

2026 Service Rating Analysis

Protection

1st February 2026



2026 Service Ratings Analysis – Protection

Purpose of this document

This report contains high level analysis of the service data collected which influenced the Defaqto Service Rating given to Protection from 1st February 2026.

How does Defaqto collect the data?

Defaqto commissioned third party research specialist Savanta to conduct a survey of advisers in the UK, these advisers are from different parts of the country and of different sizes and specialisms. The responses received are supplemented by Defaqto Engage users who are contacted and asked to complete the survey, and via provider specific links distributed by the providers themselves to their adviser contacts.

How does Defaqto apply a Service Rating?

Based on response rate, Defaqto determines a number of minimum responses required to receive a Service Rating. Responses are also monitored by Savanta as part of normal data quality cleansing measures. Defaqto will take steps to remove any responses they consider to be potentially not genuine.

Advisers are asked to rate the importance of a range of key service disciplines relevant to Protection. They are then asked which providers they have placed business with in the previous 12 months.

Where more than one provider is selected, they are asked to rank them in order of preference.

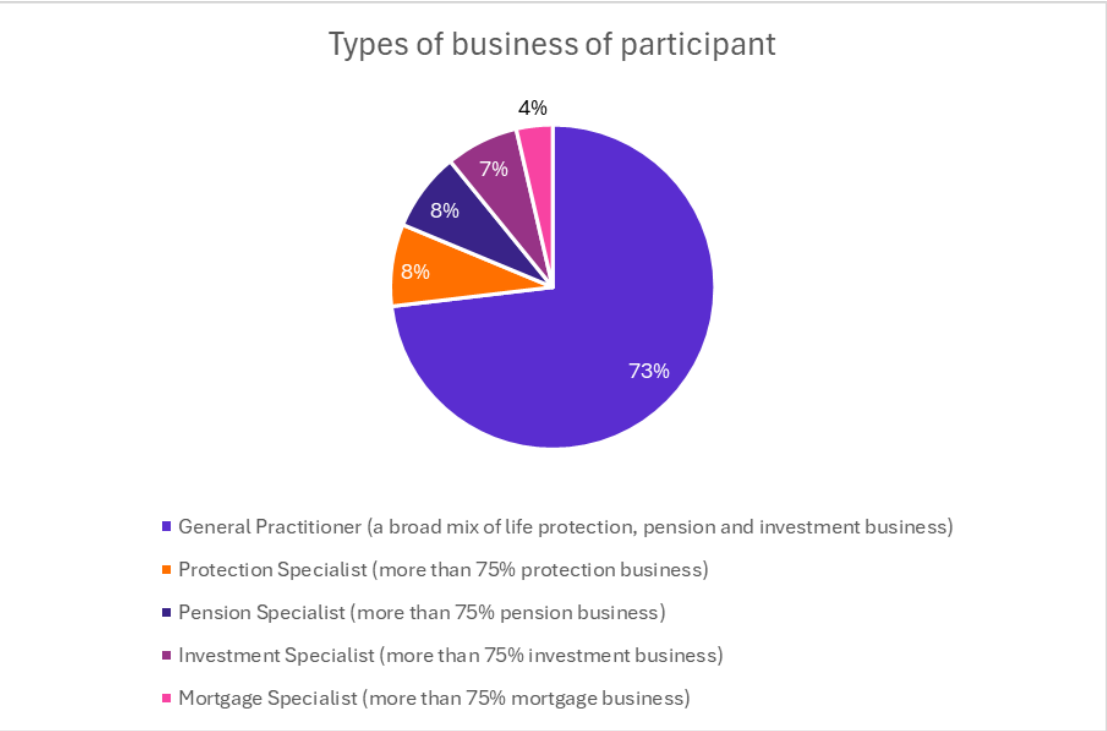
Advisers are then asked how satisfied they are with their preferred providers for a number of service disciplines using a 1 to 5 scale, where 5 represents very satisfied and 1 represents very dissatisfied.

Defaqto then calculate the satisfaction index for each provider in the study by working out the percentage of above average scores and weighting the result by the importance attributed to each of the service disciplines. The service rating is then based on these indexes with 70% of the average importance ordinarily being the Gold benchmark.

Building the overall score up by combining scores for individual aspects of service gives a truer assessment than if we were to simply ask the advisers for an overall score for their preferred providers.

Number of responses	Service disciplines scored
331	Claims handling and administration staff
	New business administration
	Existing business administration
	Online services facilities
	Business development managers
	Underwriting services
	Technical assistance

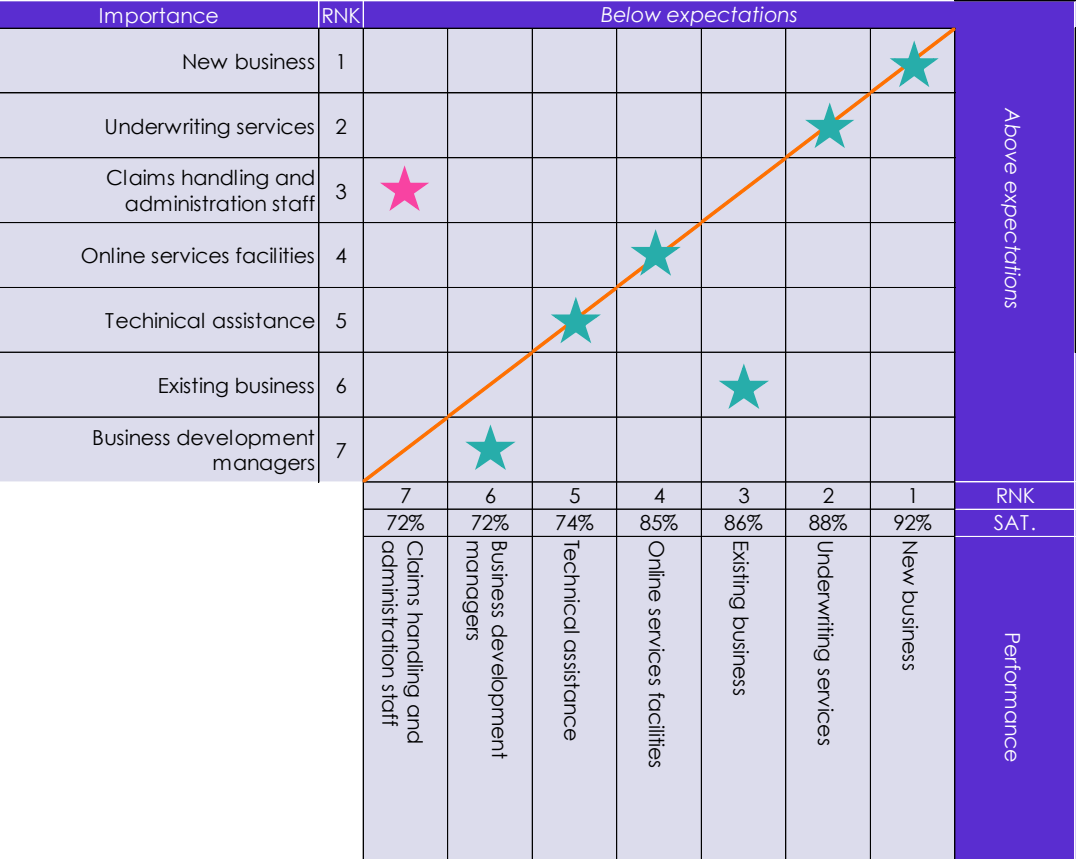
Participants were asked to confirm the type of business they consider themselves to be based on more than 75% of their business:



Advisers were asked to nominate providers they had placed business with in the last 12 months and the below shows the 10 providers who received the most nominations:

Most nominated providers	
1	Aviva
2	Legal & General
3	Zurich
4	Royal London
5	Vitality Life
6	LV=
7	Scottish Widows
8	Guardian
9	HSBC Life (UK) Ltd
=10	Shepherds Friendly Society
=10	The Exeter

We asked the advisers to tell us which are the most important service disciplines and based on their responses can plot how the industry is scoring against this order of preference:



Where advisers scored providers against the service disciplines, the below indicates the highest scoring for each of them, where their score has been weighted by the average importance of that service discipline:

	1st	2nd	3rd
Business development managers	HSBC Life (UK) Ltd	Shepherds Friendly Society	Royal London
Claims handling and administration staff	HSBC Life (UK) Ltd	Royal London	Aviva
Existing business	Shepherds Friendly Society	HSBC Life (UK) Ltd	Scottish Widows
New business	Shepherds Friendly Society	LV=	Guardian
Online services facilities	HSBC Life (UK) Ltd	Aviva	Vitality Life
Technical assistance	Royal London	HSBC Life (UK) Ltd	LV=
Underwriting services	HSBC Life (UK) Ltd	Guardian	Shepherds Friendly Society

Finally, the highest performing providers can be placed into order based on the total number of above average scores received against the number of completions they received from participants. This is weighted by the total average importance of all service disciplines surveyed:

Top 10 providers for service	
1	HSBC Life (UK) Ltd
2	Royal London
3	LV=
4	Aviva
5	Vitality Life
6	Shepherds Friendly Society
7	Guardian
8	Zurich
9	Legal & General
10	Scottish Widows

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