

Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on petition [PE1953](#): Review Education Support staff roles, lodged by Roisin Taylor-Young

Background

The petition covers the professional regulation, roles, and pay and conditions of Education Support Staff roles.

The petition calls on the Government to review education support staff roles. It is not wholly clear what the petitioner means by education support staff. It appears that the petitioner is referring to staff delivering learning support in the classroom. The terminology used for these roles varies. Some local authorities use the Classroom Assistants and ASN Auxiliary terminology for staff roles but in many local authorities, staff performing these roles are employed under different job titles such as Pupil Support Assistant, Pupil Support Officer and Learning Assistant.

Teachers' pay and conditions are largely set nationally through the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) which is a tripartite body comprising members from teaching organisations, Local Authorities, and the Scottish Government. The SNCT agrees pay scales for teachers, music tutors, Educational Psychologists, and some other local authority staff.

Terms and conditions, and the duties of staff who are not covered by SNCT agreements will be subject to a combination of local decisions and national bargaining. Most local authorities use a national pay scale, the Spinal Column Points, while some have local pay scales. Both would be updated through national bargaining. The pay scale does not include a list of job titles. Roles with similar titles may have different responsibilities from one local authority to the next, and this may mean that where these similar jobs fall in the pay scale also differs.

Professional regulation

Currently classroom assistants are not required to have a professional registration. The [Scottish Government and Scottish Green Party shared policy programme commits](#) the Scottish Government to:

“explore in collaboration with trade unions and other key stakeholders options for the development of an accredited qualification and

registration programme for Additional Support Needs assistants with final proposals to be brought forward by autumn 2023.”

This is not the first time that the registration of support staff has been considered. In 2017, the Scottish Government consulted on an Education Reform Bill. This included the proposal to replace the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) with an Education Workforce Council which was to take on the responsibilities of the GTCS, the Community Learning and Development Standards Council and register other education professionals, including classroom assistants. The proposal to abolish the GTCS was not widely supported and, for other reasons, the Bill itself was never introduced. The then [Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, John Swinney MSP, told Parliament on 26 June 2018](#)

“We will explore what can be done within the scope of current legislation to provide the benefits of regulation and registration to a wider group of education professionals.”

Ned Sharratt
Senior Researcher
13/09/2022

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in petition briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Published by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), an office of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP