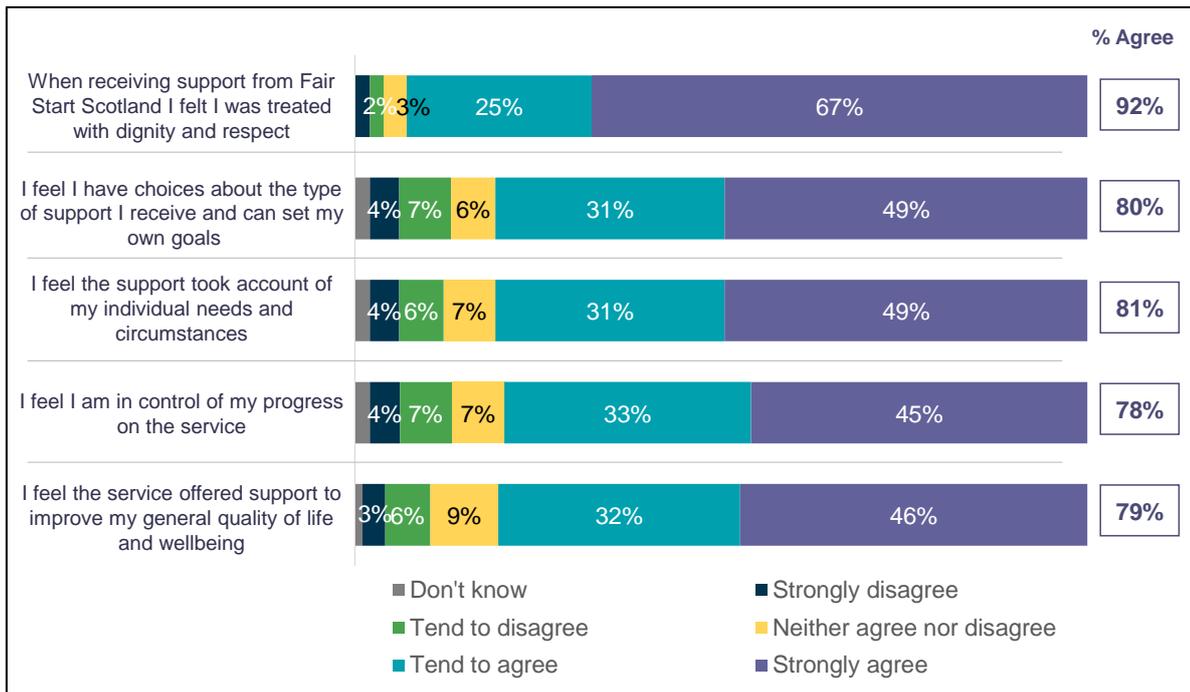
Previous research¹⁶ suggests that when individuals have this sense of control over their personal journeys and are treated with dignity and respect by service providers, they are more likely to recognise the benefits of progression to their mental and physical wellbeing.

As shown in Figure 6, **most respondents were very positive about the support they received from Fair Start Scotland.** Those who were in work at the point of interview (June 2019) were particularly likely to agree with each attitudinal statement compared with those not in work.

¹⁵ For full details of the Scottish approach to employability support see: Creating a Fairer Scotland (2015) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/creating-fairer-scotland-new-future-employability-support-scotland/pages/3/>

¹⁶ See: *Social security systems based on dignity and respect*. (2017) EHRC Research Report. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/social-security-systems-based-dignity-and-respect>

Figure 6: Participants' attitudes to the FSS support they received



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

Nine out of ten respondents felt that they were treated with respect and dignity (92%), and this did not differ by gender, ethnicity, or presence of health condition. Younger participants were more likely to agree than others (95% amongst those aged 16 – 34 compared with 89% of those aged 35-49 and 92% of those aged 50 and over).

Four fifths (80%) felt that they had choices about the type of support they received, and that they could set their own goals. Women were more likely to agree with this than men (85% vs 79%), as were those aged 16-24 (88%) compared with older participants (78% of those aged 35-49 and 80% of those aged 50 and over agreed).

A further four fifths (80%) felt that the support took account of their individual needs and circumstances, and a similar proportion (79%) agreed that they felt they were in control of their progress on the service. Again, younger participants were more likely to agree with the later statement (82% of 16-34 year olds vs 74% of those aged 35 – 49).

Most participants (78%) also agreed that the service offered support to improve their general quality of life and wellbeing. Women were more likely than men to agree with this (84% vs 75%).

There were some differences by area in levels of agreement with these statements. See the full Phone Survey report for more detail on these.

Direct feedback from phone survey participants (June 2019)

Respondents were asked for more open feedback about the service. On the whole, there were more positive responses than negative, with participants particularly praising the staff involved in delivering the service:

“If it wasn't for FSS and my support worker, I wouldn't be where I am today. She's done a brilliant job and has been so supportive.”

Female, aged 50+, Lot 8 (Highlands and Islands)

“The advisor has been very good, phoning and texting when I didn't turn up for appointments. He also understood my situation and he helped me without putting me under any pressure. Very empathetic.”

Male, aged 50+, Lot 1 (Glasgow)

“It put me in a new direction. It gave me the confidence to start working. It was really worthwhile”

Male, aged 35-49, Lot 5 (East)

“It was absolutely fantastic for me and I wish the Jobcentre was run a lot more like that service. The Jobcentre creates anxiety for its users whereas with this service I felt like I was treated with dignity and respect - life is great thanks to them.”

Female, aged 16-24, Lot 9 (West)

Although small numbers were more critical about the service:

“I wasn't offered any courses nor was there any attempt to contact employers. They just humoured me once a fortnight. It was a waste of time.”

Female, aged 50+, Lot 6 (South West)

“They put me forward for a position within the office which then transpired didn't exist. Any positions I applied for were positions I had found myself and not through the service. I found the benefits [of the service] minimal.”

Female, aged 35-49, Lot 3 (Tayside)

What do participants in Alloa, Wick and Irvine think about Fair Start Scotland?

Overall, feedback from participants was very positive and clients identified several strengths including comprehensive and tailored support, the caring, respectful and supportive key workers, the holistic support offered, and the voluntary nature of the support.

Comprehensiveness

Participants valued the comprehensive support offered, covering all aspects of preparation for employment. Interviewees appreciated the help and advice they receive to find vacancies, write their CV, make job applications, prepare for interviews and enhance their experience and skills through placements and courses. Very few participants reported having any support needs that Fair Start Scotland did not meet and one said, “What they do is perfect”. Another said the service was “On the ball about everything”.

Tailored support

Participants reported that the support they received was tailored to their individual needs. Key workers help to find vacancies and arrange placements and training that suits individual participant’s skills, interests and circumstances. For example, one participant, who has a young son, said that their key worker was helping them to look for opportunities that would fit around school start and finish times. Key workers also provide wide-ranging support to address individual needs including, for example, helping participants to obtain a driving license, get their hair cut before an interview, or buy new shoes before starting a job.

Many participants who had also taken part in the other employability support programmes noted that they did not seek to accommodate their interests and individual circumstances to the same extent as Fair Start Scotland.

Holistic support

Participants appreciated the holistic nature of support from key workers with other aspects of their lives not directly linked to their employability. For example, we spoke to one participant whose key worker helped them to access financial assistance to buy furniture when they moved out of their father’s house and into their own flat, and another whose key worker helped them to arrange medical appointments. Other examples include a participant with a mental health condition who said “they made sure I was eating and taking my medication”.

Caring, respectful and supportive key workers

In line with the principles of dignity and respect, participants described the approach of their key workers as caring, respectful and supportive. Across the three [local area case studies] providers, interviewees reported that staff were friendly, understood their circumstances and genuinely cared about achieving the best outcome for them.

Participants with experience of the DWP Work Programme felt that FSS key workers are more supportive and respectful than Work Programme advisers. One said that they were “spoken to like a bairn” on the Work Programme, but the FSS worker “puts you at ease”. Another observed that “the FSS advisor listened to you” in contrast to their experience of the Work Programme.

Voluntary participation without risk of sanctions

Participants and non-participants [interviewed for the local area case studies] appreciated the voluntary aspect of FSS and reported that key workers were understanding when they missed appointments or were unable to take part in activities. In one case, a participant turned down a job offer because they did not feel emotionally ready to return to work, and they were able to do this without fear of penalty.

In contrast, participants who had engaged with other employability support services, e.g. the Work Programme, disliked the compulsory nature of that programme and the risk of sanctions for non-completion or non-participation.

Specific challenges reported by FSS participants in Alloa, Wick and Irvine

While feedback was generally very positive, some participants interviewed as part of the local area case studies research reported some challenges.

In Irvine, several participants stated that they preferred other employability support to FSS, and chose to leave and return to their previous advisor because they provided more intensive and personalised support.

Another participant, also receiving support in Irvine, for whom English is not their primary language, left FSS as they did not receive the intensive literacy support they required. They stated that the key worker only saw them once a week, whereas they saw a dedicated literacy worker three times a week on the programme provided by Jobcentre Plus, which provided support with English writing skills and in preparing job applications and cover letters.

In Alloa, one participant said they had hoped to receive support with interview skills but there was not enough time to provide this, and in Wick

one participant would have appreciated more support with managing their finances.

8. Moving towards work

This section focuses on participants' views and experiences of moving towards and into work.

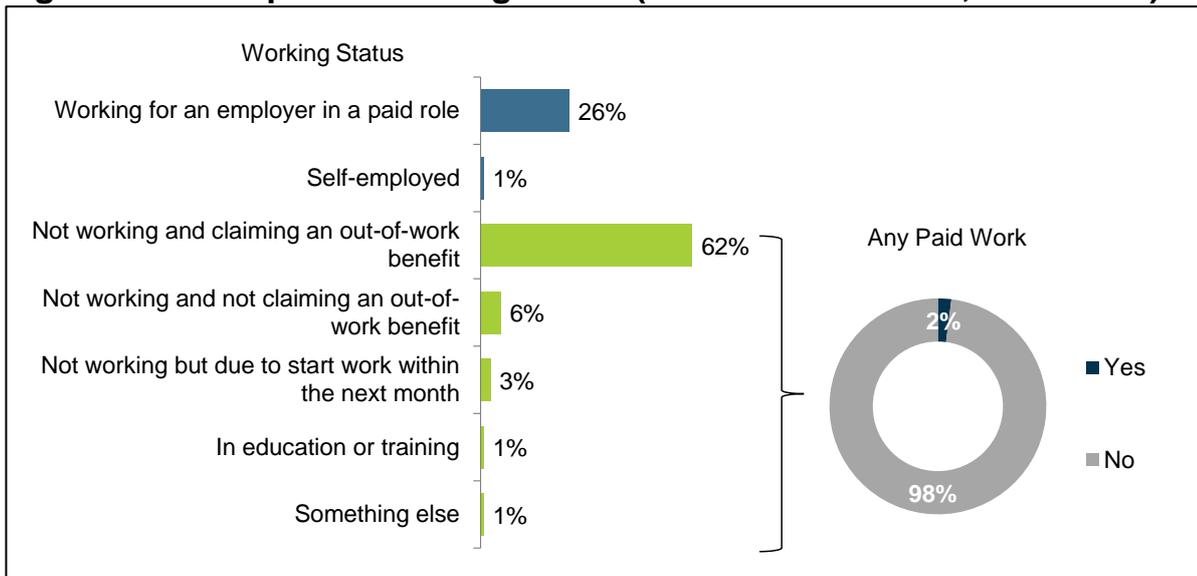
8.1 Employment Status at end of Year 1

When the participant phone interviews were conducted (in June 2019), 29% of respondents reported that they were working¹⁷ and 67% were not in work.

Almost two fifths (38%) of respondents had not worked in the last 5 years. A greater proportion of younger respondents were in work than older respondents (40% of those aged 16-24 compared with 25% of those 35-49 and 24% of those 50 and over).

Those who had worked in the last 5 years were also more likely to be working currently (39%) than those who had not worked at any time in the last 5 years (11%). Those in Lot 3, Tayside, were also more likely to be working (41%) than the other lots.

Figure 7: Participants' working status (at time of interview, June 2019)



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

Level of education was also correlated with working status. Those with Highers or equivalent (40%) and those with a degree level qualification or above (35%) were more likely to be in work than those with either no education (21%) or National 1-5 or equivalent (26%).

¹⁷ Proportion includes those who said they did any paid work in the seven days prior to interview, in addition to those said they were working for an employer or self-employed.

Of those in work, half (49%) were in full-time employment (30 or more hours per week). Two-fifths (38%) worked between 16 and 29 hours per week, whilst 12% worked fewer than 16 hours per week.

Women were more likely than men to be in part-time work, 16 to 29 hours a week (16% vs 9%), reflecting national employment patterns¹⁸. Those that had worked in the last 5 years were also more likely to be in full-time employment (as opposed to part time) (21%) than those who had not worked in the last 5 years (4%). In addition to being more likely to be in any type of employment, those in Tayside (Lot 3, 24%) were more likely to be in full time employment than those in other areas.

8.2 Factors influencing progression into and towards work

Views on returning to work

The vast majority of participants who were still receiving pre-employment support at the point of interview felt that they wanted to return to (full time) employment in the future. Figure 8 below shows that seven in ten participants (69%) stated that they wanted to return “to a great extent” and a further 17% “to some extent”. A small proportion (4%) did not want to return to work; this was more common amongst older participants (aged 50+, 8%) and those whose health limited their day-to-day activities (6%).

There were higher levels of desire to return to work amongst men than women (72% and 64% wanted to return “to a great extent”, respectively), and amongst those qualified to degree level or above (83%). There was some indication that those who have been out of work for longer periods felt less strongly about returning to work, with 77% of those who have worked in the last five years wanting to return to a great extent compared with 61% of those who have been unemployed for five years or more.

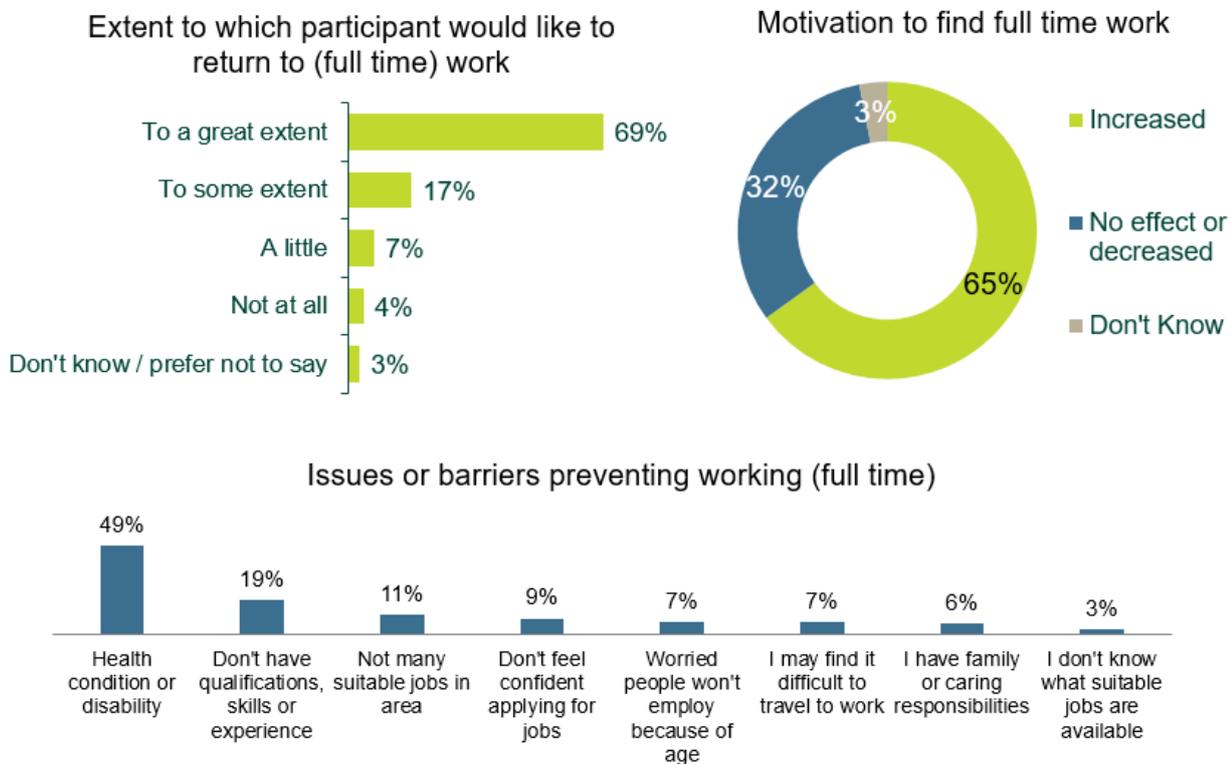
FSS had a positive effect on motivation to find employment for two-thirds (65%) of participants, with 41% reporting that their motivation to find work had increased a lot. However, a fifth (21%) of participants receiving pre-employment support felt that their motivation levels had not changed, and one in ten (10%) reported a decrease in motivation.

FSS appears to be less likely to have a positive impact on the motivation levels of those with a long-term health condition than other participants; half (51%) of those with no health condition said that their motivation had increased a lot from when they began receiving support from FSS, compared with only 36% of those whose health limits their day-to-day activities. A quarter (25%) of those with

¹⁸ <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06838/SN06838.pdf>

no health condition compared with 35% of those whose activity is limited by their health stated that their motivation levels had stayed the same or decreased.

Figure 8: Participants' views on returning to work



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

Indeed, health proved to be the issue most commonly mentioned when those in pre-employment support were asked about the barriers they face returning to work, with half (49%) stating that this was one of the main issues they faced. This factor was more commonly mentioned by women (56%) and older respondents (50+; 58%).

A lack of skills, qualifications or experience was the second most frequently mentioned barrier that participants felt was preventing them from finding work (19%). Men (22%), younger people (16-34; 23%), and individuals from minority ethnic communities (39%) were particularly likely to cite this as a barrier to employment.

A range of other concerns were mentioned, some of which were particularly felt by subgroups of respondents, for example:

- Family or caring responsibilities were more commonly mentioned by women than men (11% compared with 3%);
- One in five (19%) of those aged 50 or over were concerned that they would not be offered employment due to their age;

- A quarter (26%) of those in the Highlands and Islands (Lot 8) felt there were not many suitable jobs in their local area (11% overall).

Job search skills and self-efficacy

FSS is rooted in the principles of dignity and respect, and the service model is designed to treat individuals in a way that reflects these values. This will manifest in a number of ways, one of which may be by nurturing a sense of self-efficacy in those who participate.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their own ability to organise and carry out actions in order to successfully achieve a task. It is based on a person's perceptions and beliefs about themselves. The level of self-efficacy experienced by a person can have an impact on many areas of life, particularly those that are relevant to finding and maintaining employment.

Self-efficacy can influence many personal outcomes including:

- decision making,
- level of motivation, whereby lower self-efficacy makes it more likely for an individual to avoid a task¹⁹
- the amount of perseverance and resilience in the face of adversity,
- engaging in thoughts that are harmful or supportive to the individual,
- levels of stress and depression²⁰.

Self-efficacy is not set in stone; it can change, and deliberate efforts can be made to increase feelings of self-efficacy for an individual. The most effective way of increasing feelings of self-efficacy is through the successful mastery of a task²¹. This means that a person's confidence in their own ability to be successful in the workplace, and in other areas of life, can be increased through opportunities to master the tasks needed to achieve employment, such as through pre-work training, as well as experience in the workplace itself.

In order to explore the effects of FSS support on participants' self-efficacy, and to establish any links to being treated with dignity and respect, the participant phone survey included a section on standardised job search self-efficacy measures. Respondents completed a nine-item measure of the strength of an individual's

¹⁹ Lunenburg, F. C. (2011). Self-efficacy in the workplace: Implications for motivation and performance. *International journal of management, business, and administration*, 14(1), 1-6.

²⁰ Petrovich, A. (2004). Using self-efficacy theory in social work teaching. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 40(3), 429-443.

²¹ Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press. (Reprinted in H. Friedman [Ed.], *Encyclopedia of mental health*. San Diego: Academic Press, 1998).

belief that they have the skills to undertake a range of job search tasks, known as the Job Search Self Efficacy (JSSE) Index²².

Over all respondents, there were variations in the levels of confidence felt about specific job search tasks, which ranged from most feeling confident (74%) about searching for jobs online through to a half (51%) who felt confident about contacting and persuading potential employers to consider them for a job.

The average score JSSE index score across the nine statement iterations revealed some groups with lower confidence in their ability to find a job, compared with the mean (3.8), namely:

- Those without formal educational qualifications (mean score 3.4)
- Participants who had not worked in the five years prior to joining the Fair Start Scotland service (3.7)
- Those whose day-to-day activities were limited by a health condition (3.7)

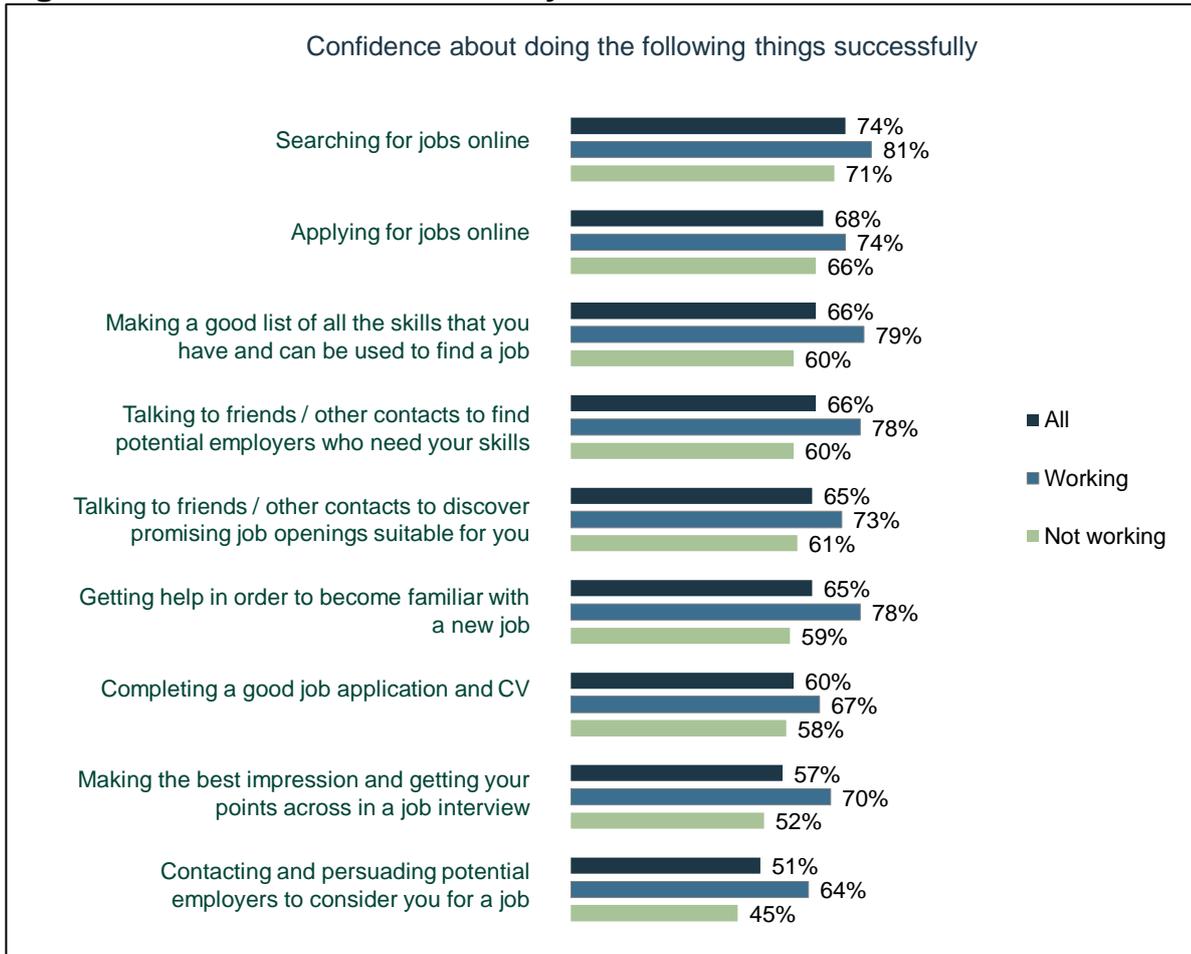
Those aged 16-34, conversely, demonstrated greater confidence regarding these job search skills, with a mean score of 4.0 across all statements.

As expected, participants in work at the point of the Wave 1 interview were more likely to feel confident about each measure of job searching ability, as shown in Figure 9 below.

This part of the research will be repeated over the next two years to explore any changes in self-efficacy as a result of FSS support or time in spent in work.

²² The original JSSE Index was developed at the University of Michigan (Vinokur et al., 1995) and contained six items. This was modified by R. Birkin and M. Meehan in 2014 with the addition of three items to address using IT for job search and job applications, and also getting help to become familiar with a new job.

Figure 9: Job Search Self Efficacy Measures



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

Positive impacts of FSS support in Alloa, Wick and Irvine

Participants and key workers reported a range of positive outcomes for participants. Several interviewees had gained new practical, job-related skills, or renewed their existing qualifications, through undertaking courses and work placements. Participants had built skills in a range of areas such as forklift driving, retail, health and safety, landscaping and welding. Many interviewees also reported being enrolled in IT courses and confidence-building workshops.

Participants also said they improved their skills in job-seeking. This included better awareness of where to look for vacancies, including online sources, enhanced CVs and support with interview skills.

Many of the participants and key workers involved in the research reported that Fair Start Scotland helped participants to feel more confident in themselves and in their ability to find work.

“I’ve opened up more as a person... before, I was always at home and I was never out the house.”

“They helped me see that people should be screaming out for me.”

“It has given me the confidence and experience to go into places.”

Participants attributed this growth in confidence to Fair Start Scotland activities giving them a purpose and “structure” to their week, a chance to meet new people, and a greater awareness of their strengths, as well as enhancing their skills and experience. One participant reported that Fair Start Scotland “gave me the confidence to do interviews” and another, who has not worked for 12 years, said the key worker “has helped me feel more confident”. Another key worker felt that one of their participants “is less quiet than before” and more confident about speaking to people.

Some interviewees told us that Fair Start Scotland helped them to gain experience of different sectors and decide what they want to do. For example, one participant took part in placements in retail and sports development and through these, realised that they wanted to pursue a career in sports development - “I like that they’ve helped me find out what I want to do”. Another liked the fact that their key worker gave them different “ideas to float around my head”.

For some participants, the confidence gained and support provided through Fair Start Scotland helped them to move into work or further education. One participant said that “I got the job because of confidence and self-esteem” developed through Fair Start Scotland, while another “wasn’t confident at all in applying for retail jobs but they supported me the entire way and I feel a lot more confident. That’s how I was able to get my current job”. A third noted that their key worker has “helped me to get into work by showing me how to do my CV and that sort of thing”. Another secured a place at college which they will take up unless they are successful with a Modern Apprenticeship application. Another reported that Fair Start Scotland has “helped me with skills to start self-employment”.

Other participants reported that, although they are not ready to enter the labour market just now, Fair Start Scotland had made them more confident about and interested in finding work when their circumstances change. For example, one single parent who has eight children said that Fair Start Scotland has given them a “taster” and that they are more interested in finding a job when their children are older.

Fair Start Scotland has also had a positive impact on participants’ health and wellbeing and, more broadly, that of their families. Some participants reported that, by helping them to get into work, Fair Start Scotland had helped to improve their financial situation and this in turn had benefitted

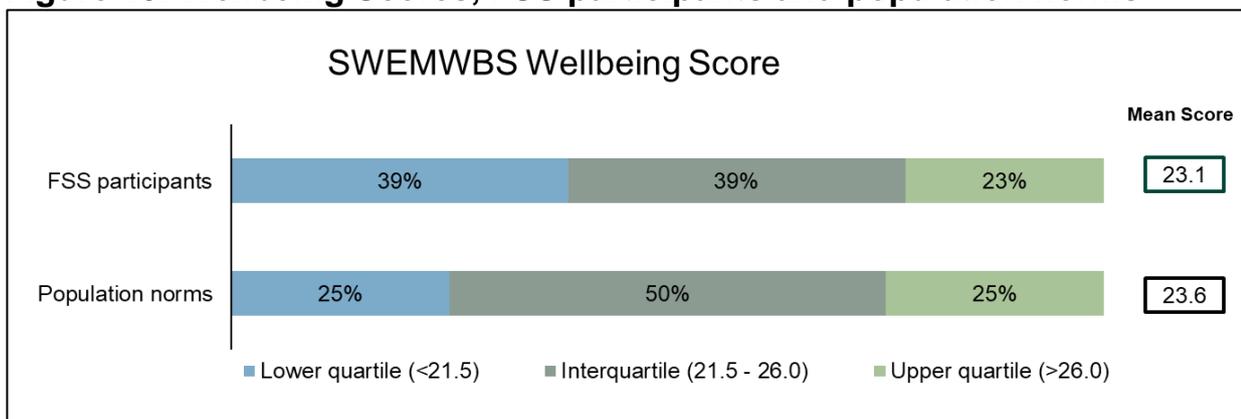
other members of the family as well. The service helped some participants to meet new people, exemplified by one who said “I don’t feel so isolated”. Another spoke about the importance of the holistic support that Fair Start Scotland offers and of having the key worker there to talk to about anything that is worrying them - “[the key worker] is there if you need her... she gives the support I need”.

8.3 Wellbeing and work

A further section of the phone survey explored the health and well-being impacts of FSS support and moving towards work. IFF used standardised questions from the (Short) Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale²³. The scores of FSS participants based on our survey responses were compared with the population norms based on the Health Survey for England 2011²⁴, when population level data was last published. FSS participants had a lower mean (average) score (23.1) than the population norm (23.6).

As Figure 10 shows, FSS participants were considerably more likely to have a score in the lower quartile of the population norm by 14 percentage points (39% of FSS participants scored less than 21.5 compared to the norm of 25%). FSS participants were less likely to score within the interquartile range (39% scored between 21.5 and 26.0 compared to the norm of 50%) and the upper quartile range (23% scored above 26.0 compared to the norm of 25%).

Figure 10: Wellbeing Scores, FSS participants and population norms



Source: FSS Participant Phone Survey Year 1 (IFF Research).

²³ For further background on WEMWBS, see: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs>

²⁴ Population norms based on Health Survey for England 2011 data available here: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/using/howto/wemwbs_population_norms_in_health_survey_for_england_data_2011.pdf

The average score of participants varied considerably by employment status, age and the impact of health conditions on individuals.

Mental wellbeing and employment

Participants who were receiving In Work Support from FSS providers scored the highest wellbeing score of any demographic group at 25.5, which was considerably higher than both the FSS participant average (23.1) and the population average (23.6).

Those who were in work at the time of survey (a slightly higher proportion than those recorded as receiving In Work Support) also had a higher average score of 25.4, while those who had been in work in the last five years scored more highly than those who had not worked in this period (23.4 compared with 22.6).

There was also some variation among different FSS Lots. The East (Lot 5) were more likely to have scores in the lower quartile of the population norm (42% had a score of below 21.5 compared to the norm of 25%). Lot 4, Forth Valley had the lowest average score of 21.6%, with only 11% of participants in this region recording a score in the population top quartile.

Mental wellbeing and age

Participants aged between 16 and 24 had the highest wellbeing score of 24.2, while those aged between 16 and 34 still had a higher than average score of 23.6. Participants aged between 35 and 49 scored lower than average, at 22.4. Participants aged over 50 were very close to the average and the difference was not statistically significant.

Mental wellbeing and the impact of health conditions

As described above, we asked participants who had a health condition to what extent their condition impacted on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. As might be expected, participants who were limited by their health condition (either a lot or a little) had a lower than average mental wellbeing score (22.4), while those who had a health condition which did not limit their abilities were in line with the average (23.1). FSS participants who did not have a health condition scored 24.8 which is above the average for both FSS participants and the population norm.

Participants who did not have any qualifications had the lowest mental wellbeing score of any demographic group (22.0 compared to 23.1 average across all FSS participants), although there were no significant differences across those who had qualifications.

Overall, the findings from this part of the survey suggest that FSS support, and employment more generally, have a positive influence on an

individual's mental wellbeing. While FSS participants start off with lower than average wellbeing scores, those who move into work, and who are receiving in-work support from FSS providers show higher wellbeing scores than the general population.

Perhaps not unsurprisingly, age, the impact of health conditions and having no qualifications are the factors most likely to lead to lower than average mental wellbeing scores.

As increased numbers of FSS participants move through the service and find work, the overall wellbeing score may rise towards that currently reported by those receiving in-work support. This element of the research will be repeated over the next two years with new and existing FSS participants to explore how mental wellbeing changes over the stages of the FSS participant journey.

Barriers to progression identified in Alloa, Wick and Irvine

Participants and non-participants interviewed across the local case study areas reported that challenges in finding and then staying in work were related to a range of individual circumstances. Many interviewees reported that they have struggled to find work because of their parental and/or caring duties. These issues have either prevented them from moving into employment altogether or set limits on the range of roles they could apply to. For example, one participant mentioned that they had to wait for their child to start school before moving into work. Their key worker reported that the participant felt they could not commit to the hours required. Likewise, another interviewee recently became a full-time carer for their grandson and said that, in the jobs they applied to, they were asked to work nights and weekends, without any flexibility.

A lack of skills was another key barrier to employment. Some felt they were hindered by a lack of skills in written English or IT (such as typing) or by not having a driving license, which one key worker noted was valuable in opening up opportunities for employment further afield.

For some, a lack of knowledge of recruitment processes was also a barrier to employment. We heard from participants who needed help with writing and uploading a CV and applying for jobs online. One participant felt hindered by a lack of interview skills and familiarity with the interview process. They had been in the same line of work for decades, had never attended a formal interview, and had difficulty understanding what was being asked of them in interviews.

In some cases, poor mental and/or physical health has prevented interviewees from moving into and staying in employment. For example, one participant lost their job as a chef because they were experiencing mental health issues, which they described as “a psychological knock”.

Other barriers to employment reported included a lack of job opportunities in the local area and age constraints. For example, one research participant referred to a retail job they applied for which required a 12-year commitment from successful applicants so that they could make progress to middle management. As the interviewee said, “they’re not going to hire someone in their 50s”. Another participant who is turning 60 stated that they received good support from Fair Start Scotland and “managed to fire off lots of applications” but felt their age “works against me” and “employers don’t want to give me a look in”.

We also heard from a [Provider] key worker that a lack of discipline and/or poor relations with work colleagues has prevented two Fair Start Scotland participants from staying in work. While one participant lost their job because of inappropriate behaviour, the other left due to strained relations with their manager.

What worked well?

There is clear evidence from the phone survey results that receiving FSS support has a positive effect on many (65%) participants’ motivation to return to work.

The measures of self-efficacy used in the phone survey also showed that most participants felt confident about their job search skills, with those in work reporting markedly higher levels of confidence in all nine recognised activities on the scale than those still receiving pre-employment support.

The local case studies show that FSS has also had a positive influence for participants who are not yet ready to move into work, with examples of many who reported increased confidence and wellness and moves into education or training.

Finally, results of our measures of mental wellbeing demonstrate the positive influence of both FSS in-work support and of work itself.

What could be improved?

While FSS support is motivating many participants, there remains scope to strengthen the positive influence of FSS services for vulnerable participants, including those with more limiting health conditions, who have been unemployed for 5 years or more and who report feeling they have a lack of qualifications, skills or experience.

Similarly, participants with no formal qualifications reported the lowest levels of confidence in their ability to undertake a range of job search tasks. Not working for five years or more prior to engaging with FSS support and having a limiting health condition were also factors in reducing confidence in job search tasks.

The mental wellbeing survey results emphasised again the negative impacts for those with more limiting health conditions, for people aged 35-49 and in particular, for people with no qualifications.

What are we doing?

We will work with providers and local delivery partners to deliver our continuous improvement plan which aims to strengthen the support available through FSS for the most vulnerable members of our communities.

9. Reflections & Next Steps

Overall, performance across the first year of FSS service delivery has been positive for the vast majority involved. This evaluation has provided clear and robust evidence of the high quality of support experienced by the vast majority of FSS participants.

Participants have reported a range of benefits arising from the FSS support they've experienced. The most commonly cited are improvements to both their confidence and overall wellbeing. Through this evaluation, FSS participants have told us that they feel they are treated with dignity and respect, and that they are participating in genuinely personalised services that make a positive difference to their lives.

FSS providers are each building their own unique FSS offer, in partnership with other local delivery organisations, including Jobcentres, local authorities and third sector partners, to deliver a wide range of bespoke support for some of Scotland's most vulnerable unemployed people. The Scottish Government and FSS service providers will continue to drive improvement in response to evaluation findings and operational performance feedback. Current continuous improvement actions are highlighted in the first FSS Annual Report, due to be published along with this evaluation.

In the spirit of "test and learn", we recognise where there is scope to improve FSS services to support the most vulnerable, particularly people with no qualifications; people from minority ethnic communities; people who have been unemployed for more than five years and people with health conditions that limit their day-to-day activities.

As we move into the implementation of No One Left Behind, we will also be collaborating with local government, DWP/ JCP and the third sector to integrate and align employability support more effectively at a local level.

The next FSS evaluation report is due in Autumn 2020 and will explore FSS delivery on the ground in three further local case study areas, will hear directly from participants, providers and partners about their FSS experiences and will provide further detail on the nature of FSS pre-employment and in-work support.

More detailed reports on the evaluation research are also published alongside this Overview report and are available on the Scottish Government website:

[**Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 2: Local area case studies \(year 1\)**](#)
[**Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 2: Participant phone survey \(year 1\)**](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Evaluation Methodology

The Fair Start Scotland (FSS) Wave 1 telephone survey was carried out in June 2019, on a sample drawn from all beneficiaries who took part in FSS from its commencement in March 2018 until the end of December 2018.

IFF were provided with sample consisting of all starts on the FSS service during this period. Following data cleaning, a total of 6,780 records were available, of which 6,044 had a valid telephone number and address. From those with full contact details, 3,175 pieces of sample were drawn. Sample was drawn in proportion with the distribution of participants by lot, with Lot 8 (Highlands & Islands) slightly oversampled to ensure a minimum base for subgroup analysis of this region. Table 1.1 below shows the number of records drawn and the number of surveys achieved from each lot.

Table 1.1: Sample drawn and surveys completed per Lot

Lot	All sample		Sample drawn		Unweighted responses		Weighted responses	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lot 1 Glasgow	1289	19.0%	597	18.8%	176	17.5%	191	19.0%
Lot 2 Lanarkshire	1262	18.6%	584	18.4%	174	17.3%	187	18.6%
Lot 3 Tayside	740	10.9%	346	10.9%	99	9.9%	110	10.9%
Lot 4 Forth Valley	551	8.1%	257	8.1%	83	8.3%	81	8.1%
Lot 5 East	1102	16.3%	514	16.2%	184	18.3%	164	16.3%
Lot 6 South West	636	9.4%	295	9.3%	93	9.3%	94	9.4%
Lot 7 North East	393	5.8%	181	5.7%	55	5.5%	58	5.8%
Lot 8 Highlands and Islands	291	4.3%	159	5.0%	60	6.0%	43	4.3%
Lot 9 West	516	7.6%	241	7.6%	81	8.1%	76	7.6%
Total	6780	100%	3175	100%	1,005	100%	1,005	100%

Participants were sent an advance letter two weeks prior to fieldwork to notify them of the research and offer them the opportunity to decline to take part.

Telephone fieldwork was conducted between 3rd June and 28th June, and 1,005 completed interviews were achieved. A full breakdown of sample outcomes is shown in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Sample outcomes

	Number	Proportion of starting sample (%)
Total sample	3,175	100%
Opt outs	47	1.5%
Unusable (for example, wrong number)	159	5.0%
Contact attempted, no final outcome after minimum number	1696	53.4%
Refusal	266	8.4%
Respondent stopped or screened out during survey	2	0.1%
Total surveys completed	1,005	31.7%

The survey was 20 minutes in length. The data was checked, tabulated and verbatim responses were fully coded for analysis purposes. A rim weight (based on age, gender and lot) was applied to bring the oversampled Lot 8 back in line with population proportions and to correct for any non-response bias.

More detail on the breakdown of respondent profile by Lot, after weighting, is set out in Tables 1.3 and 1.4 of the original report. See: *Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 2: Participant phone survey (year 1)*.

Local Area Case Studies

The local area case study research focuses on developing case studies in 9 localities across Scotland over the three years, one in each contract Lot area. The research involves carrying out the following tasks in each of the case study areas:

- Conducting desk-based area analysis of the socio-economic and employment trends in each of the localities to understand the local labour market context that FSS is operating in;
- Analysing the management and performance data from FSS in each of the localities to understand the profile and numbers of participants and outcomes achieved in the area;
- Conducting interviews with participants in each locality to understand their experience of and views on FSS;
- Conducting interviews with individuals in each locality who would be eligible for FSS but have not participated in the service to understand potential barriers individuals face in participating in FSS;

- Conducting interviews with employers in each locality to understand their experience of and views on FSS;
- Conducting interviews with service provider staff including managers and frontline staff delivering FSS locally to understand their experience of and views on the service;
- Conducting interviews with staff in partners of FSS providers in the locality to understand their experience of and views on FSS; and
- Conducting interviews with relevant other stakeholders in the area to understand their experience of and views on FSS.

FSS participants were contacted through a database of all service participants supplied by Scottish Government. We emailed all participants living in Alloa, Irvine and Wick who had taken part in the service for at least 6 months and issued an introductory letter to 112 participants across all three areas – 76 by email and 36 by post. We followed this up with a telephone call to arrange an interview, making a maximum of three attempts to contact each participant.

We recruited non-participants by contacting 20 public and third sector organisations with employability services operating in Alloa, Irvine and Wick. These included: local authority-led employability services; community hubs; housing associations; charities that provide employability support; and third sector interfaces. In addition, we liaised with the FSS providers to explore whether they were delivering other services involving people who were eligible for FSS but not taking part.

As anticipated, identifying eligible non-participants proved challenging. Half of the organisations we contacted did not respond and all but one of the responding organisations were unable to identify eligible non-participants. In total, we conducted 30 interviews with participants and non-participants – 18 participants and 12 non-participants. This figure is broken down by participant group and type of interview in Table 1.3 below.

Table 1.3: Interviews conducted with participants and non-participants

	Face-to-face	Telephone	No. of interviews
Participants (out of 112 participants contacted)	5	13	18
Non-participants (from 20 organisations contacted)	8	4	12
Total interviews conducted			30

Appendix 2: Fair Start Scotland Service Providers and Contract Areas

On 4 October 2017 the Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills, Jamie Hepburn MSP, announced the award of Contracts up to £96 million to deliver Fair Start Scotland, to be delivered by a mixed economy of public, private and third sector suppliers in nine Contract Areas (Lots) across Scotland, as set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: FSS Service Providers and supply chain by contract area and local authority area (current at time of research fieldwork Nov-Dec 2018).				
Contract area	Local authority	Successful Bidder	Delivery Partners/Sub Contracted	Estimated Value (up to £ million)
1 - Glasgow	Glasgow	People Plus Group Ltd (Private)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remploy (Supported Business) • Momentum (Third Sector) • The Lennox Partnership (Third Sector) 	19.1
2 - Lanarkshire	N Lanarkshire S Lanarkshire	Remploy Limited (Supported Business)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENABLE Scotland (Third Sector) • Routes to Work South (Third Sector) 	12.6
3 - Tayside	Angus Dundee City Perth and Kinross	Remploy Limited (Supported Business)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rathbone (Third Sector) 	7.3
4 - Forth Valley	Falkirk Stirling Clackmannanshire	Falkirk Council (Public Sector)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falkirk Council (Public Sector) • Clackmannanshire Council (Public Sector) • Stirling Council (Public Sector) • NHS Forth Valley (Public Sector) 	5.0
5 - East	City of Edinburgh East Lothian Midlothian Scottish Borders West Lothian Fife	Start Scotland Limited (Private and Third Sector Partnership)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Momentum (Third Sector) • Triage (Private) • Working Links* (Private) 	21.3
6 - Southwest	North Ayrshire South Ayrshire East Ayrshire Dumfries and Galloway	Start Scotland Limited (Private and Third Sector Partnership)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Links* (Private) • Rathbone (Third Sector) • The Lennox Partnership (Third Sector) • The Wise Group (Third Sector) 	10.1

7 - Northeast	Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire	Momentum Scotland (Third Sector)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Skills Centres Limited (Private) • ENABLE Scotland (Third Sector) • Aberdeen Foyer (Third Sector) • Scottish Association for Mental Health (Third Sector) • Enterprise Mentoring Ltd (Private) 	5.6
8 - Highlands and Islands	Argyll and Bute Eilean Siar Highland Moray Orkney Islands Shetland Islands	People Plus Ltd (Private)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argyll and Bute Council (Public Sector) • Life Skills Centres Ltd (Private) • Lochaber Hope (Third Sector) • Momentum Scotland (Third Sector) • Third Sector Hebrides (Third Sector) • 2020 Clearview Ltd (Private) 	6.2
9 - West	E Renfrewshire Renfrewshire E Dunbartonshire W Dunbartonshire Inverclyde	The Wise Group (Third Sector)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lennox Partnership (Third Sector) • Working Links* (Private) • ENABLE Scotland (Third Sector) • Royal National Institute for the Blind (Third Sector) 	8.8

(*Working Links went into liquidation in February 2019 and their share of the Start Scotland contract was taken over by FedCap (third sector) in March 2019).

Appendix 3: FSS Evaluation Plan

The Scottish Government is committed to providing a robust, independent evaluation of the delivery process and outcomes of Fair Start Scotland services. All findings will contribute to our understanding of what works in employment support for individuals and to the continuous improvement of policy and service delivery. Scottish Government will also use these findings to help ensure accountability and value for money from the procurement and management of future services from 2021 onwards.

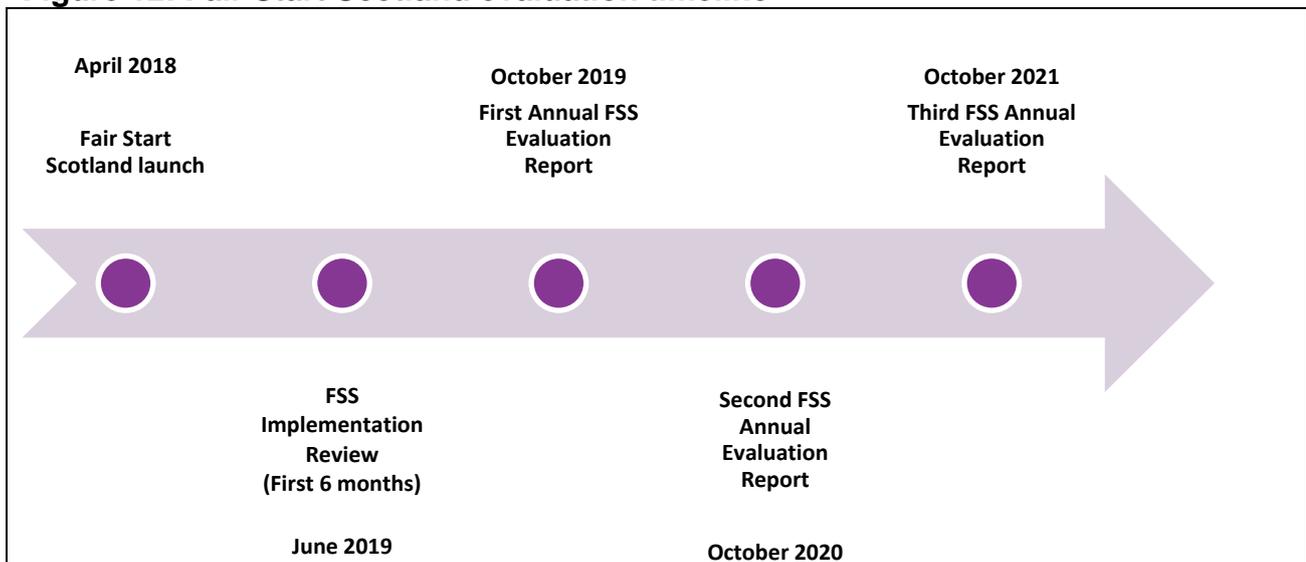
The evaluation will be undertaken by independent research contractors, following a mixed methods approach delivered over three phases (Figure 11):

Figure 11: FSS Evaluation Phases

Phase	Focus	Time period
Phase 1	Implementation and early delivery review	First 6 months of service delivery April – Sept 2018
Phase 2	Ongoing service delivery and participant outcomes	Annual reports covering each full year of service delivery to March 2021
Phase 3	Long term outcomes and impact measures	Final report on impacts up to 18 months after initial delivery ends (Sept 2022).

The Scottish Government will publish a series of reports on the evaluation findings, following the timeline in Figure 12 below.

Figure 12: Fair Start Scotland evaluation timeline



Appendix 4: FSS policy and delivery background information

DWP contracted employment provision and the Smith Agreement

The UK Government delivers services to support unemployed people into work through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This includes a range of contracted support. The Work Programme and Work Choice (for disabled people) are the two main employment support contracts. Following the Scottish Independence Referendum in 2014, the Smith Agreement set out a range of new powers for Scotland which included devolution of contracted employment support to Scotland. DWP contracts for both Work Programme and Work Choice expired on 31 March 2017, and devolved services commenced from 3 April 2017

Legislation

The 2016 Scotland Act (“the Act”) enables the Scottish Government to implement the further devolution set out in the Smith Agreement in 2014. Clause 31 of the Act gives the Scottish Government the legislative competence to create employment schemes to assist those at risk of becoming long-term unemployed who are receiving UK benefits such as Universal Credit, and to help disabled people into work, including schemes which seek to help employers find suitable employees.

Consultation and the SG response

A consultation in 2015 on the shape and design of devolved services received 215 responses and the Scottish Government has built on those responses to develop its new employment services. [Creating a Fairer Scotland: A new future for employability support in Scotland](#)²⁵ sets out the key values and principles which underpin the new services.

Our Values

- Dignity and respect;
- Fairness and Equality; and
- Continuous Improvement.

Value 1: Dignity and respect

Scottish Ministers are clear that Scotland’s public services will be based on a culture of respect. We will have a social contract with the people of Scotland that states Scotland’s public services will treat everyone with respect and dignity, and the public will treat staff providing those services in the same way. The Service will be an exemplar of this approach.

Individuals can expect to be treated with dignity and respect through each step of their journey into work.

Value 2: Fairness and Equality

²⁵ Available at: <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00498123.pdf>

Our approach to employment support will not be driven solely by a need to reduce the Welfare Bill and focus on those with the best prospects of moving into work. Instead we will aim to contribute to a broader range of economic and social outcomes by supporting those furthest from the labour market. Customers of the Service will reflect this core value.

Value 3: Continuous Improvement

In the first instance, our priority will be to ensure a smooth transition from existing UK services to our new Scottish arrangements.

Scottish Government policies, processes and systems will evolve in response to individual, employer and community need across Scotland. The Scottish Government will ensure that they remain fit for purpose through close engagement with stakeholders and Service users alike.

Our Principles

We are developing a Scottish approach based on the principles of:-

- Delivery of a flexible ‘whole person’ approach;
- Services that are responsive to those with high needs;
- A drive towards real jobs;
- Services designed and delivered in partnership;
- Services designed nationally but adapted and delivered locally; and
- Contracts that combine payment by job outcome and progression towards work.



Transition in 2017

Scottish Ministers agreed a 1 year transition from April 2017. The focus was continuity in support for those who are unemployed with significant barriers to work, while building towards a Scottish programme of support from April 2018. Further information on WFS and WAS services, including evaluation reports, is available on the Employability in Scotland website: <http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/>

Fair Start Scotland

The Scottish programme of support ([Fair Start Scotland](#))²⁶ replaced the transitional arrangements from 3 April 2018. The service provides a tailored, flexible and person-centred support to people who want help to find work, and stay in work. This includes helping people who may be disadvantaged in the labour market such as disabled people, and those at risk of becoming long-term unemployed.

Eligibility and early entry groups

Through delivery of the FSS service, the Scottish Government is looking to support a minimum of 38,000 people over 3 years of referrals. These individuals must be in receipt of a reserved UK out of work benefit, unless they are disabled, and will be either:

- aged 18 years old and over, out of work and living in Scotland; or
- aged 16 or 17 years old and are either disabled or in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance.

The Service aims to support individuals who:

- have a disability or additional support need (with disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010).
- have been unemployed for a long time (those reaching 2 years on Job Seekers Allowance/ Universal Credit equivalent).
- are currently in the Employment and Support Allowance Work Related Activity Group.
- have caring responsibilities
- are a single parent
- are a care leaver
- are from a minority ethnic community
- are a refugee
- are a person with a conviction
- live in the 15% most deprived Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) areas.
- have a health problem which presents a barrier to employment.

²⁶ Further information on Fair Start Scotland services and Providers is available here: <http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/>

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this social research publication:

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact Kirstie.Corbett@gov.scot for further information.



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