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# Slow progress? A review of social workers' pay and progression

A report for UNISON

Incomes Data Services

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## Contents

1	Review of social work practice	Page
2	Scope of research	
3	Key findings	
4	Methodology	
5	Social workers' basic salaries	
6	Distribution of social workers across different levels	
7	Progress for social workers	
8	Social workers' pay compared to other occupations	
9	Market rates of pay for social workers and comparable occupations	
10	Earnings for social workers and comparable occupations	
	Appendix A – IDS job levels	
	Appendix B – Bespoke participants	

## 1. Review of social work practice

Long-standing issues around recruitment, retention and leadership within social worker practice have been compounded recently by increased public and media scrutiny, including the high-profile ‘Baby P’ case. This attention has prompted a number of official reviews looking into the causes of these problems in the social work profession. A recent report by the Social Work Task Force<sup>1</sup>, the body set up by Government to undertake a comprehensive review of frontline social work practice, made a number of recommendations that could improve the working conditions of social workers. One of these was the development of a career structure that accurately rewarded frontline expertise. The report states that some local authorities may have used job evaluation schemes to introduce equality-proofed pay structures that have underrated the skills and experience of social workers in comparison to other professionals – leading to unfair pay. The recommendations of the Task Force include the development of a single national career structure, which would encourage the continuing development of social workers and lead to progression to higher grades. The report highlights that more opportunities need to be provided for staff to progress to roles with greater responsibility and higher pay, while still staying in roles on the front line.

## 2. Scope of research

UNISON commissioned Incomes Data Services (IDS) to undertake research on the market levels of pay for social workers compared to other major professional staff groups in the public sector. The purpose of this research is to look at pay and progression arrangements to inform UNISON’s pay negotiations for this group. This report draws on sources of existing data, supplemented with the results of a bespoke survey into the pay and progression arrangements for social work staff.

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<sup>1</sup> Building a Safe, Confident Future, November 2009.

### 3. Key findings

- There is significant use of a mainstream social worker grade, often in place of a career-grade structure
- The bespoke survey shows that most social workers are concentrated at the mainstream social worker level. All other levels or grades of social worker make up a minority of the social worker workforce in comparison
- The distribution of social workers suggests that progression arrangements are not functioning effectively
- Significant variations between local authorities suggest that traditional social worker progression structures are being adapted to suit local circumstances
- Salaries for senior social workers vary considerably between individual councils, indicating a lack of a defined structure or role definition at this level
- There is significant variation in minimum salaries. This suggests that market pressures have forced some organisations to increase minimum or starter salaries
- Progression within grades is by annual increments. In some cases, this appears to be the only form of progression available
- Where a competency framework or career grade structure is in place, the disproportionate number of employees on mainstream social worker grades appears to show that these are not being used effectively
- Salaries paid to newly-qualified social workers are typically higher than those paid to teachers and health professionals. Only police officers are paid slightly higher
- The relative position of social workers’ salaries declines with length of service and seniority. At first they fall behind teachers at the main professional level, and then behind both teachers and health professionals at the senior professional level
- An analysis of earnings data supports the view that only a small minority of social workers are progressing to the higher professional level. This stands in sharp contrast to school teachers where more than half of classroom teachers in England and Wales are now employed on the senior teachers’ spine.

## 4. Methodology

The bespoke survey was conducted during November and early December 2009,.It was sent to those authorities that had responded to previous IDS surveys that employ social workers. This provides a degree of continuity between the bespoke and desk research.

The desk research draws on the data collected in 2009 by IDS from various surveys covering social work positions, and all of the data is current for 2009. The combined dataset provides the basis for the comparisons with other professional occupations, which updates an earlier report published in December 2009. That report largely relied on data collected from the annual IDS pay and conditions survey of local government.

The salaries for the other occupations in Tables 1 to 3 are taken from *IDS Pay in the Public Services* and *IDS Pay Report*, and they are all current for 2009. In the cases of teachers and police officers, a single salary range covers more than one matching level of social worker. In these two cases we have taken the progression likely to be achieved in the first two or three years to be equivalent to the newly-qualified level, and the remaining part of the salary range has been matched to the relevant range points for the main social worker level. The exception to this is for teachers in England and Wales, where typical salaries used are based on the latest findings on the distribution of classroom teachers by spine point<sup>2</sup>.

It should be noted that the salary data for teachers in England and Wales does not take into account additional payments for teaching and learning responsibilities or for special needs. A recent report shows that around a third of primary and three-fifths of secondary classroom teachers are in receipt of an additional allowance.

Three levels of social worker – newly-qualified, mainstream social worker and senior social worker – are compared to matching levels in each of the chosen comparator occupations. The matching levels are based on evaluations using the IDS job evaluation scheme, which has a series of job levels<sup>3</sup>.

The earnings data is largely taken from the 2008 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), published by the Office of National Statistics. The Data used is weekly gross earnings, excluding overtime. This data has then been multiplied by 52.14 to produce the annual figures shown in the report.

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<sup>2</sup> Survey of Teachers’ Pay 2008, ORC International.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix A.

In addition, the Local Government Association produces the results of its own survey of local authorities on earnings of staff below chief officer level. The figures are derived from payroll data supplied by local authorities in England and Wales. The figures are for gross earnings, including overtime. For the purposes of this report we have used the median earnings figures across all types of authorities for the two categories of social worker and occupational therapist.

## 5. Social workers basic salaries

Analysis of median or typical basic salaries, including market supplements, for different levels of social workers shows that there is not a significant variation between grades. In particular, social worker adults, social worker children and families, social worker mental health, social worker youth offending and other social workers are at a similar level, ranging from £30,340 for those working in mental health to £31,361 for those working in youth offending. The median salary for a mainstream social worker is £30,752, which is 12 per cent lower than the median salary for a senior social worker at £34,415 a year. This analysis is based on the results of a bespoke survey of 11 local authorities across the UK conducted by IDS during November and December 2009.

Chart A: Median/typical salaries for social workers 2009<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Assistant social workers are those employees that assist qualified social workers but are not yet qualified themselves and hence they are at the lower-end of the pay scale. Adult social workers, children and families’ social workers, mental health social workers, youth offending social workers and other social workers are largely assumed to be at the same skill and level of expertise. These social workers are referred to as ‘mainstream social workers’ in this report.

Results from the bespoke survey of 11 local authorities are comparable to those found in the desk research, which covers up to 44 organisations. The desk research combines the salary information from local government, the not-for-profit sector and other public sector groups, taken from IDSPay.co.uk<sup>5</sup>.

Table 1: Bespoke research – modal salaries

	£pa	Equivalent NJC salary/spine point	Equivalent SJC s/spine point
<b>Councils - England &amp; Wales</b>			
<b>Mainstream social workers</b>			
Modal minimum salary	26,276	26,276 (sp 31)	
Modal maximum salary	28,636	28,636 (sp 34)	
<b>Senior social workers</b>			
Modal minimum salary	28,636	28,636 (sp 34)	
Modal maximum salary	-	-	-
<b>Councils – Scotland<sup>6</sup></b>			
<b>Mainstream social workers</b>			
Modal minimum salary	29,234	-	15.20ph (sp 62)
Modal maximum salary	32,102	-	16.64ph (sp 68)

Minimum salaries in the bespoke survey for mainstream social workers range from £21,519 (currently point 25 of the Local Government Services NJC pay structure) to £34,338 (includes a 10 per cent base pay annual retention allowance). The modal<sup>7</sup> minimum salary is £26,276 (equivalent to point 31 of the NJC structure).

Maximum salaries for mainstream social workers range from £28,636 to £37,754. The modal maximum salary is £28,636 (equivalent to point 34). This indicates that within a typical grade or salary range for mainstream social workers there are four increments available. Almost two-thirds of local authorities in the survey operate narrow-banded pay structures.

<sup>5</sup> Of these 44 organisations, 39 are local authorities, two are other public sector and three are not-for-profit organisations.

<sup>6</sup> Spine points and pay rates for Scottish local government are based on the Single Status agreement. No annual salary equivalents are available due to local variation in weekly hours worked.

<sup>7</sup> The modal figure is the most frequently occurring value in the sample, and indicates a degree of clustering around this value.

Minimum salaries for senior social workers range from £28,636 (equivalent to point 34 of the NJC salary structure) to £38,307 (provided at a council in Scotland). The modal minimum salary is £28,636. Maximum salaries for senior social workers range from £30,851 (equivalent to point 37 of the NJC salary structure) to £43,790 (paid at a council in Scotland). A modal salary is not available due to the variation in the distribution of maximum salaries paid by individual local authorities. This supports the view that the role of senior social worker is less defined at the national level, leading to a range of roles developing at the local level.

Results from the desk research show that the spread between the lower and upper quartile for median/typical salaries for senior social workers is 22.2 per cent, compared to 13 per cent for mainstream social workers (table 2). This reinforces the points already made that salaries for senior social workers vary considerably between individual councils, indicating a lack of a defined structure or role definition at this level.

Table 2: Bespoke research - summary salaries, including market supplements, 2009

Social worker role		Basic salary min £pa	Typical/calculated midpoint £pa	Basic salary max £pa
Assistant social worker	Lower quartile	19,328	20,978	21,695
	Median	20,548	22,219	23,369
	Upper quartile	22,698	23,638	25,387
Newly-qualified social worker	Median	27,576	28,318	31,092
Social worker - adults	Lower quartile	25,874	28,076	30,431
	Median	29,234	30,668	32,102
	Upper quartile	30,155	31,456	34,085
Social worker - children & families	Lower quartile	25,874	28,536	30,931
	Median	29,234	30,836	33,173
	Upper quartile	30,155	31,456	34,773
Social worker - mental health	Lower quartile	25,673	28,535	31,164
	Median	27,755	30,340	33,345
	Upper quartile	30,102	31,230	34,804
Social worker - youth offending	Lower quartile	26,276	30,668	32,102
	Median	29,264	31,361	33,231
	Upper quartile	30,381	31,851	34,712
Social worker - other	Lower quartile	26,075	28,320	31,224
	Median	29,249	30,752	32,780
	Upper quartile	30,533	31,843	33,811
Mainstream social worker	Lowest	<b>21,519</b>	-	<b>28,636</b>
	Lower quartile	25,954	28,827	31,170
	Median	28,947	30,791	32,926
	Upper quartile	30,265	31,567	34,437
	Highest	34,338	-	37,754
	Mode	26,276	28,564	28,636
Senior social worker	Lowest	28,636	-	30,851
	Lower quartile	29,072	32,885	33,278
	Median	31,718	34,415	35,541
	Upper quartile	35,338	37,439	38,734
	Highest	38,307	-	43,790
	Mode	28,636	-	-
Consultant social worker	Median	37,506	40,109	41,452
Team manager	Lower quartile	36,083	38,879	39,454
	Median	38,961	41,610	41,610
	Upper quartile	40,444	42,051	44,971

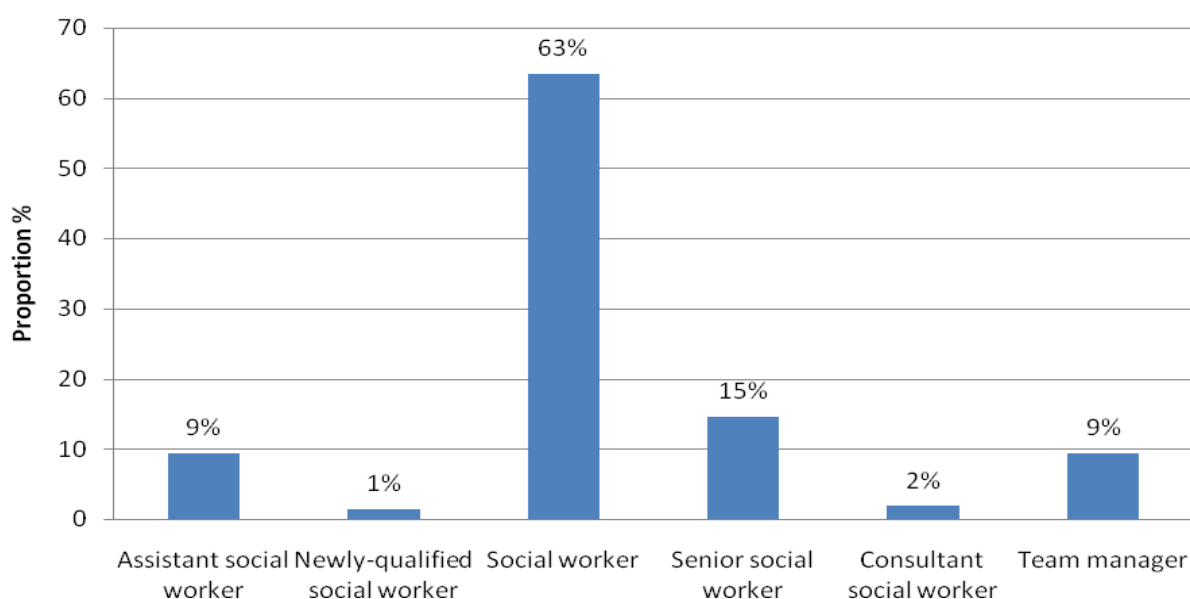
Table 3: Desk research – summary salaries, 2009<sup>8</sup>

		Minimum £pa	Typical/calculated midpoint £pa	Maximum £pa
<b>Social worker</b>	<b>Lower quartile</b>	23,708	27,522	29,624
	<b>Median</b>	26,276	29,403	31,803
	<b>Upper quartile</b>	29,235	31,210	33,612
<b>Senior social worker</b>	<b>Lower quartile</b>	28,636	30,195	31,754
	<b>Median</b>	30,851	32,970	34,894
	<b>Upper quartile</b>	33,661	36,904	39,226

## 6. Distribution of social workers across different levels

Chart B shows the distribution of the different types of social workers employed by local authorities in our survey sample. Mainstream social workers make up by far the largest proportion of all the six types of social worker. The bespoke survey covers 2,322 social workers in total, with 63 per cent (1,473) employed on the mainstream level. All other levels of social workers make up a minority of the social worker workforce in comparison to the mainstream social worker. The distribution of social workers by type or level reveals that current systems of progression may not be functioning effectively, as employees are clustered on one particular level with limited progression to higher social worker grades.

Chart B: Distribution of social workers by grade



<sup>8</sup> Includes data held by IDS, including the results from the bespoke survey.

There is however, a significant variation between local authorities in the distribution of the different levels of social worker. For example the largest local authority in this research employs 394 social workers in total. Of these, 82 per cent (322) are employed on the mainstream social worker level and 4 per cent are employed as team managers. There are no employees at senior social worker level. This council operates a wide-banded pay structure with 14 to 16 increments available for mainstream social workers with most near to the top of the grade. Despite this, typical salaries are relatively level with median salaries from the bespoke survey, with only its typical salary for a social worker children and families 2 per cent higher than the median salary for this role. This particular role includes up to four increments paid as a retention allowance and for the attainment of an additional qualification.

In addition, this particular pay structure provides progression through double increments, and assessment takes place after employees have reached a certain point in the grade. However, as average typical salaries at this council are towards the top of the salary range this indicates that employees have been progressing up the social worker grade structure and most have passed the assessment stage.

Another council represented in the survey employs a total of 169 social workers, this is made up of 80 per cent (136) at the mainstream social worker level, there are no social workers at senior social worker or social worker consultant level and 19, or 11 per cent, are employed as team managers. However, some councils show a balanced distribution in the different level of social workers employed. One of these councils employs 247 social workers in total. Of these, 95 or 38 per cent are employed on social worker grades and 91 or 37 per cent are senior social workers. Another council in the survey sample actually employs more senior social workers than mainstream social workers.

## 7. Progress for social workers

Salary progression within grades (table 3) shows a similar dispersion, providing an average progression increase of 13.7 per cent. For mainstream social worker level, the average progression increase is £3,979. This is slightly higher than for senior social workers and significantly higher than for team managers. The largest progression increase is for social workers working in mental health at £5,590, although this may reflect the use of recurring market supplements and additional increments paid to approved mental health practitioners.

Table 4: Progression within social worker grades<sup>9</sup>

	Progression within grades £	% progression
Assistant social worker	2,821	13.7
Newly-qualified social worker	3,516	12.8
Social worker - adults	2,868	9.8
Social worker - children & families	3,939	13.5
Social worker - mental health	5,590	20.1
Social worker - youth offending	3,967	13.6
Social worker - other	3,531	12.1
<b>Mainstream social worker</b>	<b>3,979</b>	<b>13.7</b>
Senior social worker	3,823	12.1
Consultant social worker	3,946	10.5
Team manager	2,649	6.8

The relatively consistent progression increases within the different levels of social worker suggest that pay progression arrangements at each level are similar. This correlates with the findings on incremental progression below, which shows a consistent number of increments are in place for each grade of social worker (see Chart C below). However, a higher number of increments are in place for mainstream social worker roles.

<sup>9</sup> Difference between median minimum and median maximum salaries.

**Market pressures**

Table 4 shows significant variation in minimum salary ranges. This indicates market pressures may have forced organisations to review and increase minimum or starter salaries, possibly due to recruitment pressures.

At the mainstream social worker level (combined average of adults, children & families, mental health, youth offending and other social worker levels), the average variation between lower and upper quartile minimum salaries is 17 per cent. This compares to a dispersion of 11 per cent within the quartile range for maximum salaries. The highest levels of variation recorded are for mainstream social workers working in mental health, reflecting the varied practice of paying additional increments and pay supplements for this role. For example, the role of approved mental health professional often attracts additional increments.

Table 5: Basic minimum and maximum salaries – quartile spread

	<b>Min quartile spread %</b>	<b>Max quartile spread %</b>
<b>Assistant social worker</b>	17.4	17.0
<b>Social worker - adults</b>	16.5	12.0
<b>Social worker - children &amp; families</b>	16.5	10.2
<b>Social worker - mental health</b>	17.3	11.7
<b>Social worker - youth offending</b>	15.6	8.1
<b>Social worker - other</b>	17.1	8.3
<b>Mainstream social worker</b>	16.6	11.0
<b>Senior social worker</b>	21.6	16.4
<b>Team manager</b>	12.1	14.0

**Greater use of mainstream social worker grade**

This variation in minimum salaries correlates with the disparity in the distribution of the different levels of social workers employed in individual local authorities represented in the bespoke survey. Both findings indicate that the grade or salary range for mainstream social workers is being used disproportionately in comparison to progression to higher grades. The minimum salaries for social workers are being used very flexibly by local authorities depending on recruitment and retention pressures and individual progression

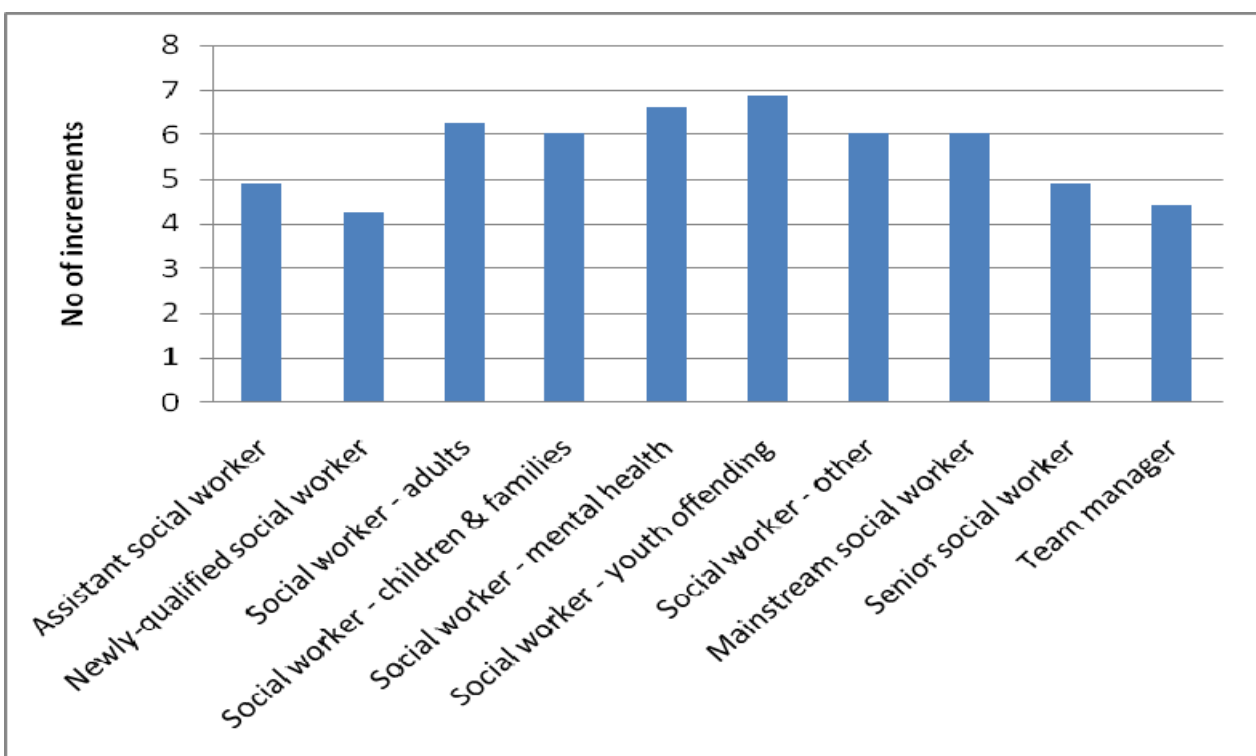
arrangements in place. Progression arrangements between organisations are not consistent and local authorities appear to sometimes turn away from traditional social worker progression structures (such as progression from newly-qualified social worker to mainstream social worker through to senior social worker), in favour of local arrangements. These arrangements appear to concentrate on greater flexibility around the mainstream social worker grade rather than progression to a senior grade.

For example, findings from one local authority in the bespoke survey sample shows that, of the 136 social workers, four-fifths are mainstream social workers. This particular council does not employ senior social workers but divides the role of mainstream social worker (in this case, adults, children & families and mental health social workers) into two levels – main and higher. Minimum salaries for main and higher social workers at this council are lower than our median minimum salary of £28,947. This suggests that this particular council is not experiencing recruitment difficulties. The replacement of senior social worker roles by higher level mainstream social workers appears to reinforce this finding.

**Increments by social worker grade**

Chart C below shows the average number of increments in place at each social worker level. This shows that most mainstream social workers receive six increments.

**Chart C: Average number of increments by job level**



The figures are higher for those working in mental health and youth offending. All local authorities in our sample award annual increments. Almost two-thirds of councils in the survey sample have in place a narrow-banded pay structure consisting of either four or five increments for each band or job level. The majority have a consistent number of increments in each grade, but where this does not occur a smaller number of increments is in place for those at the lower-end of the grading structure (assistant social workers) and the higher-end of the structure (team managers). For example, one of the local authorities in our sample has in place five increments at the assistant social worker level and four increments each for senior social workers and team managers. However, mainstream social workers at this council have between eight and 13 increments.

Another council in the survey that operates a broad-banded pay structure has 12 increments within each mainstream social worker grade, progression is by double increments until employees reach half way up the grade; continued progression by double increments is dependent on assessment. This assessment requires positive appraisal and possible completion of a competency framework grid.

### **Career grade progression**

Half of the councils in the bespoke survey use career grades for progression. Promotion up the social worker grade structure is through the attainment of competencies or managerial responsibilities. However, three councils in the survey operate progression through grades solely by annual increments. There appears to be no other form of progression framework in place. One such council has a very disproportionate distribution of social workers at different levels with 107 mainstream social workers and 12 senior social workers. Another council in the sample shows a balanced distribution of the different levels of social workers employed, and progression to mainstream social worker and senior social worker grades takes place through the addition of managerial responsibilities and vacancy creations.

Using the findings of the bespoke survey it appears more reliance is placed on progression through annual increments rather than structured career grades. Where a competency framework or career grade structure is in place, the findings show that these may be being used insufficiently and progression through the social worker levels is not occurring. It could be that the availability of vacancies is hindering this process. The disproportionate number of employees on mainstream social worker grades reinforces this finding.

## 8. Social workers’ pay compared to other occupations

Chart D shows that the median midpoint salary for a newly-qualified social worker is £26,654 a year, which is higher than equivalent salaries for the comparator occupations, except for a police officer on £26,787 a year. A similar picture emerges when minimum and maximum salaries are compared (table 5). A different picture starts to emerge at the higher levels of social worker.

Chart D: Median midpoint salaries for newly-qualified social workers and comparable professions, 2009

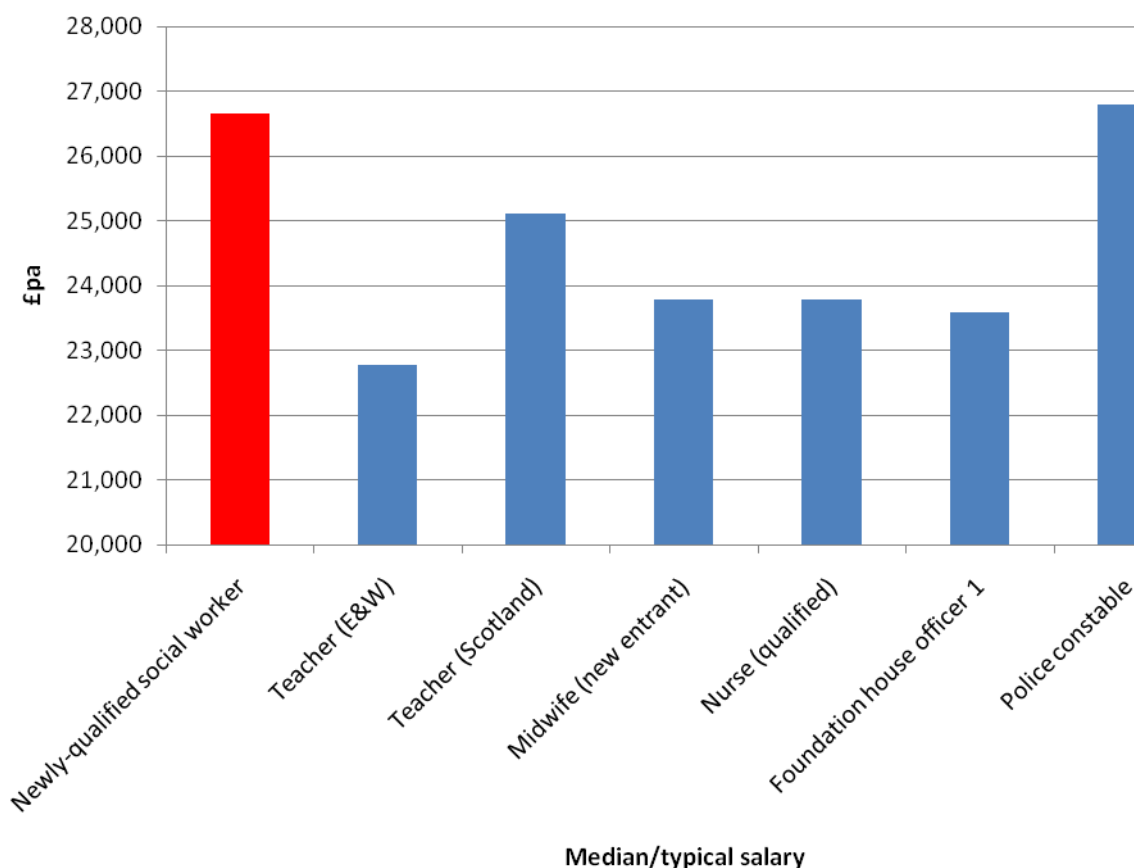
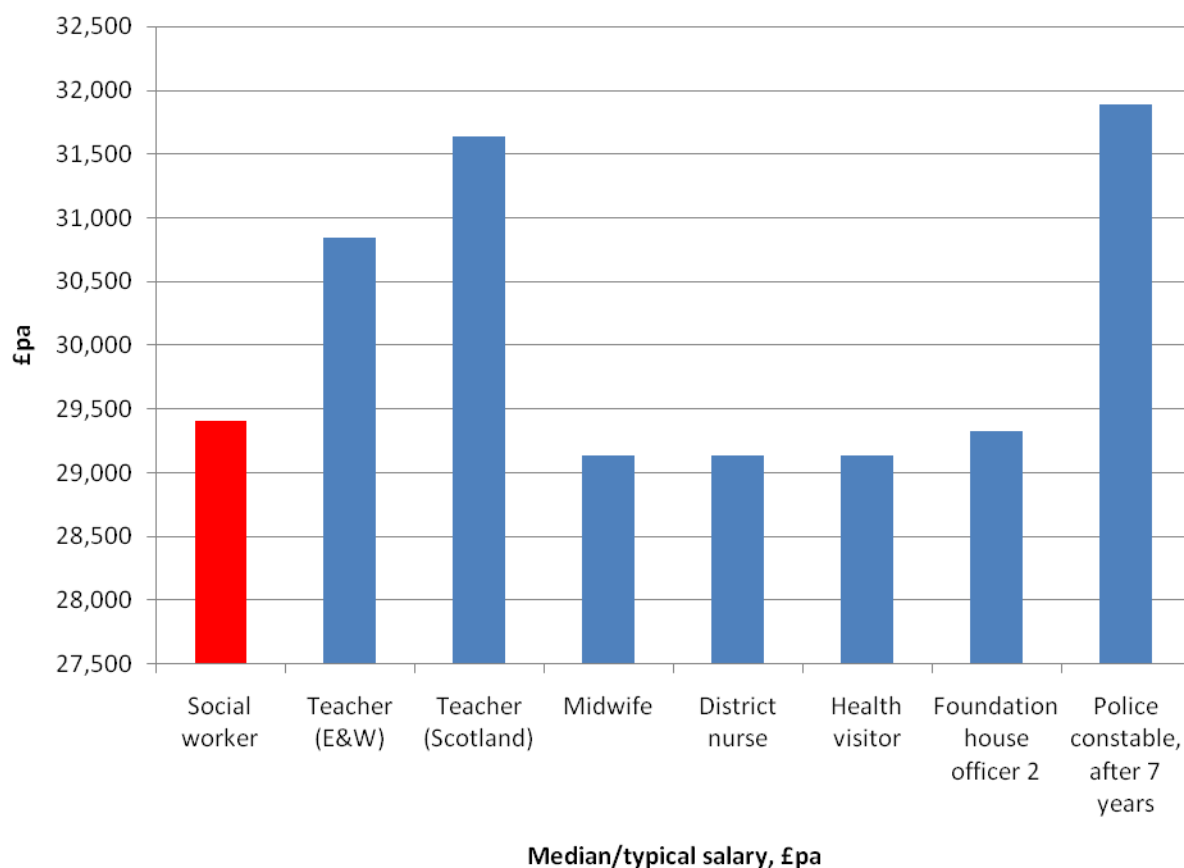


Chart E shows that the median midpoint salary for a social worker is £29,403 a year, which is behind the typical salary for a classroom teacher in England and Wales of £30,842 a year, and even more behind the comparable figure of £33,399 for a teacher in Scotland<sup>10</sup>. However, social workers are typically paid more than most comparable health professionals at both the minimum and midpoints (table 6), but then start to fall behind at the maximum.

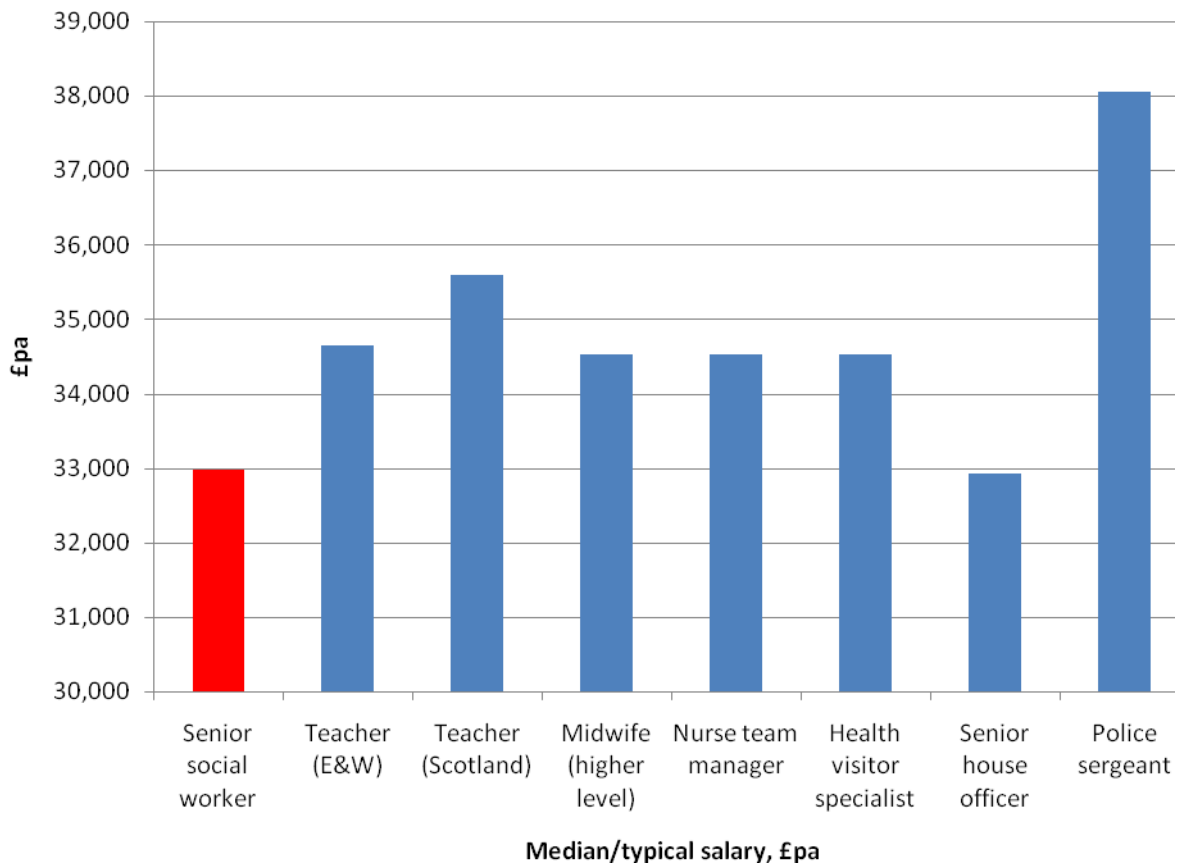
<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that salary data for social workers from five Scottish local authorities show no significant variation from the figures for England and Wales.

**Chart E: Median midpoint salaries for social workers and comparable professions, 2009**



A senior social worker is typically employed on a salary of £32,970 a year, which is less than the £34,650 paid to a comparable teacher in England and Wales, the £35,592 paid to a teacher in Scotland or the £34,531 paid to equivalent health professionals (Chart F). The exception to this is the position of a senior house officer in the NHS who is on a comparable salary at the midpoint, but then passes senior social workers on the maximum salaries (table 7).

Chart F: Median midpoint salaries for senior social workers and comparable professions, 2009



A comparison of maximum salaries shows that a senior social worker is typically paid £34,894 a year, which is significantly less than the £39,273 paid to a comparable midwife or health visitor, or the £38,322 paid to a senior house officer. Although a senior social worker’s typical maximum salary is closer to that of equivalent classroom teachers across Great Britain, the maximum senior teacher salaries exclude additional payments for extra skills and responsibilities. A recent report shows that around a third of primary and three-fifths of secondary school classroom teachers are in receipt of such payments.

Police officers are significantly ahead at both the social worker and senior social workers levels, whichever pay point is taken.

## 9. Market rates of pay for social workers and comparable occupations

Table 6: Basic rates of pay for a newly-qualified social worker and comparator occupations, 2009

<b>Minimums</b>		
<b>Matching job</b>	<b>Matching grade/level</b>	<b>Basic £pa</b>
Newly-qualified social worker	Median minimum	23,888
Teacher (E&W)	Main scale 1	21,102
Teacher (Scotland)	Main scale 0 (probationer)	20,937
Midwife (new entrant)	Band 5, pt 16 (AfC)	20,710
Nurse (qualified)	Band 5, pt 16 (AfC)	20,710
Foundation house officer	Level 1	22,190
Police constable	On completion of initial training	25,317
<b>Midpoints</b>		
Newly-qualified social worker	Median midpoint	26,654
Teacher (E&W)	Main scale 2	22,771
Teacher (Scotland)	Main scale 1	25,113
Midwife (new entrant)	Band 5 (AfC)	23,775
Nurse (qualified)	Band 5 (AfC)	23,775
Foundation house officer	Level 1	23,575
Police constable	After 2 years	26,787
<b>Maximums</b>		
Newly-qualified social worker	Median maximum	29,070
Teacher (E&W)	Main scale 3	24,602
Teacher (Scotland)	Main scale 2	26,604
Midwife (new entrant)	Band 5, pt 24 (AfC)	26,839
Nurse (qualified)	Band 5, pt 24 (AfC)	26,839
Foundation house officer	Level 1	24,960
Police constable	After 3 years	28,422

Table 7: Basic rates of pay for a social worker and comparator occupations, 2009

<b>Minimums</b>		
<b>Matching job</b>	<b>Matching grade/level</b>	<b>Basic £pa</b>
Social worker	Median minimum	26,276
Teacher (E&W)	Main scale 4	26,494
Teacher (Scotland)	Main scale 4	29,751
Midwife	Band 6 (AfC, pt 22)	24,831
District nurse	Band 6 (AfC, pt 22)	24,831
Health visitor	Band 6 (AfC, pt 22)	24,831
Foundation house officer	Level 2	27,523
Police constable	After 3 years	28,422
<b>Midpoints</b>		
Social worker	Median midpoint	29,403
Teacher (E&W)	Main scale 6	30,842
Teacher (Scotland)	Main scale 6	33,399
Midwife	Band 6 (AfC)	29,134
District nurse	Band 6 (AfC)	29,134
Health visitor	Band 6 (AfC)	29,134
Foundation house officer	Level 2	29,323
Police constable	After 7 years	31,890
<b>Maximums</b>		
Social worker	Median maximum	31,803
Teacher (E&W)	Main scale 6	30,842
Teacher (Scotland)	Main scale 6	33,399
Midwife	Band 6 (AfC, pt 30)	33,436
District nurse	Band 6 (AfC, pt 30)	33,436
Health visitor	Band 6 (AfC, pt 30)	33,436
Foundation house officer	Level 2	31,122
Police constable	After 10 years, includes competency-related payment	36,792

Table 8: Basic salaries for a senior social worker and comparator occupations, 2009

<b>Minimums</b>		
<b>Matching job</b>	<b>Matching grade/level</b>	<b>Basic £pa</b>
Senior social worker	Median minimum	30,851
Teacher (E&W)	Upper pay scale 1	33,412
Teacher (Scotland)	Chartered spine, pt 1	34,428
Midwife (higher level)	Band 7 (AfC, pt 27)	29,789
Nurse team manager	Band 7 (AfC, pt 27)	29,789
Health visitor specialist	Band 7 (AfC, pt 27)	29,789
Senior house officer	Senior house officer	27,523
Police sergeant	On promotion	36,792
<b>Midpoints</b>		
Senior social worker	Median midpoint	32,970
Teacher (E&W)	Upper pay scale 2	34,650
Teacher (Scotland)	Chartered spine, pt 2	35,592
Midwife (higher level)	Band 7 (AfC)	34,531
Nurse team manager	Band 7 (AfC)	34,531
Health visitor specialist	Band 7 (AfC)	34,531
Senior house officer	Senior house officer	32,923
Police sergeant	After 2 years	38,061
<b>Maximums</b>		
Senior social worker	Median maximum	34,894
Teacher (E&W)	Upper pay scale 3	35,929
Teacher (Scotland)	Chartered spine, pt 3	36,411
Midwife (higher level)	Band 7 (AfC, 35)	39,273
Nurse team manager	Band 7 (AfC, 35)	39,273
Health visitor specialist	Band 7 (AfC, 35)	39,273
Senior house officer	Senior house officer	38,322
Police sergeant	After 4 years, includes competency-related payment	40,020

## 10. Earnings for social workers and comparable occupations

Chart G shows the earnings data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Holidays (ASHE) and from the Local Government Association for social workers and other comparable occupations. This indicates that social workers typically earn between 13 and 15 per cent less than teachers and police officers and 3.5 per cent less than midwives, but they earn 6 per cent more than nurses.

Table 8 shows that the median ASHE earnings figure for social workers is £29,975, which excludes overtime. The LGA figure is £29,290 but this may include overtime payments. Both figures are close to the median midpoint basic salary of £29,403 for a social worker. This indicates that social workers are not typically employed on the senior social worker grades.

The earnings figure for teaching professionals from ASHE is £34,611 a year, which is close to the market median for a senior teacher<sup>11</sup>. This indicates that a significant proportion of teachers are employed on the teachers’ upper pay scale in England and Wales and on the Chartered Teacher pay range in Scotland. This is supported by a recent report on teachers’ pay in England and Wales which shows that two-thirds of part-time and half of full-time classroom teachers are employed on the upper scale points<sup>12</sup>.

In comparison, earnings for different health professionals are closer to that of social workers. In particular, nurses typically earn £28,187 a year. This is less than the median salary of £29,134 for a district nurse or health visitor, and significantly less than the midpoint salary of £34,531 for a nurse team leader. This indicates that the majority of nurses are to be found on the lowest grade (Band 5), working in a hospital environment and in receipt of unsocial hours payments.

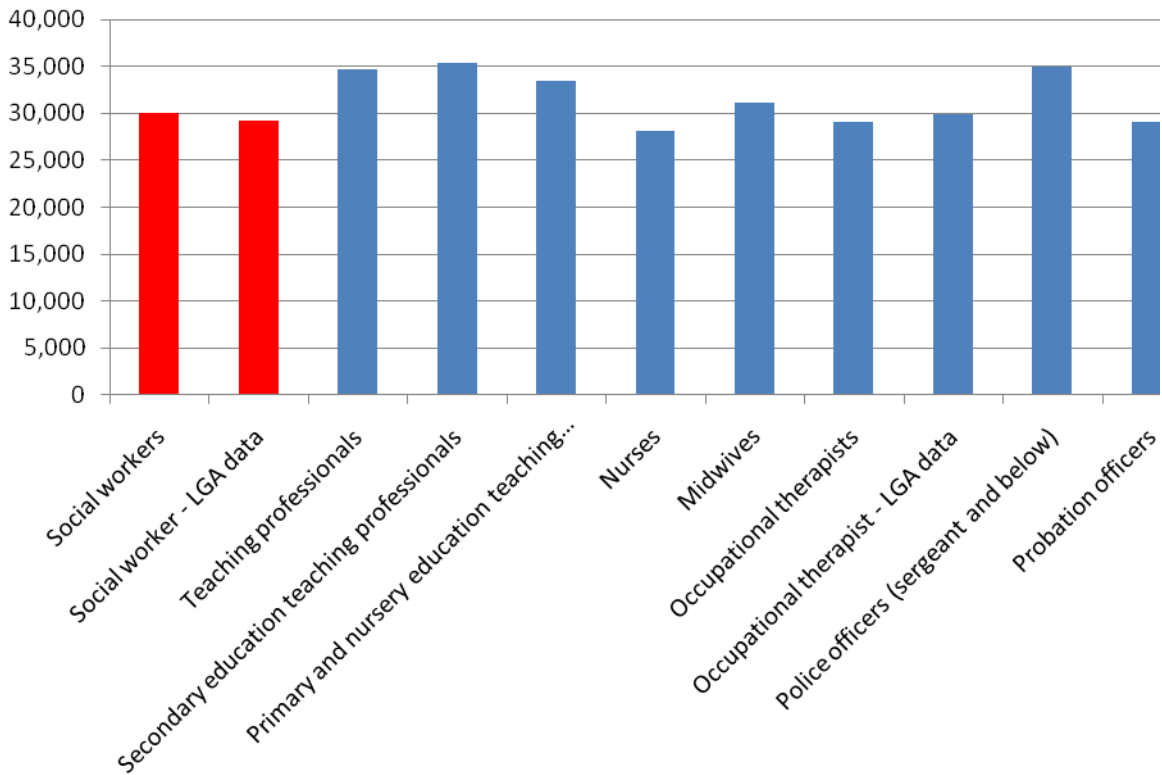
Even in the case of midwives, although a median earnings figure of £31,065 a year sits between the median salary of £29,134 for a midwife and £34,531 for a senior midwife, it may not indicate a level of progression. Most midwives work in a hospital environment and work unsocial hours, and their basic salary is boosted by unsocial hours’ payments. The median earnings’ figure for this group indicates that the majority of midwives have not progressed to the higher level.

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<sup>11</sup> Upper scale point 2.

<sup>12</sup> *Survey of Teachers’ Pay 2008*, OCR International.

Chart G: Comparison of earnings for social workers and comparator occupations, 2008



Gross earnings (excludes overtime, except in the case of LGA data which may include overtime payments)

Table 9: Gross earnings, excluding overtime, for social workers and other occupations, 2008

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Median, £pa</b>
Social workers	29,975
Social worker - LGA data	29,290
Teaching professionals	34,611
Secondary education teaching professionals	35,398
Primary and nursery education teaching professionals	33,432
Nurses	28,187
Midwives	31,065
Occupational therapists	29,011
Occupational therapist - LGA data	29,860
Police officers (sergeant and below)	34,908
Probation officers	29,042
Source: ASHE 2008, unless stated otherwise.	

## Appendix A – IDS job levels

Category	Level	Description	Evaluation scores
<b>Administrative, manual and support</b>			
	1	Work requires basic literacy and numeracy skills and the ability to perform a few straightforward and short-term tasks to instructions under immediate supervision. Previous experience is not necessary	Up to 310
	2	Work requires developed literacy and numeracy skills and the ability to perform some routine tasks within procedures that may include keyboard and practical skills and initial contact with customers. Some previous experience is required	311-400
<b>Secretarial/craft</b>			
	3	Work requires specific administrative, practical, craft or technical skills gained by previous experience and qualifications to carry out a range of less routine work and to provide specialist support, and could include closer contact with the public/customers	401-510
	4	Work requires broad and deep administrative, technical or craft skills and experience to carry out a wider range of activities including staff supervision, undertaking specialist routines and procedures and providing some advice	511-620
<b>Vocational/supervisory</b>			
	5	Work requires detailed experience and possibly some level of vocational qualification to be able to oversee the operation of an important procedure or to provide specialist advice and services, involving applied knowledge of internal systems and procedures	621-720
	6	Work requires a vocational qualification and sufficient relevant specialist experience to be able to manage a section or operate with self-contained expertise in a specialist discipline or activity	721-800

<b>Professional/managerial</b>		
7	Work is concerned with the provision of professional services and requires an experienced and qualified professional to provide expertise and advice and operate independently. Also includes operational managers responsible for service delivery	801-1,000
8	Work requires deep professional experience and qualifications in a specific discipline to be able to carry out a range of specialist technical or scientific activities, which may include the management of a team or services. May also include specialist management roles responsible for delivery of a major service	1,001-1,250
<b>Senior management</b>		
9	Senior managerial roles involved in managing an important activity or providing authoritative expertise, also contributing to the organisation as a whole through significant experience	1,251-1,500
<b>Director</b>		
10	Member of a company board or an executive/senior management team in public sector organisations, with overall functional responsibility and input to the strategy of the wider organisation, through deep and broad experience	1,500-1,749
<b>Chief executive</b>		
11	The most senior posts in an organisation responsible for setting the overall direction, strategy, financial success, and performance achievement requiring substantial business pre-eminence	1,750+

## Appendix 2 – Bespoke survey participants

Bracknell Forest

Aberdeen City Council

Falkirk Council

Greenwich(London Borough of)

Leeds City Council

Lincolnshire County Council

Moray Council

Portsmouth City Council

Windsor & Maidenhead (Royal Borough of)

Scottish Borders Council

Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council