Performance Report Q1 2022-23

Item: 10 Paper ref: 08

Paper for the

Social Work England Board

Sponsor

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Date

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Reviewed by

Executive Leadership Team

This paper is for

Discussion and Advising

Associated Strategic Objective

SO9: We will establish robust infrastructure, systems and processes that promote trust and confidence.

Impact: Risk Type and Appetite

Operational delivery - Open

1. Summary

This report presents our performance for Q1 of 2022-23. We publish our performance and data on a quarterly basis. Publishing quarterly means we show trends and performance within the year and against previous years.

2. Overall assessment

- Performance in Q1 of 22-23 is broadly in line with expectations.
- We achieved all our targets for registration, enquiries and advice.
- We achieved all of our targets for fitness to practise.
- The current median age of the triage caseload is 17 weeks and the current median age of the investigation caseload is 60 weeks, both are slightly ahead of projections.
- We have concluded 78% of the legacy cases, against our Q1 target of 77%.
- We have revised our year-end target for concluding education and training course re-approval decisions from 40% to 33%, to reflect our most recent planning assumptions. We are on track to meet this target.
- We inspected 40 education and training courses and made recommendations for approval for 31 courses.
- We met 5 out 6 targets for the 'our organisation' pillar, narrowly missing the corporate complaints response time target.

Key discussion points

- We anticipate increases in Q2 in the registration, enquiries and advice KPIs due to the annual increase in applications from UK graduates and the start of the annual renewal period.
- Current forecasts indicate that all legacy investigations that we are able to progress will conclude by September 2022. We have increased the number of scheduled hearings from July to accommodate progression of the legacy caseload.
- Submissions for CPD in Q1 22-23 are lower than in Q1 21-22. We are closely monitoring the impact of introducing new CPD requirements. We are supporting social workers to meet the new requirements through guidance, engagement events and communications. Social workers have until the end of November to meet the new CPD requirements.

3. Performance 1 April to 30 June 2022

3.1 Our regulatory approach

Registration, enquiries and advice

Table 1: registration, enquiries and advice key performance indicators

KPI ID	KPI Description	Target	Q1	DoT*	2021-22 Q1	2021-22 Q2	2021-22 Q3	2021-22 Q4
REG1	Time taken to approve registration applications[1]	≤ 10 working days (median)	2	↑	1	1	2	1
REG2	Time taken to approve restoration applicationsError! Bookmark not defined.	≤ 20 working days (median)	2	↓	8	9	4	9
REG3	Time taken to answer emails	≤ 5 working days (median)	1	→	0	0	1	1
REG4	Time taken to answer phone calls	≤ 8 mins waiting time (median)	2	↑	0	2	10	1

RAG rating of actuals:
- Green - achieving target
- Amber - within 5% of achieving target
- Red - over 5% from achieving target

*Direction of travel:
- Direction of arrow indicates numerical change compared to previous quarter
- Colour of arrow indicates performance against target (green = trending towards target; red = trending away from target)

The time taken to approve registration applications has increased from 1 working day in Q4 21-22 to 2 working days in Q1, which remains well within the target. During Q1, 6 employees (5 FTE) have left or moved to new roles within the organisation. Three new team members will join in Q2, filling all current vacancies by the end of July 2022. A slight increase in call volumes compared to Q1 last year and ongoing recruitment challenges have contributed to the average time taken to answer telephone calls increasing from 1 minute to 2 minutes, still well within the target. Email response times remain within target.

The time taken to approve registration applications is expected to increase further in Q2 due to the induction and training of new staff, in addition to the expected annual increase in applications from UK graduates. Registration applications from people who qualified overseas continues to increase; 424 in Q1 22-23 compared to 238 in Q1 21-22, a 78% increase.

We are working with key regulators from overseas to gain further insight into the reasons for this and to explore ways to support the experience of applicants to our register. The time taken to approve restoration applications has decreased from 9 working days to 2 working days in Q1 22-23, which reflects a Q1 reduction of 151 applications to 240. There continues to be an increase in misuse of title investigations (26 in this quarter, compared to

[1] Excludes applications where an investigation is required

6 in Q1 last year). The cases continue to be a balance of cases raised by members of the public and those that we raise where we find that someone has been practising without registration.

We actively supported social workers to pay their second direct debit instalment, with only 132 people removed for non-payment of fees. We also continue to work collaboratively to prepare for the closure of temporary registration in September 2022, following the ministerial statement on the closure of the temporary register: https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2022-06-13/hcws96

In Q2, we anticipate a peak in applications from people who are completing undergraduate and postgraduate courses, in line with previous years. We have delivered internal refresher training and focused on filling vacancies in the team to ensure that we are prepared for this peak of activity.

Fitness to practise

Table 2: Fitness to practise key performance indicators

KPI ID	KPI Description	Target		Q1	DoT*	*2021-22*			
						Q1	*Q2*	*Q3*	*Q4*
FTP1	Age of triage caseload	12 weeks (median) by March 2023	Actual	17	↓	*new KPI for 22/23*			*18*
			Forecast	17.5					
FTP2	Age of investigation caseload	39 weeks (median) by March 2023	Actual	60	↓	*new KPI for 22/23*			*68*
			Forecast	64					
FTP3	Legacy cases concluded	98% by March 2023	Actual	78%	↑	*tbc*	*tbc*	*tbc*	*69*
			Forecast	77%					
FTP4	Time taken to conclude cases we investigate	Monitor (median weeks)		72	↑	*52*	*58*	*67*	*68*
FTP5	Time taken to approve interim orders	≤20 working days (median)		19	↓	*17*	*20*	*23*	*27*
FTP6	FTP internal quality score	≥ 90% of cases meet internal standards		96%	↓	*91*	*95*	*93*	*99*

RAG rating of actuals:

- Green - achieving target
- FTP1, FTP2, FTP5: Amber - within 10% of achieving target. Red - over 10% from achieving target
- FTP3: Amber - within 3% points of achieving target. Red - over 3% points from achieving target
- FTP4 – no target, not rated
- FTP6: Amber - within 5% points of achieving target. Red - over 5% points from achieving target

Direction of travel:

- Direction of arrow indicates numerical change compared to previous quarter
- Colour of arrow indicates performance against target (green = trending towards target; red = trending away from target; black = no target)

FTP1 Age of the triage caseload

We significantly reduced the number of cases in the triage service in 21-22, so we can now focus on reducing the median age of the caseload to a target of 12 weeks. A 12-week timeframe optimises our ability to resolve referrals at the appropriate stage by ensuring that enquiries can be made at an early stage to avoid unnecessary investigation and case examination processes, whilst ensuring that cases are not held in the triage service for excessive periods of time. The current median age of the caseload is 17 weeks, which is slightly ahead of the forecasted performance of 17.5 weeks.

Although our performance is within the target, productivity has been impacted by significant Covid-related sickness absence in April. This has meant that the caseload in the service continues to be slightly higher than our target optimum level. We are closely monitoring the situation as Covid rates increase nationally.

New referral rates reduced and stabilised during 21-22, with a consistent trend of lower referral rates over summer. This, alongside a greater resilience in the service from increasing the number of staff at all levels, will offset the impact of annual leave over summer this year.

FTP2 Age of the investigation caseload

We exceeded our target in 21-22 for reducing the caseload in the investigations service. This enables us to focus on reducing the median age of the investigations caseload to a target age of 39 weeks. Achieving this target indicates most cases are ready for adjudication within 9 months of receipt. We are currently ahead of the forecast (64 weeks), with a median age of 60 weeks. At the end of June, 87% of legacy cases had progressed beyond investigation, with 108 legacy cases remaining in the investigations service. Current forecasts indicate that all progressable legacy investigations will conclude by September 2022. This will enable the deployment of all investigators to focus on reducing the median age of cases received since 2 December 2019. Movement of staff in the service is a risk to delivery this year. A range of actions are underway to mitigate this, including adapting our workforce planning for the service and delivering training to support members of staff progressing high volume work this year.

FTP3 Legacy cases concluded

The majority of the legacy caseload is now at the case examiner and adjudication stages. Our target this year is to conclude 98% of legacy cases by March 2023. Currently, we have concluded 78%, which is above our Q1 target of 77%. As planned, the hearings schedule has been expanded to increase hearings activity from July, and a further expanded schedule is on track to be implemented from September. This is a complex project that is monitored closely by a dedicated project team and through monthly reporting to the executive leadership team.

We are closely monitoring the referral rate of the remaining legacy cases into hearings at the pre-case examiner stage and the hearing adjournment rates. We have identified these as the most significant risks to delivery against this target and we have initiated a series of proactive interventions aimed at reducing the hearings adjournment rate. This has included undertaking a root cause analysis of hearings adjournments as part of the hearings efficiencies project in 20-21 and implementing a range of improvement actions in 22-23.

FTP4 Time taken to conclude cases we investigate

Due to our focus on legacy cases, we anticipated that the time taken to conclude cases received after 2 December 2019 would increase during 21-22. We expect that our ambitious targets to the reduce the age of the caseload in triage and in investigations will result in improved performance against this indicator as the year progresses.

FTP5 Time taken to approve interim orders

Our performance in this area has improved (19 days in Q1 22-23 compared to 20 days in 21-22 overall). Meeting this target remains challenging, because our delivery is impacted by surges of interim order referrals, the complexity of the three-stage interim order process, required by legislation. We continue to pursue amendments to our regulations so we can implement a more streamlined interim order process. We anticipate that the new framework will be in place by December, which will release additional hearings capacity to support legacy hearings in Q4.

FTP6 FTP internal quality score

We continue to exceed the target of 90%. We have developed our approach to the learning, development and appraisal of the case examiners and adjudicators to ensure continued high-quality decision making. We delivered training for newly recruited adjudicators in June 2022, with 43 adjudicators and 18 legal advisors attending. Refresher training for existing adjudicators will be delivered in July 2022, with 54 adjudicators and 16 legal advisors due to be trained

3.2 The social work profession

Continuous professional development (CPD)

Our new CPD requirements and the updated online recording form are now in place. To renew their registration for 2022 to 2023, social workers are now required to submit a minimum of 2 pieces of CPD, including at least one piece with a peer reflection. We published updated CPD guidance and sent a message to all social workers about the changes. In collaboration with the regional engagement leads and the communications team, we also refreshed key messages for national and regional events and developed a communications and engagement plan. Our communication activities included targeted messaging, podcasts, information about peer reflection on the website and an updated video guide on how to record CPD.

We contacted 392 employers to inform them about the new CPD requirements and resources. We recorded podcasts with two external organisations: Social Care Institute for Excellence and Research in Practice. We continue to develop resources to support social workers with CPD. We continue to monitor and review the effectiveness of our communications and engagement efforts.

To date, submissions for CPD are lower than the equivalent period last year. We sent out a targeted message was sent out to social workers in June to ensure they understand the requirements for this registration year. There is supportive guidance on our webpages and our regional engagement team have commenced their annual events leading up to registration renewal period.

Policy and strategy

We responded to the independent review into children's social care and the children's safeguarding practice panel report with a statement on our website. We are working closely with our sponsor team to implement the recommendations that directly affect our work or where we are explicitly mentioned as responsible. In June, we published 'Our approach to education and training' that responded to key areas of the review's recommendations, alongside our consultation on 'readiness for professional practice' which will run for 12 weeks and include engagement events for the public and professionals.

In Q1, we successfully evaluated our work on upstreaming in fitness to practise to respond to a higher than anticipated number of referrals. This has included changes to our online concerns-raising form, the completion of commissioned research, and ongoing engagement with employers and professionals about upholding the professional standards, and working with the investigations service.

After establishing the policy committee in Q4, we held a meeting of the committee in May to discuss key areas of policy development, national reform of children's social care and plans for our next corporate strategy. In Q2 we will be planning our work schedule with the committee and improve our governance arrangements to support its effective functioning.

We appointed a steering group, including representatives of our National Advisory Forum, to oversee the development of the final Social Work in England report. The group has completed coproduction training to support effective collaboration between group members. Report authors have undertaken interviews with executive leaders and Board members ahead of planning a programme of engagement opportunities for the public, profession and people with lived experience of social work over the next quarter.

Following early engagement events, we launched a public consultation on the education and training standards for approved mental health and mental capacity professionals, which was informed by the research we commissioned into approved mental health professionals and best interests assessors led by Sheffield Hallam University. We have also held 9 online events to explain the purpose of the standards and to support people to engage with our proposals. The consultation will close in August.

Communications

We continue to generate media coverage, with 30 articles helping to land key messages with the sector. As part of an integrated communications plan for the launch of our approach to social work education and training, this included issuing a press release to the education and social work sector. FE News, one of the main titles in the education sector, ran our whole release. We also promoted two ‘shaping the future of social work in England’ events to the sector, which will help to embed our approach to social work education and training and feed into our next social work in England report.

Stakeholder engagement activity was also key to the launch of our approach to education and training, by ensuring they know about and understand our plans in the context of public protection. We continue to monitor and learn from our stakeholder intelligence and engagement activity through Tractivity.

Compared Q1 21-22, the website saw a 6.8% increase in visitors. There were 2,368 new followers of our social media accounts: Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, taking our total social media following to 42,194. Our Social Work Now newsletter reached 82,851 people.

We continue to make improvements to our public guidance and webpages to support social workers. We have completed accessible language reviews of our fitness to practise guidance to make it clear, concise and accessible. This has involved working closely with the fitness to practise and legal teams, managing large volumes of content with tight deadlines.

Internally, we have engaged with our people as we co-produce our next corporate strategy. This has included looking at how we work as a whole organisation and across directorates, to review relevant goals. We also celebrated Deaf Awareness Week, Pride Month and Mental Health Awareness Week.

3.3 The people we work with and for

Engagement

We evaluated the success of Social Work Week and agreed to deliver a similar approach in March 2023, combining a core programme with independent events and in-person regional events. The planning and co-design has started much earlier this year to reflect previous learning and manage internal capacity of functions that make the week a success.

We continue to embed the single point of contact network across all employers to support our fitness to practise investigations and to implement this internally. We have also been working with a local authority in Greater Manchester to understand why concerns are raised with us and how we can improve local resolution processes to resolve concerns in a timely and proportionate manner.

The National Advisory Forum have been actively engaged in our response to the children's social care review and are now members of key governance groups such as the corporate strategy steering group and the policy committee. The Forum met for the first time in person, which was a significant step in building strong working relationships. Members have been accepted to submit a contribution to the British Journal of Social Work in a special edition on the voice and influence of people with lived experience.

The Forum are engaging with the Board at the upcoming strategy day and are supporting an intense period of engagement around our key priorities for Q2, including the corporate strategy, social work in England report and our vision for education.

Other priorities for Q2 include consultation engagement events, readying the sector for the registration renewal period and new CPD requirements. We will also be engaging more intentionally with people with lived experience of social work across the regions, particularly children and families, and student social workers.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We entered our second Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) submission in May, which is the benchmarking tool from the Employer's Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI). We have seen improvement in most categories, with notable increases for strategy and planning, leadership and accountability, training and development and communications and engagement. We saw a small decrease for other employment practices, which is due to incomplete employee data on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). Addressing this is a key focus for our next submission, along with further improving our training and development offer.

The overall TIDE assessment indicates that we have moved from the ‘realise’ category (‘reaping rewards and gaining momentum’) to the ‘embed’ category (‘embedding new culture’). We aim to reach the ‘sustain; category next year (‘maintaining organisational success’).

We launched our mandatory EDI e-learning in May and have allocated 2 months to this training to ensure everyone has the time to complete it and reflect on the learning. We developed and co-produced the e-learning internally with the EDI Steering Group, colleagues across the organisation and members of the National Advisory Forum. The training covers why EDI matters to us, our legal obligations and organisational expectations, discrimination and oppression, and digital inclusion and accessibility. We have received positive feedback about the value of having this bespoke training. We are looking to create a supporting pack that will build on the e-learning.

We continue to deliver monthly bitesize workshops and resource workshops that explore different topics relating to EDI, such as deaf awareness, microaggressions and unconscious bias. We continue to seek feedback on these sessions to improve content and delivery.

We held an engagement session in June with stakeholders focused on developing a sector-wide action plan to address the findings of the anti-racism survey we published alongside partners in the Anti-Racism Steering Group in March. We’ll continue using our influence to bring together key stakeholders and push collective ownership.

Following review and consultation with other regulators and key stakeholders on how we collect diversity data we plan to include diversity questions in the renewal journey. Engagement with the diversity questions will be mandatory, but with the ability to opt out of answering some or all of the questions, along with a prefer not to say option for each question. We recognise that this change could increase enquiries and plan to reduce this risk through automated telephone messages for incoming calls, updated renewals guidance, and by developing clear standard responses. We will closely monitor the impact of this change on our registration, enquiries and advice KPIs.

We are also developing a dedicated communications plan to inform social workers on the reasons and value to the sector in collecting this data, including a joint communication between key stakeholders. By promoting one voice on the issue, we hope to create a unified message and increase response rates. We also recognise the risk that asking people to share their diversity data will create a barrier to renewal, especially alongside the additional CPD requirements. We will mitigate this risk through engagement and clear communications in advance of renewals to encourage social workers to share this information.

3.4 Education and training

Table 4: Education and training key performance indicator

KPI ID	KPI Description	Target		Q1	DoT*	*2021-22* Q1	*2021-22* Q2	*2021-22* Q3	*2021-22* Q4
EQA1	Percentage of reapproval decisions made	33% by March 2023	Actual	5.5%	↑	*n/a*[2]			*3.3*
			Forecast	5.5%					

RAG rating of actuals:
- Green - achieving target
- Amber - within 3% points of target
- Red - over 3% points from target

Direction of travel:
- Direction of arrow indicates numerical change compared to previous quarter
- Colour of arrow indicates performance against target (green = trending towards target; red = trending away from target)

Approvals and reapprovals

The first year of the approval of all social work courses against the Education and Training Standards 2021 continues. In Q1, we inspected 40 courses either virtually or with an on-site course visit. The team has adapted to short notice changes to on-site plans and are able to continue with inspections when planned on-site visits must be held virtually. We made recommendations for approval for 31 courses, with 6 courses reaching the point of a regulatory decision in required timescales. The remaining decisions are with the course provider for review and due in Q2. All courses were approved with conditions where standards were not met or required further evidence.

Due to the increased number of course changes (see below), increased activity in other areas of EQA work and the continuing movement of inspection dates agreed with course providers, we have amended the target for this area from 40% to 33%. We remain on track to reapprove all courses by the end of the three-year period.

We inspected a further 9 courses wishing to be included in the approved list of providers in Q1 and we expect to have the regulatory decisions in Q2 and Q3. We inspected and approved a new Approved Mental Health Professional course . We plan to inspect 27 courses in Q2 with regulatory decisions due within four months of the inspection.

We have confirmed our plans for the second year of reapprovals with inspectors and providers. We recruited additional registrant and lay partner inspectors in Q4 of 21-22 and increased the pool of inspectors. This has alleviated pressure on availability during peak times of inspections that correspond with the course providers' busiest periods. Course providers will receive confirmation in Q2 of the dates for our second year of reapproval inspections.

Links to the inspection reports are included at Annex B.

[2] No reapproval decisions expected during Q1 to Q3

Course changes

Most social work courses are going through elements of re-design, in part due to internal validation timeframes and following a review of the changes made because of the pandemic. Most of these changes have been dealt with as an administrative process of review by education quality assurance officers. Three courses have requested changes to the design of their course that required further documentary review by inspectors to confirm how the changes could be assured to demonstrate the standards.

Engagement with Course providers

The quality assurance team engage regularly with course providers on the development of social work courses. In Q1 we received enquiries from education providers hoping to run Best Interest Assessor courses or hoping to arrange the approval processes for the Approved Mental Capacity Professional course. We signposted them to the consultation on the standards for these professionals. The team also received many enquiries from students expressing dissatisfaction with placements or decisions made by course providers. These were triaged under the concerns process and advice and signposting offered to students where appropriate. In Q1, there were no enquiries that resulted in a concern case being opened.

3.5 Our organisation

Table 5: our organisation key performance indicators

KPI ID	KPI Description	Target	Q1	DoT*	*2021-22*			
					Q1	*Q2*	*Q3*	*Q4*
P1	Retention rate	≤ 85%	90%	↑	*94*	*93*	*89*	*89*
FIN1	Forecast year-end variance to budget	+/- 1.5%	0.1%	↓	*0.02*	*0.01*	*0.05*	*1.00*[3]
IT1	System availability excluding planned outages	≤ 99.0%	99.9%	→	*99.8*	*99.7*	*99.8*	*99.9*
IG1	Time taken to complete freedom of information requests	100% within statutory deadline	100%	→	*100*	*100*	*97.2*	*100*
IG2	Time taken to complete subject access requests	100% within statutory deadline	100%	→	*100*	*100*	*100*	*100*
C1	Corporate complaints response time	100% within specified timeframe	96%	↓	*100*	*100*	*100*	*100*

RAG rating of actuals:

- Green - achieving target
- FIN1: Amber - within 0. 5% of achieving target. Red - over 5% from achieving target
- P1: Amber - within 2% of achieving target. Red - over 2% from achieving target
- IT1, IG1, IG2, C1: Amber - within 5% of achieving target. Red - over 5% from achieving target

Direction of travel:

- Direction of arrow indicates numerical change compared to previous quarter
- Colour of arrow indicates performance against target (green = trending towards target; red = trending away from target)

Recruitment

Despite challenges in the job market, we successfully recruited to 23 of the 29 vacancies advertised, which include fixed term roles to support the legacy work. We recruited to 3 new assistant director roles, 2 of whom were internal promotions. We have found recruiting to administrative roles most challenging, which recruitment specialists have confirmed is a common challenge currently. There have been 9 internal promotions and one lateral move, which is positive, but also creates additional recruitment to backfill roles.

In May, we simplified our application process after reviewing incomplete applications. Following these changes there was a 22% increase in completed applications. We will continue to review the impact of these changes.

Our retention rate of 90% remains above the target.

Starters and leavers

There were 9 leavers during Q1, and we have recruited to all 9 vacancies. We are reviewing our exit process during July to improve our understanding of leavers and internal movement

[3] Actual year-end variance

to better inform our retention activity. We welcomed 22 new people and received positive feedback on the quality of induction.

Sickness absence

In Q1, an average of 3.9 days per employee were lost to sickness absence, mainly due to general illness. Covid cases increased towards the end of the quarter which has affected our capacity and some teams needed to reprioritise accordingly.

We have a small number of long-term absences and frequent sickness absences. These colleagues are supported through return to work plans and occupational health referrals when appropriate. We made 6 referrals to occupational health, which is higher than usual and relates to a small number of complex cases that have required more than one referral.

People engagement survey

Previously, we used a survey that was based on the civil service engagement survey and constructed and analysed internally. Not all questions transferred well to our context, and we were unable to do meaningful benchmarking or undertake deep dives in areas we wanted to explore further, and our management information team had to invest a significant amount of time and effort to support.

We have now procured a survey from a specialist external provider, which was launched and concluded in May with an 81% response rate, up from 78% in 2021. The findings, which included benchmarking against similar organisations, were presented to the executive leadership team in June and will be shared with the organisation on 19 July.

Learning and development

In Q1, we delivered 12 external and 18 internal learning events and 19 people are undertaking professional qualifications. Our learning platform GROW had 29,672 views.

In May, the last session of the management development programme culminated in a face-to-face session for both cohorts. We have established a working group of managers to determine how to work more effectively as a larger group, and to enhance our connections to leaders.

We have adopted a business partnering approach to support our strategic thinking with a focus on improvement. Themes are already emerging that inform our plans, these include recruitment and retention, wellbeing, change and management development.

Finance, Commercial and Partners

In Q1, expenditure, net of fee income, was 0.4% lower than budget. This is an impressive outcome given the challenges in managing the additional funding from the Department for

Education, which represents a 25% increase from the previous year's expenditure budget. During the quarter we have successfully recruited and onboarded an additional 65 partners and an additional role to support the ongoing administrative needs from this enlarged pool of partners.

IT and Infrastructure

The project to migrate the infrastructure underpinning Forge and the public facing website has progressed well. We are on target to complete in Q2, ahead of the Q3 deadline due to a positive working relationship with our delivery partner. Once the migration is complete, we will be able to make improvements internally to our core infrastructure without being dependent on a third-party

Forge development work continues in line with the 22-23 roadmap. There have been some minor changes to the roadmap, in particular the inclusion of specific EDI work which will help to increase the volume of EDI data collected from registrants. The flexibility of our digital delivery model enabled us to incorporate this additional work whilst avoiding significant delays to other planned development activity.

Governance and Assurance

The audit completion report on the 21-22 financial statements was presented to the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) meeting on 24 June along with the draft Annual Report and Accounts 21-22. ARAC recommended the Annual Report and Accounts for approval by the Board, subject to any material changes before signing, certification and laying in July.

The external audit for the annual report and accounts impacted our capacity in Q1. We had a clear timetable and external auditors appointed by the National Audit Office were working with us for several months, however the auditors identified some issues late in the process. However, these have been overcome and we are pleased to have met our target for the Annual Report and Accounts. We have a meeting with the National Audit Office to discuss learning and agree ways of working.

The Internal Audit Annual Report 21-22 from our internal auditors, Haines Watts, concluded we had adequate and effective risk management, governance and control processes.
Internal audit 22-23

The internal audit plan for 22-23 was approved by the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee and the first audit of 2022 was on business planning and achieved a substantial assurance.

Policy committee

The Policy Committee met on 12 May to consider our approach to education and training. The committee had received approval from the Board to invite two representatives from the National Advisory Forum to join the committee.

Corporate complaints

We saw a 57% decrease in the number of corporate complaints received in Q1 compared to the same period in 21-22. The themes are consistent with the previous quarter, namely how we had communicated with people, and how our policies and/or processes had been applied. As previously reported, the issues raised in corporate complaints are often complex as they are linked to regulatory decisions or due to the complex needs of the complainant. We are using the learning from some of these more challenging complaints to support the review of our organisational policies and processes in relation to unreasonable and unacceptable behaviour.

For the first time, we did not meet our target for responding to corporate complaints within the specified time. This was due to an incident where the investigation and the response was completed and approved ahead of time, but the complaint response email was not sent successfully. We have updated our internal guidance to ensure that complaints are not closed on the complaint management system until a copy of the sent email is saved to the relevant folder.

Professional Standards Authority

The Professional Standards Authority (the 'Authority') published its annual report of our performance for the period 1 December 2020 to 30 November 2021. The Authority concluded that we met 16 of the 18 standards. This is an improvement on the previous year where we met 15. The standards not met were standard 3 (EDI) and standard 17 (risk assessment in fitness to practise).

A range of actions are in progress that are relevant to Standard 3 and 17. This includes the communication strategy to encourage social workers to provide their diversity information and changes to the online renewal journey. In respect of standard 17, the internal quality and improvement team are undertaking an audit of risk assessments to provide the authority with further assurance of our performance. The fitness to practise team will also review guidance and frameworks that support their risk assessment processes and identify opportunities for improvement. The internal quality and improvement (IQI) team will act as a critical friend as part of this review.

Under the new performance review approach, introduced in April 2022, the IQI team meet monthly with the Authority to discuss areas of our work on which they are focusing in our first ‘monitoring’ year[4]. A specific meeting focused on EDI was held in Q1 and a further meeting to look at the implementation of the new education and training standards (an area of focus this year) is planned for August 2022.

Legal and information governance

We continue to pursue changes to our rules and the first of two consultations on our rules has concluded. We submitted the final version to the Department for Education for approval by the Secretary of State for Education, who has 28 days to provide any objection. Our response to the consultation and our revised rules, will be published early in Q2.

The Department for Education has concluded its consultation on changes to the Social Workers Regulations 2018 and continues to progress these changes, which are expected to come into force in Q3. The changes to the regulations will require further amendments to our rules, which need to come into force at the same time as the regulations. We will undertake the consultation process for these further amendments in Q2.

We continue to meet our targets in relation to information requests. Work is near completion to ensure all staff have signed an updated code of conduct. Policies are being developed to cover the protection of personal data in electronic communications, staff IT equipment, software and in disclosures of personal data outside of Social Work England.

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[4] Under the new performance review process, the Authority will carry out periodic reviews every 3 years in which all the standards are assessed in detail. In the intervening ‘monitoring’ years, the Authority will focus on standards not met in the last periodic review and those standards where they identify declining performance, emerging risk, or significant change that requires monitoring.

Annex A
Statistical Data 2022-23

Registration				Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of registered social workers			2022/23	98512	98640	98725									
			2021/22	96573	96901	97090	97877	98444	99279	99775	99191	97458	97912	98148	98447
Number of temporarily registered social workers			2022/23	6306	6291	6280									
			2021/22	13517	13441	13380	13299	13269	13219	13187	6518	6450	6393	6354	6322
Number of social workers joining the register			2022/23	246	169	300									
			2021/22	420	375	380	830	620	950	820	353	1034	470	273	362
Number of social workers leaving the register			2022/23	181	41	215									
			2021/22	162	47	191	43	53	115	324	937	2767	16	37	63
New registration applications	Number received	All graduates	2022/23	275	358	594									
			2021/22	392	533	431	1167	829	1452	928	724	388	413	305	427
		UK graduates		152	188	463									
		Overseas graduates		123	170	131									
	Median time taken to progress (working days)[5]	All graduates		4	5	3									
		UK graduates		2	3	1									
		Overseas graduates		7	15	12									
Restoration applications received	Number received		2022/23	83	82	75									
			2021/22	86	64	75	82	63	52	108	153	627	158	128	105
	Time taken to process (median working days)[6]			11	13	17									
Registration appeals	Number received		2022/23	0	0	0									
			2021/22	3	1	1	4	1	2	1	0	0	0	2	0
	Number concluded			0	1	0									

[5] Includes applications where an investigation is required therefore figures may differ from the KPI, REG1. Excludes time awaiting further information from applicants.
[6] Includes applications where an investigation is required therefore figures may differ from the KPI, REG2

	Upheld		0	1	0									
	Rejected		0	0	0									
	Withdrawn		0	0	0									
	Time taken to complete (median weeks)		n/a[7]	11	n/a[7]									
Misuse of title cases	Number received	2022/23	6	7	13									
		2021/22	2	2	2	1	4	2	2	16	25	18	20	19
	Time taken to complete (median working days)	2022/23	23	35	45									
		2021/22	97	147	25	n/a[8]	93	40Error! Bookmark not defined.	37	33	13	18	15	25
Number of phone calls received		2022/23	1304	1578	1543									
		2021/22	1527	1286	1443	1605	1577	3588	4219	8088	3435	1825	1448	1800
Median call queue time (minutes)			1	3	3									
Percentage of calls answered (of all calls received)		2022/23	65%	57%	59%									
		2021/22	66%	75%	74%	71%	70%	63%	58%	47%	51%	66%	69%	64%
Number of emails received		2022/23	931	980	771									
		2021/22	1183	829	800	959	960	1884	1611	2435	1398	968	848	1178
Median response time to emails (working days)			1	1	1									

CPD		**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**
Number of social workers completed at least one piece of CPD (cumulative)	2022/23	4962	6055	7988									
	2021/22	9599	11319	13118	16887	19960	28925	43685	94352	n/a[9]	968	2504	3976
Social workers who have completed valid CPD (%)	2022/23	5%	6%	8%									
	2021/22	10%	12%	14%	17%	20%	29%	44%	95%	n/a[9]	0.3%	0.7%	1.0%

[7] No registration appeals were completed in April and June 2022

[8] No misuse of title cases were completed in July 2021.

[9] Online CPD recording for 2022 launched on 11th of January 2022, therefore no CPD items were recorded in December 2021.

Number of social workers met all requirements (cumulative)[10]	2022/23	1262	1791	2683									
Social workers who have met all requirements %	2022/23	1%	2%	3%									
Total number of valid CPD items recorded	2022/23	7710	9968	13720									
	2021/22	21782	27332	33704	41911	48998	76987	114109	205432	n/a[9]	1198[11]	3374[12]	5792[11]

Education and Training		**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**
Enquiries received	2022/23	11	16	13									
	2021/22	18	23	36	25	24	27	28	46	18	31	24	26
Concerns received	2022/23	0	0	0									
	2021/22	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Course approvals conducted[12]		8	17	15									
Outcome of approvals	Approved	0	0	0									
	Approved with conditions	2	0	3									
	Not approved	0	0	0									
	Request for approval withdrawn	0	0	0									

Corporate complaints		**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**
Corporate complaints received	2022/23	10	9	10									
	2021/22	12	21	23	13	11	18	11	7	17[13]	10	8	9
Corporate complaints closed		10	6	7									
Mean working days to respond to corporate complaints		15.8	17.7	22.6									

[10] For the 22-23 registration year, the requirements are two pieces of CPD, one of which must be peer reviewed.

[11] Figures updated since Q4 21-22 report

[12] This includes both approval and reapproval inspections

People		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Headcount	2022/23	228	231	237									
	2021/22	214	215	217	219	223	223	224	229	227	225	228	225

Fitness to Practise		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Concerns received	2022/23	153	121	129									
	2021/22	138	150	159	137	136	129	133	163	154	134	138	135
Referrals received (SW identified)	2022/23	125	146	144									
	2021/22	158	206	209	142	157	228	142	216	142	138	147	164
Number of cases awaiting pre-triage at end of month	2022/23	350	320	336									
	2021/22	241	351	297	327	319	400	426	465	429	376	352	372
Time to complete pre-triage (mean calendar days)	2022/23	109.4	144.5	87.7									
	2021/22	35.4	45.9	75	63.7	71.3	53.4	56.2	65.4	73.9	103.9	121.3	92
FTP cases opened	2022/23	114	110	111									
	2021/22	53	69	243	81	136	92	34	133	151	168	112	112
Percentage of cases closed at triage	2022/23	64%	53%	56%									
	2021/22	57.2%	53.2%	65.8%	68.2%	74.6%	57.3%	57.1%	56.1%	50.7%	73.8%	74.9%	73.1%
Number of cases entering investigation from triage	2022/23	25	48	44									
	2021/22	67	59	50	49	30	33	62	54	47	48	51	58
Number of cases closed in/progressed from investigation	2022/23	55	87	77									
	2021/22	83	99	90	96	75	85	103	118	76	95	111	105
Substantive hearings concluded/final decisions made	2022/23	6	17	10									
	2021/22	8	11	4	10	6	12	9	13	4	10	11	11
Interim Order application hearings held/decisions made	2022/23	2	10	6									
	2021/22	11	13	13	8	8	12	7	15	7	8	22	10
Interim order reviews held/decisions made	2022/23	58	62	40									

	2021/22	35	49	43	37	45	41	59	44	45	54	63	54
Substantive order reviews held/decisions made	2022/23	8	9	11									
	2021/22	3	5	6	4	8	6	3	6	4	8	6	3

Annex B

Course Approvals Q1 22-23

Provider	Course	Region	Inspection dates		Link to inspection report	Decision
			From	to		
Liverpool Hope University	BA (Hons) Social Work	North West	25 Jan 2022	28 Jan 2022	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/4358/lhur1_ba_cond_met-final.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work	North West	25 Jan 2022	28 Jan 2022	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/4332/lhur1_ma_pg_approved.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work (Masters exit route)	North West	25 Jan 2022	28 Jan 2022	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/4332/lhur1_ma_pg_approved.pdf	Approved with conditions
University of Portsmouth	BSc (Hons) Social Work	South East	15 Feb 2022	18 Feb 2022	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/4372/reapproval-inspection-report-upor1-bsc-hons-final.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MSc Social Work	South East	15 Feb 2022	18 Feb 2022	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/4373/reapproval-inspection-report-upor1-msc-final.pdf	Approved with conditions
Teesside University	BA (Hons) Social Work	North East	22 Feb 2022	25 Feb 2022	Decision made but awaiting publication on our website	Approved with conditions