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Evaluation of Job Start Payment



EQUALITY AND WELFARE



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Executive Summary

Background

The Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 introduced a range of new benefits devolved to Scotland. An Order under section 63 of the Scotland Act 1998 gave the Scottish Government further powers to arrange assistance under section 2 of the Employment and Training Act 1973. Job Start Payment was introduced using these powers. It is a one-off payment of £267.65, or £428.25 for those with children, to help young people on low incomes meet the initial costs of starting a new job following a sustained period of unemployment.

Social Security Scotland began taking applications for Job Start Payment in August 2020. This report presents an evaluation of the benefit which is based on progress towards its immediate and short-term policy outcomes. However, it also considers progress towards Job Start Payments' medium-term outcomes, and its contribution to the Scottish Government's strategic aims (e.g. increased youth employment). The policy outcomes of Job Start Payment relate to the benefit's impact on people who receive the payments (hereafter referred to as 'recipients'), but the evaluation also considers the experience of Job Start Payment applicants in general.

The evaluation of Job Start Payment is largely based on findings from qualitative research that was commissioned and undertaken by Diffley Partnership, attached in full at [Annex B](#). The qualitative research involved interviews with:

- Young people (i.e. Job Start Payment recipients, unsuccessful applicants, and non-applicants)
- Stakeholders who support unemployed young people; and
- Social Security Scotland staff who process Job Start Payment applications.

It also draws on information about applications, payments, and recipients which Social Security Scotland collects in the process of delivering benefits.

Promotion of Job Start Payment

The findings suggest that signposting by organisations (e.g. the Job Centre, employers, or employability and third sector groups) is one of the main ways recipients find out about Job Start Payment, and that people are less likely to find out about the benefit via media advertising. However, they also indicate that overall awareness of the benefit is low amongst young people. Additionally, employability and third sector stakeholders feel that there is a lack of awareness and knowledge of Job Start Payment within their organisations and professional networks. Some also feel they need better promotional materials about the benefit in order to signpost young people effectively.

Clarity of Job Start Payment and its eligibility criteria

Most young people understand that Job Start Payment is supposed to help with the costs of starting a new job. The qualitative findings suggest that most recipients spend at least part of the money on related items such as travel passes or work clothes. However, stakeholders feel that the eligibility criteria of Job Start Payment are unclear, and could be confusing to young people.

Stakeholders also report concerns about two main eligibility rules for Job Start Payment - i.e. that applicants must have been out of paid work and receiving an income-related benefit for at least 6 months at the point of job offer. They feel these rules could be unfair in some cases, because:

- Young people are often encouraged to undertake short, paid work placements which can break up otherwise long periods of unemployment, making them ineligible for the Job Start Payment – despite these placements (with agreement from the Job Centre) not impacting other benefits such as Universal Credit.
- Due to employability initiatives for school leavers, few are classed as ‘unemployed’ – meaning that 16-17 year olds are therefore unlikely to have claimed income-related benefits for 6 months or more. However, stakeholders express the view that these young people would still need financial assistance when starting a new job.

Applying for Job Start Payment

Application denial rates

Young people and stakeholders report that the Job Start Payment application form is straightforward to complete. However, 53% of Job Start Payment applications have been denied (rising to 79% for 16-17 year olds) which is higher than denial rates for other low income benefits administered by Social Security Scotland. The most common reasons for applications being denied were that they failed to meet one or both of the following eligibility criteria: (a) being in receipt of a qualifying benefit for at least 6 months prior to the job offer, and (b) being out of work for at least 6 months prior to the job offer.

Findings from the qualitative research provide more insight into application denial rates. As mentioned above, stakeholders report concerns that the main eligibility criteria could be unfair on some claimants, specifically (a) young people who are encouraged to take up short work placements which interrupt long periods of unemployment, and (b) 16 and 17 year olds, who they say are particularly unlikely to have been on qualifying benefits for 6 months. Testimony from Social Security Scotland staff confirmed that these factors can be linked with application denials.

The findings also indicate that factors relating to the provision of application supporting evidence could be contributing to denials.¹ Testimony from young people shows that obtaining supporting evidence (e.g. from employers, or social services in the case of care leavers) can be challenging and stressful. Indeed, one unsuccessful applicant - who was potentially eligible for Job Start Payment - said they failed to get this information from their employer, and therefore had their application denied.

Additionally, Social Security Scotland staff say it can be challenging to contact applicants for supporting evidence. They report having to approach young people by telephone or letter, but feel that other methods such as email or text would be more effective. Staff also express the view that the level of supporting evidence required is excessive for a one-off payment. They highlight a number of factors which mean they cannot validate claims, and which can lead to application denials:

- When applicants submit supporting evidence (e.g. job contracts) which do not contain all of the required information, such as the date of job offer.
- When applicants provide a date of job offer on their application form which does not match exactly with the date of job offer which is stated in supporting documents. This can be because (a) the applicant has put the job start date on the form by mistake, or (b) the job offer date was given verbally and in writing on separate days.

Finally, stakeholders who support unemployed young people feel the information provided to Job Start Payment applicants (e.g. on eligibility criteria and the supporting evidence required for applications) is not clear, and could be leading to ineligible claims. This is supported by testimony from an unsuccessful applicant, who did not feel the guidance to care leavers was clear enough. Conversely, another unsuccessful applicant reported that they knew they were ineligible, but made a claim in the hope that their ineligibility would be overlooked.

Application processing times

Official Statistics show that application processing times have generally increased since Job Start Payment was introduced. Processing times include time spent waiting to receive copies of documents or evidence requested from applicants. The qualitative findings show that some recipients do not receive the payment at the point of need (i.e. before they receive their first pay check) due to the length of time they have to wait for an application decision. Waiting a long time for an application decision can cause stress and financial difficulties for applicants.

¹ Applicants can choose to provide supporting evidence when making an application by post or through online document upload. If an applicant does not provide all the evidence required for an application, they will be contacted by a client advisor and asked to provide this.

Take-up of Job Start Payment

A diverse range of young people from all areas of Scotland have claimed Job Start Payment. However, the Scottish Government has not yet published a take-up rate estimate for the benefit - one is due to be published later this year. As such, it is not currently clear what proportion of eligible young people have claimed (or have not claimed) the benefit. However, the evaluation highlights factors which could impact whether eligible young people are taking-up Job Start Payment. The findings suggest that:

- Young people do not report any stigma applying for the benefit, and would recommend it to others. However, they do report feelings of anxiety asking employers for supporting evidence, and stakeholders feel this may put some young people off applying altogether.
- Awareness of the Job Start Payment appears to be generally low amongst young people and stakeholders (e.g. employability and third sector organisations) who signpost them to the benefit, meaning some eligible people may not apply.
- Some eligible applicants could have had their claims denied because they were unable to provide the required supporting evidence.

The impact of Job Start Payment

Progress towards short-term policy outcomes

There is a consensus amongst young people and stakeholders that Job Start Payment is needed due to challenges people face meeting the up-front costs of a new job. Recipients welcome the payment, describing it in terms such as 'fair', 'helpful', and 'amazing'. They use it for a range of work-related expenses, such as clothes, travel passes, equipment, and childcare - which some feel they could not have afforded without the benefit. Recipients also report that Job Start Payment helped boost their confidence (e.g. in cases where they bought smart work clothes with the money) and reduced the stress they felt about the costs of starting a new job. Some also say that being able to choose how they spent the payment made them feel good about themselves.

Despite the generally positive impact of Job Start Payment on recipients, the findings indicate that – due to the high cost of childcare - parents can be left with substantial expenses which are not covered by the payment. Additionally, some young people do not receive the money before their first pay check due to lengthy application processing times, which can cause stress and financial difficulties.

Contribution to medium-term policy outcomes

A full assessment of progress towards Job Start Payment's medium-term outcomes would require: (a) more time to have passed since the benefit was

implemented, and (b) access to more robust quantitative data. Medium-term outcomes will also be affected by other contributing factors, such as wider social security benefits and other government interventions designed to support young people entering employment.

However, based on the qualitative findings, it is possible to say the following:

- Young people report a range of benefits as a result of having a job, albeit they do not link these directly with the payment. For example, having an expanded social network due to bonding with work colleagues, and having an improved lifestyle compared to when they received benefits. Some feel these benefits positively impact their personal wellbeing.
- There is only limited evidence that Job Start Payment helps young people to sustain employment. However, most recipients who took part in the research were still working at the time of interview. Two of these recipients felt they would not have kept their job without the benefit.
- There is only limited evidence that Job Start Payment has led to improved health and wellbeing for recipients' families. However, some use the payment in ways that would benefit family members – e.g. as a contribution towards household bills or food costs.

Conclusion and policy implications

The evaluation shows that Job Start Payment has largely achieved its short-term policy outcomes, and there has been a small amount of progress towards its medium-term policy outcomes. As a result, it may also to have contributed positively to the Scottish Government's strategic aims relating to young people's participation in the labour market.² However, the evaluation also highlights substantial issues with Job Start Payment. These issues and their implications are as following:

1. The findings indicate that young people are more likely to hear about Job Start Payment via stakeholder organisations than media advertising. However, overall awareness of the benefit appears to be low amongst young people. Additionally, stakeholders sense there is a general lack of awareness of the benefit within their organisations and professional networks. Both of these factors could mean that some eligible young people do not find out about Job Start Payment. As such, it may be helpful to increase awareness of Job Start Payment amongst eligible young people. This could be done via further promotional work and engagement with stakeholder organisations, to ensure that more young people are being signposted to the benefit.

² However, due to the targeted nature of the support, Job Start Payment claimants are likely to represent only a small proportion of total unemployed 16-24 year olds in Scotland at any given time – meaning the benefit could only be expected to make a small contribution to the government's strategic aims on labour market participation.

2. Stakeholders feel the Job Start Payment eligibility criteria are unclear, and could be a reason for ineligible claims. It is also possible that young people apply despite knowing they are ineligible for the benefit, hoping their ineligibility will be overlooked (albeit there is only limited evidence for this happening). As such, it may be helpful to clarify eligibility rules, and take further steps to reduce applications from ineligible applicants.
3. Stakeholders also raise concerns about eligibility rules. For example, they report that young people who have been unemployed for long periods are often encouraged to take up short, paid placements which can make them ineligible for the benefit – but do not affect their other benefits. Additionally, they highlight that 16-17 year olds are particularly unlikely to be on a qualifying benefit, but (in their view) still need assistance with the costs when starting a new job. As such, revisions to Job Start Payment eligibility rules could make the benefit available to more young people who need financial support when entering employment.
4. Applicants and Social Security Scotland staff experience issues around application supporting evidence. Applicants say getting evidence is challenging and stressful, and stakeholders feel the need to approach employers for evidence could put young people off applying for Job Start Payment altogether. Staff have to apply rigid procedures when processing evidence, which could lead to eligible applicants being denied. They also report difficulties contacting applicants via telephone or letter to obtain the necessary documents, and feel other methods (e.g. email and text) would be more effective. As such, reviewing and changing procedures around the provision of supporting evidence could lead to fewer application denials, and increase take-up of the Job Start Payment.³
5. Application processing times have generally increased since the benefit was introduced. This can cause stress and financial difficulties in cases where applicants have to wait longer for a decision on their claim, and do not receive the payment at the point of need (i.e. before their first pay check). As such, it may be helpful to review the application decision-making process to see if it can be expedited.
6. The evaluation shows that parents can face high childcare costs when starting a new job. This means that, despite receiving a higher rate of Job Start Payment, they can still be left with substantial expenses to cover before

³ It should be noted that, since the research for this evaluation was undertaken, the following changes have been made to the application process: (i) applicants have been given an extra 7 days to provide supporting evidence for their claims; (ii) a 14 day grace period has been introduced for job offer evidence - meaning if a client provides evidence of a job offer date which differs from the job offer date stated on the application form, this can be accepted as long as the dates are within 14 days; and, (iii) applicants who have been contacted by phone are sent a reminder letter as an additional prompt to provide evidence (whereas before letters were only sent in cases where applicants could not be contacted by phone).

their first pay check. As such, it may be helpful to review the rate of payment awarded to parents.

7. While the evaluation indicates that some progress has been made on the medium-term outcomes associated with Job Start Payment, it is not possible with the information available to provide a full assessment across these areas. As such, more data should be sought and made available for future evaluations of the benefit.

Introduction

This section introduces Job Start Payment and the rationale behind its implementation. It also summarises the eligibility criteria, aspects of the application process, and the overall evaluation aims relevant to this report.

Job Start Payment: description

The Scottish Government is committed to supporting young people make the transition into employment, to help reduce the risk of them becoming unemployed or economically inactive when they are older. A key part of this is helping young people on low incomes meet some of the initial costs of starting work, including transport costs. These efforts are particularly important given the decreased employment rate amongst 16-24 year olds during the pandemic, which has yet to fully recover.⁴ Research shows longer periods out of work can reduce someone's chances of finding a job.⁵ Therefore it is crucial that young people who have experienced a sustained period without paid work are given support to enable a smooth and sustainable transition into employment.

The Social Security powers that have been devolved through the Scotland Act 2016 give the Scottish Parliament responsibility for £2.8 billion of social security expenditure (around 15% of total benefit expenditure in Scotland). An Order under section 63 of the Scotland Act 1998 gave the Scottish Government further powers to arrange assistance under section 2 of the Employment and Training Act 1973. Social Security Scotland is the executive agency of Scottish Government that is responsible for delivering social security benefits for Scotland. The agency began taking applications for Job Start Payment on Monday 17 August 2020.

Job Start Payment is a one-off cash sum of either £267.65 for those who do not have responsibility for a child, or a higher amount of £428.25 for those who do have responsibility for a child. It is available to young people who have been out of paid work and receiving a qualifying low income benefit for at least six months prior to finding employment. To be eligible, on the day of the job offer they must:

- Be aged 16 to 24 years
- Have been offered a paid job which averages at least 12 hours per week over a four week period
- Have been out of paid work and receiving an income related benefit continuously for six months or more
- Be living in Scotland with a Scottish postcode.

⁴ Scottish Government, 2022: [Labour Market Statistics for 16 to 24 year olds: Scotland and the United Kingdom – January to December 2021](#); Skills Development Scotland, 2021: [COVID-19 Labour Market Insights, July 2021](#)

⁵ ONS, 2021: [Which groups find it hardest to find a job following a period out of work? - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

The eligibility for care leavers is slightly different - they only have to be out of work and in receipt of a qualifying benefit on the date of their job offer, not the preceding six months. They are also eligible for Job Start Payment for an additional year i.e. until their 26th birthday.

The qualifying benefits for Job Start Payment are: Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Income-related Employment Support Allowance, and Universal Credit. Some 16 and 17 years olds can be in receipt of a qualifying benefit if any of the following apply:

- They are caring for a severely disabled person
- They have child responsibility and are the main carer of a child
- They are no longer in touch with their parents
- They are limited in their ability to work.

The payment can be used for any purpose by the recipient. For example, it could help with travel costs or could be used for clothing, lunches, and other expenses they have before receiving their first salary. Applications can be made up to three months after the date of the job offer. If a young person receives Job Start Payment and subsequently finds themselves out of work they will be able to apply again, but not until two years after their previous payment.

Application process

Applications can be made online, by phone, and by paper form. Social Security Scotland processes each application received and makes a decision whether to approve or deny the application. An application will be denied if the client is not eligible to receive Job Start Payment. An application will be authorised if the applicant is eligible and provides the appropriate evidence to receive Job Start Payment. Applicants may also withdraw their application before a decision is made.

Applicants can choose to provide supporting evidence when making an application by post or through online document upload. If an applicant does not provide all the evidence required for an application, they will be contacted by a client advisor and asked to provide this. Once this evidence has been received, Social Security Scotland aims to make a decision as soon as possible with payments following soon thereafter.

Accessibility of Job Start Payment

Social Security Scotland is committed to accessibility. To maximise this, multiple application channels are available: digital, paper and telephone. The digital application process is compatible with assistive technologies and clients can request 3 phone calls and letters in a variety of formats e.g. in over 100 different languages, using BSL video calls, or in braille, easy read and large print.

Evaluation aims

The Scottish Government published its approach to evaluating the first wave of devolved social security benefits, including Job Start Payment, in November 2019.⁶

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide learning about the overall implementation of the benefit and the extent to which Job Start Payment's immediate and short-term outcomes have been met, now that the benefit has been in operation for almost two years. In doing so, it can also assess progress towards Job Start Payment's medium-term outcomes and its possible contribution to the Scottish Government's National Indicators – such as the young people's participation in education, training or employment indicator in the National Performance Framework⁷. However, these longer-term impacts will also be affected by Scottish Government interventions outwith social security, which are also designed to support young people into employment (e.g. Young Person's Guarantee). As such, any impacts will not only be attributable to Job Start Payment.

Specifically, the evaluation objectives are to:

1. Evaluate the extent to which Job Start Payment has met its policy outcomes.
2. Assess the potential contribution of Job Start Payment to the Scottish Government's strategic aims for employment of young people.
3. Discuss implications for future policy development.

The findings will form the policy evaluation of Job Start Payment, and will set the groundwork for policy improvements.

⁶ Scottish Government (2019) [Devolved benefits: evaluating the policy impact](#)

⁷ Scottish Government (2022): [National Indicator Performance | National Performance Framework](#)

Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the evaluation approach for Job Start Payment. It introduces the logic model and research questions driving the evaluation activities, and gives a summary of the different data sources used.

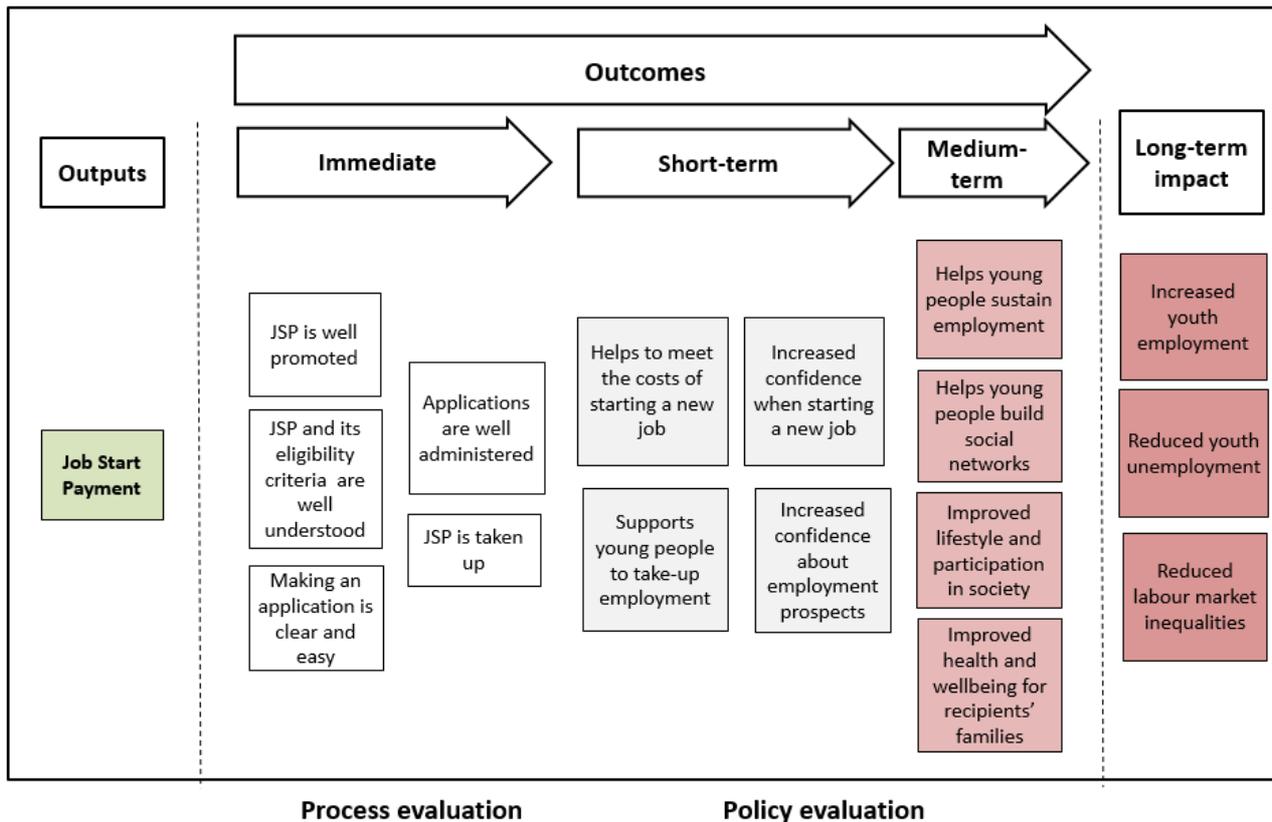
Overview of evaluation design and logic model

The Job Start Payment policy evaluation is based on a “theory of change” logic model. The model shows the mechanisms whereby interventions (such as Job Start Payment) have a chain of immediate, short-term, and medium-term outcomes. If these are met, they can generate longer-term outcomes and contribute to wider Scottish Government policy impacts.

Job Start Payment’s medium-term outcomes, and the Scottish Government’s long-term policy impacts (e.g. increased youth employment), will take time to determine, and may require access to robust quantitative data that is not currently available. They will also be influenced by other social security policies, as well as other Scottish Government interventions designed to support people into employment - making it difficult to measure and attribute changes specifically to that payment. However, the achievement of shorter-term policy outcomes (e.g. supports young people to take-up employment) could reasonably be expected to contribute to these wider outcomes.

The logic model for Job Start Payment is below at Figure 1.

Figure 1 Job Start Payment (JSP) logic model



The immediate outcomes of Job Start Payment relate to the delivery process of the benefit – i.e. promoting and administering the benefit. The short-term and medium-term outcomes relate to policy outcomes, which are linked with the intended aims of Job Start Payment.

Immediate outcomes (Process Evaluation)

- Job Start Payment is well promoted
- Job Start Payment and its eligibility criteria are well understood
- Making an application is clear and easy
- Applications are well administered
- Job Start Payment is taken up

Short-term outcomes (Policy Evaluation)

- Supports young people to take-up employment
- Helps to meet the costs of starting a new job
- Increased confidence when starting a job
- Increased confidence about employment prospects

Medium-term outcomes (Policy Evaluation)

- Helps young people to sustain employment
- Helps young people to build social networks
- Improved lifestyle and participation in society
- Improved health and wellbeing for recipients' families

Long-term impacts

- Increased youth unemployment
- Reduced youth unemployment
- Reduced labour market inequalities

Evaluation questions

Below are the key questions that informed the evaluation design:

1. To what extent did Job Start Payment achieve its immediate, short-term, and medium-term policy outcomes?
2. Is there any evidence of Job Start Payment contributing to the long-term government policy impacts of increased youth employment, reduced youth unemployment, and reduced inequalities in the labour market?
3. What are the implications of the evaluation findings for future policy development?

Summary of data sources

In line with the evaluation strategy⁶, the evidence used in this report was drawn from multiple data sources, described below:

Bespoke commissioned research

Diffley Partnership was commissioned by the Scottish Government to conduct primarily qualitative research on Job Start Payment. Data was gathered via:

1. **One-to-one interviews** with 26 Job Start Payment recipients, 6 unsuccessful applicants, and 7 non-applicants.
2. **One-to-one** and **double interviews** with 2 third sector representatives and 6 employability and skills professionals.
3. **Discussion groups** with 7 Social Security Scotland staff.

The qualitative data was supplemented by a short survey of 159 young people. The survey was mostly used as a recruitment tool for the qualitative research. However,

it also gives some insight into awareness of Job Start Payment amongst 16-24 year olds living in Scotland.

The commissioned research had the following aims:

- To explore people's experience of applying for and receiving the benefit, and how this mapped on to Job Start Payment policy objectives (i.e. the immediate, short-term and medium-term outcomes outlined above).
- To investigate (a) factors which could impact take-up of Job Start Payment amongst eligible young people, and (b) factors associated with application denial rates.

Fieldwork took place via telephone or online video chat between November 2021 and March 2022.⁸ The main findings from the commissioned research are presented in this report to provide a fuller understanding of the implementation and impact of Job Start Payment at this early stage of delivery. The full report from Diffley Partnership, including more information on research methods and sample demographics, is available at [Annex B](#).

Official Statistics

Social Security Scotland collects information on applications, payments, and recipients in the process of delivering the benefits. Some of this information is published online as Official Statistics. The following Official Statistics publications are used as sources of evidence in this report:

- [Job Start Payment – high level statistics to 31 March 2022](#)
- [Social Security Scotland client diversity and equalities analysis to May 2021](#)

Of these publications, the high level statistics data is used most frequently, and is hereafter referred to as “Official Statistics”. The client diversity and equalities analysis publication is named in full when cited.

Supplementary analysis was carried out for the purposes of this evaluation to provide additional information on approved applications for Job Start Payment. This included a more detailed breakdown of the parental status of applicants. This analysis was produced using the same data as the [Job Start Payment – high level statistics to 31 March 2022](#) publication.

Supplementary analysis was also carried out using the data from the Social Security Scotland client diversity and equalities analysis to May 2021 publication. This included breakdowns for approved Job Start Payment applications on a number of applicant characteristics including gender, age, ethnicity, health condition, gender identity, sexual orientation, and geography.

⁸ The Scottish Government had a moratorium on face-to-face research at this time due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The full supplementary analysis tables used in this report are provided at Annex A.

Please also note the following technical points about how Official Statistics are presented throughout this report:

- Figures are rounded for disclosure control and may not sum due to rounding
- Where stated, secondary analysis has been conducted on rounded figures from published Official Statistics
- Most results are presented to zero decimal places. '0%' should therefore be interpreted to mean less than 0.5%. If no responses were given then this is denoted by '-'.

Limitations

This section explains what can and cannot be determined from the available data sources, and how this influences the extent to which conclusions can be drawn about the early impact of Job Start Payment.

Limited quantitative data: The only quantitative data used are Official Statistics on applications and payments. The Social Security Scotland Client Survey was also examined to determine if it could be used to assess Job Start Payment against its intended outcomes. The survey ran in August/September 2020 (round 1) and May/June 2021 (round 2). It was open to everyone who at that time had received either (a) a Social Security Scotland benefit, or (b) a successful decision on a benefit application from Social Security Scotland's inception in September 2018 to March 2021. However, the survey only received 31 responses from people who had applied for Job Start Payment, and more than half of these respondents had applied for Job Start Payment and at least one other benefit, meaning that their views and experiences would potentially relate to numerous benefits (as opposed to having **only experienced** applying for or receiving Job Start Payment). Therefore, the Client Survey has not been used as a source of information in this evaluation.

Role of qualitative research: The evaluation is largely dependent on findings from qualitative research commissioned by the Scottish Government. This provides a rich and detailed insight into the impact of Job Start Payment on recipients with a range of personal and demographic characteristics, and the views of different stakeholder groups. However, the research also has the following limitations:

1. The findings are not representative of all Job Start Payment recipients, because (a) while diverse, the overall sample of participants was small, and (b) participants were self-selecting, meaning that they actively chose to take part, as opposed to being randomly selected.
2. Findings are based on the participants' perceptions of impact, rather than objective measures of impact.

These are standard limitations of qualitative work. More detail on limitations has been provided at [Annex B](#).

Medium and long-term impacts will take time and additional data to determine: Understanding the true impact of Job Start Payment would involve measuring (a) progress towards medium-term policy outcomes, and (b) its lasting contribution to wider Scottish Government outcomes. Doing so would require suitable time to have passed, and would involve isolating the influence of Job Start Payment from other contributing factors, such as wider social security benefits and other government interventions designed to support young people entering employment. A step in this direction would be to gain access to data with appropriate outcome variables e.g. from population surveys, or further bespoke research. However, at the time of writing there are no concrete proposals on future evaluations of Job Start Payment.

More detail on options for extended policy evaluation is provided in the evaluation strategy report.⁶

Findings

In this chapter of the report, the data sources outlined in the methodology chapter are used to evaluate progress towards Job Start Payment's immediate, short-term and medium-term policy outcomes. Based on this, potential progress towards the Scottish Government's longer term outcomes are discussed. The section ends with a discussion of the policy implications which emerge from the evaluation findings.

Achievement against immediate Job Start Payment policy outcomes

This section evaluates Job Start Payment against the following policy outcomes:

- Job Start Payment is well promoted
- Job Start Payment and its eligibility criteria are well understood
- Making an application is clear and easy
- Applications are well administered
- Job Start Payment is taken up

It uses data from bespoke commissioned research and Official Statistics.

Job Start Payment is well promoted

There are a number of ways to evaluate whether Job Start Payment is well promoted. An indirect method would be to determine how many eligible people have (and have not) claimed the benefit, as this could be related to the effectiveness of promotional activity. This can be done by calculating the 'take-up' rate, which is the number of benefit recipients divided by the number of people eligible to receive the benefit. However, at the time of writing the Scottish Government has not published a take-up rate estimate for Job Start Payment - an estimate is due to be published later this year.

The commissioned research also gives some insight into the promotion of Job Start Payment. A survey of 16-24 year olds (n=159) living in Scotland, which was promoted on the [Young Scot website](#), found that only 20% of respondents had heard about the benefit. Additionally, in the qualitative research, young people expressed the view that there was a lack of awareness of the benefit amongst their peers.

"I don't think young people know about it just cos there's not much information about it. You might if you've got someone like [charity organisation] telling you about it...But if you're by yourself without any support, I don't think you'd know about it."

(Job Start Payment recipient)

In the interviews, Job Start Payment recipients (n=26) explained how they first heard about the benefit. Their responses, shown in Table 1, indicate that most were signposted by organisations - Job Centre was mentioned by 13 recipients, and other organisations (i.e. employers, employability and third sector organisations, and Social Security Scotland) were mentioned by 10 recipients. Only one recipient said they had heard about the benefit through a media advertisement.

Table 1 How recipients heard about Job Start Payment

| Information source | Number of successful applicants |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Job Centre | 13 |
| Friend or family member | 5 |
| Employer | 4 |
| Employability or third sector organisation | 4 |
| Social Security Scotland | 2 |
| Social media advert | 1 |

Note: 3 recipients heard about Job Start Payment from more than one source

Employability and third sector stakeholders who took part in the qualitative research recognised that their roles were important in signposting Job Start Payment to young people. However, some felt they needed better promotional materials to advise young people about Job Start Payment effectively.⁹ Stakeholders also sensed that there was a general lack of awareness and knowledge of the benefit within their organisations and professional networks, with one saying that the COVID-19 pandemic may have diverted attention and resources away from it. They also had a perception that awareness of the Job Start Payment was low amongst employers.

Job Start Payment and its eligibility criteria are well understood

The next intended outcome of Job Start Payment is that the purpose of the benefit and its eligibility criteria are well understood. In the commissioned research, most young people and stakeholders understood that the purpose of Job Start Payment is to help people with costs of starting a new job. Indeed, the majority of recipients had spent at least part of the payment on items suggested on the Scottish Government website (such as work clothes, travel passes, lunches, or childcare).¹⁰ However, it should be noted that it is up to recipients how they use the money, and that spend is not monitored.

Despite the purpose of the benefit being generally understood, stakeholders expressed the view that the eligibility rules are unclear, and felt that young people would also find this information confusing.

⁹ It should be noted that some stakeholders also commended Social Security Scotland for their efforts at raising awareness of the benefit in their organisations.

¹⁰ Scottish Government (2022) [Job Start Payment: What you can spend the payment on](#)

“You look at it and you think ‘I don’t know if you are eligible or not’. And we don’t want to refer them to something they might not be eligible for...We want to be confident referring that they are eligible, rather than a vague signposting.”

(Skills and Employability stakeholder)

Stakeholders also raised concerns about the fairness of eligibility rules – specifically that applicants must have been out of paid work and receiving an income related benefit continuously for six months or more. Firstly, they highlighted that young people are often encouraged to undertake short-term, paid work placements (or trial shifts), which can interrupt otherwise long periods of unemployment. These were described as being a ‘stepping stone’ to full employment. However, because they count as paid work, they render the young person ineligible for Job Start Payment. All stakeholders felt strongly that this was a negative feature of the benefit, and unfair on young people – particularly because (with the agreement of the Job Centre) these type of placements do not impact other benefits such as Universal Credit.

Secondly, stakeholders pointed out that existing employability initiatives for school leavers meant that few 16-17 year olds were classed as ‘unemployed’. As such, they felt that this group were especially unlikely to have claimed income-related benefits for 6 months or more. Several stakeholders suggested having different eligibility criteria for this age-group which corresponded to the education and training opportunities they were taking up.

“Young people who leave school and go through employability fund training [...] are not unemployed, or claiming. But neither are they earning a major wage. They earn £55 a week on a training scheme. Which is not a lot of money. [...] And for those young people that are lucky enough to go onto employment that money would go a long way to help them too.”

(Skills and Employability stakeholder)

Making an application is clear and easy

Official Statistics show that for the period covering 17 August 2020 to 31 March 2022, 10,105 Job Start Payment applications were received. Of these, 9,440 (93%) were made online, 625 (6%) were made on the telephone, and 35 (less than 1%) were paper-based.

In the commissioned research interviews, both young people and stakeholders were positive about filling out the Job Start Payment application form. Stakeholders who supported young people explained that the form was straightforward to

complete if they were prepared with the evidence required to support the young person's claim.

"I've helped participants myself, three within the last six months which I must say is very simple [...] Once you do it more than once it's quite simple. And we can sit and support them with it."

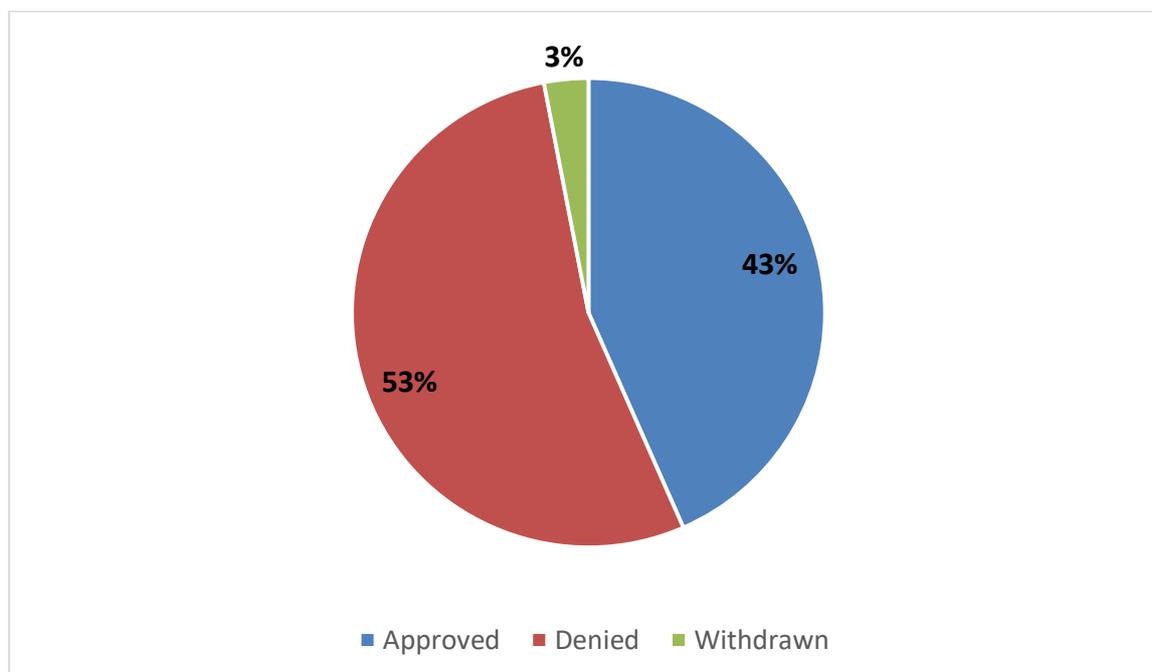
(Skills and Employability stakeholder)

Of the 10,105 applications received to 31 March 2022, 9,595 had been processed - 43% of which were authorised, 53% were denied, and 3% were withdrawn (see Figure 2). It is notable that:

- The proportion of denied applications for Job Start Payment is higher than for other low income benefits administered by Social Security Scotland.¹¹
- 79% (n=265) of processed applications received from 16-17 year olds were denied.

The most common reasons for applications being denied were that they failed to meet one or both of the following eligibility criteria: (a) being in receipt of a qualifying benefit for at least 6 months prior to the job offer, and (b) being out of work for at least 6 months prior to the job offer.

Figure 2 Job Start Payment application outcomes – 17 August 2020 to 31 March 2022 (n=9,595)



¹¹ For example, 12% of processed Scottish Child Payment applications were denied to March 2022, and 29% of processed Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods applications were denied to May 2022.

The commissioned research explored issues around Job Start Payment application denials. As mentioned above, stakeholders highlighted concerns with the main eligibility criteria - i.e. that (a) unemployed young people are encouraged to take up short, paid work placements which can break up otherwise lengthy periods of employment, and (b) 16 and 17 year olds are unlikely to have been on qualifying benefits for 6 months. The testimony given by Social Security Scotland staff in discussion groups shows that these factors are sometimes linked with application denials.

“I had [...] a denial that stuck with me. They were a poll worker during the election, their work coach said ‘yes go for that’, good experience, something to talk about on their CV. So they had worked one day. And because of that, when they got their job offer, and when they applied to us for JSP they were ineligible. The experience had helped them get that job, and then we knocked them back with the benefit. They had only got £50 for that poll work.”

(Social Security Scotland staff member)

“Technically we can provide support to people who are between 16 and 18. Functionally it’s very rare that we are able to pay anyone who is that age. Because one of the criteria is that they have to [be on a] qualifying benefit. And most young people aren’t.”

(Social Security Scotland staff member)

Evidence from the commissioned research also indicates that the way Job Start Payment is administered – particularly procedures relating to application supporting evidence - could be contributing to high application denial rates. [The Job Start Payment application form](#) explains that applicants must provide the following supporting evidence for claims:

- Confirmation of job offer from the employer, including key details such as the name of the applicant, the name of the employer, and the date of job offer
- Confirmation of time in care for applicants who are care leavers and wish to have their application considered against the less stringent eligibility criteria

Social Security Scotland staff expressed the view that the supporting evidence required was excessive for a one-off payment, and one staff member felt that this could be leading young people to drop out of the process after submitting their initial application form.¹² Indeed, interviews with young people revealed that

¹² As outlined in the introduction to this report, Job Start Payment applicants can choose to provide supporting evidence when making an application by post or through online document upload. If an

obtaining supporting evidence from employers, or proof of care leaver status, could be challenging and stressful.

“The employer offered to give me a contract and that’s it – but then the manager actually quit before they did and the new manager refused to provide this. All I had was a Whatsapp message asking me to start tomorrow and they [Social Security Scotland] wouldn’t accept the screenshot. When I talked to [Social Security Scotland] staff about this I was told I needed to have my name, the position, and contact details of my manager as evidence and I couldn’t get this so ultimately couldn’t provide evidence of getting a job. It was absolutely infuriating.”

(Unsuccessful Job Start Payment applicant)

“So being a care leaver means I can apply sooner than other people. But I’ve not been in contact with social services since I was 18 so about 7 years ago. I didn’t have a great experience with social services when I was a kid so it was quite traumatic having to get back in touch with them, and the communication with them wasn’t great. It kept going back and forth to get what I needed from them.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

In the commissioned research, Social Security Scotland staff highlighted how they had to apply rigid procedures when processing Job Start Payment applications – an experience which they generally found to be frustrating. For example, they highlighted that they cannot validate claims in the following cases:

1. When applicants submit supporting documents (e.g. job contracts) which do not contain key details such as the date of job offer.
2. When applicants provide a date of job offer on their application form which does not match exactly with the date of job offer which is stated in supporting documents. This can be because (a) the applicant has put the job start date on the form by mistake, or (b) the job offer date was given verbally and in writing on separate days.¹³

applicant does not provide all the evidence required for an application, they will be contacted by a client advisor and asked to provide this.

¹³ Since this research was undertaken, a 14 day grace period has been introduced for job offer evidence. As such, if a client provides their evidence and the date differs from what they have provided on the application, then this can be accepted as long as the dates are within 14 days.

3. When the date of job offer indicates that the applicant was not out of paid work and/or on a qualifying benefit continuously for 6 months – even in cases where they fall short by a single day.

Social Security Scotland staff also cited difficulties contacting young people to obtain supporting information. They felt this was compounded because they could not contact applicants by methods other than phone or letter.

“We don’t have text functionality. We can’t email. So we really need to bring our communications into the twenty first century. Phone or letters that’s it... People just ignore phone if they don’t recognise the number, or they’re working, so they can’t answer it anyway.”

(Social Security Scotland staff member)

Finally, the commissioned research also indicates that the clarity of information provided to Job Start Payment applicants could be linked to application denials. Stakeholders felt that the information provided to Job Start Payment applicants is not clear – specifically on the eligibility criteria and the nature of supporting evidence required – and could be leading to ineligible claims. This was supported by the testimony of a care leaver.

“They told me that I ‘did not have the care experience that they were looking for’...They said that I wasn’t subject to a supervision order when I was of the age 16 years. And that was that. So I was just left thinking, I was in care, I spent time getting evidence together. I had to think back to that period of my life, and even reconnect with agencies and think through what happened to me. And then nothing came of it...it was a few months not subject to a supervision order overlapping my 16th birthday. If there are criteria around these things they should say. I don’t really understand the logic either.”

(Unsuccessful Job Start Payment applicant)

Conversely, another young person who applied unsuccessfully was fully aware that they did not meet the eligibility criteria for the payment, but hoped this would be overlooked.

“I thought the eligibility was quite clear and I applied even though I didn’t fit all criteria. I didn’t fit the length of time on the benefit – I had only been getting Universal Credit for a little over five months and thought they might look at it on a case-by-case basis.”

(Unsuccessful Job Start Payment applicant)

Applications are well administered

According to Official Statistics, a total of 9,560 Job Start Payment applications were processed between 17 August 2020 and 31 March 2022 (not including cases where an internal review was requested - i.e. approximately 2.6% of applications).

Processing times are calculated in working days (excluding public holidays) from the point of initial benefit application until a decision on the application is made, and includes time spent waiting to receive copies of documents or evidence requested from applicants.

On the basis described above, a quarterly breakdown of Job Start Payment application processing times is shown in Table 2.¹⁴ The figures show that there has been a general increase in application processing times since the benefit was introduced in August 2020. For example, the percentage of applications processed in 21 working days or more (not including cases where an internal review was requested) has increased in each quarter, except the April to June 2021 quarter.

More information on the figures in Table 2 is provided at Annex A.

Table 2 Job Start Payment application processing times per quarter

| Quarter ¹⁵ | Number of processed applications (excluding reviews) | Percentage of applications processed in 0-10 working days | Percentage of applications processed in 11-20 working days | Percentage of applications processed in 21 working days or more |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Aug-Sep 20 | 940 | 96% | 3% | 1% |
| Oct-Dec 20 | 1,130 | 70% | 19% | 11% |
| Jan-Mar 21 | 865 | 57% | 9% | 34% |
| Apr-Jun 21 | 1,380 | 43% | 41% | 16% |
| Jul-Sep 21 | 2,360 | 44% | 23% | 32% |
| Oct-Dec 21 | 1,620 | 21% | 45% | 35% |
| Jan-Mar 22 | 1,260 | 34% | 25% | 42% |

In the commissioned research, a number of Job Start Payment recipients who took part in interviews said that they did not receive the money until after their first pay

¹⁴ The figures in Table 2 are derived from a secondary analysis of rounded data in the [Job Start Payment Official Statistics](#) publication.

¹⁵ Note that the first quarter in Table 4 only covers the period of 17 August 2020 to 30 September 2020, and is therefore a partial quarter. This is because Job Start Payment was launched on 17 August.

check, due to the length of time they had to wait for an application decision.¹⁶ This meant they did not have the money at the point of need, and caused some participants stress and/or financial difficulties.

“Was a frustrating and a worrying wait. I was very close to the edge financially. Okay, knowing money would come, I knew I would get paid and I was confident I would also get Job Start....every day I was watching the money get lower and lower and just holding out until then....I had to push rent back for a few days actually. But my landlord was okay with that as I hadn't asked before.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Job Start Payment is taken up

A direct way to assess progress on this outcome would be to estimate the ‘take-up’ rate, which is the number of benefit recipients divided by the number of people eligible to receive the benefit. As mentioned above, the Scottish Government has not yet published a take-up rate estimate for Job Start Payment, but an estimate is due to be published later this year.

As explained in the [Social security: benefit take-up strategy](#), there are three primary reasons for non-take-up of benefits amongst eligible people.

1. **Social barriers** – (perceived) stigma, felt lack of need, people in vulnerable situations, pride, or lack of trust in institutions.

The commissioned research findings provide mixed evidence that social barriers could stop eligible people from applying for Job Start Payment. On the one hand, all of the young people who took part in interviews - including unsuccessful applicants and non-applicants - were supportive of the benefit, said they would recommend it to others (and in some cases already had recommended it). They also did not feel there was any stigma in applying for it. However, on the other hand, recipients reported feeling anxious about approaching employers for supporting evidence when making claims – as discussed in more detail below. It is possible, therefore, that the need to approach employers for evidence could be a barrier to claiming Job Start Payment.

2. **Lack of information** - a lack of awareness or misunderstandings about the benefit, eligibility, or application procedures.

The findings indicate that lack of information about Job Start Payment could lead to eligible young people not claiming the benefit. As outlined above, there appears to

¹⁶ It should be noted that application processing times may have included time spent waiting for applicants to provide supporting evidence for their claim (supporting evidence can be provided after the initial Job Start Payment application form is submitted).

be low awareness of the benefit amongst young people, and also amongst professionals who would be expected to signpost them to it. Also, stakeholders feel that the Job Start Payment eligibility criteria are unclear, and could be misunderstood by young people. Indeed, some stakeholders expressed caution about signposting their clients to the benefit, because they did not want them to experience a denied application.

3. **Costly or complex access** - complexity of the application, lack of time or money, limited administrative abilities or experience.

The commissioned research also indicates that costly or complex access could impact take-up of Job Start Payment. Firstly, it is possible that issues with supporting evidence, described previously in the findings section, mean that some eligible people have had their applications denied – e.g. if they had difficulties obtaining evidence from employers.

However, stakeholders also felt that eligible young people might be put off applying altogether because it involves (a) putting their employers details on the application form, and (b) backing up their claim with supporting evidence obtained from the employer. Whilst there is no direct evidence that young people chose not to apply for these reasons, Job Start Payment recipients did report feeling awkward and anxious about seeking application evidence from their employers, as mentioned above. This testimony gives some weight to the idea that having to approach employers could be putting young people off from making an application.

“[It was] my first kind of official job for a proper company, you know a big company. And I was nervous to talk to my manager...I’m grateful for the money, but it really wasn’t an easy process. Even during that time I thought sometimes ‘just leave it’. It seemed too much anxiety to get the money.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

“If they want us to prove anything then why don’t they have a standard form that is completed by the manager with the information needed and that’s that, end of story. But they wanted one thing, and then needed more, and needed more. It was a hassle for my manager. Even if they need to contact the employer, they should have a separate relationship and not involve us in that in a way that we are being put in an awkward situation. And so we don’t feel any pressure. I felt like I was under pressure.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Another way to assess the overall reach of Job Start Payment is to consider the diversity of people applying for or receiving the benefit. This can be done by examining data on the demographics and individual characteristics of applicants.

Official Statistics show that Job Start Payment applications were submitted by people living in all 32 local authority areas in Scotland. In terms of total approved applications to March 2022, the highest number of applications were from Glasgow City (575), Fife (295), and Edinburgh City (260). The lowest were from Orkney Islands (25), Na h-Eileanan Siar (20), and Shetland Islands (10).

Both Official Statistics and Social Security Scotland client diversity and equalities analysis provides more information on the outcomes of applications by each of the equalities groups:

- Table 3 presents (a) a secondary analysis of Official Statistics data on the age and care leaver status of approved applicants to March 2022, and (b) a supplementary analysis on the parental status of approved applicants, based on the same data used in the production of the Job Start Payment Official Statistics publication.
- Table 4 presents a secondary analysis of data on clients who had their applications approved from December 2020 to May 2021, using data from client diversity and equalities analysis publication.¹⁷

A more detailed breakdown of the data in both of these tables, with additional notes, is provided at Annex A.

Table 3 Job Start Payment approved applicants by age-group, care leaver status, and parent status, August 2020 to March 2022 (n=4,150)

| Age-group | % |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| 16-17 years | 1% |
| 18-21 years | 47% |
| 22-24 years | 51% |
| 25 years | 1% |
| Care leaver status | % |
| Care leaver | 6% |
| Not declared as a care leaver | 94% |
| Parent status | % |
| Parent | 23% |
| Not declared as a parent | 77% |

¹⁷ The percentages in Table 4 were calculated by dividing the number of approved applications for each variable category by the total number of approved applications. For example, the percentage of approved applications for those who identified as women, as shown in Table 3 (47%), is calculated by dividing the number of approved applications for women (410) by the total approved applications (865).

Table 4 Job Start Payment equalities data for approved applications, December 2020 to May 2021 (n=865)

| Category | % |
|---|----------|
| Gender | |
| Woman | 47% |
| Man | 50% |
| In another way | 1% |
| Prefer not to say | 2% |
| Physical or mental health condition or illness | |
| Yes | 17% |
| No | 77% |
| Prefer not to say | 6% |
| Ethnicity | |
| White | 95% |
| Asian | 1% |
| African | 0% |
| Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups | 1% |
| Other ethnic group | 0% |
| Caribbean or black | 0% |
| Prefer not to say | 2% |
| Sexual orientation | |
| Heterosexual | 81% |
| Gay & lesbian | 5% |
| Bisexual | 9% |
| In another way | 1% |
| Prefer not to say | 5% |
| Transgender | |
| Yes | 2% |
| No | 97% |
| Prefer not to say | 2% |
| 6-fold Urban Rural Classification¹⁸ | |
| Large urban area | 38% |
| Other urban area | 40% |
| Accessible small town | 7% |
| Remote small town | 4% |

¹⁸ Scottish Government (2018) [Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016](#).

| | |
|--|-----|
| Accessible rural area | 7% |
| Remote rural area | 5% |
| SIMD Quintile¹⁹ | |
| 1 (most deprived) | 38% |
| 2 | 24% |
| 3 | 17% |
| 4 | 12% |
| 5 (least deprived) | 10% |
| Residence on mainland or island communities | |
| Scottish Mainland | 98% |
| Scottish Island | 2% |

Achievement against short-term policy outcomes

This section evaluates Job Start Payment against the following policy outcomes:

- Supports young people to take-up employment
- Helps to meet the costs of starting a new job
- Increased confidence when starting a job
- Increased confidence about employment prospects

It is based on findings from the commissioned research.

Supports young people to take-up employment

There was a consensus amongst commissioned research participants (both young people and stakeholders) that there is a need for Job Start Payment, due to the challenges people face meeting up-front costs when starting a new job. Young people explained how they, and their friends, had been caught off-guard by the amount of money they had to pay for travel, accommodation, work equipment, and uniforms.

Additionally, all of the young people who were interviewed – including young people whose applications were denied – said that they would recommend the benefit to others, and in some cases had already done so. They did not feel that there was any stigma in applying for Job Start Payment, and had a strong sense that it could make a real difference to people entering employment.

“It’s a great helping hand if they’re starting a job, they might need transport or clothes or equipment and not [having that] come out of the money they need to live on.”

Job Start Payment recipient

¹⁹ Scottish Government (2020) [Scottish Index Multiple Deprivation 2020](#).

Helps to meet the costs of starting a new job

In the commissioned research interviews, Job Start Payment recipients (n=26) were asked what they had used the money to buy. As shown in Table 5, recipients often spent the money on costs directly associated with starting their new job. For example, the two most commonly mentioned items were work clothes and travel passes.²⁰ Other items mentioned by participants included food for lunches, childcare costs, car costs, and work equipment.

Table 5 What recipients used Job Start Payment to buy

| Type of item | Number of young people mentioning item | Examples given included |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Work clothes | 16 | Clothes and shoes suitable for working environment- including office wear, uniforms, safety clothing for building sites |
| Travel | 14 | Travel passes |
| Food | 7 | Food for their lunches, food for family |
| General bills | 5 | Own bills, and bills of parents when living at home |
| Savings | 4 | Put into bank account for unexpected expenses |
| Settling debt | 3 | Paying back money borrowed from friends and family, paying credit card debt |
| Childcare costs | 3 | Upfront payments |
| Leisure | 3 | Day out with children, trip to visit relatives, dinner out with partner |
| Car costs | 3 | Fuel, MOT costs |
| Work equipment | 2 | Computer equipment, furniture to work from home |
| Miscellaneous | 1 | Toys for children |

Note: some participants mentioned more than one item

All of the interview participants who had received Job Start Payment spoke positively about the payment. It was described as being ‘fair’, ‘helpful’, and ‘amazing’. Participants also explained how the money had helped them meet the costs of starting a new job.

²⁰ The Young Persons’ (Under 22s) Free Bus Travel Scheme began on 31 January 2022 in Scotland, whilst the fieldwork for this research was underway. It is therefore possible that fewer Job Start Payment recipients would now spend the payment on travel. [Young Persons’ Free Bus Travel Scheme | Transport Scotland](#)

“My partner was out of a job, so we didn’t have a stable income...All the money was going onto bills. And even going into Glasgow, where the office was, to pick up my laptop to start the new job for instance, I didn’t have money to do that. So JSP helped me pay for that...I felt that amount was more than enough for my circumstances at the time.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Stakeholders agreed that Job Start Payment helps young people meet the costs of starting a new job, and spoke positively about the benefit. However, they also felt that the payment amount may not be enough in some cases. Indeed, one young parent who received Job Start Payment said the benefit had contributed towards her childcare costs, but described taking on debt to cover remaining expenses.

“So, the majority of the payment went towards the childcare and we set up a payment plan to pay the rest of the up-front childcare cost. And for the likes of travel and uniform, then that just went on the credit card so I had to get myself into a bit of debt. It was quite daunting...Well to cover the full month of childcare and the travel, that would have been £1,300...Oh it was a huge relief [getting JSP]. That came up with about a third of the money I needed and it made it a lot more manageable. Like, I wouldn’t have been able to get all that on credit.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Additionally, as mentioned previously, whilst participants felt Job Start Payment helped with the costs of starting a job, a number of recipients did not receive the money until after their first pay check, due to the length of time they had to wait for an application decision.²¹ This meant they did not have the money at the point of need, which, according to some participants, caused stress and financial difficulties.

Increased confidence when starting a new job

In the commissioned research, young people who had successfully claimed Job Start Payment discussed how receiving the payment made them feel. Those who had spent at least some of the money on work uniforms described how this made them more confident about starting their new job.

“First impressions are everything, and I didn’t want to walk up to the jobs in some skinny jeans. Even though other people did, that’s their choice. I always like to dress smart to give a good first impression. And not only did I give a good impression, but I felt confident and smart. And it helped me feel that I could do that job properly.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

²¹ It should be noted that application processing times may have included time spent waiting for applicants to provide supporting evidence for their claim (supporting evidence can be provided after the initial JSP application form is submitted).

“The Job Start Payment helps a lot, it really cuts down on a lot of stress. I felt a lot more confident knowing that I didn’t have to buy the uniform with no way to pay for it. That was where a lot of the anxiety was; it said you needed a dressy shirt but I just didn’t have any.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

As indicated by the quote above, many recipients also felt like Job Start Payment reduced their anxiety about starting work. Some also specifically mentioned that being able to choose how they spent the money made them feel good about themselves.

“I think it is really incredible, that it’s open to you spending it. It feels like it’s rewarding you for doing a good job for getting a job. And sometimes that’s what some people need. Because I know it’s incredibly difficult to get a job. And it makes them feel less scared about getting a job, if you can get that to help you.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Increased confidence about employment prospects

In the commissioned research, young people who received Job Start Payment said they felt more confident about their medium- and long-term employment prospects as a result of getting the job. However, they did not directly link this with receiving the benefit. One young person with experience of homelessness spoke about how employment had boosted their overall confidence and prospects.

“Getting that job and starting fresh, it’s made such a difference. I’m more motivated to spend time with my friends, I have my own space, and because I’ve enjoyed my job so much, I’m actually working towards a promotion.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Achievement against medium-term policy outcomes

This section evaluates Job Start Payment against the following policy outcomes:

- Helps young people to sustain employment
- Helps young people to build social networks
- Improved lifestyle and participation in society
- Improved health and wellbeing for recipients’ families

It uses data from bespoke commissioned research. However, a full evaluation against these outcomes would require: (a) more time to have passed since the benefit was implemented, and (b) access to more robust quantitative data. The outcomes will also be affected by a range of factors in addition to Job Start Payment, and would involve isolating the influence of the payment from other

contributing factors, such as wider social security benefits and other government interventions designed to support young people entering employment.

Helps young people to sustain employment

The commissioned research provides only limited evidence that Job Start Payment helps young people to sustain employment. However, two interview participants did say that receiving Job Start Payment not only helped them to take-up employment, but also helped them to stay in their new job.

“[I] wouldn’t have been able to work there for that long if I hadn’t got it to be honest. Because I would have started off in debt to pay for my travel and food and bills before getting my salary.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Participants were also asked about their current employment status at the time of interview. Out of the 26 who had received Job Start Payment, 14 (54%) were still working with the same employer, 7 (27%) were working with a new employer, 3 (12%) were unemployed, and 2 (8%) were in education or training. However, without access to further data, it is not possible to link these outcomes directly with Job Start Payment.

It is notable that, while they felt Job Start Payment helps young people to take-up employment, stakeholders were less convinced that it would help them to sustain work – citing that this would entail additional costs which could not be covered by the payment.

“It’s a grant that will help somebody, but it’s not of an adequate amount that it would completely take away the problems that people have [sustaining employment]. Because of that, it would need to be substantially more to do that, but it does go some way towards acting as a bit of a buffer.”

(Skills and Employability stakeholder)

Helps young people to build social networks

In the commissioned research, those who received Job Start Payment explained how they had made friends and bonded with colleagues in their new jobs – although they did not directly link this to receiving the benefit. In some cases participants linked their expanding networks with improved personal wellbeing.

“Interacting with colleagues - it is good because I’ve not really been interacting before with anyone outside my parents and my partner. And now I have colleagues and speak to them and socialise a bit more again.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

“I would say I’ve matured a lot in this job. And my mental health is a lot better due to the support we get in here. We are a small business, and a family owned business, it’s not my family, but a family. And we are really close knit and family run on here. So I’ve got a tonne of support. I’ve made so many new friends and I’ve allowed myself to grow.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Improved lifestyle and participation in society

In the commissioned research, several young people who received Job Start Payment compared being in employment favourably with being on benefits – although they did not link this directly with the benefit. Parents in particular spoke about how their new jobs had improved their quality of life.

“It’s made me feel a lot more independent. I’ve got a working wage now rather than just having to be on benefits. And I feel a lot better in myself, I’m not just having to look after kids all the time.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

“I was on Universal Credit and I’ve got 2 young kids – it was absolutely not enough to get by. It got us out of poverty and created better living circumstances for me and my children...It meant that my kids can start eating better, go back to the youth club. My childminder is worth her weight in gold; she’s an amazing support not just to my kids but for me. She’s expanded my whole support network.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

In exceptional cases, recipients also spoke about how their job had led to new education and career development opportunities.

“I’m now doing a course for a diploma. I’m essentially just doing really great. And actually [...] now I realise this is the job I want to do long-term, so working more in digital marketing. So I’m developing my career now.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Improved health and wellbeing for recipients’ families

The commissioned research provides only a limited amount of evidence that Job Start Payment has contributed to better health and wellbeing for recipients’ families. As shown in Table 5, a number of recipients spent at least part of the money on items that would benefit family members – e.g. on food for the family, or as a contribution towards bills. One parent who spent the money on childcare explained how this had had a positive impact on her daughter’s wellbeing.

“Yeah it helped my little girl get into nursery which is great. She’s a Covid baby so I feel really guilty, she’s not been around a lot of other children so it’s great to see her make friends and thrive.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Also shown in Table 5, a small number of recipients used Job Start Payment as a means to spend time with family members, which may have contributed to their families’ wellbeing, albeit temporarily and in a modest way.

“I actually spent it on a train ticket to see my mum, who I hadn’t see in months. Because I was on Universal Credit I couldn’t afford the ticket before then. I went to see her, and I took my partner out for dinner. Because we hadn’t done that at all. So I really saw it as a reward and spent it on two things that I hadn’t had the money to do before then, as a treat for starting my job really. So obviously there were things coming out my account that month, bills for necessities. But I put that money aside to spend time with people and enjoy that.”

(Job Start Payment recipient)

Evidence of progress towards long-term outcomes for young people on low incomes

The Scottish Government is committed to supporting young people into fair and sustainable employment. To do this, it has been delivering support for those who are further from the labour market across a range of policy areas, including social security. These actions are intended to contribute to the following long-term government outcomes:

- Increased youth employment
- Reduced youth unemployment
- Reduced inequalities in the labour market

Job Start Payment could contribute towards these targets. However, measuring its impact would require (a) suitable time to have passed since the payment was introduced, and (b) access to more robust and suitable quantitative data than is currently available. It should also be noted that the targeted nature of the support means Job Start Payment claimants are likely to represent only a small proportion of total unemployed 16-24 year olds in Scotland at any given time. As such, the benefit could only make a modest contribution in these areas.

Despite the above, it can be reasonably expected that success against Job Start Payment’s immediate, short-term, and medium-term policy outcomes could contribute positively to the Scottish Government achieving its long-term outcomes – as a (relatively minor) part of wider measures to support unemployed young people.

Based on the evidence presented in this report, the following summary of progress can be made.

Progress towards immediate outcomes

- With regards to promotion of Job Start Payment, the qualitative evidence indicates that young people commonly find out about the benefit via stakeholder organisations, but are less likely to find out about it through media advertising. General awareness of the benefit also appears to be low amongst young people.
- Stakeholders from employability and charity organisations recognise that they have an important role in signposting Job Start Payment to eligible young people. However, they also have a sense that awareness and knowledge of the benefit is generally low within their organisations (and also amongst employers).
- The purpose of Job Start Payment is generally well-understood by recipients. However, stakeholders feel the eligibility rules are not clear, and raise concerns about the need for applicants to be out of paid work and on a qualifying benefit for 6 months continuously, because they say that:
 - Young people are encouraged to do short, paid work placements, which can break up long periods of unemployment. These placements do not impact benefits like Universal Credit, but can make young people ineligible for Job Start Payment.
 - 16-17 year olds are less likely than older applicants to be on qualifying benefits for 6 months, due to employability initiatives for school leavers. There is a sense that eligibility criteria should be different for this age-group.
- Young people and stakeholders report that the initial Job Start Payment application form is straightforward to complete. However, 53% of applications have been denied (rising to 79% for 16-17 year olds) – most commonly because applicants were not out of paid work and/or on a qualifying benefit for at least 6 months prior to job offer. The qualitative findings highlight that the following factors could be contributing to denial rates:
 - Some applicants can be ineligible because, as mentioned, they (a) are encouraged to take-up short, paid work placements which interrupt long spells of unemployment, or (b) are under 18 and unlikely to have been on a qualifying benefit for 6 months.
 - Young people can find obtaining supporting evidence from employers to be challenging and stressful.
 - Social Security Scotland staff say they have to stick rigidly to procedures when processing claims e.g. they cannot validate claims if the supporting evidence provided does not contain details such as the date of job offer, or if the job offer date does not match the one stated on the application form.

- Social Security Scotland staff find it difficult to contact young people by phone or letter about supporting evidence, and say they cannot use other methods such as email or text.
- A lack of clarity around eligibility rules and the supporting evidence could be leading to ineligible claims. Also, testimony from an unsuccessful applicant suggests some young people may apply hoping their ineligibility will be overlooked.
- Application processing times have been generally increasing since the benefit was introduced. Longer waiting times can be stressful for applicants, and mean that they do not receive the payment at the point of need.
- The qualitative findings highlight that the following factors could be impacting take-up of Job Start Payment amongst eligible young people:
 - A lack of awareness of the benefit amongst young people, and within stakeholder organisations which signpost unemployed young people to benefits, could mean that some eligible young people are not making applications.
 - Challenges obtaining supporting evidence for applications could mean that some eligible people have claims denied.
 - The need to put employer details on the application, and/or to approach employers for supporting evidence, could be putting some eligible people off from applying altogether (albeit there is no direct evidence of this).
- People from across Scotland with a wide range of personal and demographic characteristics have applied for Job Start Payment.

Progress towards short-term outcomes

- There is a consensus amongst young people and stakeholders that Job Start Payment is needed due to challenges people can face meeting the up-front costs of a new job. Young people do not report any stigma claiming the benefit, and say they would recommend it to others.
- The benefit helps young people meet the costs of starting a new job. It is spent on a range of items, with work clothes and travel passes being amongst the most common purchases. Young people are very positive about the payment amount – describing it as ‘fair’, ‘helpful’, and ‘amazing’.
- Job Start Payment can boost recipients’ confidence and help to reduce anxiety when starting a new job. Young people also appreciate being able to choose how to spend the money.
- Recipients report feeling more confident about their employment prospects as a result of getting a job, albeit they do not link this confidence directly with the payment.
- The payment amount is not always enough to cover everyone’s expenses e.g. parents with high childcare costs. Additionally, as mentioned, longer application processing times mean that some young people do not receive the money at the point of need.

Progress towards medium-term outcomes

Medium-term outcomes cannot be fully evaluated until (a) more time has passed since Job Start Payment was implemented and (b) more robust quantitative data has been obtained. However, the following summary can be made based on existing evidence:

- There is limited evidence Job Start Payment helps young people to sustain employment. Stakeholders expressed the view that sustaining employment would involve more costs than the payment covers. However, two recipients in the qualitative did feel the payment helped them to stay in their jobs, and most qualitative participants were still in employment at the time of interview.
- There is limited evidence that Job Start Payment has led to improved health and wellbeing for recipients' families. However, some use the payment in ways that would benefit family members – e.g. as a contribution towards household bills or food costs.
- While not linked directly with receiving Job Start Payment, young people reported other positive outcomes of getting a job e.g. increased social networks and improved lifestyles.

This summary shows that positive progress has been made towards Job Start Payment's short-term outcomes – which relate primarily to the impact of the payment on people who receive it. It also indicates that positive steps have been made towards its medium-term outcomes, albeit the benefit may only be contributing indirectly in these areas, and in a small way. In combination, it can be reasonably assumed that Job Start Payment is making some contribution towards the Scottish Government's long-term aims for unemployed young people.

However, the evaluation has also highlighted that there are substantial issues with Job Start Payment, which relate primarily to its immediate outcomes – i.e. the promotion and administration of the benefit. Implications are discussed in the conclusion chapter below.

Conclusion

The purpose of the interim evaluation was to:

1. Evaluate the extent to which Job Start Payment has met its policy outcomes.
2. Assess the potential contribution of Job Start Payment to the Scottish Government's strategic aims for employment of young people.
3. Discuss implications for future policy development.

The first two of these has been achieved by reviewing the available evidence on Job Start Payment, drawn from different sources (primarily bespoke commissioned research carried out by Diffley Partnership and Official Statistics). As discussed above, Job Start Payment has made good progress towards its short-term outcomes, and some positive steps are being made to its medium-term outcomes, albeit not directly as a result of the payment. Based on this progress, it is reasonable to assume that the policy is also contributing towards the government's long-term aims. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, due to the targeted nature of the support provided by Job Start Payment, it can only be expected to have a modest impact in these areas relative to other government interventions which are designed to assist unemployed young people.

Despite these positive developments, the evaluation has also highlights some areas where Job Start Payment has struggled to meet its stated outcomes, which may need to be addressed to achieve better outcomes for recipients. These are outlined below.

Policy implications for Job Start Payment

The following implications have been drawn from the commissioned research report by Diffley Partnership, which is available in the full in [Annex B](#). However, they also take into account the wider evidence from Official Statistics which has been presented throughout this report. They are as follows:

1. It may be helpful to increase awareness of Job Start Payment amongst (a) young people, and (b) stakeholder organisations who support unemployed young people.

Low awareness of Job Start Payment could mean some eligible young people are not applying for the benefit. Indeed, the qualitative findings indicate that recipients do not commonly hear about the benefit via media advertising. Additionally, while stakeholders recognise that they have a crucial role in signposting the benefit to recipients, they sense there is a general lack of awareness and knowledge of Job Start Payment within their organisations and professional networks – and also amongst employers. As such, it may be helpful to raise more awareness of Job Start Payment amongst eligible young people. This could involve further

promotional work and increased engagement with stakeholder organisations – including employers - to ensure young people are being signposted to the benefit.

2. It could be helpful to (a) clarify the eligibility rules for Job Start Payment, and (b) review whether changes are needed to eligibility rules.

The evaluation evidence indicates that the Job Start Payment eligibility criteria are unclear, and could be a factor in why ineligible young people make applications. It is also possible that young people make claims despite knowing they are ineligible for the benefit, hoping their ineligibility will be overlooked (albeit there is only limited evidence for this happening). As such, clarifying eligibility rules could reduce the amount of denied applications. Further steps may also be needed to reduce the number of claims by ineligible applicants.

Stakeholders also have concerns about eligibility rules. They highlight that young people who have been unemployed for long periods are encouraged to take up short, paid placements which can make them ineligible for Job Start Payment – but do not affect their other benefits. Additionally, they highlight that 16-17 year olds are particularly unlikely to be on a qualifying benefit, but (in their view) still need assistance with costs when starting a new job. As such, revisions to eligibility rules could make Job Start Payment available for more young people who would benefit from this assistance.

3. Reviewing and changing procedures around the provision of supporting evidence could make this process simpler for applicants and Social Security Scotland staff processing claims.²²

The evaluation highlights that the process of obtaining supporting evidence (e.g. from employers or social services) causes issues for applicants and Social Security Scotland staff, and contributes to denial rates. For example:

- Young people report that obtaining evidence can be challenging and stressful. They are also not always clear about the level of detail that is required in supporting documents.
- Staff processing applications have to rigidly apply procedures when processing claims – e.g. they cannot validate applications if they are given supporting documents (e.g. job contracts) which do not contain details such as the date of job offer, or if the job offer date in supporting evidence does not match the one stated on the initial application form.

²² It should be noted that, since the research for this evaluation was undertaken, the following changes have been introduced to the application process: (i) applicants have been given an extra 7 days to provide supporting evidence for their claims; (ii) a 14 day grace period has been introduced for job offer evidence - meaning if a client provides evidence of a job offer date which differs from the job offer date stated on the application form, this can be accepted as long as the dates are within 14 days; and, (iii) applicants who have been contacted by phone are sent a reminder letter as an additional prompt to provide evidence (whereas before letters were only sent to applicants who could not be contacted by phone).

- Staff also say it is difficult to reach young people via telephone or letter to obtain supporting evidence, and feel it would be better if they could also use email or texts.

These issues could mean that eligible young people have their claims denied, thereby reducing the overall take-up of Job Start Payment. Additionally, anxiety about getting evidence from employers may put some eligible people off from applying altogether. As such, it may be helpful to review the supporting evidence aspect of the application process, to see if it can be simplified for both applicants and staff processing claims.

4. Steps to expedite application processing times could be helpful to consider.

The evaluation has shown that Job Start Payment application processing times have increased each quarter since the benefit was introduced. Applicants say that long waits for decisions can be stressful, and that in some cases they do not receive the payment at the point of need - i.e. before their first pay check. As such, it may be helpful to review the application decision-making process to see if it can be expedited.

5. It might be helpful to review the rate of payment for parents.

Job Start Payment helps young people to transition into employment, and is generally welcomed by recipients. However, the evaluation shows that parents can face high childcare costs when starting a new job, which – in spite of receiving a higher rate of Job Start Payment – can leave them with considerable outstanding overheads to meet. As such, it may be helpful to review the rate of payment awarded to parents.

6. More data is required to fully evaluate progress towards Job Start Payment outcomes.

It has been touched on throughout this report that there is currently a lack of data to fully evaluate the medium-term outcomes of Job Start Payment, and assess its contribution to longer-term government aims (e.g. increased youth employment). For example, there is only a limited amount of evidence to suggest that Job Start Payment helps young people to sustain employment - and stakeholders feel the payment cannot achieve this outcome. However, the true impact of Job Start Payment on whether young people can sustain employment cannot be assessed with the available evidence. This is similar for other policy outcomes, such as the benefit's impact on recipients' social networks and overall lifestyle. Continued efforts should therefore be made to obtain data to fully evaluate the progress of Job Start Payment ahead of future evaluations.

Annex A: Additional statistical information

Notes which apply to more than one statistical table are presented at the beginning of Annex A, as can be seen below. Notes which apply to only one statistical table are presented underneath the relevant table.

Notes – all tables

- Figures are rounded for disclosure control and may not sum due to rounding.
- Figures have been rounded to the nearest one percent – figures may not sum due to rounding.
- Most results are presented to zero decimal places. '0%' should therefore be interpreted to mean less than 0.5%. If no responses were given then this is denoted by '-'.

Notes – table 1-11

- The total percentage of approved applications has been calculated by dividing the number of approved applications for each variable category by the total number of approved applications. For example, in Table 1, to calculate the percentage of approved applications for 16-17 year olds, 55 (i.e. the number of approved applications for 16-17 year olds) is divided by 4,150 (i.e. the total number of approved applications).

Notes – tables 1-2 & table 12

- This secondary analysis was carried out using the same data used in the production of the [Job Start Payment Official Statistics](#) publication.

Notes – tables 4-11

- This secondary analysis was carried out using the same data used in the production of the Social Security Scotland client diversity and equalities analysis to [May 2021](#).

1. Number of approved applications by Age-group, 17 August 2021 to 31 March 2022

| Age-group | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 16-17 years | 55 | 1% |
| 18-21 years | 1,950 | 47% |
| 22-24 years | 2,120 | 51% |
| 25 years | 25 | 1% |
| Other | [c] | [c] |
| Total | 4,150 | 100% |

Notes – table 1

- [c] Figures suppressed for disclosure control
- The other category includes applications where the applicant is under 16 years old, over 25 years old, or where the applicants age is unknown.

2. Number of approved applications by Care leaver status, 17 August 2021 to 31 March 2022

| Care Leaver Status | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Care Leaver | 255 | 6% |
| Not declared as care leaver | 3,895 | 94% |
| Total | 4,150 | 100% |

Notes – table 2

An applicant is considered a care leaver within this table if they provide evidence of their care leaver status when making an application. It is possible that an applicant may be a care leaver but choose not to provide evidence of this if they qualify for the benefit under the standard eligibility criteria. In this instance, the applicant would be classified as 'Not declared as a Care Leaver' within this table. See the background information section of the publication document for more information on eligibility criteria.

3. Number of approved applications by Care leaver status, 17 August 2021 to 31 March 2022

| Care Leaver Status | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Declared parent | 935 | 23% |
| Not declared parent | 3,215 | 77% |
| Total | 4,150 | 100% |

Notes – table 3

- This supplementary analysis was carried out using the same data used in the [Job Start Payment Official Statistics](#) publication
- Whether an applicant is assumed to be parent or not is based on the presence (absence) of a data field called "Children Under 16". Since it is possible for applicants to not fill in information about their children aged under 16, overestimation of non-declared parents can occur and thus caution is needed when interpreting these figures.

4. Number of approved applications by Gender, December 2020 to May 2021

| Gender | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Man | 435 | 50% |
| Woman | 410 | 47% |
| In another way | 10 | 1% |
| Prefer not to say | 15 | 2% |
| Unknown | - | - |
| Total | 865 | 100% |

5. Number of approved applications by Physical or Mental Health Condition, December 2020 to May 2021

| Physical or Mental Health Condition | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Yes | 150 | 17% |
| No | 670 | 77% |
| Prefer not to say | 50 | 6% |
| Unknown | - | - |
| Total | 865 | 100% |

6. Number of approved applications by Ethnicity, December 2020 to May 2021

| Ethnicity | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| White | 825 | 95% |
| Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups | 10 | 1% |
| Asian | 10 | 1% |
| African | - | - |
| Caribbean or Black | - | - |
| Other ethnic group | - | - |
| Prefer not to say | 15 | 15 |
| Unknown | - | - |
| Total | 865 | 100% |

7. Number of approved applications by Sexual orientation, December 2020 to May 2021

| Sexual orientation | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Heterosexual | 700 | 81% |
| Gay & Lesbian | 45 | 5% |
| Bisexual | 75 | 9% |
| In another way | 5 | 1% |
| Prefer not to say | 40 | 5% |
| Unknown | - | - |
| Total | 865 | 100% |

8. Number of approved applications by Transgender, December 2020 to May 2021

| Transgender | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Yes | 15 | 2% |
| No | 835 | 97% |
| Prefer not to say | 20 | 2% |
| Unknown | - | - |
| Total | 865 | 100% |

9. Number of approved applications by Urban Rural, December 2020 to May 2021

| Urban Rural | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 -Large Urban Areas | 325 | 38% |
| 2 -Other Urban Area | 345 | 40% |
| 3 -Accessible Small Town | 60 | 7% |
| 4 -Remote Small Town | 35 | 4% |
| 5 -Accessible Rural Area | 60 | 7% |
| 6 -Remote Rural Area | 40 | 5% |
| Unknown - Scottish | - | - |
| Unknown - Other | - | - |
| Total | 865 | 100% |

Notes – table 9

- In Social Security Scotland client diversity and equalities analysis Urban Rural data is presented based on the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification, 8-fold. In Table 7 it is based on the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification, 6-fold. The 6-fold data in Table 6 has been calculated by aggregating the following items from the 8-fold data:
 - '4 - Remote Small Town', and '5 - Very Remote Small Town'
 - '7 - Remote Rural Area', and '8 - Very Remote Rural Area'

10. Number of approved applications by SIMD Quintile, December 2020 to May 2021

| SIMD quintile | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | 330 | 38% |
| 2 | 205 | 24% |
| 3 | 140 | 16% |
| 4 | 100 | 12% |
| 5 | 90 | 10% |
| Unknown – Scottish | - | - |
| Unknown – Other | - | - |
| Total | 865 | 100% |

Notes – table 10

- In Social Security Scotland client diversity and equalities analysis SIMD data is presented based on SIMD Deciles. In Table 8 it is based on SIMD Quintiles. SIMD Quintiles data in Table 8 has been calculated by aggregating the following from the SIMD Deciles data:
 - Deciles 1 and 2 data, for Quintile 1
 - Deciles 3 and 4 data, for Quintile 2
 - Deciles 5 and 6 data, for Quintile 3
 - Deciles 7 and 8 data, for Quintile 4
 - Deciles 9 and 10 data, for Quintile 5.

11. Number of approved applications by Islands, December 2020 to May 2021

| Islands | Total number of approved applications | Total percentage of approved applications |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Scotland – Island | 20 | 2% |
| Scotland – Mainland | 845 | 98% |
| Scotland – Unknown | - | - |
| Other | - | - |
| Total | 865 | 100% |

12. Job Start Payment application processing times per month, 17 August 2020 to 31 March 2022

| Month | Number of processed applications | Percentage of applications processed within 10 working days | Average (median) processing time in working days |
|--------------|---|--|---|
| Aug-20 | 285 | 100% | 4 |
| Sep-20 | 655 | 95% | 6 |
| Oct-20 | 425 | 59% | 10 |
| Nov-20 | 400 | 75% | 8 |
| Dec-20 | 305 | 79% | 6 |
| Jan-21 | 220 | 70% | 6 |
| Feb-21 | 190 | 66% | 8 |
| Mar-21 | 455 | 47% | 14 |
| Apr-21 | 365 | 75% | 7 |
| May-21 | 345 | 39% | 12 |
| Jun-21 | 670 | 28% | 13 |
| Jul-21 | 680 | 33% | 13 |
| Aug-21 | 1,000 | 47% | 12 |
| Sep-21 | 680 | 51% | 10 |
| Oct-21 | 490 | 24% | 16 |
| Nov-21 | 455 | 8% | 18 |
| Dec-21 | 675 | 27% | 15 |
| Jan-22 | 240 | 10% | 35 |
| Feb-22 | 545 | 41% | 13 |
| Mar-22 | 475 | 37% | 13 |

Notes – table 12

- Processed applications exclude cases where a review was requested. Approximately 2.6% of processed applications are flagged as having had a re-determination request.
- Data is presented by the month of decision rather than month the application was received.
- Median average has been used. The median is the middle value of an ordered dataset, or the point at which half of the values are higher and half of the values are lower.

Annex B: Evaluation of Job Start Payment: Qualitative Research

[Evaluation of Job Start Payment: Annex B: Qualitative Research](#)

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this social research publication:

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- are available via an alternative route
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact social_research@gov.scot for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.



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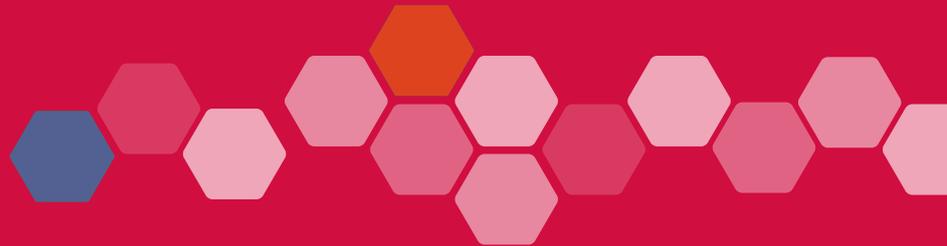
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