




**Social security  
scrutiny options for  
Scotland**

Prof Gráinne McKeever

ulster.ac.uk

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**Scrutiny options for Scotland**

3 main assumptions

1. The existing UK body for for social security scrutiny (SSAC) will not be able to scrutinise devolved social security legislation for Scotland
2. The Scottish Government can create a separate scrutiny committee for Scotland
3. It would be advantageous to have a good working relationship between the SSAC and a Scottish scrutiny committee

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## Option 1

### Memorandum of Understanding

- A bilateral, non-binding agreement between the advisory bodies and the 'other' government
- A non-statutory role for SSAC to advise Scottish Government and to share this advisory process with the Scottish scrutiny body.
- Reciprocal position giving the Scottish scrutiny body a non-statutory role to advise UK government and to share its advisory considerations with SSAC



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## Option 1 (contd)

### Memorandum of Understanding

#### Advantages:

Good sense of the inter-workings of 2 social security systems, anticipating/preventing adverse consequences arising where claimant entitlement spans both systems

#### Disadvantages:

Political opposition to submitting social security proposals to the 'other' government/body for scrutiny



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## Option 2

### Overlapping membership

- a) Ex officio membership for each body:
  - a SSAC member who is also entitled to sit on the Scottish scrutiny body
  - a Scottish scrutiny committee member who is also entitled to sit on the SSAC
  
- b) SSAC as the state body, Scottish scrutiny committee as sub-state body, with some sub-state members also members of SSAC



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## Option 2 (contd)

### Overlapping membership

#### Advantages:

Good opportunities for each committee to learn what the other is doing, to develop shared consideration of options, and sub-state members would bring a wider committee voice to the state body

#### Disadvantages:

While Scottish scrutiny committee appointments could be made by SG, SSAC appointments are made by SSWP:

- a) Ex officio member, drawn from Scottish body, would be de facto appointment by UK government
- b) Sub-state body member/s would be reserved for SSAC appointment, which would be de facto SoS appointment



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## Option 3

### Informal relationship

- Unofficial, working relationship facilitated by each Committee's Chair
- Information sharing, visits and presentations by and to each committee.



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## Option 3 (contd)

### Informal relationship

#### **Advantages:**

No (formal) political obstacles, mutually beneficial relationship, opportunity to understand some of the interactions between reserved/devolved benefits

#### **Disadvantages:**

Vulnerable to other (statutory) priorities of each committee; relies on Chairs having diplomatic skill, and committees having ability to manage the additional work demand without additional resources



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