



Standard Occupational Classification 2020 (SOC2020) Revision Consultation

Crafts Council response submitted May 11th 2026

SOC is a coding framework used to classify people's occupations within the UK. It assigns all jobs a four-digit code, which is based on the skills and qualifications needed for the job.

It is used by the ONS in the UK census and in the production of labour market statistics, as well as being used by other government agencies for their own purposes. For example, UK visas and immigration use SOC to grant skilled worker visas according to occupational shortages within the UK.

Due to the continual evolution of occupations, we need to ensure that SOC is reflective of any significant changes which have occurred due to:

- *Technological developments*
- *Innovation and new products*
- *The use of new materials*
- *Improved methods of production or delivery of services*

Please note that to ensure the correct changes are made, there will be an evidence-based assessment on proposed changes to ensure occupation groups affected are sufficiently populated to be statistically viable at low output levels.

We are asking users and interested parties of SOC which areas of SOC2020 should be reviewed and updated, and why. We are responsible for maintaining and updating SOC, which was introduced in 1990, and is revised every 10 years.

What areas of SOC2020 do you think could be improved?

Please supply reasons why these changes need to be made, providing as much information as possible.

Crafts Council and partners would like to propose the following new SOC code: 5444 designer-maker and related craft workers. This class includes designers and makers of independent craft in the design, creation and production of three dimensional craft objects (e.g. From ceramic, glass, textiles, metal, leather, basketwork, wood)'.

Now that the concept of craft is fully recognised in the SIC framework as a 3D sub-category of the activities of independent artists, it seems logical to reflect

the related skills associated with craft creation activities in the SOC framework, on the grounds that this would allow for a clarification of the existing SOC structure.

Provision could be made to exclude skills related to the manufacture of furniture, jewellery and digital forms of visual arts as these are covered elsewhere (see codes 31.00, 32.12 and 90.12/2).

Thus the activities involved in e.g. Furniture making (5442 furniture makers and other craft woodworkers) could become simply 'furniture makers' as the activities are different from those involved in other craft woodworking.

Please provide any other comments on SOC2020:

We welcome the recent agreed changes to the SIC framework and look forward to this opportunity for SOC202 to reflect the related skills associated with craft creation activities.