

Quality Support in Social Security Scotland

The Quality Support Team feed back to stakeholders on the findings of Quality checks.

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Background

Last updated date

- 05 June 2023 - 14:40

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The Quality Support Team are a supportive team who feed back to stakeholders on the findings of quality checks.

The Quality Support Team work with:

- Client Services Delivery
- Team Managers
- Senior Managers
- Product Owners
- Fraud and Error
- Continuous Improvement group
- Programme
- clients

Team charter

Last updated date

- 05 June 2023 - 16:47

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The Quality Support team charter can help you understand how and why they carry out quality support checks.

Respectful and inclusive. We are welcoming and compassionate to all.

Knowledgeable and professional. We are reassuringly informed so we can deliver our service efficiently and helpfully.

Positive but realistic. We are warm, kind, supportive and welcoming but grounded and understanding.

The Quality Support Team report on the findings of all quality checks, including:

- individual
- team
- benefit
- Client Services Delivery

Quality checks include the standards set in [Phase 1 of the Social Security Scotland Quality Framework](#). These are:

- user centred
- privacy
- accessible
- inclusive
- public protection
- prevent fraud prevent error
- manage data as a business asset
- transparency
- value for money
- controlled
- workstream specific standards

The Quality Support Team give detailed, accurate, and supportive feedback on post-quality checks. They ensure a route for challenge is available when an error occurs.

Responsibilities

Last updated date

- 27 July 2023 - 16:25

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The Quality Support Team work across the following benefits and activities:

- Best Start Grant
- Best Start Foods
- Scottish Child Payment
- Funeral Support Payment
- Job Start Payment
- Young Carers Grant
- Child Winter Heating Payment
- Carers Allowance Supplement
- Child Disability Payment
- Child Disability Payment case transfer
- Adult Disability Payment
- Adult Disability Payment case transfer
- Local Delivery appointments

Checks include:

- benefit applications
- change of circumstances
- telephony
- webchat
- complaints
- re-determinations
- internal reviews
- appeals

The Quality Support Team conduct post-payment checks. Most checks are end-to-end client journey and cover all workstreams within Client Services Delivery. The Quality Support Team may perform targeted checks on specific areas if required. When the Quality Support Team check Local Delivery, telephony, and webchat teams, they are checking for soft skills and that staff are following guidance. Quality Support checkers follow a standardised check list and complete all the checks listed.

How the Quality Support Team communicate with client advisers

Last updated date

- 05 June 2023 - 15:43

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They select checks at random from SPM after clients have been paid. Where the Quality Support Team identify error trends or concerns, they can also do targeted checking. They complete checks based on [Phase 1 Quality standards](#) and the [Social Security Scotland charter](#).

The Quality Support Team send feedback on checks to line managers. This feedback forms part of the monthly 1-2-1-quality conversation.

Line managers can access checking outcomes on individual staff for:

- pre-payment
- trainee assurance
- letter
- client contact

All results are captured within a quality database. Your line manager will get your individual checking results. The Quality Support Team report on both positive and negative feedback.

1. If there's an error:

The case will go back to the team leader. The team leader returns the case to the person who completed the application or change for action.

Financial errors must be corrected to avoid payment errors such as under or overpayments.

Checks are selected at random by SPM.

Senior managers set the number of checks to be completed per person per month.

Line managers can increase pre-payment checks to above the minimum quota if needed. For example, if a change to a current process is introduced, increased checking can help to ensure the change has been implemented and understood.

2. If there's a disagreement over an error

The line manager will review the error with the Quality Support Team Manager. They make a final decision together.

3. Continuous Improvement

The Quality Support Team will signpost to guidance where errors are found. They will produce a monthly report of the quality checks. The report includes analysis of error trends in each workstream.

Line manager checks

Last updated date

- 17 January 2025 - 11:02

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4. Trainee assurance checks

Trainee assurance check will:

- be a minimum of 10 checks
- finish when the trainee reaches the agreed financial and procedural quality rate

Senior managers set the quality rate within each business area. Line managers follow a standardised check list and complete all checks within the list. All results are captured in the quality database. Telephony and webchat checks are included, and soft skills are quality-assured.

Once the trainee assurance check is completed, the Quality Support Team are informed to begin post payment checks.

5. Pre-payment checks

Pre-payment checks are:

- conducted by the line manager
- completed prior to an application/change being authorised

Line managers will follow a standardised check list and complete all the checks listed. All results will be captured within the quality database.

6. Communications check

Line managers perform a standardised communications check. This covers:

- telephony inbound
- outbound call
- webchat

All checks are recorded in the quality database.

Checking sheet can be found attached at the bottom of this page.

7. Letter check

Line managers will perform a standardised letter check. Line managers may check letters at random. They may also target specific types of letter. For example, a complex letter giving a decision outcome. All checks should be recorded in the quality database.

Check list can be found attached at the bottom of this page.

8. Post-payment checks

The Quality Support Team will conduct post-payment checks. Most checks will be end-to-end client journey and may cover many parts of Client Services Delivery. When the Quality Support Team check Local Delivery, telephony, and webchat teams, they are checking for soft skills and that staff are following guidance.

9. What the Quality Support Team are not responsible for

Last updated date

- 05 June 2023 - 14:57

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They do not work across the following areas:

- pre-payment checks
- trainee assurance checks
- line manager communication and letter checks
- any data received from Department for Work and Pensions to Social Security Scotland
- practitioners
- case transfer of 'live' benefit applications that Department for Work and Pensions have already processed
- input or advice from stakeholders, including third parties
- tribunal and Scottish Public Service Ombudsman decisions
- decisions and payments made by other teams. For example, Fraud, Interventions and Finance

