Fair work policy levers in Scotland

Report for the Fair Work Convention

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Contents

Executive Summary

The commitment to fair work in Scotland is long standing and significantly more embedded in policy than elsewhere in the UK. Fair work is defined in Scotland's Fair Work Framework as paid work that offers effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect. The aim of this research is to explore possible new or adapted policy levers to improve fair work in Scotland. The research was commissioned by the Scottish Government on behalf of the Fair Work Convention (FWC).

This research was desk-based and involved a Rapid Evidence Assessment of academic and non-academic peer-reviewed articles, policy and research reports and evaluations, and working papers (all in English). While the evidence assessment focused primarily on UK-based studies, research from other regions and nations was included where this offered relevant insights. Notably, however, much research on improving job quality focusses on legislative or regulatory interventions, limiting its applicability in the current Scottish context.

The evidence assessment had two aims: to identify and review existing knowledge on policy levers and how these are (or may be) applied in advancing fair work; and, to evaluate any evidence on the effectiveness of levers in generating their intended outcome(s). Further, any potential levers had to be applicable to fair work in general, or to one or more of its components; and had to be consistent with the powers available to the Scottish Government.

Our evidence assessment was wide-ranging covering human resource practice, job quality and employment relations to find evaluations of the impact of workplace practices that may be relevant to fair work and be able to be applied without legislative powers.

We deployed two frameworks – one bespoke and one existing – to shape the existing evidence, form our understanding of substantive levers and identify the mechanisms through which policy can impact on practice. Our bespoke framework of change towards fair work is informed by research on individual and organisational learning from which we pose an ongoing relationship and feedback look between awareness of fair work, understanding of what fair work means, endorsement of fair work, action to deliver fair work, support for and evaluation of actions, and dissemination of lessons learned on fair work, that feedback into awareness of fair work in practice.

The second framework we draw on is Hood and Margett's (2007) NATO[1] framework to understand the various ways in which policy can impact practice. NATO stands for Nodality, Authority, Treasure and Organisation. *Nodality* refers to the role and importance of government and policymakers within networks, where they can aid flows of information across key workplace actors. *Authority* refers to the power of government to regulate to

ensure changes in or uptake of particular practices. *Treasure* refers to the resources that governments and policymakers can deploy to influence or shape practice, either by incentivising good practice or disincentivising poor practice. *Organisation* refers to the assets (human and material) available to government and policymakers to support the activities of other actors.

By integrating the change and NATO frameworks we identified a total of twelve levers and a summary of these along with key information on their evidence base, potential ownership, dependencies and constraints, and their potential locus and reach is provided in the table that follows. It should be appreciated that some of these levers are aligned and interlinked in different ways with other levers.

All of these policy levers have potential, through different mechanisms, to enhance fair work in Scotland. But there is no single 'silver bullet' to deliver fair work. Devolution constrains important levers available to policymakers in Scotland, most notably in relation to employment law powers. However, there are actions within the powers and influence of the Scottish Government that could make a difference to the adoption and deepening of fair work in Scotland.

Fair work spans a wide range of workplace practices, and these are configured in a variety of ways across Scotland's workplaces. Employers play a key role in fair work because they are the primary drivers of workplace practice, and many of Scotland's employers consistently deliver good working practices that support fair processes and outcomes. Our proposed levers aim to engage, support and encourage employers, and to support peer-to-peer learning across the employer community.

The levers are both broadly and narrowly targeted but will require the investment of resources to bring about change. This is particularly challenging in the current economic and fiscal context for Scottish Government, public bodies, and employers. However, shifting the dial on fair work requires a range of connected actions, both short-term and longer-term, that develop, support and provide a pathway to impact, and create a tipping point that – in line with the initial approach of the FWC – can better support a Scotland-wide movement towards fair work.

Lever	Evidence	Ownership	Dependencies/Constraints	Locus & Reach
Targeted awareness campaign	Best practice literatures	SG and other stakeholders	Resources	Generic and wide-ranging
Embedding fair work in employability support	In-support progression	SG through NOLB	Resources to embed in employability services	Wide-ranging for job seekers, including most disadvantaged
Support for Real Living Hours	Best practice literatures on rLW extended to hours	Living Wage Foundation, Poverty Alliance and SG	Resources to deliver support to employers in context to move towards rLH	Potentially spans low wage industries with hours' instability - hospitality, social care and retail
Fair work champions in public bodies and ILGs	Best practice literatures	SG (into public sector) and through ILGs	Achieving buy-in from public sector stakeholders	Significant across public sector
Further conditionality	Academic and practice literatures especially related to funding processes	SG and public sector	Need for further evaluation of specific funding processes to assess potential impact	Context specific but examples like Small Business Bonus Scheme could reach smaller employers
Strategic joint capacity investments with key workplace stakeholders	Best practice evaluations such as union learning funds	SG resources and workplace stakeholders interested in increasing fair work capacity	Resources	Strategic targeting across public, private and third sectors
Accredited training in Fair Work	Academic and practice literatures	SG alongside accrediting organisations such as SFC	Buy-in from educational providers and employers	Generic and potentially wide-ranging
Fair work charters	Best practice literatures	SG alongside ILG's	Risk of less impact because they are voluntary	Industry-specific and potentially wide-ranging
Fair work accreditation	Academic and practice literatures around professional standards	SG alongside an appropriate accrediting body	Significant investment of resources over time	Potentially wide reach but possible bias towards employers with good existing fair work practice
Fair work communities of practice	Academic and practice literatures	Members of CoP	May need upfront stimulus to start CoP and connect CoP	Potentially wide ranging
Business support, tools and diagnostics	Academic and practice literatures	SG, public agencies and FWC	Resources	Potentially wide ranging
Fair work evidence hub	Best practice literatures	SG and public agencies	Resources	Potentially wide ranging

Introduction

This report explores possible new or adapted policy levers to improve fair work in Scotland. The research was commissioned by the Scottish Government on behalf of the Fair Work Convention (FWC).

The commitment to fair work in Scotland is long standing and significantly more embedded in policy than elsewhere in the UK, as illustrated by the establishment of an independent FWC in 2015 to advise the Scottish Government on fair work and to advocate for fair work,[2] the development of an evidence-based Fair Work Framework in 2016, the endorsement by the Scottish Government of that Framework and a Fair Work Action Plan to ensure its delivery, recently updated[3]. Advocates of fair work recognise its potential to benefit not just workers/employees, but also employers (across the private, public and third sectors), the economy and society.

Fair work is defined in Scotland's Fair Work Framework as paid work that offers effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect. Fair work is, therefore, multidimensional and spans the range of policies and practices that affect the conduct of work, employment and employment relations in Scotland's workplaces. This includes access to work and employment; contractual arrangements; pay and remuneration policies; the design of jobs and work; career development; access to training, skills and learning; performance and its review; health, safety and well-being policies; work-life balance; and workplace communication, voice and decision making.

At this stage of fair work's (and the FWC's) trajectory and development, ensuring substantive and measurable progress on fair work requires identifying:
1) actions that can further leverage fair work;
2) the ownership of these levers and the conditions in which they can be deployed; and
3) the constraints and facilitators of their deployment, and their likely effects or outcomes.

These levers are also likely to be sensitive to context, such as different sectoral and industry characteristics, and to the distinct challenges emerging from economic turbulence in the Scottish and UK economies that shape the conditions in which fair work thrives or declines.

Advancing fair work and the role of policy
Scotland and the UK are liberal market economies with weaker institutional arrangements for shaping fair work than is the case in countries with greater institutional economic coordination.[4] This creates challenges for where, how and by whom fair work is activated and requires creativity in identifying opportunities for leveraging fair work. It is helpful to

frame the opportunity structure for leveraging fair work in terms of key domains, dimensions and actors within the fair work landscape, and the potential for policy intervention.

Interventions to deliver fair work can take place in different domains – either within or outwith workplaces. In either case, interventions can be regulatory or voluntary (including incentivised voluntary actions). To illustrate, aspects of fair work within workplaces might be leveraged by regulations that require certain workplace practices. In Scotland, the absence of employment law powers means that any workplace intervention is likely to depend on the voluntary actions of employers, and workers where they have sufficient power to act, alongside an influencing role for the Scottish Government.

Outside of workplaces, interventions might occur prior to work – for example, practices that might improve equality of access to work for those with protected characteristics through networking, training and support; or educating young people about fair work; or ensuring that employability support specifically targets fair work. Interventions might also run parallel to work, for example, by setting conditionality requirements for the delivery of public contracts, or by building alliances across civil society organisations to de-legitimise practices that are inconsistent with fair work (such as, for example, fire and rehire).

Levers for fair work can be directed toward support for the idea of fair work in general and towards the multiplicity of distinct practices that underpin the fair work dimensions. Levers might operate at and across quite distinct levels: national, sectoral, industry, occupational or demographic. For example:
- a national lever might be a Scotland-wide awareness campaign targeted at improving employers' understanding of what fair work means and its benefits;
- a sectoral lever might focus on delivery of fair work in the public sector, for example, better embedding fair work capability in public sector boards;
- an industry lever might address the specific challenges of a particular industry or industries, for example, the provision of a management training programme helping managers to understand and operationalise anti-poverty workplace strategies in low pay sectors – which could also target workers in particular occupations;
- a joint charter designed by employers and trade unions in a particular industry is an industry lever, but might support practice in other industries; and
- an online tool to help employers understand their disability, race or gender pay gaps could be both a national lever, but also target particular demographic groups.

The fair work ecosystem in Scotland contains a range of important actors within and beyond workplaces. The Fair Work Framework[5] sets out an illustration of the relevant landscape and the multiple collective actors with a direct or indirect stake in what happens within Scotland's workplaces (adapted below). It is important to acknowledge that beyond the

direct workplace stakeholders (employers, managers, workers and unions) there are many educational, policy, accreditation, support, regulatory and civil society actors as well as clients/customers and communities that might have a role to play in the advance of fair work, often with opportunities to act collectively and in partnership. These include but are not limited to business organisations; trade union confederation; the UK and Scottish governments; local government; public agencies; professional bodies and associations; regulatory, accreditation and quality bodies; universities and colleges; campaigning organisations; and judicial, quasi-judicial and dispute resolution bodies.

Government and policymakers are particularly important actors in relation to fair work. They can engage directly and indirectly with other stakeholders and influence their actions through a range of mechanisms, processes and relationships. How government and policymakers leverage their actions and relationships in support of fair work is crucial to delivering the real change and progress required for Scotland to be a leading fair work nation by 2025.

Findlay and colleagues have argued that "Intervening to improve job quality, however, requires more than exhortation, and many governments fail to deploy sufficiently or at all the range of levers at their disposal".[6] Important levers that could support fair work are not within the devolved powers of the Scottish Parliament, such as those that relate to employment law, aspects of health and safety regulation and important elements of equalities protection. However, there are other ways in which the Scottish Government can act directly or indirectly to deliver a leading fair work nation.

Multiple policy levers have been deployed to support fair work since the Scottish Government's adoption of the Fair Work Framework. Specific responsibility for fair work has been enshrined in the portfolios of Cabinet Secretaries and in Scottish Government departments. Ministerial letters of guidance to public agencies and bodies have focussed attention on delivery of fair work, and their subsequent organisational strategies have reflected their activities to support fair work. The Fair Work Convention has continued to be supported by the Scottish Government to advise government on fair work and to advocate for fair work more widely. New National Performance Indicators have been adopted to capture, measure and monitor aspects of fair work. Public funding has been made available to employers' organisations and trade unions to support fair work. More recently, fair work has featured more centrally as a criterion for public funding and procurement. Few of these policy actions have been formally measured or evaluated in relation to their impact but taken together they have undoubtedly enshrined fair work as an important policy focus in Scotland. There may well be an argument for refreshing some of these previous policy foci, but the purpose of this research is to consider potential new levers.

These include the use of devolved regulatory and non-regulatory powers; government spending, public procurement and funding arrangements involving fair work conditionality; the development of policies in relation to business and skills support that target fair work; and a variety of ways to encourage and embed a commitment to fair work amongst workplace stakeholders in Scotland. The adoption and early deployment of Fair Work First conditionality in public sector grants and procurements illustrates one such lever.

The NATO framework[7] is helpful to understand the ways that policy can impact on fair work. NATO stands for Nodality, Authority, Treasure and Organisation. *Nodality* refers to the role and importance of government and policymakers within networks, where they can aid flows of information across key workplace actors. Policymakers are not just network members but can also, crucially, perform a meta governance role in helping to corral, combine and integrate ideas, concerns and priorities across networks to deliver jointly developed solutions.

Authority refers to the power of government to regulate to ensure changes in or uptake of particular practices. While authority is often the strongest lever of government and policymakers, regulation/legislation can be blunt instruments and are often focused on ensuring only minimum standards of workplace and labour market practice. Authority is more complex in systems of multilevel governance such as in the devolved context of Scotland, where key powers are reserved to the Westminster Parliament.

Treasure refers to the resources that governments and policymakers can deploy to influence or shape practice, either by incentivising good practice or disincentivising poor practice. This can include, for example, attaching conditions to the receipt of public funding or in procurement processes.

Lastly, *Organisation* refers to the assets (human and material) available to government and policymakers to support the activities of other actors. Governments can, for example, use their own staff to support and co-ordinate programmes and the activities of other workplace actors.

An understanding of the interaction of domains, dimensions, actors and policy roles sets the backdrop against which levers for fair work can be identified and evaluated. Levers might either deter poor practice or support and encourage better practice in relation to fair work – and some levers might do both.

Methods/Approach

This research was desk-based and involved a Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) of academic and non-academic peer-reviewed articles, policy and research reports and evaluations, and working papers (all in English). While the REA focused primarily on UK-based studies, research from other regions were included where these offered insights. Table 1 in Appendix A summarises our PICO (Patient or problem, Intervention or exposure, Comparison or control and Outcome) research framework and provides further information about search parameters and key databases.

The REA had two aims. First, to identify and review existing knowledge on policy levers and how these are (or may be) applied in advancing fair work. Second, to evaluate any evidence on the effectiveness of levers in generating their intended outcome(s). Further, any potential levers had to be applicable to fair work in general, or to one or more of its components; and had to be consistent with the powers available to the Scottish Government.

The REA was wide-ranging, nuanced and complex. There is no shortage of research on all aspects of human resource practice, job quality and employment relations (the wider literatures in which debates on fair work are located). However, the research base that goes beyond describing workplace practices to evaluating their impact is significantly more limited. In addition, much of the wider research base on job quality interventions focusses on the use of legislative powers. This constrains the scope for learning from wider research, given the need not only to focus on practice that can be impacted by policy levers (as opposed to practices that are in the control of employers), but also the more limited policy levers available to the Scottish Government.

In considering how levers might bring about change in practice, a lever might impact on one or more of the following ways: increase awareness of what fair work means; encourage better understanding of fair work; promote endorsement of fair work; help guide action; support monitoring and evaluation of the impact of fair work; and/or enhance dissemination and facilitate learning about fair work, its outcomes and impact.

Framing potential levers

The starting point for framing and identifying feasible levers to further drive fair work in Scotland is **what government/policymakers can do** in relation to fair work in general, its five core dimensions and the many practices that underpin these dimensions. Other workplace actors have different capabilities, reach and options that are not available to policymakers: for example, employers could choose to implement a wider range of fair work supporting practices without influence from government/policymakers. The NATO framework helps outline government's direct and indirect forms of influence.

A second element in thinking about potential levers is to consider **which actors** might most usefully be influenced. The initial focus of potential policy levers is often on collective actors (like employers' organisations or trade unions), but only as channels to inform and influence the practice of individual workplace stakeholders. The workplace is the space where fair work is experienced and implemented, and so engagement with higher level actors is only of value where it has the potential to influence workplace practice.

We deployed a bespoke framework of change towards fair work informed by and developed from the broad body of research on individual and organisational learning. We pose that fair work is supported through a range of both separate and connected as well as self-reinforcing mechanisms, beginning with increasing awareness of fair work; improving understanding of what fair work means; embedding endorsement of fair work; taking action to deliver fair work; supporting fair work actions and their evaluation; and disseminating lessons learned on fair work, that feedback into improved awareness of fair work in practice and in context.

Using this approach, the research first identified a set of policy levers to consider as having any potential to enhance the adoption of fair work in Scotland. The diagram below captures both the framing approach and the practices identified.

These practices meet the tight constraints previously outlined in the methods section above. The circle represents the framework of change in fair work and the different stages of the mechanisms that can support fair work. Twelve possible levers are identified and discussed. The internal arrows make clear that each lever can impact fair work on their own, while the external arrows indicate how levers might reinforce each other. The diagram outlines, but does not endorse, possible levers, with each lever reviewed for potential effectiveness and feasibility in the following sections of this Report.

Understanding
- Support for development of fair work accredited training

Endorsement
- Support for fair work charters
- Support for fair work accreditation

Action
- Employability provision
- Support for Living Hours
- Further conditionality
- SG, public sector/body and Industry Leadership Group Fair Work leads
- Strategic joint capacity investment (in employers orgs, Trade Unions and third sector orgs)

Leveraging fair work

Awareness
- Targeted campaign

Dissemination and Learning
- FW hub
- FW networks/ community of practice

Support and Evaluation
- Business support, tools, diagnostics

We now turn to a detailed discussion of specific levers (identified above) that the Scottish Government and its partners might consider in promoting fair work, organised in relation to the NATO framework described earlier, and summarised in the Table below.

Potential policy levers by mechanism of influence			
Authority	**Treasure**	**Nodality**	**Organisation**
Targeted awareness campaign	Further conditionality	Development of accredited fair work training	Business support, tools and diagnostics
Embedding fair work in employability provision	Strategic joint capacity investments	Support for fair work charters	Support for a fair work hub
Support for Real Living Hours		Support for formal fair work accreditation	
SG, public sector/body and ILG fair work champions		Support for fair work communities of practice	

The NATO framework allows us to consider how government can influence in different ways and at different stages. For example, there may be times and priorities where the role of government focuses on 'nodality', providing the foundation and networking capabilities for information exchange. At other times, the policy focus may be on 'authority', for example, requiring certain actions of those government contract with). The discussion begins with 'Authority' - those levers wholly within the power of the Scottish Government or local government in Scotland.

AUTHORITY – direct government levers

LEVER 1: Targeted campaign to raise awareness of fair work

Evidence
Targeted campaigns can deliver information and raise awareness of issues among an identified population as a first step to attitudinal and behavioural change. Increasing awareness of an issue – particularly one about which relatively little is known – is a critical first step. However, awareness alone is not necessarily impactful, unless it gets people to change how they think, feel or act.[8] Evidence suggests that awareness raising needs to be targeted to the right audience; avoid unintended harm or backlash; and identify what people should do differently – by defining "… actionable and achievable calls to action that will lead a specific group of people to do something they haven't done before".[9]

There is an extensive grey literature highlighting the practical steps and best practices around how to manage a successful campaign. Research on public interest communications identifies four essential elements for success: "target your audience as narrowly as possible;

create compelling messages with clear calls to action; develop a theory of change; and use the right messenger".[10]

However, robust and independent evaluations of whether specific campaigns are effective are less widely available. In other words, much more is written/known about *how* to maximise the impact of a campaign than about whether a campaign delivers on its aims. Nevertheless, these best practice literatures do suggest that campaigns can be important in increasing awareness and driving changes to policies, practices and cultures within organisations.

Potential to improve fair work adoption or practice
Applying the essential elements of a successful awareness raising campaign outlined above to fair work, the direct stakeholders of a fair work awareness raising campaign are employers, workers and unions, with other citizens as key indirect stakeholders. The compelling narrative of fair work in Scotland is its well-evidenced benefits for individuals, employers, the economy and society. The theory of change underpinning developments in fair work in Scotland has, to date, been to encourage workplace stakeholders to deliver and embed fair work, with supportive intervention from the Scottish Government and other stakeholders where relevant. Consequently, the 'right messenger' is workplace stakeholders who can convey clear messages about their experience of fair work.
There have been campaigns around fair work in Scotland. For example, the *'4 Steps to Fair Work'* campaign is currently underway and promoted by the Coalition of Support Care Providers Scotland (CCPS).[11] The campaign focuses on pay inequality; ensuring fair pay for equal work; valuing staff; and delivering equality. While such campaigns might contribute to awareness raising, the CCPS campaign is aimed at encouraging Scottish Government to deliver fair work for social care sector workers.

Where evaluations of awareness raising campaigns have been conducted in a Scottish context, there is some evidence that they raise awareness, for example, around aspects of tackling specific forms of discrimination such as mental health stigma[12] or the rationale for workplace health strategies and fair work.[13] Such campaigns to promote fair work have potential, therefore, to raise awareness, and to contribute to the advance of fair work as part of a wider strategy to link awareness to endorsement and action, as discussed below.

Ownership of lever
The Scottish Government would be the key owner/enabler of a public awareness campaign on fair work, though partnership with other direct workplace stakeholders would also be crucial. An awareness campaign would target direct workplace stakeholders but might also impact on a wider stakeholder group such as future labour market participants and consumers.

Dependencies and constraints
The key dependency in delivering an effective awareness raising campaign beyond the elements of the campaign itself is the receptiveness of those to whom the campaign is targeted, both to participate in the campaign and to act on its message. Awareness raising can adapt over time from general awareness of fair work to specific issues or the experiences of specific groups.

The key immediate constraint in deploying this lever is the cost of a well-designed and effective awareness campaign. Beyond this, awareness raising is a first and necessary step towards advancing fair work, but it is not a sufficient condition for change. Moving from awareness to action is contingent on aligning increased awareness to additional information and support tailored to the needs of specific employers and workers. We discuss at Lever 4 the role of fair work champions in Scotland's public agencies and public bodies in signposting to support for fair work, and at Levers 11 and 12, the need for a suite of appropriate support and tools, and a repository of information, to support practice. Awareness raising might also be usefully aligned with single issue campaigns (Lever 3) around fair work dimensions or specific practices.

Locus and reach
In the first instance, given that some workplace stakeholders have little awareness of the fair work policy agenda,[14] an effective awareness raising campaign is likely to be generic and economy-wide, giving significant potential reach. More industry-specific campaigns are also possible. While these inevitably have a narrower reach, their more specific locus could allow for more tailored information on fair work in industry context.

Lever 1 Insight: There is potential value in the Scottish Government leading the design, testing and evaluation of targeted awareness-raising campaigns communicating tailored messages on the importance of fair work to employers, industry representatives and other key stakeholder communities.

LEVER 2: Embedding fair work in Scotland's employability services

Evidence
Prior research identifies employability support as one area of opportunity to deliver in-work progression,[15] either by developing more innovative Active Labour Market Policy approaches to designing programmes for wage progression; improving careers information advice and guidance to enable effective career decision-making; working with employers to identify barriers and opportunities to progression as well as its benefits to business; and developing training support for sectoral career pathways.

There is increasing interest in welfare states across Europe in exactly such workplace-engaged approaches to employability services, given a realisation that a more interventionist and collaborative approach to working with providers, service users and employers has the potential to deliver more sustainable fair work outcomes.[16] There is also good reason for seeking such a pivot in employability services, given the legacy of a UK-level policy agenda in this space that has not prioritised fair work. Successive UK governments have overseen employability services that rely upon welfare conditionality to 'encourage' participation and use payment-by-results contracting to incentivise service providers to move people into jobs as quickly as possible. International comparative analyses have often characterised this approach as 'work-first', which experts see as less effective in delivering fair work when compared with policies in other countries [for example, some Nordic states] that place more emphasis on the quality of job outcomes and/or the opportunity to take up learning rather than/alongside paid employment.[17] The outcomes delivered by 'work-first services' have sometimes proved problematic in terms of limited security of hours, tenure and income; and limited opportunity for learning and progression. Indeed, the strengthening of in-work conditionality under Universal Credit reforms to some extent reflects an acknowledgement by UK Government that its existing employability services often deliver inadequate hours and income for those achieving 'successful' outcomes [the UK Government has chosen to address this by applying more punitive conditionality to vulnerable jobseekers rather than working with employers to promote fair work outcomes].[18]

Potential to improve fair work adoption or practice
Existing employability provision funded and supported by the Scottish Government could play an important role in achieving fair work outcomes, particularly in relation to the 'Opportunity' dimension, by facilitating the inclusion of people who might otherwise face exclusion from paid work, and especially by enhancing opportunity for potentially vulnerable client populations such as lone parents, disabled people, ex-offenders and care experienced young people. The payment-by-results regime for Fair Start Scotland incentivises this support for vulnerable groups, with providers achieving the greatest financial reward for achieving job entries for the 'intensive' support group facing substantial barriers to participation and in need of specialist support services.[19]

Funding and priority indicators for employability provision can also contribute – to some extent – to promoting the 'Security' dimension of Fair Work. Sustainment payments to Fair Start Scotland providers seek to encourage the insertion of people into secure jobs (35% of funding is triggered if the client is still in work after 26 weeks, with a further 50% paid for sustained job outcome at 52 weeks). Yet the extent to which existing employability provision delivers income/decent pay is more doubtful. A recent evaluation of Fair Start Scotland concluded that "based on wage rates, sectors, and contract types, it is evident

that, on average, the jobs that Fair Start Scotland participants achieve are at the lower end of the quality and fair work spectrum".[20]

However, employability services could offer more and different forms of support to encourage fair work outcomes, and there is scope for further mainstreaming of fair work as a priority and [measurable] outcome for Scotland's employability services. Employability services that prioritise job entry for participants without fair work are deploying significant public resources in a sub-optimal manner. Funding arrangements and strategic agreements with Local Employability Partnerships and delivery partners under future iterations of the No One Left Behind (NOLB) approach could easily be recalibrated to emphasise, incentivise or require a broader range of fair work outcomes such as greater security or opportunities for in-work progression.

Employability providers could be asked to work more intensively with employers to identify opportunities for progression and learning post-job entry, and to consider a broader range of flexible working opportunities that might assist people with caring responsibilities and/or managing disability/health conditions to enter work. Evidence from other welfare states suggests that where employability providers engage employers as active partners in adjusting the workplace to the needs and capabilities of job seekers, then sustainability and progression rates tend to improve.[21] Providers could be asked to report on the extent to which workplaces that provide the destination for participants are unionised or offer other effective voice mechanisms. Entry into and/or progression to better paid employment could be incentivised to promote income security. Hours sufficiency could be prioritised by asking providers to engage with employers to ensure that employability participants transitioning to work do not experience under-employment.

Ownership of lever
The Scottish Government has full powers over, and funds, employability provision (outwith the basic services provided by the UK Government's Jobcentre Plus network). This means direct authority over its national employability programme, contracting with providers to deliver 'Fair Start Scotland' and agreeing priorities with local providers delivering complementary local provision under Local Employability Partnership structures. Networks of regional/local public, private and third sector providers are responsible for the delivery of provision. The NOLB approach has driven progress towards the improved integration of local employability services and, from 2024, will see Fair Start Scotland replaced with a more fully integrated programme of local collaborative services.

The next phase of NOLB integration will see further coherence and integration of service offers for different groups at the local level. Clearly, constructive partnership-working with employers proving opportunities for labour market entry are important to achieving fair work outcomes. While the achievement of fair work outcomes for vulnerable groups is likely

to remain a significant challenge, the recalibration of priorities, rewards and priorities towards fair work in Scotland's employability services could be relatively straightforward.

Dependencies and constraints
Designing employability services that better embed fair work will depend on the Scottish Government and partners in local government and service provider communities (including the third sector) building upon strong and established collaborative relationships to embed fair work outcomes into the objectives and incentives for employability provision. Crucially, delivering more from employability support is likely to require broader and deeper engagement with employers, which may require some resourcing/incentivisation of employers to engage. Many fair work outcomes might be challenging to gather data on without sufficient additional resource for local providers. Of course, a key constraint is that Scottish Ministers have no legislative power to require employer co-operation with employability service providers. Nevertheless, there is scope for the Scottish Government and partners to explore including additional fair work targets and indicators as part of the priorities and targets for, or even contractual requirements of, the delivery of future employability services.

Locus and reach
Employability services target opportunities for labour market inclusion in all sectors. However, low valued added service sector opportunities make up a relatively high proportion of outcomes for programme participants. Therefore, it is likely that there would be a need for future programmes to be resourced to engage employers in these sectors to advocate for and facilitate fair work outcomes.

The reach of employability provision is significant. More than 80,000 people (mostly jobseekers from vulnerable groups) have participated in Fair Start Scotland or services under the NOLB approach in the past five years. Action to promote a broader range of fair work outcomes therefore has the potential to deliver positive impacts for a substantial number of vulnerable people in the labour market.

Lever 2 Insight: There is potential value in the Scottish Government, Local Employability Partnerships and partners testing how fair work outcome indicators can be further prioritised and measured as a means of assessing the performance of Scotland's employability services in supporting fair work. There is also potential value in considering how employability funding can be used to incentivise and reward the achievement of fair work outcomes for service users.

LEVER 3: Support for Real Living Hours

Evidence

The Living Wage campaign (now referred to as the *real* Living Wage or rLW) emerged from community-based action in 2001, with the first rLW rate introduced by the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) in 2011. Since, the rLW has resulted in subsequent gains in hourly pay for over 400,000 workers in the UK and most notably for those in elementary roles and on part-time contracts.[22] Some of the accredited rLW employers have reported business benefits in terms of reputational gains, improved workplace relations and performance, and commercial gains through attracting more contracts and/or new customers. Moreover, there are almost no reports from employers that the introduction of the rLW required a balancing or trade-off with other terms and conditions to manage the higher payment.[23]

While the volume of businesses seeking accreditation as rLW employers is growing, the volume of employers is small relative to the business population in the UK[1]. There is evidence, however, of a ripple effect which has the potential to reach other employers with a form of 'instrumental motivation' to sign-up to compete for talent (i.e. employers are motivated to match competitors' commitment to paying the rLW in order to attract staff).[24] [25] Moreover, while institutional motivation through pressure from campaign groups, politicians or trade unions has been less effective in motivating employers to support the rLW, there is evidence that more focused place-based campaigning has been important.[26]

The concept of living hours was initially developed to capture the increasing segmentation between standard and non-standard low-waged work (Ilsøe, 2017) in which the experience of living on a low income for the latter is exacerbated by volatility in the number of hours worked and the scheduling of work. Unpredictable hours impact on planning life outside of work. Over half of those on insecure contracts in the UK receive less than 1 weeks' notice of their shifts,[27] creating challenges for child and other care. Volatility of working hours can drive income insecurity and poorer wellbeing.[28] Insecure hours contracts can also create a higher financial outlay for workers (often already navigating life on a low income) as short notification of shifts can mean higher travel or childcare costs.[29]

The Living Wage Foundation launched the Living Hours (LHs) scheme in the UK in 2019 to tackle insecure forms of work. Accreditation is only available to employers already certified as rLW employers[30] as the combination of a living wage and living hours is rightly seen as fundamental to tackling in-work poverty and providing a secure and reasonable standard of living.[31] The scheme commits employers to providing a minimum of 16 hours per week (unless the worker requests otherwise), a contract that reflects the hours generally worked and four weeks' notice of shifts (or payment for shifts cancelled within this notice period).

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[1] There are 13,000 accredited rLW employers in the UK with around 3,000 of these in Scotland. There are 1.4 million businesses in the private sector alone with employees – of which 96,453 are in Scotland (BEIS, 2022).

To achieve LHs accreditation, employers are required to collate information on all types of contracts offered and use this data to complete the diagnostic tool developed by the LWF which shows the extent of existing LH contracts in the organisation. Thereafter, employers are required to participate in workshops that support them to move to providing LHs across all contracts. Accreditation is awarded on successful completion of the above steps.

Other campaigns touch on the issue of hours insufficiency and unpredictability. The STUC's Better than Zero campaign started in 2015 to address the exploitative use of zero hours contracts. Other jurisdictions have also addressed the broad area of living hours. In Ireland, where an employee's contract does not reflect the reality of the hours they generally work (over a 12-month period), they can request a banded hours contract which subsequently provides the employee with right to work an average of their banded hours for the next 12 months. The Northern Ireland Assembly has also previously shown interest in adopted such a banded hours system.

Potential to improve fair work adoption or practice
The Scottish Government has supported the adoption of the rLW and the delivery of the Scottish campaign since 2016, delivering funding to support awareness raising and administering of the accreditation as well as advocating the standard by signing up to it.[32] It has taken significant steps to ensure the payment of the rLW as a minimum in the Scottish public sector; required payment of the rLW to all adult social care workers and ELC workers delivering public commissioned services; required payment of the rLW in the Scottish Business Pledge (so that only employers that pay the rLW can be signatories to the Pledge); introduced the RLW as a condition of contract within procurement contracts and a condition of grant funding where it is relevant to do; and has embedded payment of the rLW as a condition within Fair Work First. The government has therefore used its authority to adopt, promote and encourage payment of the rLW, thus supporting fair work by enhancing the income security of low paid workers.

While there is some inference of a positive causal link between Scottish Government support and the reduction in the proportion of employees working for less than the rLW (decreasing from a persistent 18-20% of workers between 2012-2016 to a record low of 9% in 2023),[33] isolating the impact of this support from other influences and environmental factors is particularly challenging. Despite this, there are identifiable real effects of the Scottish Government's approach: wages in adult social care and early learning and childcare are a direct consequence of their policy. This is also true for wider public sector pay policy and for those in firms who contract with the Scottish Government. Robust rLW requirements for grant funding will also start having an impact in third sector organisations delivering services that are publicly funded. These elements of direct delivery also contribute to momentum around the wider campaign. In addition, it seems evident that the Scottish Government's support for the rLW has raised the profile of the standard as something clear and tangible that employers can do.

In-work poverty can be a consequence of low pay, insufficient paid hours or a combination of both. The Scottish Government has provided financial support for the delivery of the Living Hours Accreditation Scheme since 2021 and identifies accreditation as good practice within its Fair Work First conditionality for public sector contracts. It has the authority to broaden and deepen its support for LHs and lead the way in supporting this progressive workplace practice. Government support can help raise awareness, support campaigning organisations and bring government's influence to bear on employers to tackle hours and associated income instability. While the Scottish Government continues to advocate for the rLW, at present only 9% of workers in Scotland do not earn it, meaning that the pool of employees to impact is decreasing and is likely to constitute some of the most difficult to reach sectors and businesses. There is, however, an existing pool of employers with rLW accreditation who might be receptive to engaging with the Scottish Government to deliver LH. While LH accreditation is voluntary by employers, government support may have a significant impact, and researchers have pointed to the need for greater coordination of LHs to improve its reach and impact.[34]

LHs may also deliver benefits beyond improved income security as greater hours predictability can better support employees to access training and opportunities for career progression.[35] Moreover, the LHs scheme requires dialogue between the parties to discuss their respective needs and agree on minimum hours which could, in turn, improve worker voice.

Ownership of lever
LH Accreditation is managed by the Living Wage Foundation for the UK, and by the Poverty Alliance in Scotland. The Scottish Government has provided financial support to the Poverty Alliance for LH accreditation since 2021. Further promotion of LH would require facilitation by Scottish Government of the lever in the context of formal 'ownership' of the accreditation by the Poverty Alliance.

Dependencies and constraints
One possible constraint on embedding LHs is the need for an hours calculation system and more developed workforce planning that might challenge smaller organisations without an in-house HR function. This is an area, however, where government information, tools and support (see later levers) might play a positive and crucial role.

Locus and reach
The concept of LHs is relatively new so there is no significant evidence base on its impact. However, 6.1m workers across the UK are in insecure work[2] which includes 17% of workers in Scotland.[36] There are so far 89 accredited Living Hours accredited employers in the UK[37]

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[2] Insecure contracts are defined as non-permanent work (casual, seasonal, fixed-term and agency - not by choice), less than 16 hours but wanting more (under-employment), volatility in pay or hours while being below median income, zero hours contracts, and low-paid self-employed work.

and, encouragingly, half of rLW accredited employers report a likelihood of seeking LHs accreditation.[38]

The locus of an intervention to support LH spans those industries where hours' instability is a feature. While the LHs campaign attempts to reach all industries, particular low-wage industries and occupations like hospitality, social care and retail are identified as promising the greatest potential benefit. The hospitality sector in particular is reported to have a disproportionately high share of workers on insecure contracts[39] and zero hours contracts (29% of employees).[40]

Lever 3 Insight: There is potential value in the Scottish Government providing further financial, policy and campaigning support for Living Hours, and for further evaluation of the impact of such a campaign. Specifically, there is potential value in the Scottish Government working with relevant partners to support the development of accessible Living Hours tools and support that might enable employers and employees to assess the extent to which different workplaces and jobs provide sufficient hours (see Lever 11).

LEVER 4: Creating fair work champions in the Scottish Government, public sector, public agencies, public bodies and Industry Leadership Groups (ILGs)

Evidence
Workplace 'champions' are key agents of change dedicated to improving a specific area of practice. Champions can be employees or managers who combine enthusiasm for the role with a desire to promote and improve people's experience in the workplace.[41] Champions are change agents who tend to operate in focussed areas, including skills and training, mental health, physical health, productivity; innovation; equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI); and wellbeing. Champions can work on their own or in tandem with a network of those in similar or allied roles. Evidence suggests that EDI champions, for example, are a growing presence in public (e.g., further and higher education, and in healthcare settings) and third sector organisations. Champions are a key part of driving awareness and changes to policies, practices and cultures within organisations.

Positive assessments of the effectiveness of workplace champions are stronger in grey or practitioner literatures,[42] where there is extensive discussion of key practical lessons for diversity management.[43] [44] [45] What research does exist[46] suggests that named individuals with specific responsibility for change initiatives leading or "championing" inclusion initiatives can enhance the efficacy of organisational diversity efforts,[47] though some researchers caution against the risks of 'ghettoising' dedicated gender equality activity.

There is also direct evidence about the efficacy of appointing champions in areas such as workplace wellbeing (mental and physical). Two positive early evaluations come from

studies in England and Australia in healthcare settings that highlight the positive role played by champions in helping to improve levels of physical activity at work.[48]

While distinct from the role of champions, Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) can play an important governance role in public bodies and are required to be independent, impartial and bring experience/expertise, oversight, scrutiny and challenge into boards. They are required to act in the interests of wider society. NEDs in the public sector are governed by the UK Corporate Governance Code for Central Government Departments, and two recent reports of NEDs in Central UK Government Departments point to them performing wider roles in non-board assigned areas[49] or in areas not publicly documented or defined.[50]

While there is evidence detailing the positive link between the presence of independent NEDs and firm-level financial performance in the UK and internationally,[51] research on their organisational and operational effectiveness in public bodies and governance is limited. One illustration of the impact and effectiveness of NEDs focuses on their role in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR[3]).[52]

Potential to improve fair work adoption or practice
These evaluations give reasons for optimism regarding the likely impact of fair work champions in Scotland. Champions have a role to play in raising awareness of fair work as a workplace issue and in influencing the understanding of, adoption of, and outcomes of fair work practices, and are most likely to be effective where they operate within a wider network of champions (see Lever 9).

For example, a fair work champion may identify opportunities to raise the awareness of EDI issues; support the design and development of fair work policy; ensure that local or frontline issues inform fair work priorities; monitor progress and develop actions to address gaps; share best practice and signpost workers to appropriate policies and supports.

While distinct from the role of champions, independent non-executive directors (NEDs) in public bodies in Scotland may provide another avenue for embedding a dedicated fair work role and responsibility. NEDs on public boards with specific responsibility for fair work may provide a mechanism for greater strategic engagement with fair work in the public sector.

Ownership of lever

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[3] CSR typically refers to a wide-ranging set of voluntary company societal actions involving philanthropy or ethical business or investment practices, and a process by which companies manage their relationships with stakeholders. In the former, CSR is typically linked with brand management, while the latter focusses on the relationship between private sector business conduct and governmental regulatory structures (e.g. Alberada et al 2007). Research in CSR focusses on the governance of the social, ethical and environmental impacts of businesses and the array of 'soft law' tools that nation-states employ to shape business conduct (for a review see Kourala et al 2019).

The Scottish Government has direct authority to encourage and sponsor the identification, appointment, training and development of fair work champions across its own employees, public agencies, public bodies and parts of the wider public sector. Local government in Scotland also has ownership of this lever as it applies in parts of the public sector for which they are responsible. The Scottish Government also plays a role in public appointments of NEDs in Scotland and is responsible for the operation of Industry Leadership Groups (ILGs). ILGs bring together sector stakeholders to provide a strategic interface between specific industries and government with a view to progressing industry ambitions, reinforce industry cohesion, foster strategic partnership around shared priorities, and provide leadership and a collective voice for the sector in question. While there has been some recent experimentation with fair work structures in ILGs in Scotland (for example, the Fair Work Sub-group of the Retail ILG), embedding fair work expertise and responsibility in the specific priorities and operation of ILGs is the exception rather than the rule. There is a role for the Scottish Government to ensure that fair work is an embedded responsibility in all ILGs.

Dependencies and constraints
The effectiveness of attempting to develop dedicated capacity around fair work in public organisations, public boards and ILGs is likely to be highly contingent on buy-in from relevant public sector workplace stakeholders, notwithstanding the Government's and local authorities' formal authority. Starting with the public sector and public bodies allows the Scottish Government to ensure that fair work is better understood and embedded in Scottish public life, and to pilot, deploy and evaluate champions in ways that that may generate significant lessons for employers and workers in the wider Scottish economy, enhancing the potential reach of this lever in the longer term. Training to support this dedicated capacity and networks to connect them are also key dependencies (see levers 7 and 10).

Constraints on the development of a fair work champions approach are likely to arise from orientation, capability and capacity concerns. An effective champions' programme requires identification of those individuals – including those at a senior level – willing to advocate for fair work within their organisations. It also requires investment in training and skills development to support that role (see Lever 8). Crucially, public organisations face increasing capacity constraints that may limit the time available to champion fair work activities.

Locus and reach
There is considerable potential in developing specialist fair work expertise across public sector bodies and public sector-led processes in Scotland that are in the direct or indirect authority of the Scottish Government and of local government. Given the size of the public sector, employing approximately 594,000 people across Scotland, this lever would have significant reach. Moreover, in the delivery of public services to individuals and

organisations, the public sector itself has a lever to cascade its own fair work expertise more widely across Scotland's economy and society.

Lever 4 Insight: There is potential value in the Scottish Government and local authorities supporting the training of, and evaluating the impact of, workplace champions with expertise in specific fair work components and practices. There may also be value in a parallel and complementary training and support for NEDs to become advocates for fair work. This lever is specific to public agencies, public bodies and the public sector. Not only does this cover a significant proportion of employees in Scotland, all of these organisations closely with other workplace stakeholders in the private and third sectors.

TREASURE – incentivising practice change and capacity building

LEVER 5: Expanding conditionality or linkage

Evidence
Governments can use market power through their purchases of goods and services to pursue social policy objectives.[53] This can include labour clauses – that is, what government sees as good practice in relation to workers. Through public procurement and contracting, businesses are provided with an economic incentive (the desire to win public contracts) to comply with labour clauses.[54]

Different terms are used for this particular use of governments' market power. Conditionality – the awarding of a contract subject to meeting qualifying conditions – is most commonly used, though McCrudden[55] argues that 'linkage' is a better term to signal a broader approach that might include things like qualification/eligibility of contractors. One advantage of the term 'linkage' is that it highlights not just the economic incentive of conditionality but also how contracting can more widely signal what is valued across workplace practice.

Labour clauses are not new. The ILO adopted Convention 94 in 1949 to encourage the extension of collectively agreed pay rates or otherwise regulated pay rates for workers hired in contracting companies. Some have argued that public procurement has recently been re-discovered as a lever for promoting higher labour standards[56] and there is some evidence of greater responsiveness to labour clauses in many countries.[57]

Conditionality is a common approach of governments in other policy areas.
The rights of individuals to many social benefits (eg unemployment benefits) are often conditional on either category (for example, being a citizen of a certain age), circumstance (such as being unemployed) or conduct (as in actively seeking work).[58] The overarching rationale for conditionality is that public money should be spent for the common good.[59]

Yet there are tensions between the different roles of government - supporting labour standards but also delivering value for money as the custodian of public finances - that impact on the adoption and operation of conditionality in public contracting. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)[60] has argued recently that a consequence of the EU's financial rules on public procurement is that – on the EU's own data - half of all public contracts to private companies are awarded **solely** on the criteria of price,[61] incentivising companies to avoid high labour standards and generating 'social dumping' to the detriment of workers and responsible employers.

In 2021, labour clauses were for the first time included in the regulation of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy subsidies.[62] Farmers who fail to adhere to basic labour standards will risk a reduction in their CAP subsidies. While Member States are to define precise rules, establish labour inspections and enforcement mechanisms, this focus on transparent employment conditions, providing contracts and ensuring health and safety of workers is considered the most innovative aspect of the new regulatory framework.

Noting the development above, the ETUC argue that the same approach should apply to the entire EU budget. Public funds (at EU or national level) deployed in support of European industry around net zero and just transition should also be conditional on respecting workers' rights and collective agreements (consistent with the EU's commitment to 80% collective bargaining coverage) as well as investing in better working conditions, reskilling and high-quality apprenticeships. Contracting rules, they argue, should also be underpinned by effective oversight by social partners and effective sanctions.
Understanding how conditionality/linkage acts (or might act) as a lever to effect change is hampered by the lack of research on its operation or effects.[63] The limited research base does, however, contain some useful insights, and three useful examples are outlined below.

Australian state-level governments require all businesses who supply government to comply with employment-related legislative obligations and adherence to industry-specific codes of best practice. Yet this still leaves scope for labour protections to be de-prioritised or ignored by administrators driven more by securing best value for money.[64]

To address this risk, a more innovative approach has been adopted in the Victorian Government Schools Contract Cleaning Program.[65] First, a wide range of stakeholders are involved in the design and administration of the system. Second, businesses are subjected to a pre-qualification process administered by a tripartite committee of stakeholders to become eligible contractors. Third, labour standards are the core criterion against which eligible contractors are assessed. While there have been no comprehensive evaluations of the Program's outcomes and effectiveness, it offers useful insights as to the direct engagement of a wider range of stakeholders in procurement conditionality.

Our second example is a cross-national study of socially responsible procurement to address low wages and precarious work by local government in Denmark, Germany and the UK.[66] Core to all three examples is the importance of pragmatic alliances of progressive politicians, unions and employers to drive socially responsible procurement. The researchers found that labour clauses can compensate for weak labour market regulation (such as in the UK) by setting higher standards for outsourced workers and can complement more regulated labour markets by bringing a wider group of workers under the umbrella of collectively agreed standards. This research identified key challenges for conditionality in procurement:

- First, the tension between the potentially contradictory roles of public bodies influenced the effectiveness of labour clauses, since in all cases additional resources were required to deliver external contracts meeting the labour standards requirements.

- Second, monitoring and enforcement remained crucial beyond the design and deployment of socially responsible procurement to avoid dilution of labour clauses over time.

- Third, without strong underpinning social dialogue, it may be difficult to scale up these local initiatives.

- Fourth, some still fear that labour clauses are mere rhetoric, diverting attention from improving labour standards through stronger legal protection or collective action.[67]

Notwithstanding these challenges, the research shows the significance of deliberate political choices to support labour standards, and the importance of examples like the three cases in encouraging other public authorities to adopt labour clause conditionality. The research concludes that "… all three initiatives make a difference compared to the status quo ante"[68] in terms of improving pay and working conditions for workers at risk of precarity.

The third example highlights the approach of Nantes Metropole[69] (an intercommunal administrative structure in France) to improve job quality and inclusion through a mix of procurement conditionality and corporate social responsibility (CSR). The Metropole works with a CSR network of employers, trade unions and third sector organisations facilitated by the local Chambers of Commerce to inform members of the value of CSR and good quality jobs and the relationship between CSR and productivity. The particular focus on the responsibility of business to provide good quality jobs has led to local banks providing

specific loans for entrepreneurs with social strategies, an intervention that has had an influence on the lending criteria used by the French national banks.

Procurement conditionality is applied to sectors that work regularly with the Metropole, but crucially insights from the implementation of conditionality are shared more broadly. The Metropole technical support team develop social clauses for procurement and provide training and support to other local employers not engaged in the procurement process. The conditionality factors in the procurement process are not static and the Metropole has pushed the boundaries of conditionality to include qualitative aspects of work.

Potential to improve fair work adoption

There has been limited evaluation of conditionality in Scotland, and initiatives like Fair Work First are too recent to have been robustly evaluated, though such evaluation is planned. Yet looking across the research evidence, there is potential for greater linkage of public contracting and public spending more widely to fair work practices. As the ETUC[70] argue implicitly, not linking public spending to higher labour standards means in practice sustaining poorer labour standards. This has implications for how the Scottish Government might approach all spending.

Public spending in Scotland in 2022-23 is estimated at £106.6 billion, providing a powerful lever to shape the behaviour of those businesses in receipt of public funding or contracting with the public sector. The Scottish Government's Fair Work First policy is an example of conditionality currently in operation in public procurement and applies to public contracts and government grants to support seven key fair work practices.

The current research cannot address all Scottish Government spending. However, there are policy areas in which further conditionality might be applied. One example is the Small Business Bonus Scheme (SBBS). There is currently no conditionality attached to the SBBS, only eligibility criteria. The Scheme offers non-domestic rates relief where the combined rateable value of all business premises is £35,000 or less, the rateable values of individual premises are £20,000 or less and the property is actively occupied. A sliding scale of rates relief is offered with a maximum relief of up to £12,000.[71]

It is not clear what the significant investment in the SBBS (£279m in 2020) delivers in terms of outcomes. Evaluation[72] found no empirical evidence that the Scheme delivers improved business outcomes (though businesses themselves believe that it does) and highlighted limitations with the data collected on businesses in SBBS that make it difficult to identify any *employment-related* benefits that arise from the scheme. Further, the evaluation found significant differences in size and other attributes like turnover between businesses with similar rateable values, suggesting different levels of need for business support and that the

SBBS is not well targeted. The evaluation found that receipt of the Bonus had only a marginal impact on payment of the rLW.

While the SBBS is a significant government spend, it is eclipsed by total public spending in Scotland, and there is no reason why – given the commitment of the Scottish Government – all public spending should not be oriented towards fair work. Without a clear understanding of whether every pound public spending embeds fair work, there remains a risk that public spending contributes to the embedding of poor work. Beyond conditionality, therefore, there is merit in auditing all public spending for its fair work impact.

Dependencies and constraints
There is a need for further analysis of the composition of businesses (rather than business properties) to explore whether there is potential to make the SBBS conditional on delivering some aspects of fair work, for example, payment of the rLW, avoidance of zero hours contracts and access to living hours. At present, it is difficult on the available data to understand what the payment of the Small Business Bonus delivers for government and society, or indeed what might be the impact of attaching conditionality to the scheme.

Locus and reach
Attaching conditionality to the SBBS focusses only on small businesses. Fair work proofing all Scottish Government spending by attaching fair work conditionality addresses a much wider range of businesses and organisations and has extensive reach.

Lever 5 Insight: There is potential value in Scottish Government exploring specifically the acceptability, legality and potential costs and benefits associated with a range of additional conditionality/linkage approaches that might link the allocation of Scottish Government spending/funding to specified action(s) on fair work, beyond the current practice.

LEVER 6: Strategic jointly funded investments in fair work capacity and capability in employers' organisations, trade unions and key third sector organisations

Evidence
Joint capacity investments (JCI) can enhance the competency and resource of organisations involved in collaborative activities that contribute to the achievement of social policy goals, such as employers' organisations, third sector organisations and trade unions. Sharing these investment (between the Scottish Government and the relevant stakeholders) not only improves the capacity available to these organisations but binds them more closely to the purpose of the investment.

There are examples of such investment in Scotland. Scottish Government has provided financial support to the STUC for union-led learning (since 2000 from the then Scottish

Executive) as a route to supporting skills policy objectives, particularly in engaging non-traditional learners in the workplace. The initial purpose of the funding was to support unions to identify and address the skills needs of their members, now delivered through a Learning Fund. In addition, a Development Fund is used to develop the capacity within unions to facilitate learning, engage with employers and other partners and leverage further investment in skills and innovation in the workplace. Capacity investment in union learning has been further enhanced in 2023/24 with investment to focus on developing leadership and promoting equalities in trade unions.[73] Evaluations of the Scottish Union Learning Fund,[74] and of previous union learning funds in England and Wales,

Similarly, the Scottish Government supports employers' organisations financially to develop new initiatives, including funding for SCDI's productivity clubs and for Chambers of Commerce to deliver programmes like Developing the Young Workforce. Successive Programmes for Government signal the investments made by the Scottish Government in both capacity for and delivery by employers' organisations.

Potential to improve fair work adoption and practice
The Scottish Government recognises the importance of collaboration with economic stakeholders and civil society in achieving its policy objectives. Yet many such organisations struggle to find the resources and time to engage with policymakers.[75] To create an optimal and sustainable model of collaboration on fair work, however, there needs to be targeted investment in the capacity and capability of these stakeholders. Joint investment - by the Scottish Government and the recipient organisation – could both signal and embed a commitment to driving fair work.

Capacity investment in key organisations in Scotland could support key employers, unions and third sector organisations in sharing, using and developing their expertise to support the delivery of fair work. All three types of stakeholder face challenges in their overall capacity. The difficulties this brings is highlighted in recent research into fair work in Scotland's third sector. [76] While there is strong evidence of some fair work practices in third sector workplaces, there is also evidence of a lack of systematic understanding of some fair work issues, for example, around individual and collective voice mechanisms, that might be addressed through the development of greater fair work capacity and capability in the sector.

The research referred to above identified a high level of willingness within third sector organisations to engage more deeply with fair work, and steps have already been taken to begin the development of an open-access evidence base produced by SCVO that may provide a useful platform through which data and insights on fair work in the third sector can be shared. The Civil Society Commission (2023) made a similar recommendation for a Civil Society Evidence Organisation (CSEVO) in Scotland. Any investment in capacity to develop a fair work evidence infrastructure is likely to expand the adoption of fair work policies and practices in third sector organisations.

Other capacity investments have focused on specific dimensions of fair work and/or sectors, including support for the role of a Fair Work Apprentice Co-ordinator (FWAC) for the construction sector from 2018. The FWAC visits apprentices in colleges and workplaces across Scotland to promote fair work and union membership while also addressing any issues raised in collaboration with the Scottish Government. The Co-ordinator has reported that working directly with apprentices addresses a gap where young workers' voices are absent in Scottish workplaces and identifies issues that could otherwise have long-lasting negative impacts (e.g., the difficulties faced by apprentices in completing final skills tests during and beyond the Covid19 pandemic).[77]

The Scottish Government has invested in capacity in employers' organisations in a variety of different ways, for example, funding for SCDI's productivity clubs and for Chambers of Commerce to develop programmes to support young workforces.

Ownership of lever
Given the need for financial investment to build and support capacity, and the argument for joint investment to build commitment to fair work, this lever is owned primarily by the Scottish Government but also by organisations who will jointly invest in fair work capacity and capability.

Dependencies and constraints
Across a range of economic and social policy processes in Scotland, employers' organisations, trade unions and third sector organisations are regularly invited but not resourced to participate. A key dependency in targeted capacity investment is the availability of funding, alongside the indirect costs within Scottish Government of managing, monitoring and evaluating capacity investment. Another crucial dependency is the availability of joint funding within these key stakeholder organisations.

Locus and reach
Given constraints on public and other funding, this lever will require strategic targeting on recipient organisations with reach across the private and third sector and across trade unions. This is likely to focus on key anchor or membership organisations with significant reach across their membership, for example, the larger employers' organisations, trade federations, STUC and organisations such as SCVO. Building capacity in these key organisations has the potential to further embed fair work and to create an important ripple effect across Scotland's workplaces.

Lever 6 Insight: Developing fair work capability and capacity requires upfront investment in key organisations to drive change. Given current financial constraints affecting the Scottish Government and beyond, there is significant potential to design, develop and evaluate a programme of strategic investment to support the development of specialist capability in fair work delivery.

NODALITY – working with networks to drive change

LEVER 7: Development of fair work education and training at multiple levels

Evidence
Accredited training refers to a type of education or skill development programme that has been officially recognised and approved by a relevant accrediting body or authority. Accreditation of training is typically carried out by independent organisations or government agencies. These accrediting bodies evaluate the curriculum, instructors' qualifications, learning resources and overall training effectiveness.
The purpose of accreditation is to ensure that the training meets specific quality standards, and that the knowledge and skills acquired by participants are valid and reliable. Such training might lead to a formal qualification at a range of levels, for example, as outlined in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

Much of the existing evidence on the impact of training focusses on the benefits to individuals of accredited training across varied occupational sectors. This includes evidence on improvement in knowledge, skills and abilities,[78] improved confidence, self-efficacy and resilience[79] and better continuous professional development.[80] Individual benefits of accredited training might also include a reduction in job precarity for recipients on the basis that they can evidence professional development.[81]

Despite strong evidence advocating the value of accredited training in general terms, there is variability relating to type and level of training available, and the perceptions of those receiving the training. Training and/or accreditation delivered with a competency approach[4] has been evidenced as a useful method of job and career development for those people participating and as providing a useful development framework for their employers.[82] Accredited training can also provide the opportunity to formalise on-the-job knowledge and share existing good practice – evidenced across training types and sites.[83] Research suggests that CPD activities such as undertaking accredited training can be highly valued by professions as indicators of professional commitment.[84] Moreover, knowledge acquired through accredited training can create normative effects that helps diffuse key practices.[85] Research[86] suggests that 'formal training of the organization's employees or of its technical personnel and managers, can increase the likelihood that practices consistent with that training are adopted. Members of a profession or occupational community share a common understanding and knowledge base' that in turn can diffuse good practice across

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[4] A competence approach, also known as a competency-based approach, is an educational and training methodology that focuses on developing specific skills, knowledge, and behaviours required to perform effectively in a particular role or field. The approach emphasises practical application and measurable outcomes, with a focus on demonstrating proficiency in key competencies (Khan et al., 2022).

organisations and the economy. However, there is notably little evidence regarding whether the availability of accredited training can function as a driver for organisational change.

Potential to improve fair work adoption and practice
Previous levers have identified the need for better understanding of what fair work is, how it might be delivered and what outcomes it might produce. However, the role of education and training in fair work is under-investigated and potentially under-realised. Developing and supporting education and training on the role of fair work in enhancing organisational performance and citizen wellbeing might leverage greater adoption of fair work practices.

The development of fair work accredited training could help to increase awareness and understanding of fair work across the economy. It could also develop internal organisational support for fair work approaches, which would subsequently support the generation of a critical mass of informed fair work learners. Engagement with accredited fair work training could also develop a sense of employer accountability for fair work practices as accredited learners deploy insights from training in their job and organisation. Accredited training might also have a wider labour market impact, allowing for recognition by other employers, and transferability to new organisations.

There is considerable public investment in training in Scotland, including in leadership and management, by public agencies such as Scottish Enterprise, SOSE and HIE. This provision might usefully infuse fair work into a broad suite of management training, creating the potential for evidence-based business training on the costs and consequences of fair work to drive both commitment to and wider adoption of fair work.

Ownership
Currently there is no bespoke fair work accredited training available in Scotland. To change this would require either developing accreditation standards/criteria by which to assess training designed and delivered internally by employers or developing a full training program delivered by a training or qualifications provider. Either option would require the input and engagement of an accrediting institution – for example, an institution of higher or further education, a public accrediting body such as the SQA, or a professional association such as the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) or the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). In the absence of independent action to develop and deliver training, some stimulus by the Scottish Government is likely to be required. This could take the form of instructions to SFC and/or the public agencies, or engagement with relevant professional bodies.

Dependencies and constraints
This lever is dependent on two factors: the willingness of an accrediting institution to design, develop and offer accredited fair work training, and the willingness of employers to undertake the development of training eligible for fair work accreditation, fund the training

and/or make staff time available to access the training. There is no robust data available on the efficacy of similar accredited training schemes and it is difficult to gauge the opinions of, and likely uptake by, employers on fair work training.

The time it takes to develop accreditation standards for employee training in Scotland will vary depending on several factors, including the complexity of the training program, level of study, any associated qualifications, the number of stakeholders involved, the level of detail required, the processes of the accrediting body and employer demand.[87]

Buy-in to accredited fair work training is likely to represent a challenge for this lever in particular industries – such as hospitality - where there are longstanding calls for the industry in general to develop a more robust approach to credentialing and training its workforce.[88] Wider evidence on training highlights that it is more likely to be undertaken in the public sector (particularly if fair work champions were encouraged by the Scottish Government) and in large organisations. For smaller employers, the relationship between fair work practice and wider perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibilities may mean that supporting accredited fair work training acts as a signal of care for their employees and/or their investment in staff[89] for the purposes of recruitment and retention. For all employers, and particularly those contracting with the public sector, engagement with fair work training could act as another signal of their commitment to fair work within tendering processes.

Locus and reach
Generic, high quality, fair work training would be relevant across Scotland's economy, sectors and industries. There may also be potential to develop specific industry training. The reach of widely available, accredited fair work training is, therefore, potentially high. Dependent on the uptake of the training, it has potential to be drawn on by employers, policymakers, trade unions and workforces. Accrediting training through an existing professional body (for example, CIPD or CMI) would also expand the reach of such training to their members and professional communities.

Lever 7 Insight: The Scottish Government can engage key stakeholders (SQA, FWC, CIPD and CMI), public agencies and HE and FE institutions in the development of a suite of high quality accredited fair work training courses to support expertise in fair work across the Scottish economy. This could form part of the SQA's accredited management and leadership training.

LEVER 8: Voluntary charters

Evidence
Levers 8 and 9 comprise voluntary charters and formal accreditation processes. Accreditation and charters have both similar and distinguishing features. Their key similarity

is that both involve firms or organisations voluntarily engaging with specific practices or behaviours. Where they differ is that formal accreditation processes generally demand more of organisations: accreditation occurs when organisations engage with accreditation processes and show evidence – often independently evaluated – that they meet the standards set out by the relevant external accrediting body. With charters, firms might commit or pledge to meeting a set of standards contained in a charter that may not be evaluated independently.

There is a plethora of accreditation and charters in operation across the UK and beyond. These focus on a wide range of topics, including but not limited to corporate social responsibility; business purpose; equality, diversity and inclusion; addressing modern slavery; and environmental sustainability. These aim to remove or to promote a practice or set of practices, but can vary widely in their substantive focus, for example on a single or multiple issues, on particular sectors, and on specific geographic locations including on specific countries, groups of countries or worldwide.

Somewhat confusingly, however, the term 'charter' is widely used to span formal accreditation processes as well as weaker voluntary commitments. Lever 8 focusses on charters that are **not** formal accreditation processes (Lever 9 focusses on formal accreditation). Charters can be developed and delivered by governments, by industry stakeholders or by civil society organisations – separately or in partnership.

There is a growing interest in, and understanding of, fair or good work charters as a lever for embedding fair work practice, as illustrated in the FWC's 2022 Construction Inquiry Report. These are defined as "… examples of 'soft regulation', which seek to persuade and encourage employers to offer better jobs, as opposed to 'hard' regulation underpinned by legislation, such as the National Minimum Wage (NMW)".[90]

A number of variously named 'good work' Charters have recently been adopted across some of England's Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) to support good, fair or better work/employment. These Charters have drawn on a range of data, sources, experiences and practices, including from Scotland.[91] It has been suggested that these Charters might fill a 'policy gap' by encouraging voluntary commitments by employers to create better work, though the Charters are sometimes backed by procurement conditionality levers. While the MCA charters have a geographical focus, other charters have an industry focus – e.g. the Unite the Union's Construction Charter.

Potential to improve fair work adoption and practice
A review of the MCA Charters[92] on good work suggests that their development was driven by Mayoral backing and was characterised by extensive local consultation, strong co-design with relevant workplace and labour market stakeholders and considerable seeking out and

sharing of information. Strong local partnerships are seen as crucial to the development of the Charters and also to buy in from employers. All draw heavily on the Taylor Report[93] on good work practices. Due to their recent origin, however, these charters have not yet been robustly evaluated.

The research base on the operation of different types of charters suggests that these can help increase awareness of the substantive issue (here, fair work), can support the development of objectives to address the substantive issue, can outline implementation approaches, and can provide support and evaluation for any relevant changes to be made. Some evidence on environmental charters or codes suggests that these have spurred participating firms to introduce new practices, including the institution of environmental management systems, public environmental reporting, and community advisory panels.[94]

The suggested mechanism of change at work in charters and codes is through increasing consciousness and acceptance of the need for practices to change; establishing new norms that guide actions, for example, in the priority attached to and senior management responsibility for the issue; allocating organisational assets (people, time, money) to address the issue; and developing observable implementation resources, practices and tools.[95]

On the existing evidence, fair or good work charters could act as a form of soft regulation that engages employers in fair work by providing examples of the types of workplace practices expected, supporting a commitment to engage in specific practices, offer a way of publicly endorsing these practices and, over time, offering ascending levels of engagement with the charter.

Ownership
Charters or pledges might be developed and delivered by a range of different stakeholders. For example, the Scottish Business Pledge is 'owned' by the Scottish Government, while the MCA Charters are 'owned' by the MCAs themselves, having been designed in co-operation with a range of relevant stakeholders.

Business or industry charters have two important characteristics: they are voluntary – i.e. businesses self-select into charter support or membership – and they are designed by businesses themselves, though sometimes in co-operation with other stakeholders. Private sector leadership of charters is widely believed to ensure that business voices and concerns are embedded in the charter, though much will hinge on the composition of the businesses engaged in the charter design process. Across a range of existing charters there are concerns about the ability to engage smaller businesses.

Industry charters require a vehicle at industry level to bring together business interests. Industry Leadership Groups in Scotland provide a potential vehicle to engage specific

industry sectors in dialogue with the Scottish Government around actions to enhance sectors and their contribution to the Scottish economy.

Dependencies and constraints

Charters have varying degrees of enforcement attached to them.[96] Some are purely 'voluntary' insofar as businesses or governments opt to sign up to them but with minimal additional requirements on them to act. Others require external verification of some form. Purely voluntary charters are, other things being equal, more at risk of producing less impact in the absence of enforcement.

There is, however, a wider debate regarding the effectiveness of voluntary or self-regulation relative to more enforceable regulation. In the field of job quality improvements, many commentators support more robust hard regulation – for example, national minimum wage legislation - to ensure compliance across businesses. Leaving aside the important point that UK employment law powers are reserved to Westminster, there is a vigorous debate about the different potential of hard versus soft regulation. Regulation/legislation is likely to be effective in establishing minimum standards of practice in workplaces. However, in research[97] on environmental charters, hard regulation was considered static and difficult to change as circumstances change; and while it can effectively set minimum standards, it offers no incentive or guidance for firms wanting to go beyond minimum standards. Voluntary forms of regulation may engage more businesses to move beyond minimum standards in work and employment. Much depends, however, on any consequences arising from non-adherence to charter commitments.

If ILGs present perhaps the most appropriate mechanism for fair work charters at industry level in Scotland, the efficacy of such chargers will depend heavily on the understanding and endorsement of fair work within ILGs. Additionally, the composition of ILGs – in terms of larger and smaller businesses – will be a key dependency, given the challenges in creating charters that can engage small businesses. Crucially, ILGs require effective worker voice to be able to design and embed effective fair work charters in Scotland. Notwithstanding the importance of industry ownership of any such charter, other stakeholders such as the Scottish Government and the Fair Work Convention might play an important role in supporting ILGs to develop, design and deliver fair work charters for their industry.

Locus and reach

ILGs cover volume employing sectors which, taken together, capture a significant proportion of the labour force in Scotland. This existing network of industry leaders – and one which engages closely with policymakers – has considerable potential to drive and embed fair work at sector level.

Agreeing a fair work charter at ILG level is, however, only a starting point, and engaging a wider group of businesses is crucial to any such charter delivering impact. Lever 4 focusses on giving particular responsibility for fair work on ILGs to a fair work champion on each, and this role could be important in driving wider engagement. In addition, monitoring and evaluation of the impact of charters is crucial – notwithstanding their fundamentally voluntary nature, charters can only have impact if stakeholders act in accordance with charter commitments.

Lever 8 Insight: There is potential value in the Scottish Government engaging with ILGs and other partners to explore the value of a single or series of fair work charters, to pilot their development and, crucially, to evaluate their impact.

LEVER 9: Support for formal fair work accreditation

Evidence
Accreditation of firms and organisations occurs when they voluntarily engage with accreditation processes which set out a standard of practice and/or behaviour that firms or organisations must show evidence of meeting to become accredited. Businesses and organisations in Scotland engage in a range of formal accreditation processes, including those relating to business purpose (such as BCorp), quality standards (such as ISO 9000), and people management (such as Investors in People).

Governments can play a significant role in the development and adoption of accreditation processes. For example, governments often promote accreditation processes and standards in sectors where the state is a significant customer, as illustrated by the support of the US and EU governments for the ISO 9000 quality standard[5].[98]

Beyond government support for accreditation, processes of professionalisation and the operation of networks can influence the dissemination of accreditation. Using ISO 9000 again as an example, its adoption was supported by key professions/occupations developing a shared understanding and knowledge base that encouraged the adoption of similar practices across different organisations. The behaviour of other firms puts pressure on non-adopters that drives more widespread adoption.[99]

Professionalisation, networks and government support have played a role in the best-known people management standard in the UK, Investors in People (IiP). Operating for more than 30 years, the IiP people management standard aims to improve organisational performance through the management and development of people and formal accreditation of businesses and organisations by IiP.[100] While the Standard has changed over that time, it

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[5] ISO9000 is a set of internationally recognised standards for quality assurance and management to encourage the production of goods and service that meet a globally acceptable level of quality.

continues to be a normative framework for people management practices underpinned by a codified body of knowledge and accompanied by a programmed approach to organisational implementation and change.[101] The Standard currently covers 1.1m people or 1 in 20 workers in the UK and a similar proportion in Scotland (circa 114000 people).[102]

There has been extensive research on IiP attempting to answer key questions, including (1) why organisations engage with IiP; (2) which organisations engage; (3) what is the impact of accreditation; (4) what is the mechanism of impact; and (5) what are the challenges in engaging employers in accreditation processes like IiP? A crucial overarching question is whether accreditation engages firms who would otherwise not adopt the approach and practices contained in the accreditation standard.

Research suggests that organisations seek IiP accreditation to improve organisational performance, but there are also political motivations, as a means, for example, of career development by personnel managers.[103] Research by UKCES highlights examples of proactive commitment to IiP accreditation and also reactive responses by firms to an external trigger (e.g., contact with government or IiP). In all cases, the ultimate objective of accreditation was to support business goals through improving people management processes; training and developing managers; the impact of accreditation on securing publicly procured contracts; and gaining external recognition. Bottom line impact was, however, a higher priority in smaller employers with fewer than 25 staff, who sought accreditation to drive competitive advantage, attract new clients and, for small private sector firms, to increase turnover and profit.[104]

While IiP accreditation is sought by businesses across most sizes, sectors and industries, small businesses have particularly low rates of engagement with the Standard. This is ascribed to the Standard being seen as overly bureaucratic;[105] to training in smaller businesses being more ad hoc than formal[106] and due to cost and time required to implement.[107]

There are good examples of research that establishes a link between IiP Accreditation and business performance measures and a positive impact of the standard on innovation and on effective communication.[108] The Standard and the process of adoption has been found to improve managers' knowledge, experience and skills; increase managerial performance and support the development of an organisational learning culture. [109] However, some research has also highlighted that employees' expectation that they might receive more investment in their training and development with IiP accreditation was not always met in practice.[110]

Across the evidence base, while there are many perceived benefits of IiP accreditation, many organisations are unable to measure these benefits robustly.[111] Organisations were able to provide indicators of behavioural and cultural change – improvement in management capability, greater understanding of the business, clearer job roles and additional training generated through IiP – rather than hard measures of organisational performance.[112]

The findings above point to the mechanism of change from adopting organisational practices consistent with the IiP Standard and improved business performance. As has been argued for some time, investing in people is a commitment-based HR policy, and there is strong evidence that commitment-based policies and investment deliver an organisational climate supportive of employee performance, collaboration and flexibility – that in turn impacts positively on business performance.[113]

A crucial consideration in evaluating IiP accreditation – which has wider resonance for any fair work accreditation - is whether it improves people practice across the business base. Put simply, does it drive organisations to do new things, or does it ratify people management practices already in place? There is some evidence that that the latter is more common, with organisations requiring the least practice change to achieve the Standard – and hence with the least to gain – being most likely to seek it.[114] An evaluation of IiP for UKCES confirmed that most accredited employers needed to make relatively minimal changes to business and HR policies and practice to achieve IiP accreditation but noted that accreditation both gave a structure and framework for further improvement and increased the pace of change due to external assistance from IiP Centres and specialists.

What then might encourage organisations with poorer people management practices to seek IiP accreditation? Accreditation comes at a cost. According to the UKCES evaluation, 11% of newly accredited organisations rated IiP poor value for money; rising to 15 per cent among small firms below 25 staff, with such assessments more negative in their second year following recognition.

Cost is not the only obstacle. For some organisations, the IiP Standard would be difficult to meet and there is some evidence that organisations would be more attracted to IiP if it was easier to attain accreditation (Down and Smith 1997). But if the Standard is available to all who seek it, the process cannot discern substantive differences between employers[115] and this may deter employers with better people practices.

For some commentators, additional incentives are required for those organisations unlikely to adopt the standard[116] - whether for cost or other reasons. Addressing the more difficult cases and cost issues identified above has in the past been through the provision of significant UK government financial support. This ended in 2007. IiP's continued operation depends on engaging employers to seek the core IiP standard and its emerging suite of specialist packages (on issues such as EDI, ESG, leadership and wellbeing).

In relation to IiP and other forms of accreditation, there is a significant evidence base on their aims, components and requirements; their mechanisms of operation and compliance; and their levels of adoption. There are, however, fewer robust evaluations of their impact on practice. Those examples of evaluating accreditation impact that exist (e.g. evaluation of the Athena Swan Charter on gender equality in UK Higher Education[117]) highlight that

rigorous evaluation is both costly and time-consuming for those institutions accredited and for those delivering the accreditation process.

Potential to improve fair work adoption and practice
Research evidence suggests that formal accreditation can help embed specific organisational practices where accreditation is valued and can drive positive business outcomes. Given this, formal accreditation could provide a clear fair work standard or standards (at multiple levels) for employers to adhere to. A robust accreditation process can underpin consistent fair work practice, promote confidence in the robustness and rigour of the Standard and promote the reputation of accredited organisations, with potential benefits in recruitment, retention, and business performance.

Ownership
Designing and delivering fair work accreditation would require a reputable and willing accrediting organisation. While a fair work standard within IiP might be a promising option, this might also risk IiP cannibalising its existing Standard. Finding or developing a new accreditation body is a long-term project, and one that would depend on significant investment to stimulate both the development of a standard and employer engagement with a new standard. This is a significant task, and likely to be a costly one.

Dependencies and constraints
Voluntary accreditation processes can involve significant investment of both time and money by organisations. Taking the example of ISO 9000 quality certification, the process can take between 9 months and 2 years and may cost hundreds to thousands of pounds. Further, the more stretching and formalised the accreditation, the greater the investment required over the short to medium term to achieve accreditation, while returns to accreditation are likely to be in the longer term. Additionally, the more stretching the accreditation targets and processes, the more likely that organisations already delivering fair work to a significant extent can engage, while others – and small firms in particular – are far less likely. Given an existing people management standard (IiP), there are risks inherent in developing an additional (and potentially competing) accreditation standard. UK governments have invested millions of pounds in supporting IiP accreditation. Such investment in fair work accreditation is likely to be prohibitive in the current Scottish fiscal context.

Locus and reach
Formal fair work accreditation would operate at a national economy level, and as such would have considerable potential reach across the Scottish economy to a range of employing organisations across sectors and industries, and to workers across the range of occupations.

Lever 9 Insight: While there is evidence that a well-designed, rigorous system of formal accreditation can support better organisational practice, such a system is costly to develop and maintain. The alternative, to develop a cheaper and less robust option, is likely to reduce the attractiveness of the standard to larger and higher value organisations. Formal accreditation with external monitoring is – other things being equal – more likely to ensure fair work standards than voluntary commitments by employers (for example, through signing up to fair work charters – Lever 8) – but only for those employers who engage with formal accreditation processes. What formal accreditation may offer in terms of depth of engagement with fair work, more context-specific mechanisms such as industry charters may eclipse in reach to a broader range of employing organisations.

LEVER 10: Supporting the development of communities of practice

Evidence

Communities of Practice (CoP) are networks bound by shared interests. The purpose of the network is to develop members' capabilities and build and exchange knowledge to learn and to solve problems brought to the community by members. While knowledge sharing can, in context, improve organisational performance (e.g., producing more efficient problem-solving, creation of knowledge banks, stimulation of innovation), the success of CoP is measured by the volume of ideas and practices shared rather than other outcome measures such as performance improvement.[118] [119]

CoP can exist within any type of organisation in which boundary spanning enables individuals to share their expertise and problems.[120] These are intra-organisation CoP. Alternatively, CoP can operate across organisations[121] (inter-organisation CoP) where formal partnerships or external communities collaborate around a shared interest.[122] [123] [124]

Research has identified 10 factors that lead to the successful development and sharing of practice within intra-organisation CoP.[125] Many of these factors are similar to those that drive successful change management (e.g., identify strategic intent; categorise issues; create governance; and publicise outputs). The difference with CoPs is that the input of formal authority is indirect as the community set their own objectives within the parameters of the organisation's overall strategy and in return are granted the risk-free space to develop (Wenger and Synder, *ibid*). These CoPs are therefore self-directing in a risk-constrained environment. While CoP are often self-selecting and self-organising, this does not preclude prompts to organise from prospective network members or other relevant stakeholders.

While there are fewer studies on inter-organisation CoP, there are some examples across industries and sectors. For example, there is evidence of apparent success in the use of

inter-organisation CoP across private, public and third sectors in the development of global [Solutions for Youth Employment](#).

CoP across organisations share some of the success factors outlined above for CoP within organisations. An additional important feature is the presence of a *social glue* to bind the group.[126] This social glue is important in circumstances of *competitive collaboration* between firms[127] because it can stimulate trust in the group and better sharing of practice and ideas.[128]

The example outlined previously (at Lever 5) of Nantes Metropol illustrates not just the potential of funding conditionality but also the potential benefits of a network – in this example, to promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and job quality.[129] The CSR network is facilitated by the local Chambers of Commerce and comprises a community of businesses, employer networks, trade unions and third sector organisations. Nantes Metropole use the network to inform its members of the value of CSR, in particular inclusivity and good quality jobs, and collaborate around interventions. The Metropole shares knowledge around the relationships between CSR and productivity to engage the network, and the technical support team provides support to local employers and is considered to be the trainer and facilitator for all businesses in the region.

Potential to improve fair work adoption and practice
Developing CoPs – within and across organisations - provides a potentially effective way to advance fair work in Scotland and could be a useful policy lever. Such a CoP might be focused on all elements of the change model outlined previously: raising awareness, understanding and endorsement of fair work; helping to guide employer actions; learning how best to monitor and evaluate the impact of fair work practices and improving dissemination and learning about fair work, its outcomes and impact.

Multiple stakeholders in fair work might establish CoP. An employers' fair work CoP might help develop and build member/staff competences to find solutions in their own business/ organisation in light of their specific competitive challenges and context. A trade union CoP might build awareness of fair work among union representatives within and across workplaces and help develop and support strategies to further embed fair work. Any type of CoP focused on overcoming obstacles to fair work would benefit from sharing practice across occupations, industries and sectors; generating data and insights; understanding and measuring the impact of fair work; disseminating learning and, crucially, might help alleviate concerns any perceived costs of or obstacles to fair work.

Shared challenges and problems serve as the bases for communities of practice, but CoPs are also dynamic groups in which core and peripheral members can co-exist. CoPs support observe and develop capacity in the particular area of interest. Additionally, core members

may shift to the periphery and new members on the periphery may drift toward the centre as topics and knowledge evolve.[130] In the context of fair work in Scotland, this would allow for ongoing activity for employers, unions, professions and regulators in the fair work space.

Ownership

CoP can establish themselves in their own specific context. However, the Scottish Government might both instigate fair work CoP within and across distinct workplace stakeholders and, crucially, ensure the legitimacy of these networks through ongoing engagement with policymakers. Crucially, however, CoP have to be owned by their members, leaving policymakers with only a facilitating role. There may be opportunity for alignment with existing work around the Scottish Business Pledge Review and the implementation of the Business Purpose Report,[131] although clarity around the purpose of a dedicated fair work CoP is important.

At the current stage of the fair work trajectory in Scotland, there is significant scope for the development of CoP. Beyond employers and unions, networks of relevant public sector suppliers might also be harnessed to fair work delivery. Possible existing networks that might be linked to greater fair work engagement and activity might include suppliers connected through Public Contracts Scotland; CIPD Scotland host an Independent Consultant Network that might be encouraged to engage with fair work; and universities, colleges and professional bodies might also host such networks in light of the recommendation of the SCDI Business Purpose report[132] that fair work should be a mandatory learning outcome in business education and training. Indeed, there is also potential for a fair work CoP within the Scottish Government that might better connect fair work policy with other policy domains such as the Wellbeing Economy, tackling Child Poverty, Just Transition, Business Purpose, wider NSET and sector level strategies, and the pending refresh of the National Performance Framework.

Dependencies and constraints

Employer, union and other fair work CoP may require upfront encouragement, facilitation and knowledge and organisational support from policymakers and other relevant stakeholders such as the Fair Work Convention. The key dependency is the degree of interest among workplace stakeholders in engaging in a CoP, and there is an important role for the policy community in stimulating their engagement.

While capturing the effectiveness of CoP can be challenging[133], there is research insight on the reasons why CoP fail, such as lack of identification with the community, lack of a core group, rigidity of competences, low levels of one to one interaction between members and practice intangibility. [134]

Locus and reach

CoP are, by their nature, context-specific and arise as a mechanism to address shared problems and challenges. They also operate at a variety of levels. There may be merit in considering how CoP for higher level workplace stakeholders – employers and unions – might be developed in the first instance to inform the work of policymakers and the FWC. Similarly, there may be merit in developing a public agency fair work CoP. More widely, there may also be merit in developing materials to support the development of other fair work CoP, which will be picked up at Levers 11 and 12.

Lever 10 Insight: There is potential value in the Scottish Government and partners taking forward work to facilitate and support fair work Communities of Practice, across distinct workplace stakeholder groups and at sectoral, cross-sectoral and/or regional level as appropriate.

ORGANISATION – using government assets and resources to support and drive change

LEVER 11: Business support, tools and diagnostics

Evidence

Lever 11 focuses on how businesses and other employing organisations can be supported to make changes in the direction of fair work through the provision of insight, tools and support. There is a wealth of business support available through the public agencies in Scotland. Our focus here is on support materials, tools and diagnostics that employers of all sizes and industries might access independently. Given the breadth of possible evidence here, the research focussed for illustrative purposes on how employers might be helped to improve a specific area of practice – equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) – which is fundamental element of meaningful fair work. The discussion below, however, might also apply to other areas of fair work practice.

To improve equality and inclusion outcomes in workplaces requires that employers have the inclination/motivation to identify the issue or challenge, assess their own data, can identify how to act effectively and can evaluate the outcomes of any actions they take. Notwithstanding that equality commitments are obligatory, convincing employers to address inequality relies heavily on being able to identify specific actions that they can take that can make a difference.

Unfortunately, however, while there is a significant evidence base that describes EDI practices and interventions, there is a global lack of research that evaluates the efficacy of approaches to improving EDI outcomes. In Scotland as elsewhere in the UK, most public sector employers rely on organisation-wide Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategies[135] and/or equalities-based training to promote inclusion.[136] Research on EDI practices shows

that while many employers use anti-bias training and mentoring projects,[137] these are often limited in their effectiveness and impact.[138]

Despite the high predictive power of positive discrimination (e.g. reserving jobs or quota) and positive action (e.g. hosting special recruitment events) for EDI, research has documented a move away from such practices toward standardisation (e.g. formulating policy guidelines) and monitoring (e.g. reviewing procedures to detect differences in treatment).[139]

Research has also drawn attention to forms of resistance to what might be effective EDI practices.[140] Such practices can disrupt existing power relations[141], and result in conflict between workplace actors whose sense of self is threatened[142] [143] and also among potential beneficiaries of inclusion practices as they are relegated to 'token' status.[144] A range of arguments that act as obstacles to greater inclusion need to be surfaced and addressed to improve EDI outcomes: that existing (unequal) profiles and experiences in organisations reflect merit rather than characteristics;[145] that competence drives unequal outcomes;[146] [147] or that inequality will resolve itself over time.[148]

Evidence suggests that to improve EDI, practices that involve installing structures of responsibility in the organisation are the most effective long-term.[149] Other successful strategies for improved EDI include targeted internships,[150] evidenced senior management commitment[151] and shared organisational diversity plans.[152]

Given this complexity in the evidence base around the efficacy of employers' EDI interventions, there are significant challenges in supporting employers to change their practice, even among employers who are inclined to do so. We have been unable to uncover evidence that points to the free availability and proven efficacy of, for example, diagnostic or other 'how to' tools that might support business in improving EDI.

Potential to improve fair work adoption and practice
EDI is one of a number of substantive areas of fair work practice where employers struggle to find practical support and advice on how to improve. Addressing the 'how to' issue for employers in relation to EDI (and indeed other areas of fair work practice) has the potential to leverage more substantial impact and change.

The development of EDI (and other fair work practice) support materials could help address the challenges employers face in understanding, measuring and addressing EDI issues in their workplaces. Scottish Enterprise, in conjunction with the FWC, has developed an employer tool to encourage employers to think about particular aspects of their fair work practice. We are not aware of any formal evaluation of its use and effectiveness. While the FWC has also developed a fair work survey tool aimed at supporting individuals to reflect on

the fairness or otherwise of their work, there is no tool that we are aware of that links employer and employee or worker views and experiences of fair work. Findlay and colleagues have developed a bespoke survey tool for employers and workers at part of a major UKRI research project but to date this has only been available to employers participating in the research.[153] HIE have a fair work website and accompanying documentation that poses questions to employers about aspects of fair work, backed up by one to one business support with a specialist adviser and supporting documentation which appears to have stimulated interest in fair work issues. While there are examples of simple 'how to' infographic materials to support employers in delivering effective gender equality interventions[154], their use and effectiveness has not been evaluated.

Ownership of lever
There is a role for the Scottish Government, public agencies, the Fair Work Convention and equalities organisations to develop a suite of support materials around EDI and around fair work, to be free and easily accessible, and to be the basis of engagement with more direct business support services. In addition, given the importance of peer-to-peer engagement, there is potential to build networks of expertise around the development of these support materials to generate interest and insight into 'what works'. Crucial to the effectiveness of this lever is the development of an evidence base that such tools and materials drive change in practice.

Dependencies and constraints
The key dependencies in developing and disseminating business support materials and tools are first, ensuring that these are fit for purpose, and second, ensuring that they are accessible to employers who wish to utilise them. Addressing both dependencies would require collaborative engagement between researchers who develop EDI or fair work support tools, public agencies, employers, unions and policymakers. A first step might be engagement with equalities organisations funded by the Scottish Government to identify and evaluate existing provision of business support. Another step may be an evaluation of the existing SE and HIE provision of support materials for EDI and/or fair work.

Locus and reach
While there are challenges in developing effective forms of support, particularly in relation to tools/diagnostics that would be available to the wider business base, such tools would have a potentially substantial reach, and may prove of particular use to smaller organisations with limited HR capability.

Lever 11 Insight: There is potential value in the Scottish Government leading other stakeholders in the development of high quality fair work support materials and tools, including in relation to EDI. This would require access to specialist technical expertise and

the engagement of public agencies and workplace stakeholders in the dissemination and use of such support tools.

LEVER 12: Supporting a dedicated fair work evidence hub

Evidence
Prior research points to how research evidence can influence and inform policy and practice. The literature on evidence-based policy[155] [156]points to five key mechanisms through which research can be deployed to support evidence-informed decision-making:
- dissemination: circulating or presenting research findings to potential users, in formats that are more tailored to their target audience;
- interaction: developing stronger links and collaborations between the research and policy or practice communities;
- social influence: relying on influential others, such as experts and peers, to inform key stakeholders about research and to persuade them of its value;
- facilitation: enabling the use of research, through technical, financial, organisational and personal support;
- incentives and reinforcement: using rewards and other forms of recognition to reinforce the value of evidence-based practice.

This framing may assist the policy and research communities to reflect on current practice and consider 'what has worked and might work' in engaging with employers and other stakeholders in ways that can influence decision-making around fair work.

In practical terms, Findlay and colleagues[157] – advising on how to inform employer practice on the Security dimension of fair work (and specifically on how to encourage action on in-work poverty) – called for consideration of a number of strategies for driving change, including:
- providing data analysis in an accessible format so that employers and stakeholders are better informed about demographic and occupational groups at risk of being excluded from fair work;
- using data analysis as a means of opening up conversations with employers to raise awareness of the impact of workplace practices upon employees;
- sharing examples of good practice where employers have been able to evidence the business benefits of investments in fair work;
- providing support for cost-benefit analysis so that employers can assess the potential positive business impacts of fair work;
- partnering with publicly-funded business support services and/or professional and managerial associations such as the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and Chartered Management Institute to disseminate insights on the benefits of fair work to a wider management community.

Potential to improve fair work adoption and practice

There is already a substantial evidence base on the costs and benefits of, and practicalities of implementing fair work practices in a range of organisational contexts. This is held not just by academic/research communities but also by Scottish policy stakeholders and public agencies. Yet employers and other relevant stakeholders (including those advising employers on workplace practice, such as HR consultants and/or publicly funded business advice services) do not have easy access to this evidence base in a form that supports practice. Improving access to this evidence base among employers might better inform and incentivise take up of fair work practices.

While there are no current examples of such a publicly-supported fair work evidence hub or repository, previous research has demonstrated that a key barrier to the take-up of fair work practices is a lack of awareness of/access to data and intelligence that might better inform decision-making among employers.[158] [159] Research has also demonstrated that investments in practices to support effective knowledge transfer can promote evidence-informed decision-making.[160] There may be value, therefore, in providing support for activities to (a) synthesise and make accessible data on the benefits of fair work investments; and (b) engage employers in ways that might influence evidence-based decision-making and assist in practical decisions to support fair work.

Ownership of lever

The Scottish Government and partners have a key role to play in supporting and facilitating platforms where evidence of fair work practices and outcomes can be collated, evaluated and accessed. Ownership of data and insight, however, lies with multiple stakeholders in the research and business community and in civil society. There is a role for government in supporting collaborative engagement across these stakeholders to ensure that the best evidence and insight is more widely available to workplace stakeholders.

Dependencies and constraints

A challenge for this area of practice is that data on the potential benefits of fair work interventions are held by multiple stakeholders who currently lack both the incentive and the platform to share and synthesise intelligence. These stakeholders in the academic/research, professional/business services and policy communities need to be supported to pool resources and evidence and to develop new approaches to intelligence-sharing in line with the mechanisms discussed above.

Further, for this lever to be effective, universities, research teams and other stakeholders with access to research and intelligence on fair work must be encouraged or incentivised to share information in accessible formats and commit to knowledge transfer activities.

The key constraints on sharing data and intelligence on the impact of fair work practices relate to current lack of a shared format and platform to collate, evaluate and share information; and the inconsistent (and sometimes inaccessible) format in which evidence is shared and presented by its owners. There would also be a need for targeted work to communicate the benefits of engaging with the fair work evidence base to employers and their partners.

Locus and reach
Improving access to research and intelligence to inform decision-making on fair work has the potential to make a positive contribution across any industry or sector. Additionally, information-sharing and knowledge transfer activities can be shaped to target specific sectors facing fair work challenges.

Better fair work evidence – particularly on the positive outcomes associated with fair work – can benefit employers; stakeholders supporting employers, such as business support services; trade unions and other employee representative bodies; and employees who may be better informed to advocate for fair work practices.

Lever 12 Insight: There is potential value in the Scottish Government and partners developing a fair work evidence hub, providing a digital platform for knowledge exchange on good practice, costs and benefits, and long-term outcomes of fair work. However, this would involve resources and investment to ensure that evidence is presented in a format that is accessible to business and to support businesses understand and access the tools.

Reflections
There is no single 'silver bullet' to deliver fair work in Scotland. That employment law powers are reserved to Westminster undoubtedly constrains the potential levers available to policymakers in Scotland. However, there are actions within the powers and influence of the Scottish Government that could make a difference to the adoption and deepening of fair work in Scotland.

Those powers are most explicit in areas like employability support where the Scottish Government has direct authority. But as we have argued, all government spending should be 'fair work-proofed' to ensure that government is not supporting practices that are inconsistent with fair work.

Fair work spans a wide range of workplace practices, and these are configured in a variety of ways across Scotland's workplaces. Policy levers that might work well in some contexts may not reach into or land well in other contexts. For example, fair work accreditation might be more attractive to large employers rather than small employers in lower value sectors, and sensitivity to industry or sectoral context is crucial. As the FWC made clear in the Fair Work

Framework, the ownership of fair work lies fundamentally with workplace stakeholders and at workplace level.

What is consistent, however, is the key role of employers in delivering fair work. Employers are the primary drivers of workplace practice, and many of Scotland's employers consistently deliver good working practices that support fair processes and outcomes. There is much to learn from their experiences, making support for networks that can share insights and in particular the benefits of fair work crucially important. Many of the levers suggested here aim to engage, support and encourage employers, and to support peer-to-peer learning across the employer community. At a time when many employers are facing both labour shortages and increasingly socially conscious consumers, it is particularly important to engage them in debate and evidence as to how fair work might help them.

The levers identified here are both broadly and narrowly targeted. Some levers – such as an awareness campaign – might seem rather basic, but our wider research[161] highlights that knowledge about Scotland's commitment to fair work is more limited than might have been expected more than seven years after the launch of Scotland's Fair Work Framework. It is clear that stakeholders – across private, public sector and third sector organisations and across industries – are at very different stages in the journey towards fair work. This means that policy levers must contribute to every stage of adoption of fair work.

As this Report has shown, many levers require the investment of resources to bring about change. This is particularly challenging in the current economic and fiscal context. For some levers that are potentially effective (for example, a rigorous fair work accreditation scheme), the scale of resources required renders them unfeasible at the current time. For others, strategic investment across a number of levers might be more affordable. Such investment may reap a significant reward in the longer term. Some levers can be delivered with a re-orientation of current government spending.

Many of the levers suggested here are aligned with other levers, and shifting the dial on fair work requires a range of connected actions. Fair work training would be important to support the activities of fair work champions, and both could support the development of communities of practice. A dedicated fair work evidence hub and the development of tools and diagnostics could support training provision and fair work communities of practice. Networks of champions could be better placed to identify areas where further conditionality might be effective. The operation of voluntary charters might benefit from, and contribute to, the evidence hub. And investment in fair work capacity and training could begin to generate what might become a critical mass of stakeholders whose expertise and impact could spread out across the Scottish economy. There are good examples from other countries – for example, the development of specialist workplace innovation consultants in Finland – that show how investing in a cadre of specialists can support significant workplace change.

We need both short-term and longer-term levers. An awareness campaign could be implemented reasonably quickly – but cannot deliver impactful change on its own. While investing in fair work capacity and capability is a longer-term approach, it remains crucial to creating a tipping point that – in line with the initial approach of the FWC – can better support a social movement for fair work.

Appendix A: Research Methods

Part One of the research was desk-based and involved a review of academic and non-academic peer-reviewed articles, policy and research reports and evaluations, and working papers. We conducted a Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) of the literatures (in English) on levers around Fair Work and its dimensions (effective voice, opportunity, fulfilment, respect and security). The REA had two main elements. First, to identify and review the literatures on levers (and/or incentives) to gain an informed understanding about how these are (or may be) applied in relation to Fair Work and by extension in the hospitality sector in Scotland. Secondly, to critically evaluate, any evidence that could be found about how effective these levers were in generating their intended outcome(s). This allows us to identify (using the available evidence) a set of levers that could be taken forward into Part Two of the research and a consultation with hospitality stakeholders. Table 1 in Appendix A summarises the research framework and provides further information about the general search parameters and key databases used.

In November 2021 we conducted a comprehensive robust evidence-led overview of the gender equality literature and recent sources for and evidence of interventions. We carried out a Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) with the search limited to peer-reviewed academic publications in English and readily accessible online. As part of the process we utilised a very general PICO research framework (Table 1). It made practical sense to focus primarily on UK-based studies since this provides a consistent context on issues such as the legal basis for equalities, however studies from other regions were also included in order to gain an overall understanding of the topics in question. Initial searches were focused on articles from 2010 onwards to incorporate the most relevant critical reviews, however subsequent searches found some key contributions made in the area before 2010. Qualitative and quantitative studies were included as were original research studies and meta-analyses.

In terms of the first of our aims above, there were a number of key contextual issues accounted for by the REA. Firstly, that any potentially levers may apply to Fair Work in general, or to one or more of its components. Secondly, that our levers have to be applied in non-regulatory settings since SG is unable to legislate in a number of key areas such as pay and employment law. These issues made the REA wide-ranging, nuanced and complex. An additional strand of our work involved an assessment of the powers of SG with a focus on what potentially could work in the absence of any statutory power to legislate on, for example, Fair Work in general or aspects of contractual security or voice.

Our initial expectation was that there would be a relatively small volume of literature on the efficacy of levers in general or specific dimensions of Fair Work. This required a structured approach to the REA that would cover both how these dimensions are defined and used,

what practical interventions were taken and how they have been applied/measured. The REA was sensitive to this process along with those between the academic and practitioner (or 'grey') literatures. We employed a multi-strand search strategy that looked specifically at these latter differences in each of topic areas that underlie fair work.

For the identification of the academic literature we undertook a wide-ranging and general electronic search using existing academic databases and applying Boolean principles (and operators) to identify how fair work (and its dimensions) dignity have been defined, used and measured within the Social Science, organisational and policy literatures. Academic databases are multidisciplinary and provide electronic access to a range of academic peer-reviewed journal articles, primary sources and books in the social sciences, organisational and workplace literatures. We expected that this would generate a small range of articles (both conceptual and applied) from which we would filter and concentrate on those that lie within our stated areas of interest (identified above) using Boolean principles (and operators).

We targeted both conceptual and applied articles with priority given to any of the most recent relevant published literature. We also prioritised publications that allow us to look at these issues over a range of sub-populations and contexts. We also expected that any formal structured search strategy – irrespective of the terms being used as part of this exercise – would inevitably generate a lot of irrelevant information To overcome this issue, we used references as a means to further develop, build and refine our database organically (using 'pearl grown' or 'snowball' techniques).

As a package, our approach ensured that the literature review element of the work had as current and as comprehensive a depth and range as possible.

When considering the research included in this review, it was apparent that there are limitations in the research base, both in the quantity and quality of evidence. In particular, it was difficult to find quantitative studies which evaluated specific campaign initiatives such as Working Hours and Zero Hours.

Framework	
Population	Workers
Impact	Workplace interventions to improve fair work
Control (context)	All relevant
Outcome	Lever of fair work
Context	Workplace & Organisations
Search Terms	
Population	General: Worker OR employee

	Contractual security OR insecurity OR Working hours OR Zero hours Gender OR female OR sex OR pay-gap Career OR Job OR fulfillment OR Development OR progression
Impact	Lever OR Interven* OR organisation* OR polic* OR facilitator* OR improv* OR embed OR practice OR OR initiative OR practice OR change OR regulat*
Control	Barrier* OR inhibit* OR bias OR inequality OR "work insecurity" OR employment insecurity OR "long working hours" OR "zero hours" OR "platform work" OR "sex inequal*" OR "gender inequal*" OR "sex equal*" "gender equal*
Outcome	Progress* OR develop* OR improv* OR change OR advance OR implement OR "fair work" OR "fair pay" OR "fair contract" OR success OR "more job security* OR "better practice*" OR better regulation" polic* OR "improve policy" OR evaluat* OR "occupational mobility" OR "occupational achievement" OR "equalities, diversity and inclusion" OR "career opportunities"
Context	Workplace OR Work OR job OR employment
Boolean Operators	(All in Title or Abstract) Population AND Impact AND Control AND Outcome AND context
Restrictions	
Geography	None
Language	English
Time	2010-2022
Databases	Potentially: Proquest's Social Science Premium Collection, EBSCOhost Business Source, Psycinfo and the Web of Science core collection.
Additional Comments	
	Search supplemented by 'pearl-growing technique', including following up on the references of key texts, and papers subsequently referencing them.

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