

**ABERDEEN LAUNDRY
SERVICES LIMITED**

**FAIR WORK
FRAMEWORK & POLICY**

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ABERDEEN LAUNDRY SERVICES LTD FAIR WORK FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

In writing this policy, ALS has relied upon existing research, examples of good practice and conversations we have had with stakeholders, this has highlighted arrangements and practices that benefit workers' impact on health, wellbeing, and family life. ALS has seen evidence that fair work can deliver clear benefits for individuals alongside higher productivity, performance and innovation for business.

ALS believes that **fair work is work that offers effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect**; that balances the rights and responsibilities of business and workers and that can generate benefits for individuals, organisations and society.

ALS's aim is for this Framework to be used in the workplace to guide practice: to help improve understanding of fair work, benchmark existing practice and identify areas where improvement can be made.

Section 1 of this document sets out Fair Work Framework. Section 2 provides the fair work policy details. We relied on existing evidence on work and employment practices, stakeholder views expressed during our consultation and practical examples of how to improve fair work.

SECTION 1

THE FAIR WORK FRAMEWORK

THE VISION AND FRAMEWORK FOR FAIR WORK

THE VISION

ALS aims to have a world-leading working life where fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals businesses, and society.

DEFINING FAIR WORK

Fair work is work that offers **effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment, and respect**; that balances the rights and responsibilities of employers and workers and that can generate benefits for individuals, organisations and society.



UNDERSTANDING FAIR WORK AND ITS POTENTIAL

Many people agree that work should be fair, and that fair work should be available to everyone no matter who they are. It isn't easy, however, to define fairness, and defining fairness subjectively – as something that is different for everyone – making it difficult to shape good practice or to inform policymaking.

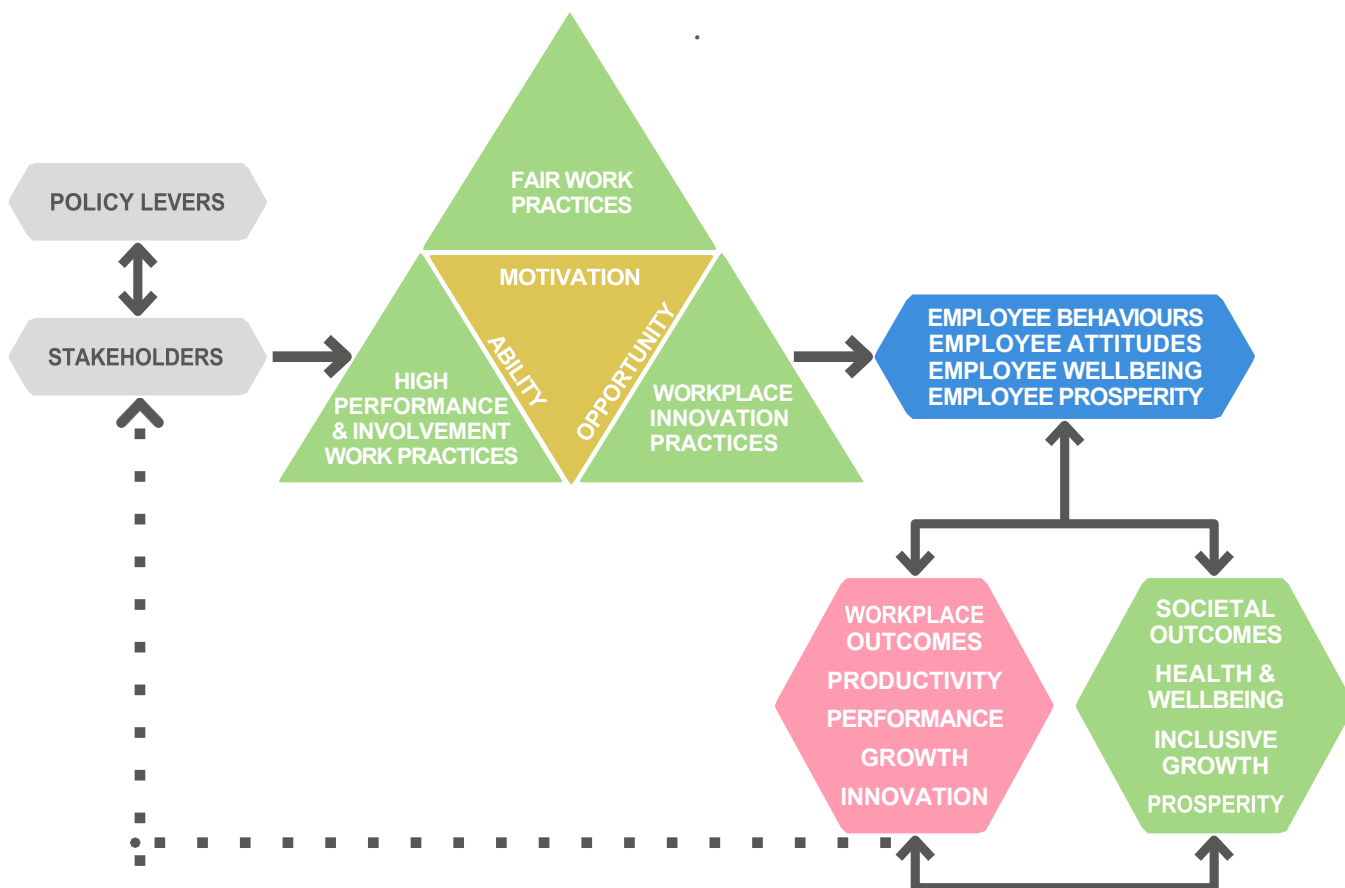
ALS have relied upon international debates and research to define fairness in a way that is relevant for everyone in work, a way that can be applied across different jobs, and stakeholders and that can be measured and improved on. We have relied on international examples where high productivity, more inclusive labour markets and greater equality co-exist, often supported by strong embedded partnership arrangements.

Based on the evidence of 'what works' and through our discussions with stakeholders, we have defined fair work through five dimensions: **effective voice**,

opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect. These dimensions cover the scope of workers to 'have a say' and to influence and change practices, how people can access and progress in work, the employment conditions they experience, the work that people do and how people are treated at work.

These five dimensions are important for two reasons:

- Identify good practice within each of the dimensions that can create positive outcomes for workers, employers and society.
- Taken together, these dimensions have significant synergies. The dimensions can reinforce each other, creating a virtuous circle of practices, behaviours, attitudes, and outcomes.



The FITwork model summarises how fair work is a crucial ingredient in supporting the types of worker behaviours and attitudes that can create positive outcomes for individuals, employers and society. High performance work practices aim to generate the best business outcomes from worker talents and abilities, while workplace innovation practices create the space in which worker contribution can make a positive difference. Fair work overlaps with both types of practice but addresses the important question of why workers should and do invest more of themselves in work.

By creating the conditions in which workers' skills and abilities are supported and developed, by promoting opportunities for skills and abilities to be deployed and by creating the motivation for workers to take up those opportunities, fair work facilitates the discretionary efforts of workers that underpin high productivity, performance and innovation – all of which can contribute to healthier, wealthier and more inclusive societies.

Fair work is consistent with business and economic success and represents an investment in people, businesses, organisations, economic prosperity and social well-being. Fair work is not simply about a different distribution of the rewards from work – although this is important. It is about improving business and organisational outcomes so that there are more rewards to be shared.

We outline the five dimensions of fair work that comprise our Framework. We outline what each dimension means, and how delivering fairness in each dimension can benefit employers, workers and society.

There is much overlap between the dimensions, but we have focused on them discretely to evaluate approaches and practices, to enhance fairness. There are cross-cutting themes that are relevant across all of the dimensions of fair work.

THE FAIR WORK DIMENSIONS



EFFECTIVE VOICE

Effective voice is much more than just having a channel of communication available within the workplace. Effective voice requires a safe environment where dialogues and challenges are dealt with constructively and where workers' views are sought out, listened to, and can make a difference.

Dialogue and structure for consulting and negotiating is key to understanding and defining fair arrangements between employers and workers and therefore opportunities for effective voice are central to fair work and underpin – and can help deliver – other dimensions of fair work.

The ability to speak and to be listened to is closely linked to the development of respectful and reciprocal workplace relationships. Voice is a legitimate aspiration of workers who have an interest, individually and collectively, in everything that an employer does. Voice is not only to resolve problems and conflicts (which is important) but also to engage and participate constructively in organisations. Voice can improve the experience of work as well as improve organisational performance.

Supportive practices for effective voice include collective bargaining; task-level and organisation-level involvement and participation practices; communication and consultation arrangements and any processes that give scope to individuals and groups to air their views, be listened to and influence outcomes.

What we learnt

Effective voice requires leadership and support from employers and workers. Voice is effective where workers have scope to say what they feel, are listened to and where their voice can make a difference, by having orientation, capability and capacity to communicate, influence and negotiate.

How to improve effective voice at work

- Adopt behaviours, practices and a culture that support effective voice and embeds this at all levels – this requires openness, transparency, dialogue and tolerance of different viewpoints.
- Effective voice requires structures – formal and informal – through which real dialogue – individual and collective – can take place.
- The ability to exercise voice effectively should be supported as a key competence of managers, other workers and other stakeholders.
- Demonstrate the effectiveness of voice channels and their influence.

VOICE CAN IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF WORK AS WELL AS IMPROVE ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE.

THE FAIR WORK DIMENSIONS



OPPORTUNITY

Opportunity allows people to access and progress in work and employment and is a crucial dimension of fair work. Meeting legal obligations by ensuring equal access to work and equal opportunities in work sets a minimum floor for fair work. This protects workers in those groups subject to specific legal protections on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, age and disability.

Fair opportunity is, however, more than the chance to access work. Attitudes, behaviours, policies and practices within organisations – and, crucially, the outcomes these produce – signal and reflect the value placed on fair opportunity. Being proactive in ensuring opportunity for all can highlight current practices, signal areas of change and intervention, and produce a range of benefits for workers and employers.

Fair opportunity can be supported in a variety of different ways: through robust recruitment and selection procedures; paid internship arrangements equally open to all; training and development to support access to work for all; promotion and progression practices that are open and equally attainable by all, irrespective of personal and demographic characteristics.

What we learnt

Individuals highlighted barriers to opportunity before the workplace (for example, in access to apprenticeships and training that lead to employment); during recruitment and selection processes, and ongoing issues within the workplace, all of which can particularly disadvantage certain groups of workers such as women, the young, black and minority ethnic workers, those with disabilities and those with low or no qualifications. Concerns were raised over how some groups found accessing the labour market much more challenging and were offered little support for their distinctive needs. Concerns were also raised about negative stereotyping of younger and older people.

How to improve fair opportunity at work

- Investigate and interrogate the workforce profile in organisation and sector, identify where any barriers to opportunity arise and address these creatively.
- Adopt a life stage approach that helps workers of all ages maximise their contribution.
- Engage with diverse and local communities.
- Use buddying and mentoring to support new workers and those with distinctive needs.
- Undertake equality profiling in the provision of training and development activities and career progression procedures and outcomes.
- Invest in and utilise the skills and knowledge of union equality, learning and other workplace representatives.

FAIR OPPORTUNITY IS, HOWEVER, MORE THAN THE CHANCE TO ACCESS WORK. ATTITUDES, BEHAVIOURS, POLICIES AND PRACTICES WITHIN ORGANISATIONS – AND, CRUCIALLY, THE OUTCOMES THESE PRODUCE – SIGNAL AND REFLECT THE VALUE PLACED ON FAIR OPPORTUNITY.

THE FAIR WORK DIMENSIONS



SECURITY

Security of employment, work and income are important foundations of a successful life. Predictability of working time is often a component of secure working arrangements. While no one has complete security and stability of employment, income and work, security remains an important aspect of fair work. Context and competitive conditions impact significantly on prospects for security, but fair work is not work where the burden of insecurity and risk rests primarily on workers.

Security as a dimension of fair work can be supported in a variety of ways: by building stability into contractual arrangements; by having collective arrangements for pay and conditions; paying at least the Living Wage (as established by the Living Wage Foundation); giving opportunities for hours of work that can align with family life and caring commitments; employment security agreements; fair opportunities for pay progression, sick pay and pension arrangements. In the context of increasing global competition, pursuing higher-value business models instead of competing solely on cost can help employers provide security in work and employment.

What we have learnt

Decent pay and secure employment were considered the most important. This mirrors recent research carried out by the Scottish Parliament⁶ and Oxfam⁷ among others. Certain groups in Scotland – women, young people, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) workers and disabled workers – are worse off than others when it comes to pay and employment security.

Transparency in approaches to pay and in addressing pay disparities were also highlighted.

How to improve security at work

- Ensure and support widespread awareness and understanding of employment rights.
- Contractual stability should be a core employer objective. Forms of flexible working where the burden of risk falls disproportionately on workers (including most zero-hours contracts) are not fair work.
- All workers should be paid at least the Living Wage as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation.
- Agreement-making between employers and workers promotes stability and perceptions of security and should be supported.
- Pay transparency and defensibility should be a core organisational objective.

SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT, WORK AND INCOME ARE IMPORTANT FOUNDATIONS OF A SUCCESSFUL LIFE.

THE FAIR WORK DIMENSIONS



FULFILMENT

For many people, work is a fulfilling part of their life. Workers benefit from engaging in fulfilling work in terms of using and developing their skills; having some control over their work and scope to make a difference; taking part in appropriately challenging work and taking up opportunities for personal growth and career advancement. Workers who are fulfilled in their jobs are more likely to be engaged, committed and healthy. Fulfilling work contributes to confidence and self-belief.

Providing fulfilling work can also benefit employers. Work that is fulfilling allows workers to produce high-quality goods and services and is more likely to unleash creativity that supports improvements. Indicators of fulfilling work are associated with higher productivity and innovation.

Fulfilling work that gets the best out of people helps to realise the investment society makes more fully in education, learning and training. Ensuring that people have access to work that is as fulfilling as it is capable of being is an important aspiration of the Fair Work Agenda. Fulfilment at work will mean different things to different people, but all types of work at all levels can be more fulfilling where the tasks, work environment and employment conditions are aligned to the skills, talents and aspirations of the people who carry it out.

Fulfilment as a dimension of fair work can be supported in a variety of ways: through forms of job design and work organisation that focus on effective skills use, autonomy, opportunities to problem solve and to make a difference, investment in learning and personal development and career advancement.

What we have learnt

It was widely accepted that fulfilment is a key factor in both individual and organisational wellbeing. This included the opportunity to use one's skills, be able to influence work have some control and have access to training and development. Excessive workloads and targets, lack of access to training and development and the difficulties in matching changing capabilities over the life course to the demands of work, are the hurdles that need to be overcome.

How to improve fulfilment at work

- Build fulfilment at work explicitly into job design.
- Create an authorising culture where people can make appropriate decisions and make a difference.
- Invest in training, learning and skills development for current and future jobs.
- Expectations of performance must be realistic and achievable without a negative impact on wellbeing.
- Clear and transparent criteria and opportunities for career progression, as well as opportunities for personal development, should be a feature of all work.

WORKERS WHO ARE FULFILLED IN THEIR JOBS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ENGAGED, COMMITTED AND HEALTHY.

THE FAIR WORK DIMENSIONS



RESPECT

Fair work is work in which people are respected and treated respectfully, whatever their role and status. Respect involves recognising others as dignified human beings and recognising their standing and personal worth. Respect at work is a two-way process between employers and workers and is valued for recognising the reciprocity of the employment relationship.

At its most basic, respect involves ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of others. Mutual respect is an important aspect of everyday social exchange and is a crucial element of relationships in the workplace where a significant proportion of life is spent. Crucially, mutual respect involves recognising the views, autonomy, status, and contribution of others.

Many discussions of respect and the related concept of dignity at work focus narrowly on issues relating to bullying and harassment. Respect as a dimension of fair work includes and goes beyond this to include dignified treatment, social support, and the development of trusting relationships. It means being open, mutually accountable, transparent, and responsive to the concerns of others.

Respect as a dimension of fair work can be supported in a wide variety of ways: through established procedural and collective bargaining arrangements with unions; through health, safety and wellbeing policies and practices; through organisational policies and practices on dignity at work; adoption and genuine engagement with respect as a key organisational value; communication; training; managerial and supervisory approaches; and approaches to conflict resolution. A sense of fulfilment at work impacts positively on individual health and happiness, contributes to organisational health, and in doing so, benefits the economy and society.

What we learnt

It was widely accepted that everyone is entitled to be treated with respect, that everyone needs to feel valued, and that value is not simply a reflection of pay or status. The disconnect between formal policies on respect and their own experience could lead to abuses of power that were inconsistent with respectful work. Open communications can address this disconnect by conveying clear reciprocal expectations of how people should treat and be treated. Respect issues were not, however, simply interpersonal; many arise from excessive work pressures and demands.

How to improve respect at work

- Respecting others is everybody's business. A culture of respect requires that behaviours, attitudes, policies, and practices that support health, safety and well-being are consistently understood and applied.
- Be explicit about respect as an organisational value and a practice guide and start a dialogue around respect as it is experienced in the organisation.
- Agree on clear expectations of behaviour, conduct and treatment and encourage the involvement of everyone to improve respectful behaviours.
- Respect for workers' personal and family lives requires access to practices that allow the balancing of work and family life.
- Re-framing conflict can enhance respect in an organisation – think about differing views as potentially productive and creative. Ensure that interpersonal relationships and internal procedures exist to manage conflict constructively.

FAIR WORK IS WORK IN WHICH PEOPLE ARE RESPECTED AND TREATED RESPECTFULLY, WHATEVER THEIR ROLE AND STATUS. RESPECT AT WORK IS A TWO-WAY PROCESS BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS.

A MOVEMENT FOR FAIR WORK

An aspiration towards fair work was commonly held across the many stakeholders that we met. There was broad agreement on what fairness means and the values (individual and organisational) that support fairness, such as honesty, transparency and trust. Fairness was considered at every stage from entry into employment until exit into retirement.

It was also widely accepted across all stakeholder groups, that fair work could deliver significant benefits, notably concerning retention, motivation, productivity, profitability, health and wellbeing.

We have argued that fair work is a journey, and it is important to be able to measure progress along that journey. Much of that measurement needs to be done at workplace or organisational level.

It is important to track progress. This policy articulates basic principles and potential of fair work, specify its key dimensions and components and indicate the baseline measures relevant to fair work.

ADOPTION OF FAIRWORK

ALS deliver fair work in the dimensions outlined here, providing effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect.

This can be achieved by doing two things.

First, we put workplace activity at the heart of fair work. Fair work must be in the workplace **We invite everyone involved in the workplace to assess critically whether their current practice supports our ambition and can help deliver fair work.** To do this, it is important to think about how to apply the Framework in a particular business context; to benchmark policy, practice, behaviours and outcomes against our overarching ambition for fair work and what this means in each of its dimensions; to verify the evidence used to make such an assessment; and to assess and identify the appropriate actions and timescales necessary to make progress and to review and improve in response to changing circumstances.

Second, while those directly involved in the workplace must own fair work at the workplace level, other stakeholders also have an important role to play. There is a wide range of interested parties and organisations in the fair work landscape.

These stakeholders possess different levers, sharing information, learning, advice and support will also enable fair work. Many stakeholders have a role to play in supporting shared learning – across networks, peer learning across employers and between and across civil society organisations.

A significant lever – and one that can be used by everyone with an interest in work – is **making and winning a positive case for change** that delivers fair work. Having a clear purpose, making an evidence-based argument, outlining practical steps towards fair work and disseminating widely is necessary, particularly in terms of knowing what a fair workplace looks like. A positive case for change that supports fair work also needs to be flexible and responsive to dynamic organisational, market, economic and social conditions.



SECTION 2 FAIR WORK POLICY



EFFECTIVE VOICE

Why is effective voice at work important?

For individuals, the opportunity to have an effective voice is crucially important. Having a say at work is consistent with the broader suite of rights available to citizens in democratic societies. Voice and dialogue can help to resolve conflict and address unjust, unfair or unequal treatment. It can also identify opportunity and reinforce consensus.

Effective voice can benefit employers as well as workers. Where voice channels exist and voice is welcomed, workers are more likely to engage with their employer and offer insights and ideas that can stimulate change and improvement. Dialogue can improve the quality of available information, information sharing and cross learning which in turn can improve the quality of decision making. Genuine voice mechanisms can deliver wider consensus and commitment to decisions – even from those who disagree – and can contribute to an open and constructive work climate. Jointly agreed decisions are easier to implement and more likely to be adhered to.

Effective worker voice and representation can also support wider social priorities in terms of equality of opportunity, pay equality, learning and skills acquisition and occupational health and safety.

Voice can be exercised through formal channels of representation and through day-to-day work practices where workers are invited to communicate and make an active contribution to decision making.

Where voice is embedded, this can create stable and constructive employment relations while supporting business success.

Evidence on effective voice at work

Workers want some form of ‘voice’ at work to help them deal with problems and to engage co-operatively with management to improve their working lives and firm performance by **help deliver wide ranging individual and collective benefits** including the payment of the Living Wage, working time regulation, pensions’ provision, paid holiday leave, enhanced training provision and duration, improved health and safety outcomes and access to flexible working. such as maternity, paternity and wider equality rights.

How to deliver effective voice at work

- Delivering fair work in changing and challenging circumstances requires an effective worker voice. **Adopt behaviours, practices and a culture that supports effective voice and embed these at all levels** – this requires openness, transparency, dialogue and tolerance of different viewpoints. Effective voice at work requires that workers are willing and able – collectively and individually – to articulate their interests, have a place or space in which to do so, that communication is welcomed and listened to – even when this uncovers different opinions and preferences, that it is acted on and is capable of making a difference. This involves not just structures of communication but a supportive climate – underpinned by training and developing managers and worker representatives in communication and influencing skills – and by signalling the importance of worker voice through leadership at all levels. Effective voice enables the constructive dialogue that can address all the dimensions of fair work through arrangements that balance the rights and responsibilities of employers and workers.
- **Effective voice requires structures – formal and informal – through which real dialogue – individual and collective – can take place.** Having a place, space and time for employers and workers to engage in real and constructive dialogue is crucial. These can take a variety of forms at different levels of an organisation but should not be confined to information sharing.
- **The ability to exercise voice effectively should be supported as a key competence of managers, workers and union representatives** and feature in training, development and assessment. Exercising voice also requires time and encouragement.
- Effective voice means that workers have the potential to influence change and it is **crucial to demonstrate the effectiveness of voice channels and their influence**, for example through ‘you said, we did’ reporting. Workers are much more likely to exercise their voice where they can see that it can have an impact.



OPPORTUNITY

Why is opportunity at work important?

It is a reasonable aspiration for fair work – and for fair work to be available to everyone. Fair opportunity allows people to access work and employment and is a crucial dimension of fair work. Fair opportunity is much more than meeting legal obligations. It is also much more than the chance to access work – what happens once in the workplace is also crucially important. Fair opportunity means not just getting a job, but also being able to progress in that job on fair terms.

For individuals, an opportunity that provides fair and equal access to work and career progression improves

their life chances and creates opportunities for social mobility. Irrelevant barriers to access and participation are removed so that employers and workers can focus on merit, performance and contribution.

For ALS, fair opportunity leads to diverse organisation where all talents from all sections of society are valued, developed and utilised. ALS can benefit from the richness of talent and diversity of ideas that this creates. ALS may also benefit from improved recruitment, retention and reputation. Providing fair opportunity requires attention to recruitment and selection procedures, internship arrangements, training and development approaches and promotion and progression procedures and practices.

For society, fair opportunity breaks down labour market and related inequality, reduces the costs of inefficient resource allocation and helps create a more equitable, inclusive and cohesive society.

Evidence of opportunity at work

Having children affects the likelihood of women being in employment. While for men, having children increases the likelihood of being in work compared to men without children, the opposite picture is the case for women, and this is particularly pronounced for lone mothers and mothers of young children.



Access to training that leads to employment is not equally accessible to all: for example, women make up only 20% of manufacturing Modern apprenticeships in Scotland and women are more likely to undertake lower level Modern Apprenticeships that have poorer labour market outcomes and lower pay. Women are concentrated in specific sectors, including early years care, education, social care and hairdressing, compared to men who are clustered into engineering, construction and plumbing. BME and disabled workers also appear to have low levels of access to Modern Apprenticeships.

Social class remains an important influence on access to work and attainment in work in Scotland, yet because socioeconomic status is not a protected characteristic in equalities legislation, this issue is less commonly a priority issue.

Access to employment opportunities and the likelihood of being in work varies by age, race and ethnicity, ability, location and gender – and the combination of these. Individuals may have multiple disadvantages in their access to opportunities for work – and in the quality of those opportunities.

What stakeholders told us

The stakeholders identified barriers faced by individuals in accessing work, progressing in work and staying in work over their life course. Pre-recruitment barriers included:

- How employment opportunities (often insecure) interacted with the benefits system and benefits entitlements – and how benefits conditionality and the sanction process restrict the ability of individuals to look for fair work over any job.
- Lower incentives for employers to offer fair employment in the context of benefits sanctions that compel people to take any job.
- More limited job quantity and poorer job quality in areas of high unemployment and deprivation.
- The cost and the accessibility of childcare, particularly for those working non-standard hours or on contracts where working opportunities are arranged at short notice.
- Limited availability of medium and long-term support for individuals with multiple disadvantages and who are far from the labour market.
- A lack of availability of local placements for Modern Apprentices in remote and rural parts of the country.

Barriers during the recruitment process included:

- The use of informal methods of selection and recruitment that lack transparency and disadvantage certain groups in accessing employment opportunities.
- Equality of process does not always lead to equality of outcome for people who require additional support even to get close to the labour market and jobs.

- Concern was also raised about the number of women in senior positions and the low number of women on Boards of Directors.
- For individuals with disrupted lives, such as those who are homeless or fleeing an abusive relationship, it was particularly challenging for them to maintain their jobs, particularly where the work itself was unpredictable such as under zero- hour contract arrangements. There was concern that for individuals in need of emergency support services, these had to be accessed once their situation had already deteriorated and affected their housing and employment circumstances.
- There was recognition of the limited access to training and development opportunities for part-time and fixed term contract workers. This was particularly problematic where training was linked to progression in the organisation. These inequities disproportionately affected women and young people who are more likely to be in part-time work or on fixed term contracts.
- Individuals and organisations reported concerns over the lack of understanding and flexibility by employers in accommodating disabled workers and those with health problems. Furthermore, the drive to have multi-skilled workers in some sectors was discussed as a barrier to supporting those with disabilities.
- Concern was raised about the support from employers and support in accommodating their ageing workforces and workers with ill-health, which can lead to older workers feeling pressured to exit employment earlier than they want to. Greater adaptability of work tasks and roles to support older workers to remain in employment were advocated, as was more innovative thinking about how to deal with emerging issues around an aging workforce.
- Difficulties were reported in providing and accessing training and development opportunities in ways that are geographically accessible.

How to deliver opportunity at work

- Investigate and interrogate the workforce profile, identify where any barriers to opportunity arise and address these creatively. Use staff data to identify whether there are systematic gaps or under-representation of particular demographic groups that can't be explained in a non-discriminatory way. Focus specifically on any barriers to opportunity that arise at different stages of the recruitment and selection process. Involve all workers in driving fair opportunity, drawing on the capacity and capability of union equality representatives where these exist, to drive fair opportunity at workplace level, for example through flexibility and adjustment in recruitment and selection in response to those with distinctive needs. Show evidence of a genuine value being placed on equality of opportunity and diversity.
- Adopt a life stage approach that helps workers at all ages maximise their contribution. Employers should acknowledge and be responsive to the changes people experience during their life. For example, worker capacities vary over the life course and parenthood and other caring responsibilities will also impact on workers at different points in their career. The design of employment, organisational and work policies that respond flexibly to such variations in capacity and circumstance is crucial to ensuring fair opportunity. This may include retraining, redeployment and the provision of specialist health and wellbeing policies.
- Engage with diverse and local communities. No organisation or company exists in a vacuum; they are part of and draw from wider communities. Engaging with diverse and local communities can improve the quality of information available to employers, help foster mutual understanding and support fair opportunity. Positive and inclusive community engagement can tap into new sources of diversity and can also help to motivate and engage existing workers.
- Use buddying and mentoring to support new workers and workers with distinctive needs. Acknowledge the diverse needs of your existing and future workers. Not all workers start from the same place and some will need more encouragement and support than others, particularly in the period following entry to employment. Buddying and mentoring support programmes and systems should be the norm for new workers and for others who require additional support.

- Undertake equalities profiling in the provision of training and development activities and in career progression procedures and outcomes. Ask existing workers about whether there are equalities issues in progression and specifically, identify the experience of workers in groups under-represented in the workforce. Use equalities profiles to prioritise investment in internal progression opportunities and worker development that can drive outcomes consistent with fair opportunity. Where relevant, work jointly with union learning representatives to ensure equal access to training, development and career progression.
- Invest in and utilise the skills and knowledge of union equality, learning and other workplace representatives. These specialist workplace reps have unique access to workers, can establish supportive and non-threatening relationships and can work with management to identify barriers to opportunity.





SECURITY

Why is security at work important?

Security and stability of employment allow individuals to better plan their day-to-day lives and their future.

Security of income can contribute to greater individual and family stability and promote more effective financial planning, including investment in pensions. When people have a stable and sufficient income they rely less on the welfare system while in work and in retirement. Predictability of work commitments, especially working hours, are also important elements of fair work.

Security plays an important role in behaviours and attitudes within workplaces and therefore can generate important benefits for employers. Where people feel secure, this can increase their willingness to adapt and change, their commitment, the chances of them 'going the extra mile' and can also increase employer-worker trust. Stability of work can support more workplace learning, better skills development and fulfilment in work. Security and stability in work can also reduce worker turnover and minimise recruitment, selection costs and lost training costs.

Security at work can generate clear benefits for society. Where people have stable employment and sufficient income, public spending on the welfare system can be lower and more public revenues can be generated through taxation. Conversely, low pay and employment insecurity lead to in-work poverty, child poverty and poverty beyond working life, all of which diminish individuals and society. Insecure employment is associated with poorer health outcomes with implications for demands on health services.

Employment insecurity and precariousness can arise from fears of job loss and are often linked to types of contractual arrangements. The impact of employment insecurity goes beyond its impact on income, impacting negatively on wellbeing.

What Stakeholders told us

A range of security related concerns were raised by individuals and organisations who spoke or wrote to the Convention.

- At the lower end of the labour market, a decent hourly rate and job security were ranked as the most important components of decent work, illustrating that the material basis of employment – what people earn and how secure their income is – is crucially important.
- Concerns were raised over what was considered an inappropriate application of the lower rates of National Minimum Wage pay rates for young people and apprentices.
- High salary disparities within organisations and across organisations in the same sector were viewed as unfair.
- Many workers reported a lack of transparency in pay policies.
- The overwhelming view of zero hours contracts was that they were unfair.
- Forms of flexibility that led to insufficient hours of work and unpredictable income were widely considered to be unfair and burdensome to individuals.
- Many workers reported that work insecurity led to personal and life insecurity and made it more difficult to take longer term decisions such as taking out a mortgage.
- Older women reported that insecure and low paid work had significant negative consequences on their incomes and wellbeing.

How to deliver security at work

- Everyone involved in work has a responsibility to ensure and support widespread awareness and understanding of employment rights. Employers should give clear information on pay and contractual matters and signpost workers to advice and support.
- Contractual stability should be a core employer objective. Forms of flexible working where the burden of risk falls disproportionately on workers (including most zero-hours contracts) are not fair work. Contracts that allow employers flexibility can be designed where worker rights are also protected, which offer sufficient security and that do not undermine worker development and future progression.
- All workers should be paid at least the Living Wage as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation, and other stakeholders - government, public agencies, unions and consumers - should support them to do so.
- Pay transparency and defensibility should be a core organisational objective. This should incorporate pay levels, benefits provision and pay structures that are openly shared with workers and can provide the basis for more equal pay and more defensible pay dispersion.



FULFILMENT

Why is fulfilment at work important?

The term *fulfilment* is associated with meeting a need or aspiration and with getting meaning from an activity. People have a wide variety of needs and aspirations at work and derive meaning from different things. Part of the challenge of management is to make sure that employment and work taps into this variety of needs and aspirations. But there are important common themes in discussions of fulfilment at work: the ability to identify the job or the organisation as serving a valuable purpose; the opportunity to use existing skills; the chance to exercise some control and to make a difference; the scope to be appropriately challenged; the chance to access training to maintain skills and learn new things; and opportunities for personal growth and for career development. Fulfilment can also arise from positive and supportive workplace relationships that promote a sense of belonging and this overlaps strongly with respect as a dimension of fair work.

Fulfilling work in a supportive context can create a more rewarding work experience for workers. It also contributes to a sense of purpose and self-worth and can support confidence and self-belief. Where a sense of purpose is aligned (or compatible) with organisational purpose it can create and promote a sense of belonging and shared goals that support individual and organisational performance. Fulfilling work also supports greater engagement and commitment and helps unleash creativity and innovation, all of which drive a more productive contribution and more effective workplaces.

The impact of individual fulfilment goes beyond the workplace by benefiting the economy and society as a whole. The return on public investment in education at all levels is enhanced where workers have opportunities to use their knowledge and expertise effectively in the workplace. Job demands that are excessive, or job demands without sufficient support, do not produce fulfilling work.

Unreasonable or unachievable targets exacerbate workplace stress, reduce fulfilment and detract from worker wellbeing. Performance management systems that incorporate such practices and that are punitive in orientation are unlikely to deliver fulfilment and wellbeing and may not be effectively incentivising performance either.

Access to training and learning that can support existing skills and the development of new skills contributes to fulfilling work.

Opportunities for **personal growth, and/or career advancement** are key to fulfilment at work,

Overall, there is now considerable evidence that an individual's experience of their day-to-day work directly affects their engagement levels and their personal effectiveness, and that poor intrinsic job quality is related to physical and psychological illness. Workers in poor quality jobs have on average, the lowest levels of health and wellbeing, showing more health problems, lower subjective wellbeing, and finding less meaning in their work

Evidence on fulfilment at work

Meaning and fulfilment in work can relate to the nature of work and/or to the goals and objectives of the employing organisation. Higher levels of worker commitment are found in work that is fulfilling in itself (for example in caring for others) and in organisations where there is a clear sense of purpose with which workers align.

Work provides workers with an **opportunity to use their skills**.

Having some control over one's work activities generates greater fulfilment and supports discretionary effort (going the extra mile). An *authorising culture* allows workers greater control, problem solving and decision taking responsibilities. In relation to the level of worker autonomy over task order, work methods and the pace of work.

Job demands are also associated with whether or not work is fulfilling. **Work that is sufficiently but not excessively challenging** can be stimulating and interesting.



What people told us

- It was widely accepted that everyone should have the opportunity to find fulfilment in their job whatever that job is.
- Personal development is an important aspect of the value which people derive from employment, as it enables personal growth and the possibility of progression.
- People related their wellbeing to having the opportunity to influence their work and being valued for their contribution.
- Workload and pace of change can be detrimental to a fulfilling employment experience and this can be a particular and varying challenge for workers at different life stages.
- An authorising culture enables people to exercise control, use their skills and contribute effectively to meeting their organisation's objectives.
- Creating a supportive environment and work experience can be more challenging in the context of changing work patterns and where workers do not have a physical workplace. Technology can also affect the experience of work in ways that impact on fulfilment.
- Commitment to an organisation and its people is a key element of value which supports a sense of belonging.
- Lack of employer investment in workforce and organisational development can be a barrier to worker engagement. Investment in skills is necessary to achieve economic growth.
- A restrictive or punitive performance regime can impact on individual fulfilment and stifle innovation. We heard examples in some sectors of where performance management was being used as a tool to force exit, to punish and not as a tool to improve performance and contribution.
- Currently jobs are not designed for career lengths and some older workers may experience disadvantage in adapting to new ways of working and to the increasing pace of change at work.

- The nature and type of employment is changing. The challenge of designing sustainable jobs could be advanced through a stronger relationship between education and business. This would help to prepare young people for work and workers to respond to the needs of the labour market.
- Where there had been a move from a 'silo culture' to one of teams this had led to more innovation and fulfilment.

How to deliver fulfilment at work

- Build fulfilment at work explicitly into job design. **Careful job design and attention to job enrichment** can simultaneously support worker fulfilment and job performance. Seek broader rather than narrower job roles where possible which allow for greater task variety. Encourage co-operation and collaboration across jobs and tasks that allow workers to communicate more and make better connections, all of which are important for problem solving activity.
- **Create an authorising culture** where workers can make appropriate decisions and make a difference. In an authorising culture, people have sufficient autonomy, the opportunity to influence the direction of their work, recognition for their achievements and a clear sense of making a difference through their work activities. The opportunity to be creative at work can unleash talent and capabilities that support good performance, creativity and innovation as well as to make work and the workplace a more fulfilling experience for workers. This has clear implications for ways of managing and leading – specifically, how managers might move from a 'command and control' approach – and how managers and leaders at all levels are supported and developed.
- **Invest in training, learning and skills development for current and future jobs.** The relationship between fulfilling work, committed workers and organisational productivity has strong supporting evidence and from an organisational perspective offering fulfilling work provides the basis for people to go beyond what is required of them. Hand in hand with an increase in productivity and/or profitability is a focus on helping people to reach their full potential in their working lives. Employers should ensure that learning, skills development and opportunities for career advancement are core organisational objectives.
- Investing in training, learning and skills development should also include **investing in the capabilities and capacities of union learning representatives where these exist** and supporting them in building co-operative relationships with employers to jointly advance fulfilment at work.

- **Expectations of performance must be realistic and achievable without negative impact on wellbeing.** Mutually agreed performance expectations, reviewed over time as circumstances change, are more likely to be achievable and achieved.
- **Clear and transparent criteria and opportunities for career progression, as well as opportunities for personal development, should be a feature of all work.** Internal career ladders help identify career progression opportunities which can be an important element of fulfilling work. Similarly, opportunities for personal development, which may not be career related, can enhance fulfilment.



RESPECT

Why is respect at work important?

Respect at work enhances individual health, safety and well-being. Dignified treatment can protect workers from workplace related illness and injury and create an environment free from bullying and harassment. Workplaces that recognise individuals as individuals with their own interests significantly impact self-esteem while giving value to the contribution that individuals make. Respect at work is a two-way process between employers and workers and is valued for recognising the reciprocity of the employment relationship.¹¹¹

From the organisational perspective, respect not only avoids the negative impacts (and potential liabilities) arising from some forms of disrespectful behaviour, but more constructively, it can improve standards of communication and social exchange. Where workers believe that their contribution is recognised and valued, trust relationships are developed and the potential for worker involvement is enhanced.

Work is an important part of social life and the relations learned and reinforced in the workplace can spill over into other social spheres, creating more respectful and cohesive societies. More practically, fewer work-related illnesses and injuries impose fewer demands on the NHS and the welfare system. Respectful workplace relations can also improve conflict resolution, thus reducing the cost of public intervention to resolve and remedy disputes between employers and workers. Bullying and harassment in the workplace damages employers as well as workers.

Trust is considered an important determinant of positive worker behaviours with 'trust in each other' covering a multiplicity of relationships.

Turning to **respect for personal and family life** and to debates on work-life balance, this is often viewed in relation to the availability of flexible hours, home working or part-time work

Evidence on respect at work

Respect at work comprises respect for the person, in terms of health, safety and wellbeing; respectful treatment in interpersonal relations; respect for family life, in terms of work-life balance; an appreciation of rights in relation to conflict resolution and due process; and respect for a person's value and contribution.

Focusing on **health, safety and wellbeing**, levels of self-reported workplace injury and sickness absence have been in decline over the last two decades

Opportunities for flexible working can be beneficial to workers and employers. Workers with flexible working opportunities report high levels of satisfaction.

Disagreement and conflict is an inevitable part of workplace life and all organisations need to engage in **conflict resolution**.

Respect for and valuing of workers' contribution can impact positively on their commitment, effort and wellbeing and can also support a high performance culture.

What stakeholders told us

- Concerns were raised over increasing work pressures, targets and sanctions that were, in some instances, contributing to a climate of fear rather than a climate of respect, and which were damaging to health and wellbeing.
- good practice in supporting work-life balance but also of the many challenges people with caring responsibilities face in combining work and family life and care responsibilities.
- It was acknowledged that leaders and managers are the key influences on a respectful organisational climate.
- A disconnect was reported between statements about respect made by senior leaders in organisations and how individuals experience these on the ground. It was reported that middle management were, in some cases, reinterpreting and diluting organisational level commitment to a respect agenda, with increasing pressures on middle management impacting on their security, to which they respond by transferring pressure downwards.

In other instances, workers reported experiencing a culture of command and control or 'us and them' which militated against mutual respect.

In influencing interpersonal relations at work, stakeholders pointed out that:

- Having explicit policies on respect and clear standards for behaviour and conduct was important, especially in signalling the organisation's commitment, but that the existence of a respect policy was not enough. Policies needed to be implemented correctly and consistently to make a difference to workers' experience.
- Inconsistency of treatment undermines trust and satisfaction, but being seen to do the right thing builds and extends trust and satisfaction.
- Customers were sometimes a source of disrespect to workers and should be more aware of how their expectations and behaviours impact on respect work intensity and pressure.

- It was also acknowledged that conflict will arise in every workplace and that resolving this constructively was difficult.
- Some employers and other stakeholders highlighted that implementing mass redundancies is difficult to achieve respectfully.
- While there are sources of support in conflict and redundancy situations (such as PACE), these were not always accessed, or accessed quickly enough.
- There were serious concerns about the lack of external support available when things went wrong at work,

An important point about value and contribution was made strongly by some workers, particularly in the care sector:

- The value of workers should not be equated with the level of their pay. Rather, jobs should be considered valuable where they provide an important service to individuals and to society.
- Workers in low paid jobs resented how their jobs were perceived by customers and society and argued that this detracted from how well respected they felt.

How to deliver respect at work

- Respecting others is everybody's business. A culture of respect requires that behaviours, attitudes and practices that support health, safety and wellbeing are consistently understood and applied. Set and actively promote standards and engage with trade unions and/or worker safety representatives to develop joint training that supports a respectful culture for workers at all levels in your organisation. A consistently applied and understood culture of health, safety and wellbeing will enhance workers' lives and may also deliver better performance.
 - Be explicit about respect as an organisational value and practice and start a dialogue around respect. Are people respected in your organisation for their personal value and for their contribution? What is the evidence to support your answer? One simple way of enhancing respect is to ask people whether they feel respected at work, be open with the results by sharing these and act on what that information reveals. Respect should not be a function of status or position and all workers, regardless of grade or pay, are worthy of respect.
 - Develop clear expectations of behaviour, conduct and treatment and encourage the involvement of everyone to improve respectful behaviours. Policies and procedures on specific respect issues such as bullying and harassment (which go beyond existing legal requirements for protected categories of worker) need to be communicated and understood by everyone. These also need to be seen to be working consistently on a day-to-day basis. Consider the adoption of a respect charter to give practical guidance as to what is and isn't respectful behaviour.
 - Respect for worker's personal and family life requires access to practices that allow the balancing of work and family life. Work-life balance arrangements need to be flexible over all stages of working life. Expectations can change over time and changes need to be communicated and understood. Engagement and listening to workers' ideas is important in designing approaches to work-life balance that can deliver for both workers and employers and may produce more effective arrangements than a 'one size fits all' approach.
 - Re-framing conflict can enhance respect in an organisation – think about differing views as potentially productive and creative. Differences of views are not by their nature destructive – constructive conflict is about examining different opinions and options and can be productive within a respectful culture. Ensure that internal procedures exist to manage conflict in a constructive way that supports good interpersonal relationships. Too often differences of opinion that could be constructively addressed are allowed to degenerate with longer-term impacts on personal relationships in the workplace. Promoting transparency, honesty and trust are important pillars that prevent alternative viewpoints from leading to conflict and division.
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CROSS CUTTING THEMES

We identified a number of recurring themes which cut across the five dimensions of fair work.

The changing workplace

The workplace is not one physical place. Examples of working in the homes of their clients, but equally applied to delivery drivers or workers in maintenance teams who are 'on the road' all their working day. These individuals have no central workplace to meet other colleagues or interact regularly with their employer face-to-face. This led us to recognise that this brings particular challenges, both for workers and employers, and that to recognise this and find ways to support and engage with more remote or distanced workers.

Multiple disadvantage

Some groups are disadvantaged in more than one or all of the dimensions including women, those with a disability, those with low educational attainment, young people, older people and BME workers. In addition to being disadvantaged in more than one dimension, some, such as young people, were disproportionately negatively affected.

Work, caring and aging

Many women in particular raised the impact of unpaid labour on the opportunity to work and to progress in work. More broadly, the interrelationships between work and the welfare system, particularly in relation to benefits sanctions, was raised as problematic for some workers facing casualised work opportunities.

Age and aging were frequently raised across the fair work dimensions. What people regard as 'fair' changed at different stages of life. In addition to the issues young people face, challenges relating to work, pensions and health arise in later age. Work has become more intense for many workers and employers need to be able to adjust roles to match the physical capacities of older workers.

External factors such as caring responsibilities can make accessing good quality work difficult. While one might expect smaller organisations to find it particularly burdensome to adjust to requests for flexibility to cope with the needs of carers, we heard positive reports of their rising to this challenge and heard that some large organisations struggle to be flexible in adjusting to these needs.

For those with disrupted lives, this needs to be addressed first, joining up health and employability support for the small group of people who are very far from the labour market.

Customers, consumers and producers

Fair work cannot be taken out of the context of society as a whole, consumer choice and behaviour have an impact on fair work. Expectations of low cost, fast delivery and access to services around the clock drive particular business and organisational models.

Business models

Business models have an impact on fair work. Low value business models and funding constraints in the can work against fair work.

Virtuous and vicious circles

The connections between the dimensions of fair work were apparent, both in terms of the virtuous circle who delivered good work practices across the dimensions (and the 'size of the prize' for these organisations is increased) and the vicious circle for those workers who had no voice, less labour market power and opportunity and therefore were less likely to be able to access the other dimensions of fair work. Positive examples of creating a virtuous circle include, for example paying at least the Living Wage to encourage more women back into labour market, level the playing field between different demographic groups and between organisations and help with pay equity.

Co-operation

Co-operation lies at the heart of fair work and is the process through which those with an interest in fair work can deliver real change. Although the implementation of the Framework will require real leadership in the workplace at the highest and at every level, the centrality of work in peoples' lives means that fair work is not just- a workplace issue. The Fair Work impacts on areas as wide ranging as education, family life, community life, public policy, the media, civic society and the economy and requires a collaborative and integrated approach

Leadership

Leadership and good management play a large role to deliver fair work. Fair work requires everyone in an organisation to understand fair work and to have the capacity and capability to influence the workplace to ensure that it is delivered.

The importance of orientation and willingness to drive fair work

The dimensions outlined in the Fair Work Framework can be addressed separately but there is much more to be gained by thinking about the Framework dimensions holistically and investigating synergies between the dimensions and the cross-cutting themes in real business contexts. What is also crucially important is to recognise the importance of a commitment to, and willingness to deliver, fair work - to design, adopt and develop business models that put fair work at the centre of driving successful businesses.

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