
Disclosure Services customer feedback survey report

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Executive Summary

Disclosure services is believed by most to be performing well across its main functional areas, namely: Enrolment and Assessment; Disclosure Applications; Customer Operations; Training; Support Visits; Website and Communications and PVG Knowledge.

What Disclose Services does well:

- Strong initial engagement with Disclosure Services for signatories through the enrolment process. With positive feedback from lead signatories on their enrolment call and welcome pack and additional signatories on the welcome pack.
- The majority of respondents agree that the online application process is easy ('Very easy' or 'Somewhat easy' and are satisfied with the overall processing time ('very satisfied' or 'Somewhat satisfied').
- Customer operations communication channels; customer operations helpline, webchat and email were all rated helpful ('Extremely helpful' or 'Somewhat helpful') by the majority of respondents.
- Almost all (99%) of respondents who attended training the past twelve months as informative. with 83% rating training as 'Extremely informative' and 16% as 'Somewhat informative'. Over half (54%) of respondents confidence improved from a rating other than 'extremely helpful' to 'extremely helpful' after attending training.
- All five types of support visits (Discussing your role as a signatory; Discussing your duty to refer, discussing the certificate process, discussing the disclosure application process and discussing regulated work) were rated as 'Extremely helpful' by at least 82% of respondents.
- Easy to navigate website, impactful information in the Disclosure Services section and a helpful newsletter, as rated by the majority of respondents.
- Finally, the majority of respondents confirmed they have relevant Disclose policies in place (Making a Referral policy; Child and Adult Protection Policies; Policies dealing with barred individuals and Secure Handling policies) and are confident in putting these policies into practice.

Areas for improvement, respondents suggested specific systems improvements such as modifying the date of birth field on applications to make the process more user friendly and a more automated process where respondents can retrieve applications and track applications. The need for a list of all those registered with respondents organisations was also cited across a number of areas.

1. Methodology

The 2024 'Customer Survey' from Volunteer Scotland Disclosure services captures the feedback from key stakeholders on our services during the previous year. In 2024 this covered our key functions and upcoming changes:

- Enrolment and Assessment
- Disclosure applications
- Customer operations
- Training
- Support visits.
- Website and Communications
- PVG knowledge
- Up coming changes to the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020.

An online survey was distributed to 8,490 signatories. 966 signatories responded, giving a response rate of 11.4%.

Eighty percent of respondents are the lead signatory / collator for their organisation (n = 768), 31% of which have enrolled in the past 12 months. Nine percent of respondents have enrolled as an additional signatory in the past 12 months (n=86).

The data reported in sections 2-9 reflect the views of the 966 individuals responding to the survey. However, the number of actual responses to individual questions is often less as respondents can skip less relevant sections of the survey.

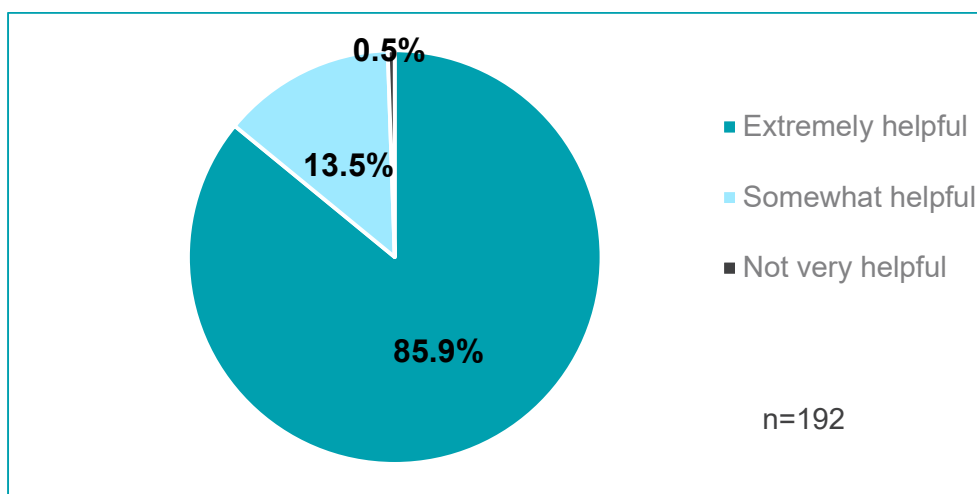
2. Enrolment and Assessment

2.1 Enrolment – Lead Signatory / collator

Eighty percent of respondents to the survey are the lead signatory / collator for their organisation, with 31% of lead signatories / collators enrolling in the past 12 months.

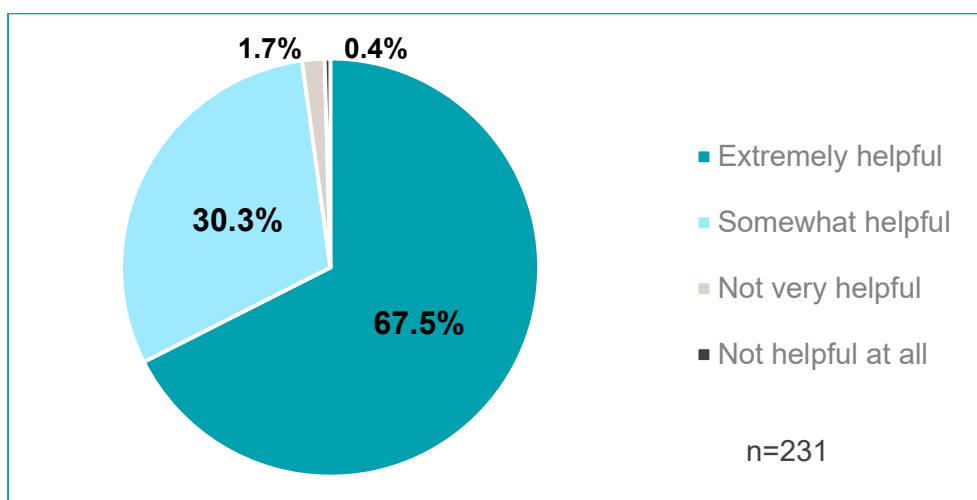
Nineteen percent of respondents emailed their enrolment application and did not use the enrolment call with the Disclosure Services team. The vast majority of those who had an enrolment call with the team rated the call as extremely helpful (86%) – figure 1.

Figure 1 -Rating of Enrolment call – Lead Signatory / collator.



Two percent of respondents did not read the enrolment pack sent as part of the enrolment process. Most respondents who read the enrolment pack rated this as extremely useful (68%) – Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Rating of Welcome pack – Lead Signatory / collator.



Of the five responses received to why respondents did not read the welcome pack, three respondents stated they did not receive a pack, one did not feel the need to after receiving support by phone and one did not recall receiving a pack.

In responding to Do you have any suggestions to enable VSDS to improve the enrolment process, respondents took the opportunity to provide positive feedback on the process.

Q - Do you have any suggestions to enable VSDS to improve the enrolment process?

“The whole process has been SO much more streamlined it is a pleasure to communicate rather than dread the previous process in years gone by.”

“No, they have gone out of their way to make things as clear as possible. Very, very helpful

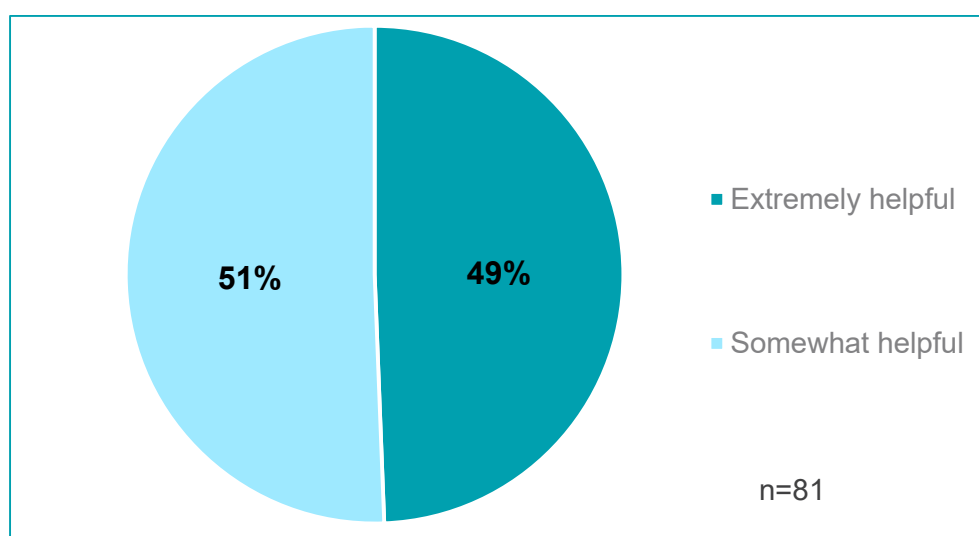
“I think everything is brilliant particularly the way they handle any discrepancies and mistakes.”

2.2 Enrolment – Additional Signatory

Twenty percent of respondents to the survey are additional signatories, with 43% of additional signatories enrolling in the past twelve months.

Six percent of additional signatories did not read the enrolment pack sent as part of the enrolment process. All respondents who read the enrolment pack rated this as useful – Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Rating of Welcome pack – Additional signatory.



Of the five responses received to why respondents did not read the welcome pack, two stated they can not recall receiving a pack, one did not receive a pack, one had held the role in a previous job, and one did not know.

Similarity to Lead signatories, additional signatories responding to Do you have any suggestions to enable VSDS to improve the enrolment process, respondents took the opportunity to provide positive feedback on the process.

Q - Do you have any suggestions to enable VSDS to improve the additional signatory process?

"I found the additional signatory process to be comprehensive and informative."

"I think what helps VSDS process work is knowing I can speak to somebody on the phone. They are very helpful."

"I was contacted and given guidance which was an additional support and so helpful."

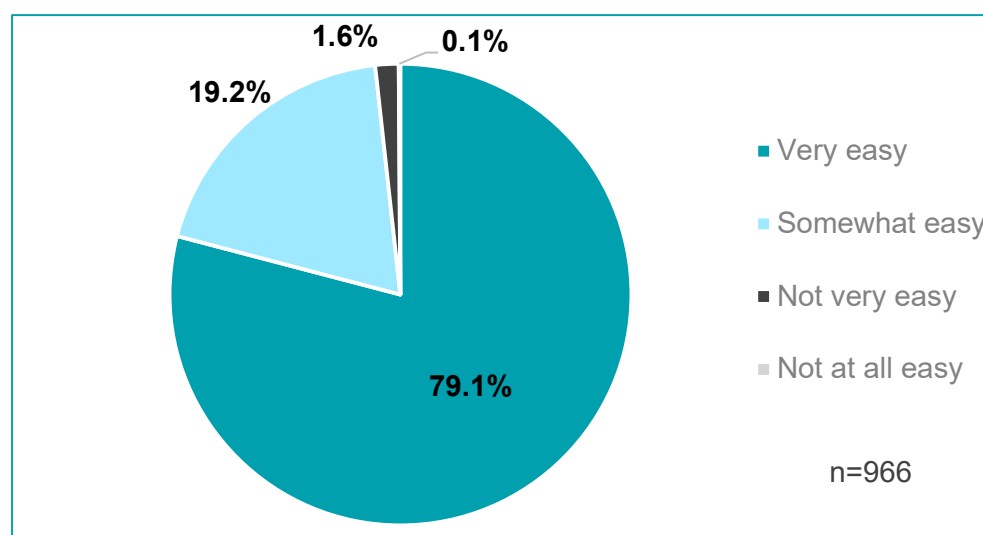
3. Disclosure applications

Eighty four percent of respondents have processed disclosure applications in the past 12 months,

3.1 PVG Applications

Ninety eight percent of respondents submitted PVG applications via the online PVG application request. Ninety-eight percent of respondents who submitted online application rated the online PVG application process as easy (very or somewhat) – Figure 4.

Figure 4 – Rating of PVG online application request.



In responding to - Please provide us feedback on how we can help you with the completion of our PVG online application request an emerging theme of process / system improvements emerged. A number of process improvement suggestions were received around the ability to view or amend applications online and to be able to view application progress online.

Q - Please provide us feedback on how we can help you with the completion of our PVG online application request.

“Facility to see what applications have been submitted and if completed.”

“If I had a login so I wouldn't have to look up my signatory information or fill out my charities information every time, this would make the process simpler.”

“Sometimes I realise I do not have all the information required and have to stop midway. There does not seem to be an option to save what I've inputted.!”

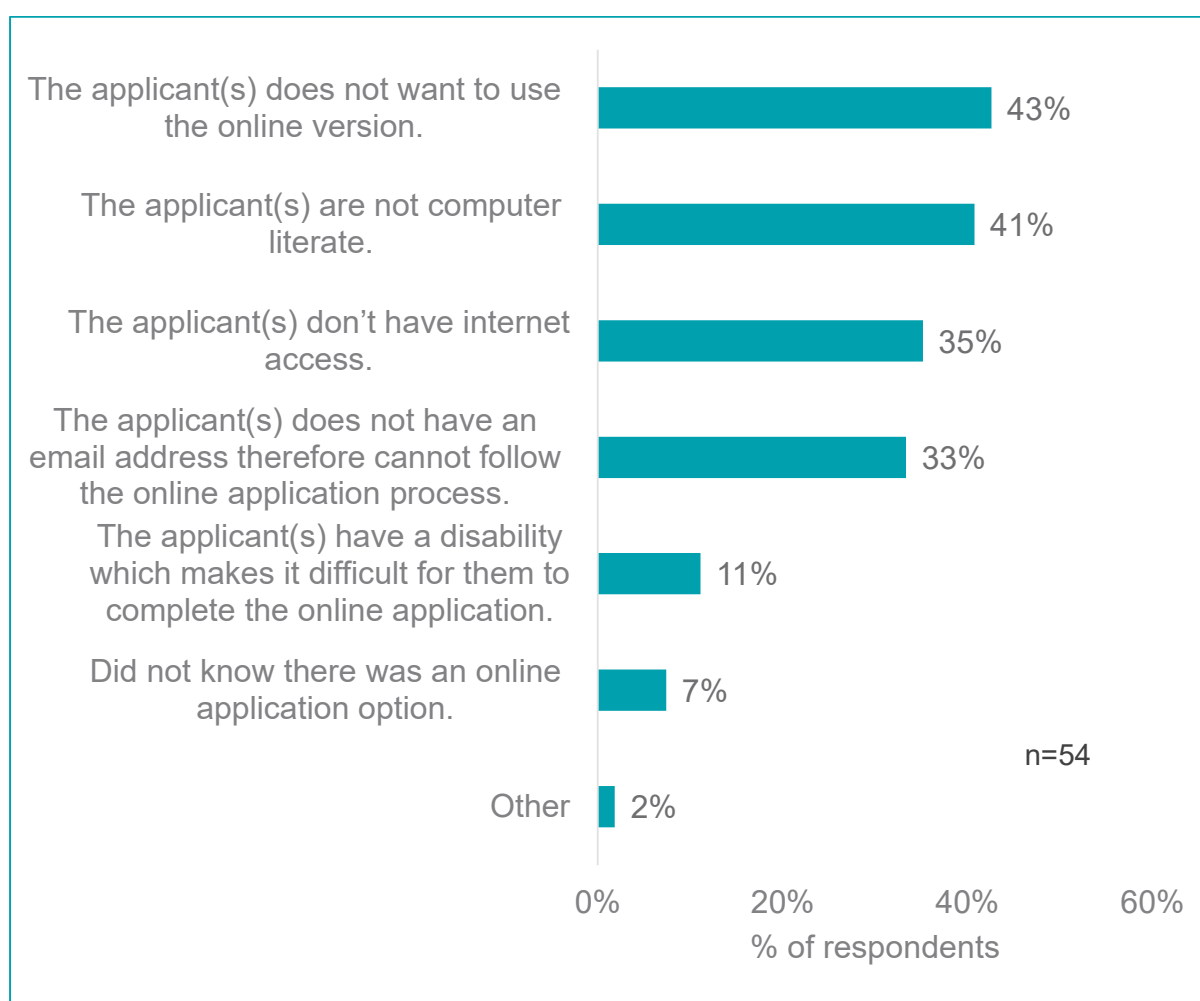
Six percent of respondents processed a PVG application in the past 12 months via a paper application. Just over half (54%) of respondents gave one reason in response to What are the reasons for you choosing the paper application option, with the remaining 46% of respondents selecting more than one reason, indicating the complexity of needs that leads respondents to use paper applications – Table 1.

Table 1 – Count of reasons for using paper PVG applications.

Number of Reason	Count	Percent
1	29	54%
2	10	19%
3	9	17%
4	6	11%
Total	54	100%

The top two responses for respondents using paper applications are the applicant(s) does not want to use the online application (43%) and the applicant(s) are not computer literate (41%) – Figure 5. Two percent of respondents gave 'other' as their response options. The most common 'other' reason provided was not being aware of the online application, other respondents stated that they will move to online applications in the future.

Figure 5 – Reasons for using paper PVG applications.



3.2 Police Act (Standard and/or Enhanced) applications

Thirteen percent of respondents submitted Police Act (Standard and/or Enhanced) applications via the word document application. One percent of respondents submitted their applications via a paper application. For respondents submitting paper applications the most frequently cited reasons for choosing a paper application were not knowing that the word option could be emailed, and that the respondent was not confident in using word. Other reasons provided including a paper copy being easier to fill in, the respondent not being computer literate and paper copies being easier to retain on file.

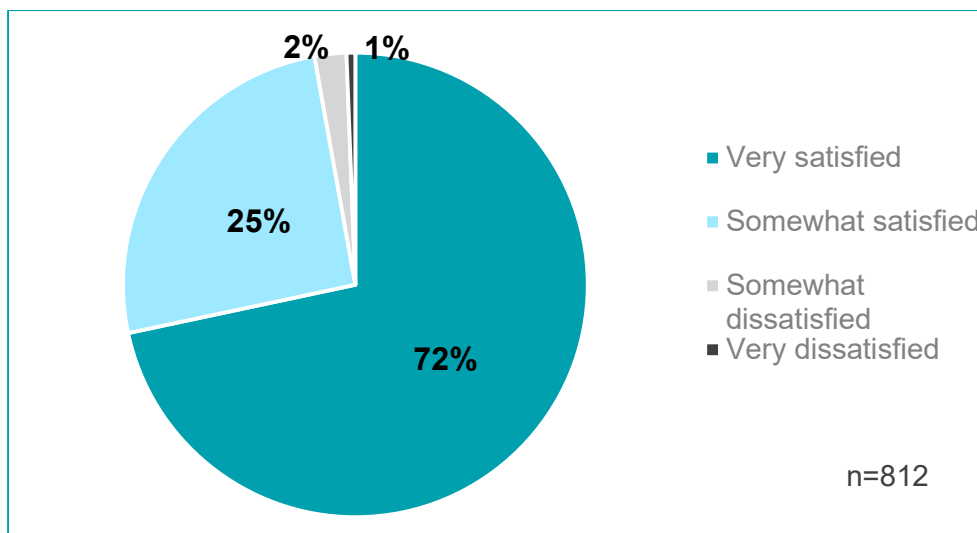
3.3 Data Usage

Eighty three percent of respondents confirmed that when speaking to applicants about the disclosure process, they are informed that VSDS will process and hold their data.

3.4 Processing times

Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents are very satisfied with the overall processing time from submitting their applications to receiving the certificates – Figure 7.

Figure 6 -Satisfaction with overall processing time from submitting applications to receiving certificates.

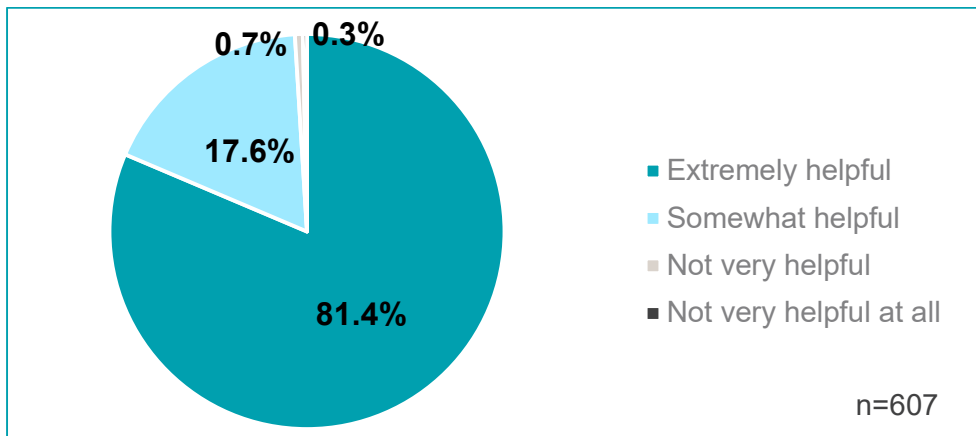


4. Customer operations

4.1 Customer operations helpline

Sixty three percent of respondents have used the customer operations helpline, with 81% of those who have used the helpline rating it as extremely helpful – Figure 7.

Figure 7 -Rating of customer operations helpline.

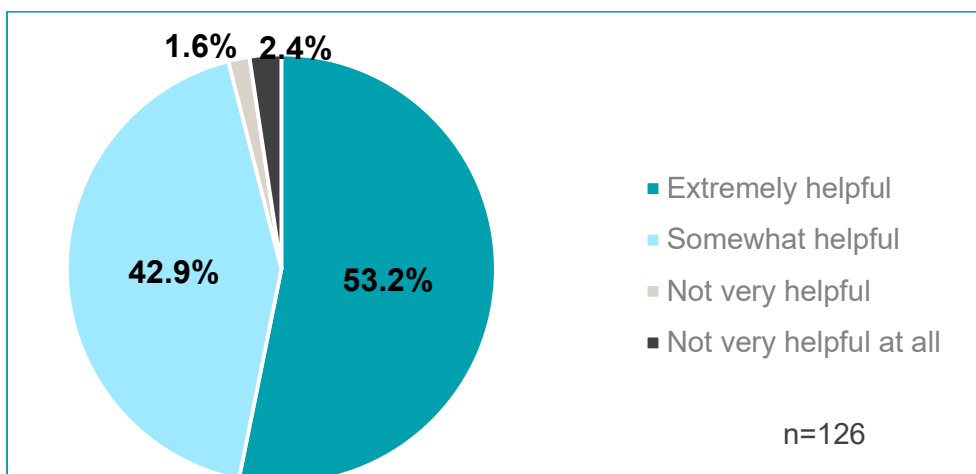


Of the six respondents who did not find the helpline helpful and provided feedback, no clear themes emerged with the feedback provided relating to a specific instance of using the helpline.

4.2 Webchat

Sixty three percent of respondent have used webchat, with 53% of respondent who used webchat rating the service as extremely helpful – Figure 8. Of the four respondents who did not find webchat helpful, no clear themes emerged.

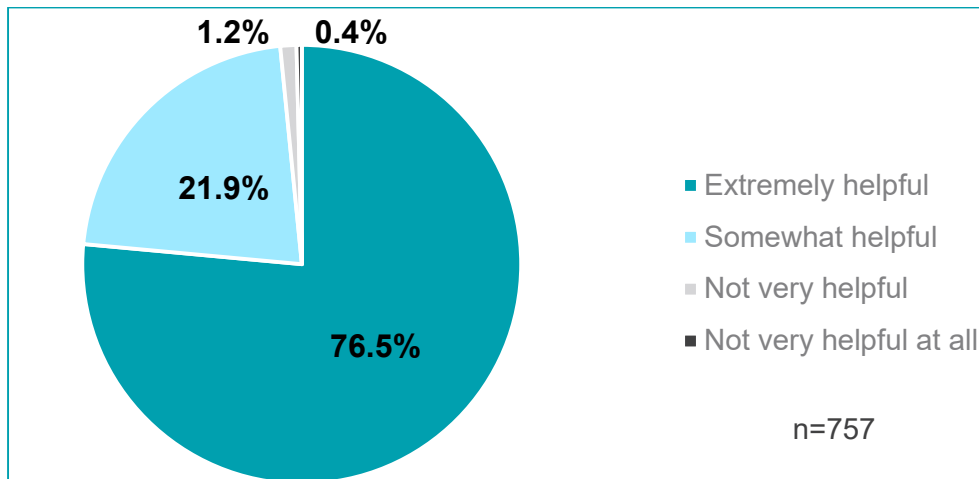
Figure 8 - Rating of customer operations webchat.



4.3 Email

Seventy nine percent of respondents have used email, with 77% of respondents who used email rating it as very helpful.

Figure 9 -Rating of email.



Of the ten respondents who did not find email very helpful and provided feedback, a theme of not receiving responses emerged. Specifically, more than one respondent referenced requesting a list of current PVG members which has not yet been received.

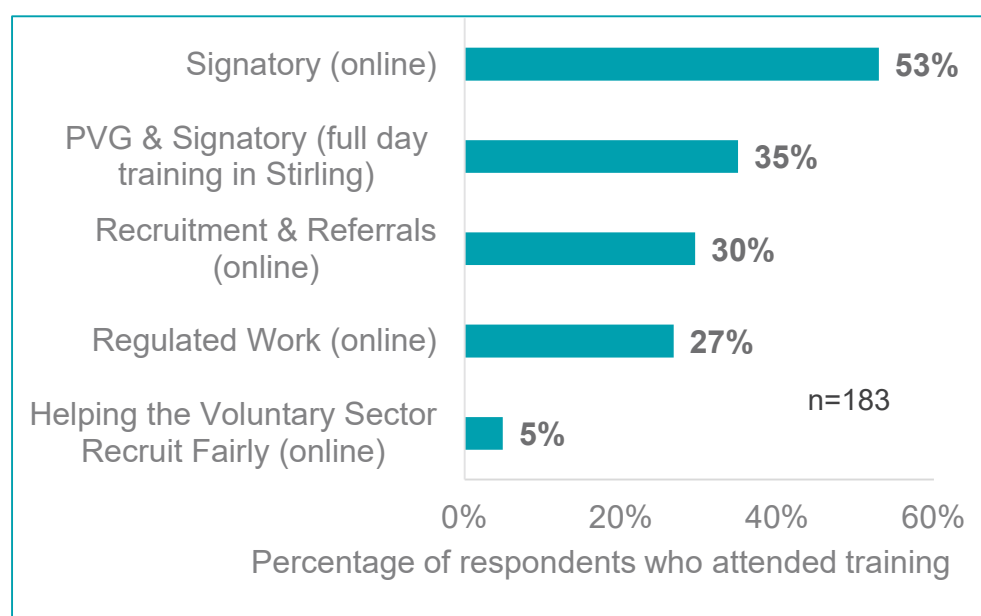
5. Training

Nineteen percent of respondents attended disclosure services training in the past 12 months (face to face and/or online). Over a fifth (28%) of respondents who attended training attended more than one training course.

5.1 Training courses attended.

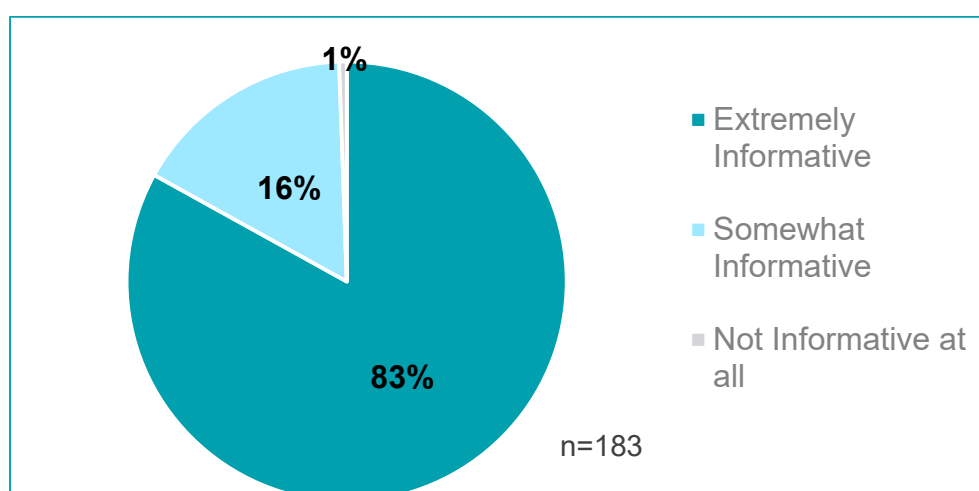
Over half (53%) of respondents who attended training undertook online signatory training, 35% attended PVG & Signatory training as an all-day session in Stirling and 30% attended recruitment and referrals training online – Figure 10.

Figure 10 – Training courses attended.



Eighty three percent of those who attended training in the past 12 months rated the amount of information provided as extremely informative – figure 11.

Figure 11 -Rating the level of information provided during training.



5.2 Confidence before and after training

Prior to training only four percent of respondents who attended training felt extremely confident in their knowledge as a signatory – figure 12. After training the proportion of respondents who felt extremely confident in their knowledge as a signatory rose to 57% - figure 13.

Figure 12 – Confidence in your knowledge as a signatory before training.

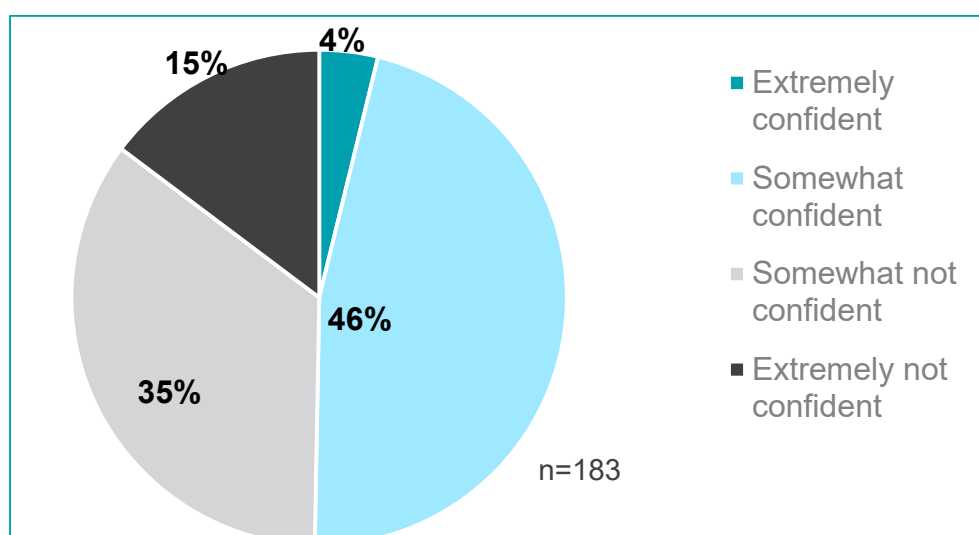


Figure 13 - Confidence in your knowledge as a signatory after training.

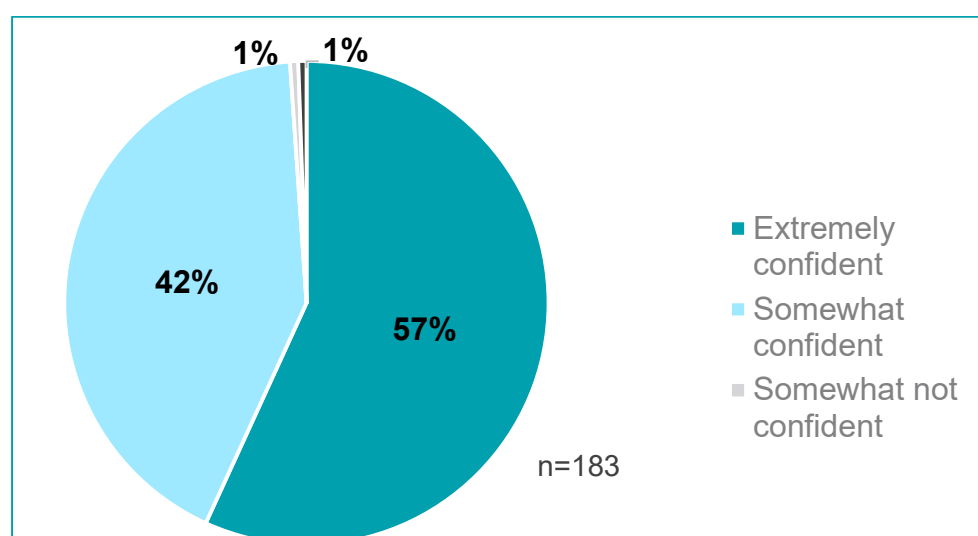


Table 2 shows a comparison of respondent's ratings of their knowledge as a signatory before and after training. The confidence of 54% of respondents has changed from a rating other than extremely confident (Extremely not confident, somewhat not confident, and somewhat confident) to extremely confident.

Table 2 - Confidence in knowledge as a signatory before and after training

Confidence in your knowledge as a signatory before training to after training	Count	Percent
Extremely not confident to Extremely confident	7	4%
Somewhat not confident to Extremely confident	26	14%
Somewhat confident to Extremely confident	65	36%
Extremely not confident to Somewhat confident	19	10%
Somewhat not confident to Somewhat confident	37	20%
Extremely confident to Somewhat confident	1	1%
No change	28	15%
Grand Total	183	100%

When asked to provide suggestions on how training could be improved many respondents provided positive feedback. Other suggestions include more opportunities to ask questions, incorporating real life examples and providing summary documentation.

Q - Do you have any suggestions to improve any of our training sessions?

"No, the training was exceptional, and I feel very well supported should I have a query."

"The training was very comprehensive. It was great having face to face training and learning from other who attended."

"Keep them direct and to the point with real examples of scenarios signatories might encounter."

"More real-life examples would help me personally I learn best by example."

"more engagement or interaction for example break away groups for discussion."

"The sessions were quite full of information. A summary bullet point page at the end send to all who attended the training would be helpful."

In response to Please tell us if there is any other training that you would like to see from us, the most common response was updated training as legislation changes. Where respondents provided topics of interest there were no emerging trends on topics of common interest.

Q - Please tell us if there is any other training that you would like to see from us

"Updates as legislation changes."

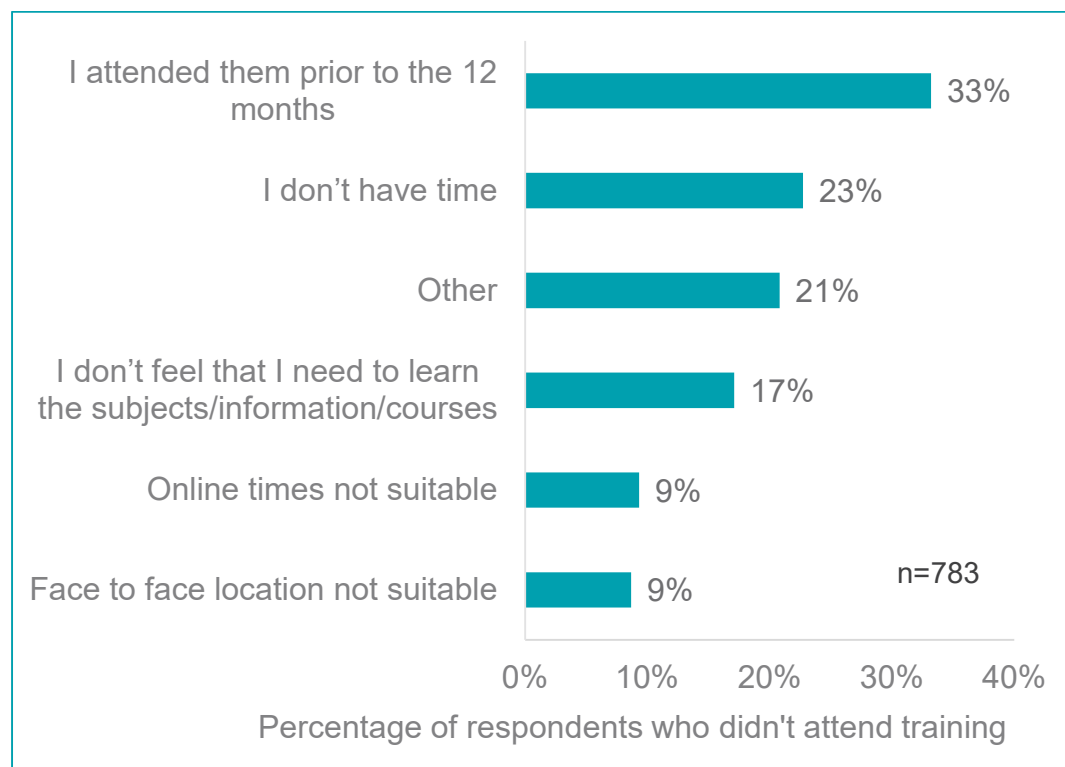
"Any updates to legislation."

"just update training for any future changes."

"An update session for the new process coming into play rather than the full training again, like an upskill on the new changes only."

Attending training courses more than 12 months ago was the most cited reason for respondents not attending free training sessions in the past 12 months – figure 12. Followed by a lack of time. Other reasons include a lack of awareness of the training available, respondents not feeling the training was required and individual respondent and organisational reasons training could not be completed in the past 12 months.

Figure 14 - Reasons for not attending free training in past 12 months.

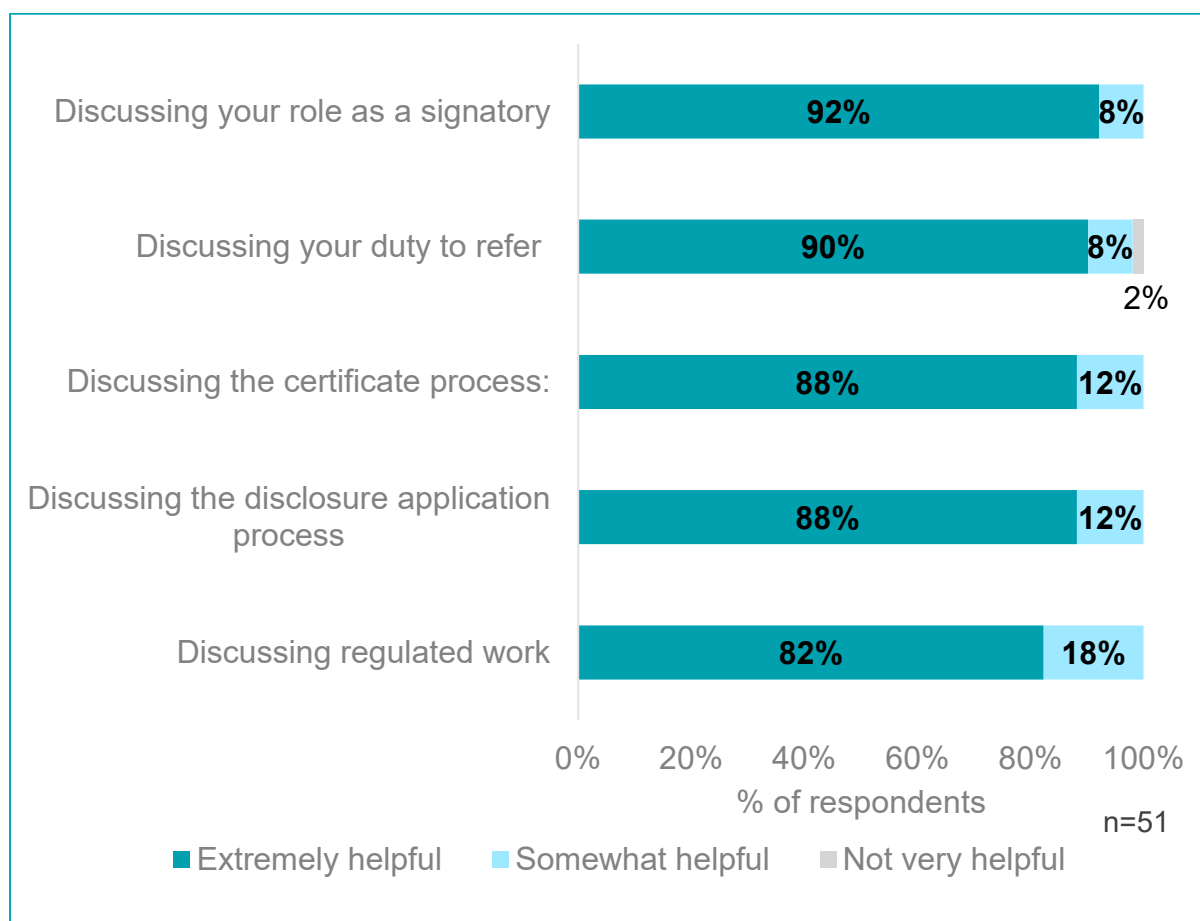


6. Support visits.

Nineteen percent of respondents received a support visit in the past 12 months, with 96% of respondents receiving a support visit agreeing that the visit made them feel more knowledgeable in their role as a signatory.

All types of support visits were rated as extremely helpful by at least 82% of respondents. With discussing your role as signatory (92%) and discussing your duty to refer (90%) being the top-rated courses. Only discussing your duty to refer received a small (two percent) not very helpful rating, all other visits were solely rated extremely / helpful.

Figure 15 - Helpfulness of support visits by type of visit.



There were no emerging trends in the suggestions for improvement, with only seventeen responses being received, the majority of which stated no suggestions, or none being required.

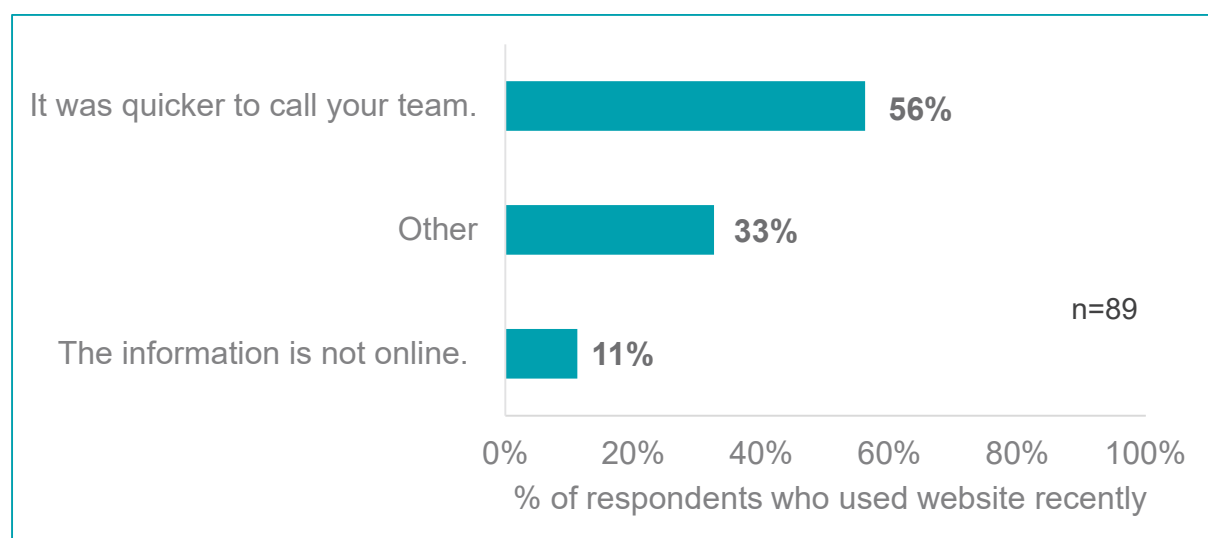
7. Website and Communications

7.1 Website

Seventy seven percent of respondents visited the website recently, with 95% of those who visited the website finding it easy to navigate. Ninety-nine percent of respondents found the information in the Disclosure Services section Extremely (66%) or Somewhat helpful (33%). In providing feedback to why they had not visited the website many respondents stated they did not feel the need to visit the website. Time constraints was also a common reason provided for not visiting the website.

Eighty eight percent of those visiting the website do so before they contact Disclosure Services for support. Over half of those who did not use the website before calling for support as the respondents felt it was quicker to call the team – figure 16. Other reasons included specific examples of where respondents had found the helpline quicker or easier to use than the website.

Figure 16 – Reasons for calling the helpline before using the website.



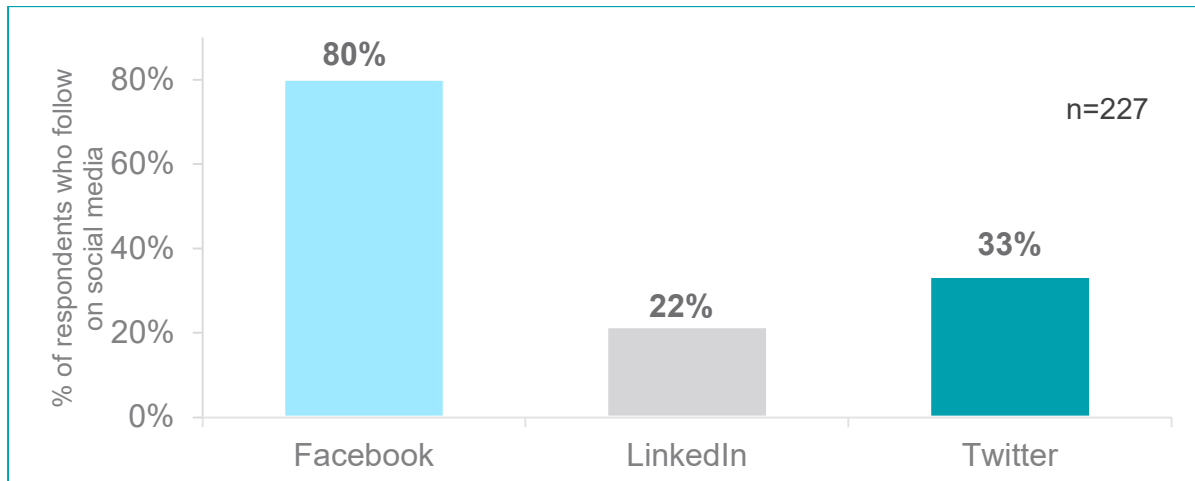
Eight respondents provided responses to information that was not available on the website, with no themes emerging and each response providing a specific example of information the respondent could not locate.

When asked if there any improvements respondents would like to see to the website, 233 responses were received. Over half of responses were “no,” “none” or did not provide any specific improvements. The second highest response theme was respondents providing positive feedback on the website with no improvement suggestions. Where improvements were suggested, they were around additional information being made available on the website or improved navigation and signposting on the website.

7.2 Communications

Just under a quarter of respondents follow Volunteer Scotland on social media (23%), 29% following on more than one social media channel. Facebook is the most followed social media channel (80%), followed by Twitter (33%) – figure 17.

Figure 17 - Social media channels followed.



Eighty six percent of respondents read the newsletter provides by Disclosure services, with 99% rating the newsletters as helpful (42% extremely helpful and 57% somewhat helpful). Seven respondents provided feedback on why they do not find the newsletter helpful with no key themes emerging. Ninety-eight respondents provided feedback on why they do not read the newsletters with a lack of awareness of the newsletter and a lack of time as the emerging themes.

Q – Why don't you read our newsletters?

"Didn't realise there was one."

"Don't think I've seen a disclosure newsletter from you."

"I don't have time."

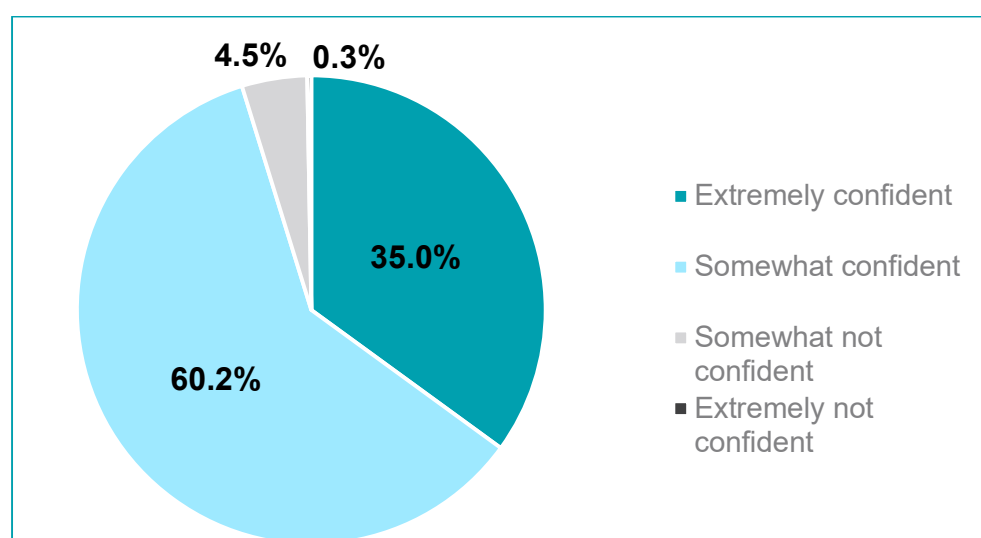
"Not enough hours in the day!"

8. PVG knowledge

8.1 Making a Referral

Seventy six percent of respondents confirmed that their organisation has a Making a Referral Policy in place. For those with a policy in place 35% are extremely confident in putting the policy into practice – figure 18.

Figure 18 -Confidence in putting Making a Referral Policy into practice.



8.2 Child and Adult Protection Policies.

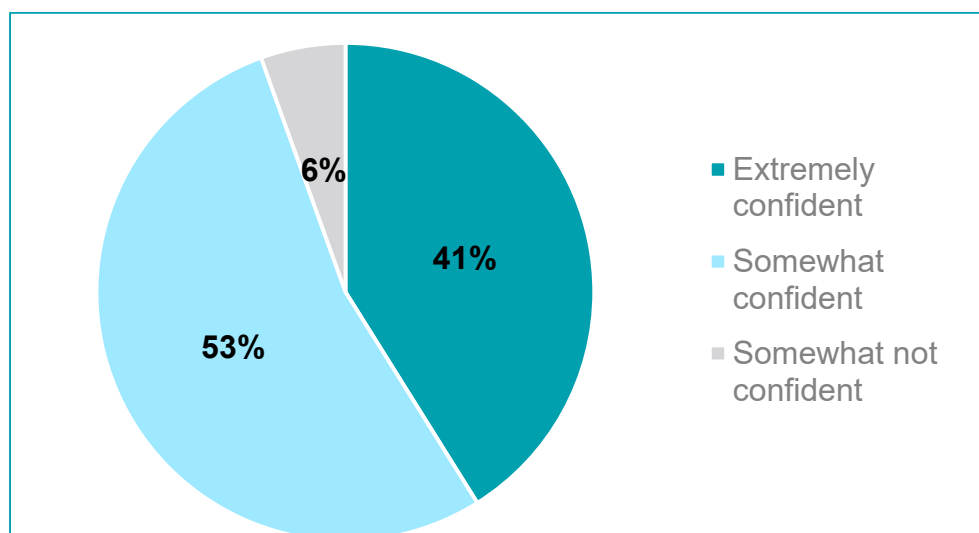
Seventy four percent of respondents organisations offer services to children, 96% of which have a children protection policy in place. For those without a child protection policy in place the most cited reason provided is that it is not required for their organisation.

Eighty percent of respondents organisations offer services to protect adults, 93% of which have an adult protection policy in place. Again, the most cited reason for not have a policy in place is that it is not required. However, respondents also cited not being aware of the requirements and reviewing whether a policy is required.

8.3 Dealing with Barred Individuals

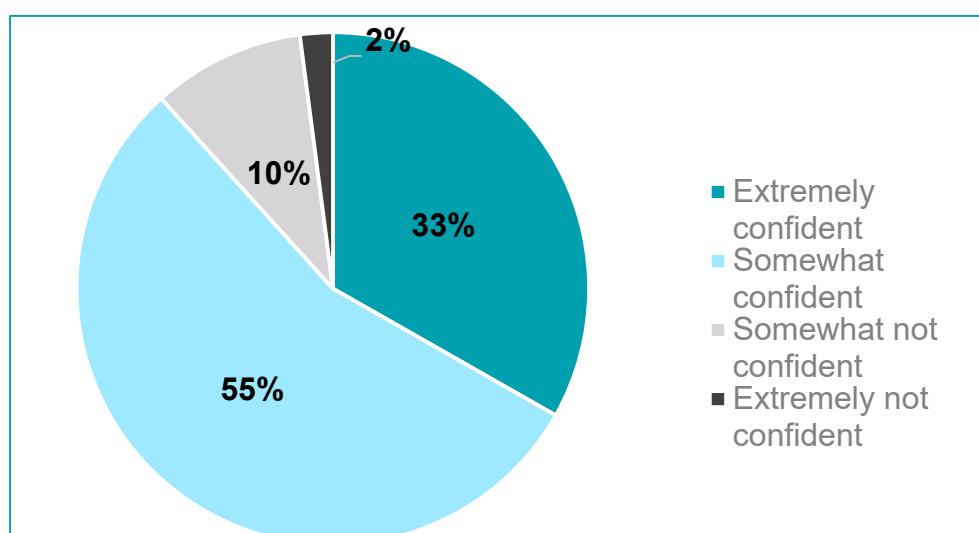
Seventy three percent of respondents organisations have a process in place for dealing with an applicant who is barred from doing regulated work. Forty-one percent of respondents with a policy in place are extremely confident in using the policy where required – figure 19.

Figure 19 – Confidence in applying barred applicants' policy.



Thirty three percent of respondents are extremely confident in assessing a PVG result which has conviction information – Figure 20.

Figure 20 -Confidence in assessing a PVG result which has conviction information.



8.4 Secure handling

Ninety Three percent of applicants organisations have a secure handling policy in place. For those without a policy in place the most cited reasons are a lack of knowledge and currently reviewing and working to implement a policy.

Ninety seven percent of applicants organisations store certificates in line with the Disclosure Scotland Code of Practice.

Ten percent of respondents have requested a follow up call after completing the PVG knowledge section of the survey.

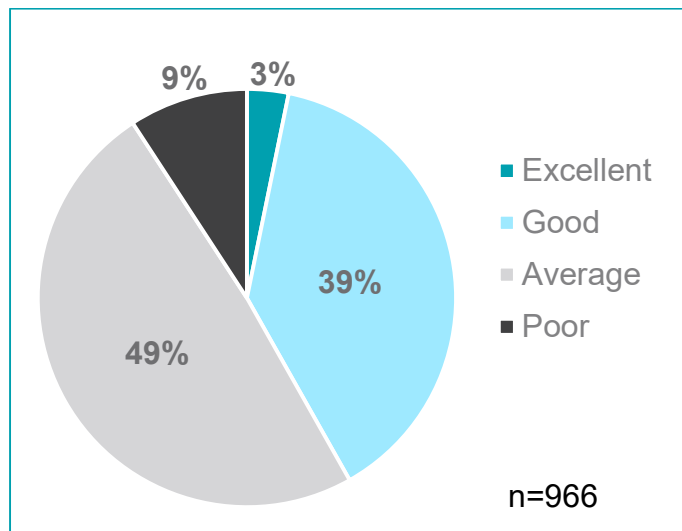
9. Upcoming changes to the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020.

9.1 Awareness and Knowledge

Sixty five percent of respondents are aware that the remainder of the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 will be implemented on the first of April 2025.

Almost half (49%) of respondents rated their knowledge on the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 as average, 39% good, nine percent poor and three percent excellent – Figure 21.

Figure 21 - Rating of knowledge of the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 202



9.2 Training

The first-choice delivery preference for information sessions in the lead up to the implementation of the Disclosure (Scotland) Act is online sessions (72%). Hybrid events (60%) is the top second choice and face to face (56%) the top third choice (Figure 22). Sixty-three percent of respondents first choice is to have sessions delivered as a half day (weekday) session, 53% of respondents second choice is full day (weekday) sessions, 63% of respondents third choice is evening sessions and 77% of respondents fourth choice is weekend sessions (Figure 23). This suggests that online half day (weekday) sessions would be the preferred delivery of sessions.

Figure 22 - Preference on delivery of Disclosure (Scotland) Act training - Where.

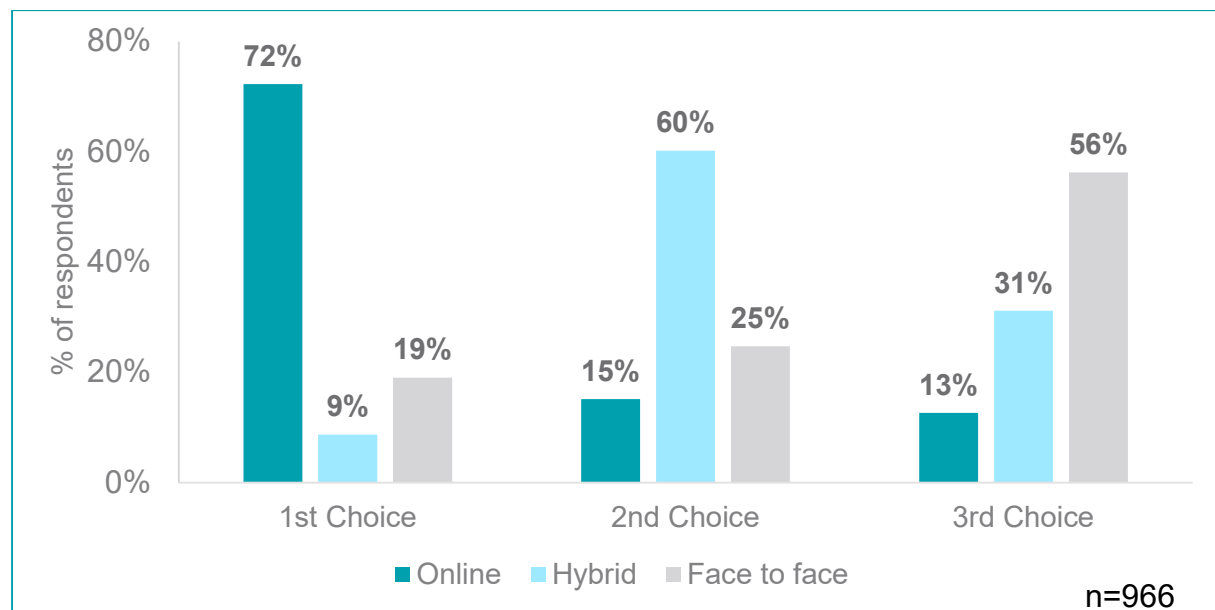
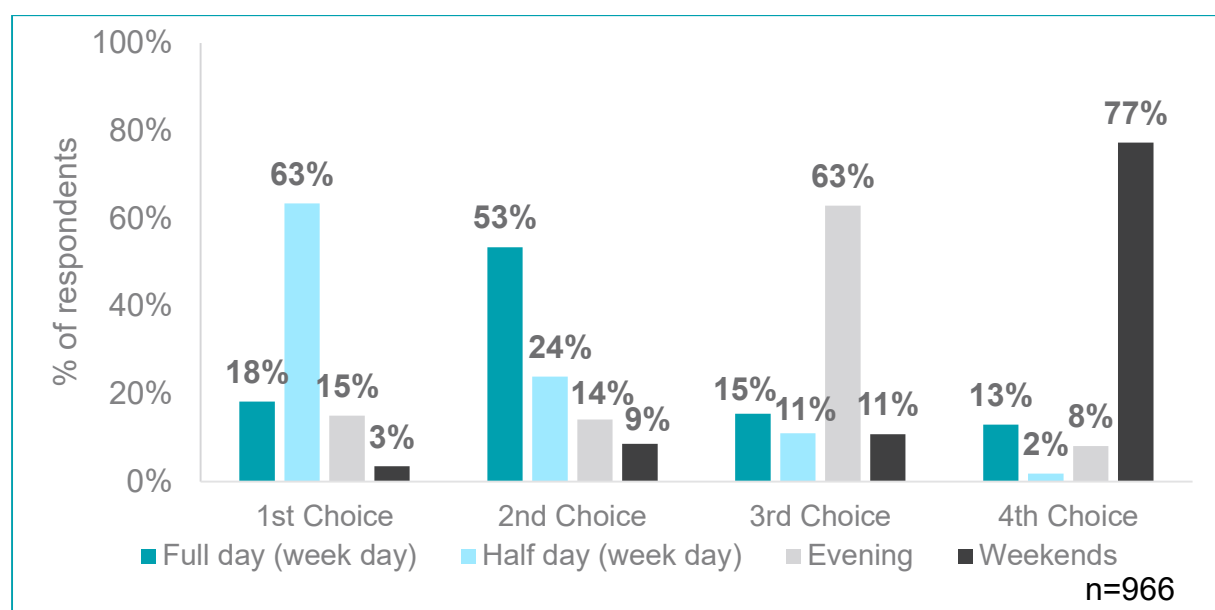
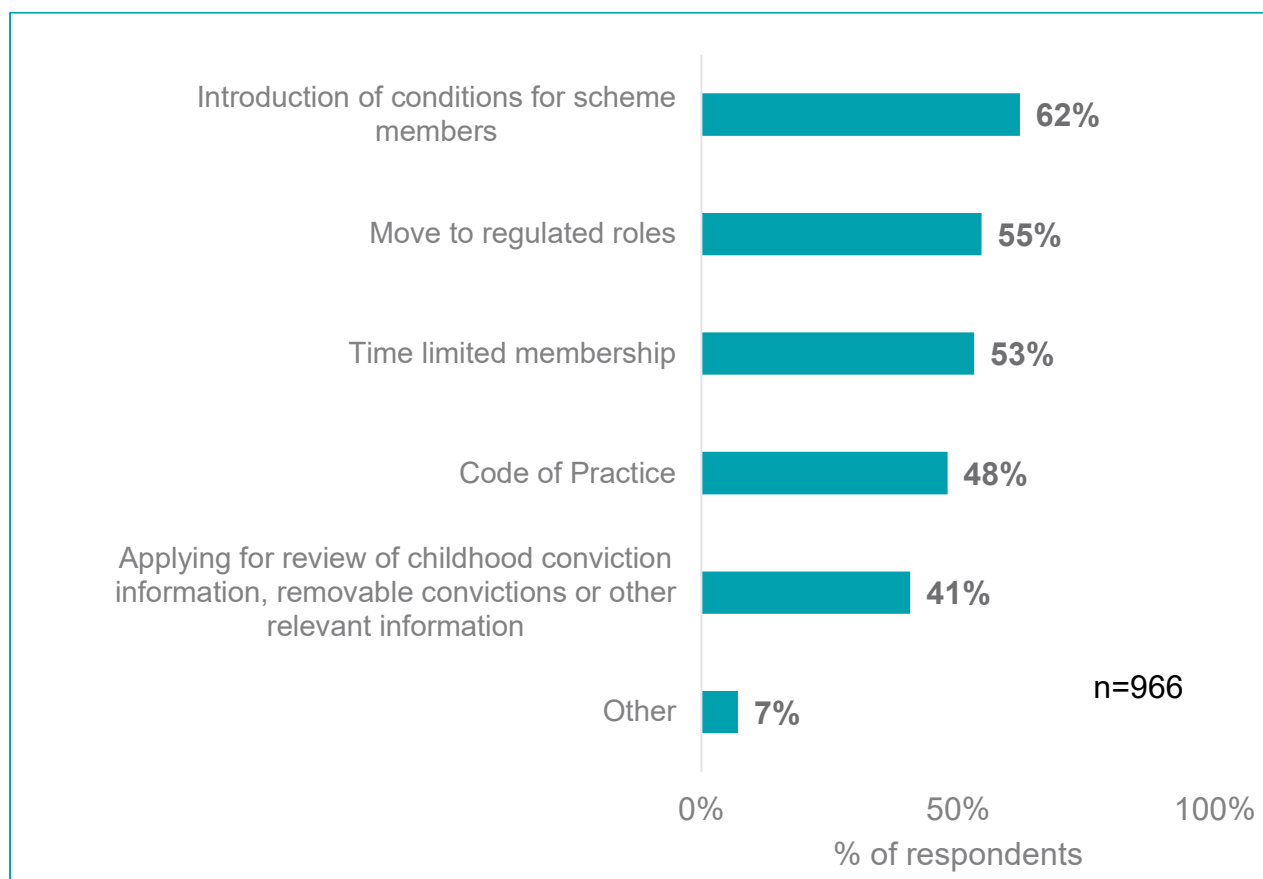


Figure 23 - Preference on delivery of Disclosure (Scotland) Act training - When.



The top three topics that respondents require for the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 provisions are Introduction of conditions for the scheme members (62%), Move to regulated roles (55%) and Time limited membership (53%) (Figure 24). Seven percent of respondents selected 'other,' with the most cited 'other' responses being do not know and general training / review of all topics covered.

Figure 24 - Preference on delivery of Disclosure (Scotland) Act training – What (Topics)



* Please note respondents can select more than one response.

9.3 Transitioning to the new scheme

In response to ‘What factors do you think are important for us to consider in supporting organisations to transition existing PVG scheme members into time-limited membership?’ 414 free format text responses were received. Themes emerged of clear & regularly updated guidance / process documentation and concerns over time and resource constraints.

“Clear guidance on what needs to be done and when, a step-by-step guide.”

“Communication of what we need to do.”

“Make accessible information available on website highlighting differences between new and old systems.”

“The impact this will have on small, part time voluntary organisations who will have to find the time to process this.”

“time frame, limited staffing capacity to deal with changes, financial impact.”

“Is it a lot of work for the organisation to do and how do they know when they need to do it”

Currently 65% of respondent's organisations routinely update Disclosure Scotland when a scheme member is no longer doing regulated work with their organisation. 306 free format responses were received in response to Why don't you update Disclosure Scotland? Emerging themes are a lack of awareness of a requirement to do so, organisations have not had changes that required updates and organisations are working on putting processes in place to provide updates.

“Did not realise I had to until recently.”

“Had not been aware of this requirement.”

“We've only just begun this process and haven't needed to yet.”

“We do update sometimes but not as a matter of routine, probably because we have so few referrals, maybe one every two years - staff and volunteers have been fairly settled recently.”

“Currently reviewing members to update or notify where volunteer is no longer carrying out regulated work. The latter will be notified to Disclosure Scotland.”

“Process being put into place to do this at present”

The last question of the section - If you had to recheck everyone you have in regulated work, what would the impact be for your organisation, received 782 free format responses providing a wide range of impacts. The responses varied from organisations with no or minimal impact through to organisations citing that the changes may cause pauses in service delivery to beneficiaries. Specific impacts of resource and cost are frequently cited.

“Fortunately, only very few members are registered members of the PVG scheme.”

“It is do-able. Impact should be minimal.”

“Loss of some volunteers, reduction in the service we provide.”

“It would take time away from delivery of our projects to dedicate time to admin of rechecking and updating.”

“Cost implications. small charity. restricted funding.”

“Our finances are tight so it would be a financial issue.”

“Huge and unmanageable impact “



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