

## Levels of highest qualification held by working age adults in Wales, 2012

This Statistical Bulletin presents key statistics on the highest qualification held by adults of working age in Wales, according to their age at the start of the academic year.

The statistics provided are taken from the Annual Population Survey (APS) for the year ending December 31st 2012. Further information on the APS can be found in the notes at the end of this bulletin.

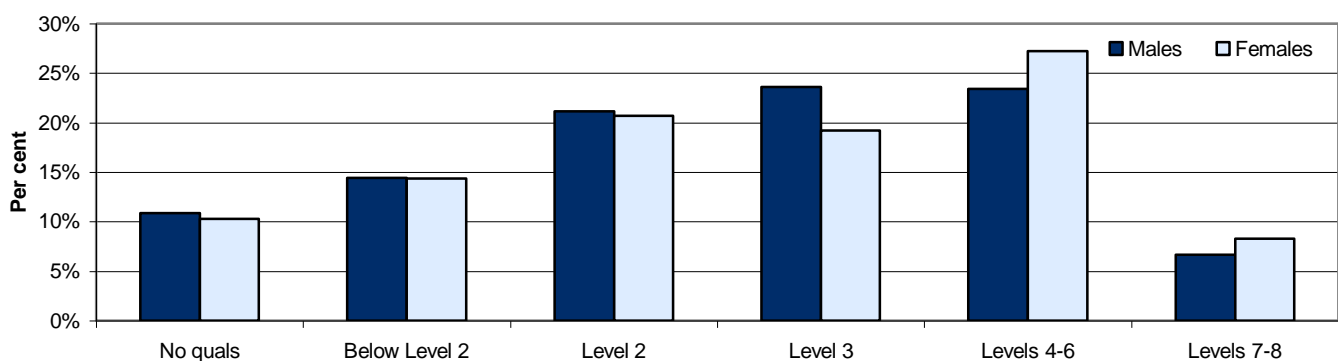
Qualifications have been grouped into National Qualification Framework (NQF) levels. Further information on NQF levels can be found in the notes.

Working age adults in this bulletin refers to males aged 18-64, and females aged 18-59.

### Key Results

- Overall, qualification levels in Wales have increased in 2012, continuing the general increase seen over the past decade. There was a 1 percentage point increase in the proportion of adults with level 2 or above, an increase of 2 percentage point for level 3 or above, and an increase of 1 percentage point for level 4 or above.
- An estimated 11 per cent of working age adults in Wales were reported as having no qualifications, the same as in 2011.
- 75 per cent of working age adults in Wales held at least level 2 qualifications. The proportion holding level 4 qualifications or above was 33 per cent.
- 59 per cent of persons with no qualifications (who are not in full time education) are either ILO unemployed or economically inactive. This compares to 26 per cent across the population as a whole.
- Wales has a higher proportion of adults of working age without qualifications compared with England and Scotland. The gap between Wales and the rest of the UK has narrowed since 2001.

**Chart 1. Level of highest qualification held by adults of working age, by gender, 2012**



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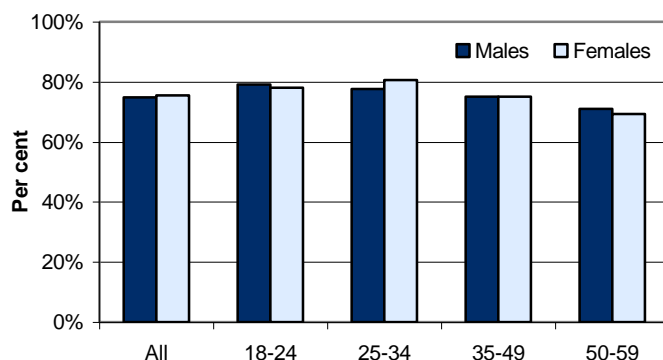
### Qualifications by age and gender

- 11 per cent of adults of working age were reported as having no qualifications. This is similar for males and females. (Table 1 and Chart 1).
- The proportion of adults with no qualifications increases with age. 8 per cent of 18-24 year olds were reported as having no qualifications compared with 15 per cent of 50-59 year olds (Table 1).
- 75 per cent of all adults of working age have a qualification at level 2 or above, whilst 33 per cent have a qualification at level 4 or above (Table 1).
- Proportions at level 2 are similar between males and females for all age groups (Chart 2).
- The proportion of females qualified to at least level 4 is higher than that of males for all age groups. (Chart 3).
- A break down of those qualified to levels 4-6 into undergraduate degree qualifications and other level 4-6 qualifications<sup>b</sup> shows the younger cohorts are more likely to have undergraduate degree qualifications than other level 4-6 qualifications. The difference is smallest for the oldest cohorts (Chart 4).

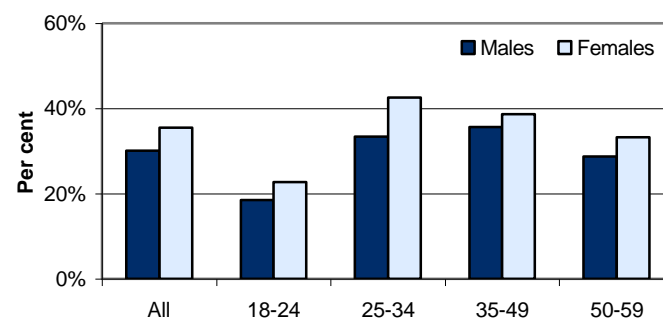
### Qualifications by ethnicity<sup>c</sup>

- 71 per cent of persons (who are not in full time education) from a non-white ethnic origin hold at least level 2 qualifications, compared to 74 per cent of persons from a white ethnic origin (Chart 5).
- Persons from a non-white ethnic origin are more likely to hold degree-level qualifications than those from a white ethnic origin (46 per cent compared with 33 per cent)(Chart 5).

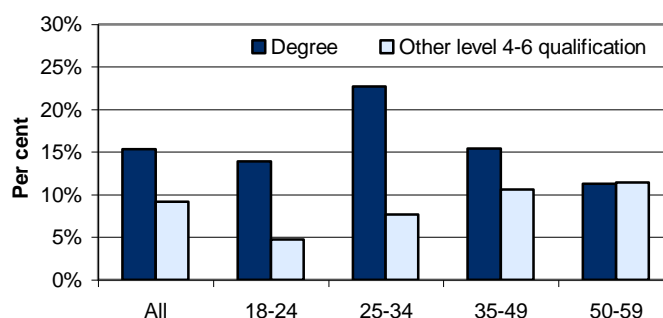
**Chart 2. Proportion qualified to at least level 2, by age and gender, 2012**



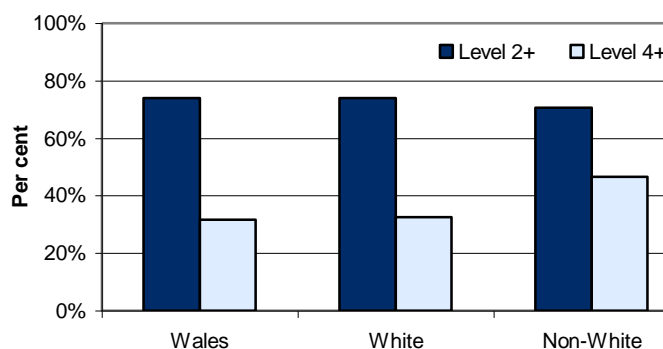
**Chart 3. Proportion qualified to at least level 4, by age and gender, 2012**



**Chart 4. Proportion qualified to levels 4-6, by age and qualification, 2012<sup>b</sup>**



**Chart 5. Proportion qualified to at least level 2 or at least level 4, by ethnicity, 2012<sup>c</sup>**



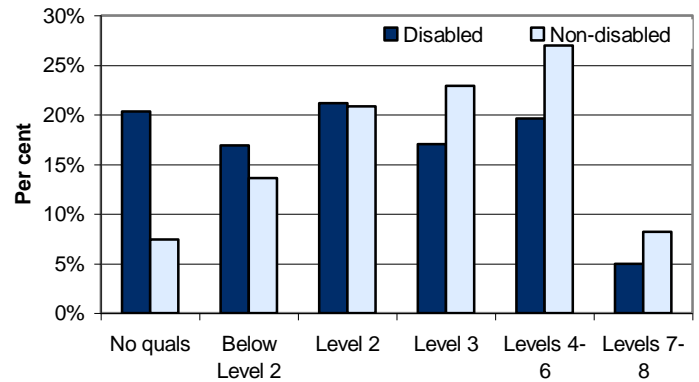
<sup>b</sup> Undergraduate degrees include first degrees, foundation degrees and other degrees. See the Notes section for more details on qualification groupings.

<sup>c</sup> Excludes those persons in full time education. See Key Quality Information.

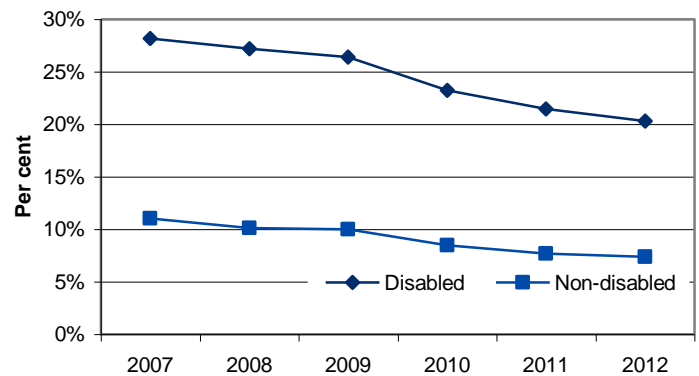
## Qualifications by disability

- Persons with a disability (DDA current disability and/or work-limiting disability) are more likely to hold no qualifications than non-disabled persons, and less likely to hold qualifications at level 3 or above. The percentage of persons with a disability holding qualifications at level 2 is 21 per cent (the same as non-disabled persons). (Chart 6).
- Since 2007, the gap between disabled and non-disabled persons holding no qualifications has narrowed from 17 percentage points to 13 percentage points (Chart 7).
- Since 2007, the proportion of disabled and non-disabled persons qualified to at least level 2 has increased, and the gap has decreased slightly. (Chart 8).
- Similarly, the proportion of disabled and non-disabled persons qualified to at least level 4 has increased, with the gap decreasing. (Chart 9).

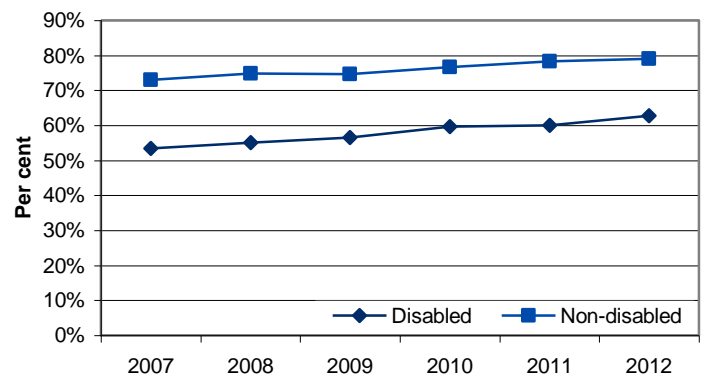
**Chart 6. Level of highest qualification held by working age adults, by current disability status, 2012**



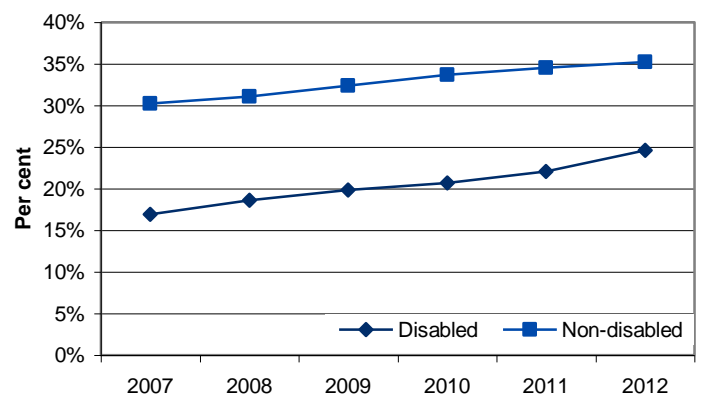
**Chart 7. Proportion of working age adults with no qualifications, by disability status, 2007-2012**



**Chart 8. Proportion of working age adults qualified to at least level 2, by disability status, 2007-2012**



**Chart 9. Proportion of working age adults qualified to at least level 4, by disability status, 2007-2012**



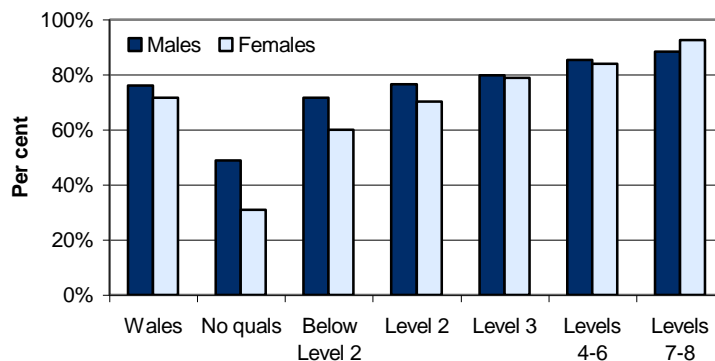
### Employment status by highest qualification

- The proportion of people in employment increases as the highest level of qualification increases. This is true for both males and females (*Chart 10*).
- 41 per cent of people with no qualifications (who are not in full-time education) are in employment compared with 91 per cent of people with qualifications at levels 7-8 (*not shown in charts*).
- 49 per cent of males with no qualifications are in employment compared with 31 per cent of females (*Chart 10*).
- A greater proportion of males for all except level 7-8 qualifications. (*Chart 10*).
- Generally, the difference between the percentage of males and females in employment decreases as the level of highest qualification increases (*Chart 10*).
- 41 per cent of adults with no qualifications in 2012 were in employment compared with 47 per cent in 2002 (*Chart 11*).
- The change in employment rates between 2002 and 2012 is smaller for higher qualification levels, suggesting the impact of the recession on employment rates has affected those with no or low qualifications most. (*Chart 11*).
- The higher the qualification level held, the more likely adults are to be employed full-time (*Chart 12*).

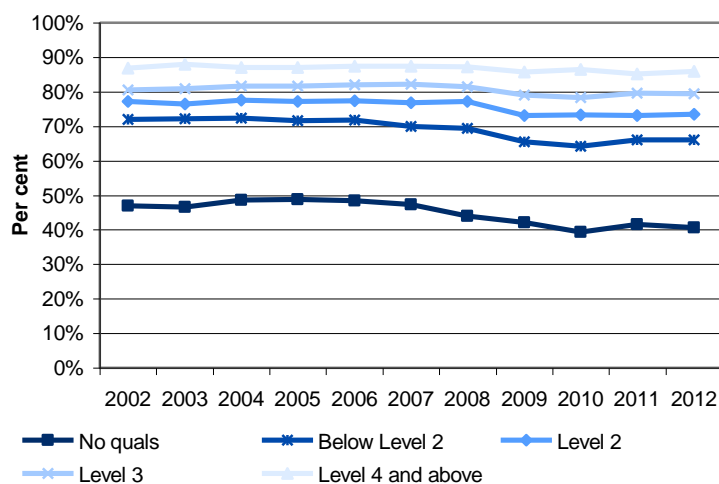
### Participation in job-related training by qualification level held<sup>e</sup>

- Participation in job related training increases as qualification levels increase (*Chart 13*).
- 18 per cent of adults of working age with degree level qualifications have undertaken some form of job related training. This compares with 10 per cent of persons holding qualifications lower than a degree, and 2 per cent of persons with no qualifications (*not shown in charts*).
- Females were generally more likely to have undertaken job related training than males at all levels of qualification (*Chart 13*).

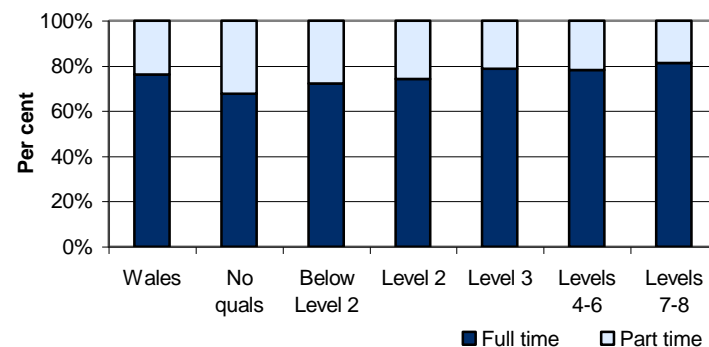
**Chart 10. Percentage of working age adults in employment, by level of highest qualification and gender, 2012<sup>d</sup>**



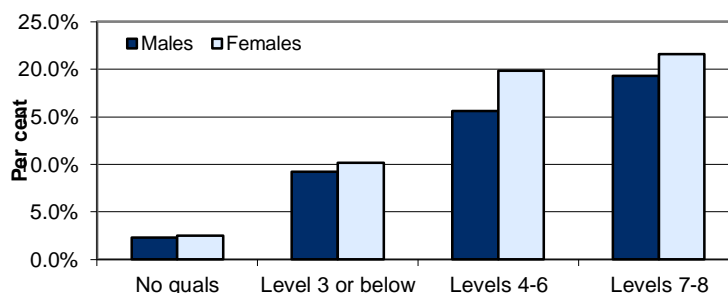
**Chart 11. Percentage of working age adults in employment, by level of highest qualification, 2002-2012<sup>d</sup>**



**Chart 12. Employment status of working age adults in employment, by level of highest qualification, 2012<sup>d</sup>**



**Chart 13. Proportion of working age adults having undertaken some job related training in last 4 weeks, by level of highest qualification, 2012**



<sup>d</sup> Excludes those persons in full time education.

<sup>e</sup> Working age adults who had undertaken job-related training in the last four weeks. Excludes respondents still at school.

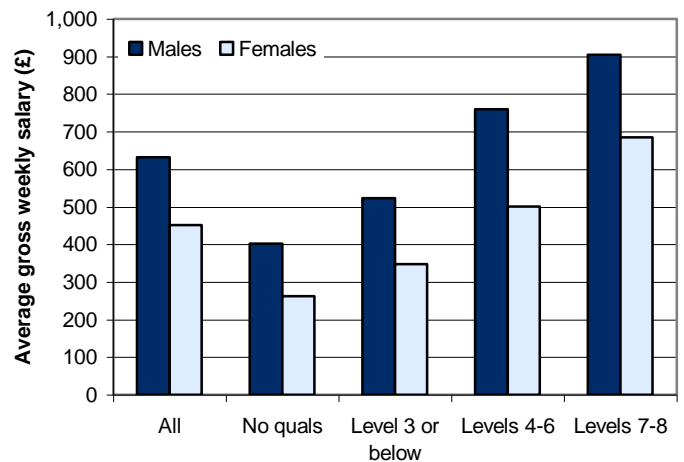
### Income levels by highest qualification

- Income levels increase as the level of highest qualification increases (*Chart 14*).
- Employees in Wales with qualifications at levels 7-8 earn on average 73 per cent more a week than persons qualified to level 3 or below and 124 per cent more a week than persons with no qualifications (*not shown in charts*).
- The average (mean) gross weekly salary is higher for males than for females across all levels of qualifications held, with males earning 40 per cent more than females on average <sup>§</sup> (*Chart 14*).

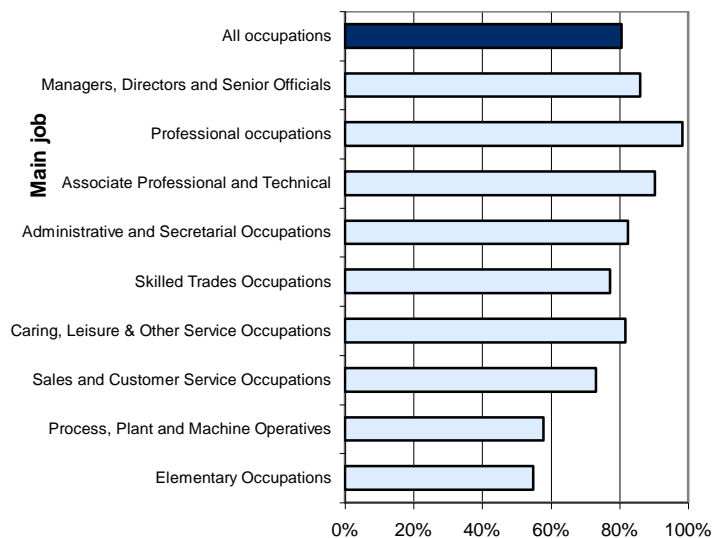
### Qualifications by main job

- 81 per cent of persons in employment are qualified to at least level 2 (*Chart 15*).
- Persons employed in professional occupations are more likely to be qualified to at least level 2 than those in other jobs. 98 per cent of persons in professional occupations are qualified at this level (*Chart 15*).
- Just under half of those in the Elementary Occupations category (e.g. farm workers, postal workers, catering assistants, cleaners, shelf fillers etc.) are **not** qualified to at least level 2 (*Chart 15*).
- 39 per cent of persons in employment are qualified to at least level 4 (*Chart 16*).
- 89 per cent of persons in professional occupations are qualified to at least level 4 compared with 8 per cent of those in Plant and Machine Operatives categories (*Chart 16*).
- Persons employed in professional occupations are almost twice as likely to be qualified to at least level 4 as managers and senior officials (89 per cent compared with 47 per cent) (*Chart 16*).

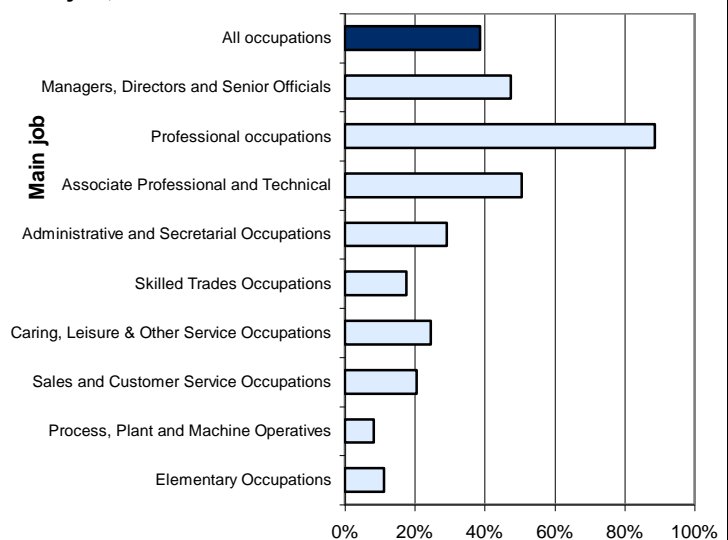
**Chart 14. Average gross weekly salary of full-time employees, by gender and level of highest qualification, 2012.**



**Chart 15. Proportion of working age adults in employment who are qualified to at least level 2, by main job, 2012 <sup>f</sup>**



**Chart 16. Proportion of working age adults in employment who are qualified to at least level 4, by main job, 2012 <sup>g</sup>**



<sup>f</sup> This is bigger than the headline gender pay gap measured using mean hourly earnings excluding overtime from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings. This shows average female full-time earnings at 92.1 per cent of average full-time male earnings.

<sup>g</sup> Excludes those persons in full-time education. Occupations graded according to Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) 2010, and therefore not directly comparable with data from previous bulletins produced by SOC 2000.

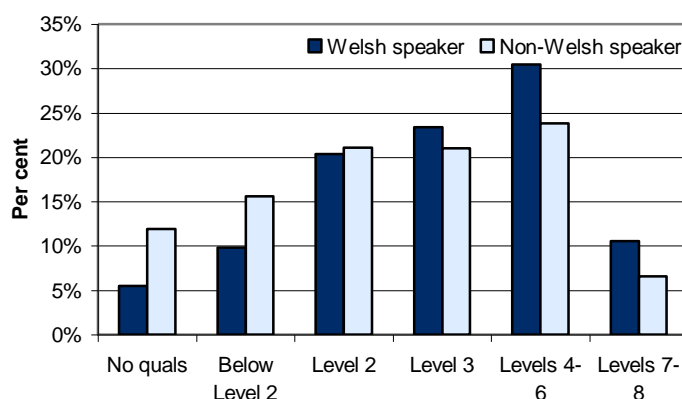
### Qualifications by Welsh Language ability

- A greater proportion of Welsh speakers are qualified to level 3 or above than their non-Welsh speaking counterparts. In general, as the level of highest qualification increases, the percentage difference between Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers increases, with 41 per cent of Welsh speakers at level 4 or above (30 per cent for non-Welsh speakers) (Chart 17).
- Around 84 per cent of adults who can read, speak, understand or write Welsh have a highest qualification at level 2 or above, compared with the overall average of 75 per cent (Chart 18).
- Around 40 per cent of adults, who can read, speak, understand or write Welsh hold a degree level qualification. This compares with the overall average of 33 per cent (Chart 18).

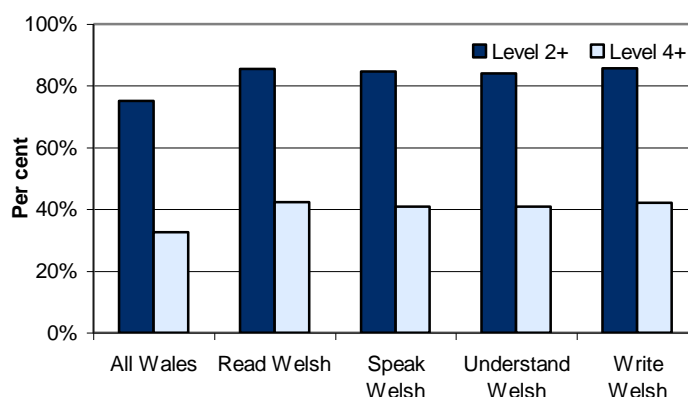
### Qualifications by local authority

- Adults of working age in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Neath Port Talbot are more likely to hold no qualifications than those in other parts of Wales. 15 per cent of adults in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Neath Port Talbot do not have a qualification compared with 6 per cent in Monmouthshire. (Table 2).
- More than 65 per cent of people of working age are qualified to at least level 2 for every local authority in Wales (Chart 19).
- Monmouthshire, Ceredigion, The Vale of Glamorgan, and Gwynedd have the greatest proportion of people qualified to at least level 2. The Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff and Monmouthshire have the greatest proportions of adults qualified to at least degree level (Table 2).
- Qualification levels are generally lowest in the South Wales Valleys authorities (Table 2 and maps).

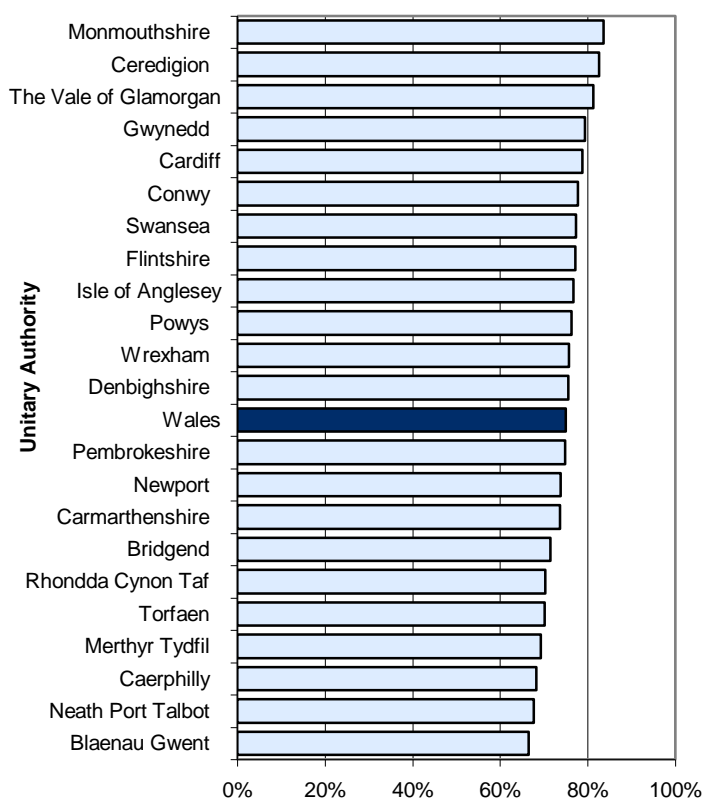
**Chart 17. Level of highest qualification held by working age adults, by whether or not respondents speak Welsh, 2012**



**Chart 18. Proportion of working age adults qualified to at least level 2 or at least level 4, by ability in Welsh language, 2012**



**Chart 19. Proportion of working age adults qualified to at least level 2, by local authority, 2012**



## Qualifications over time

- Qualification levels overall have increased since 2002 (*Chart 20*).
- The proportion of working age adults reported as having no qualifications has fallen every year since 2002, with an overall decrease of 8 percentage points over the last ten years (*Chart 20*).
- The proportion of working age adults qualified to at least level 2 and at least level 4 has risen every year since 2002 (*Chart 20*).

## 2007 and 2012 comparison

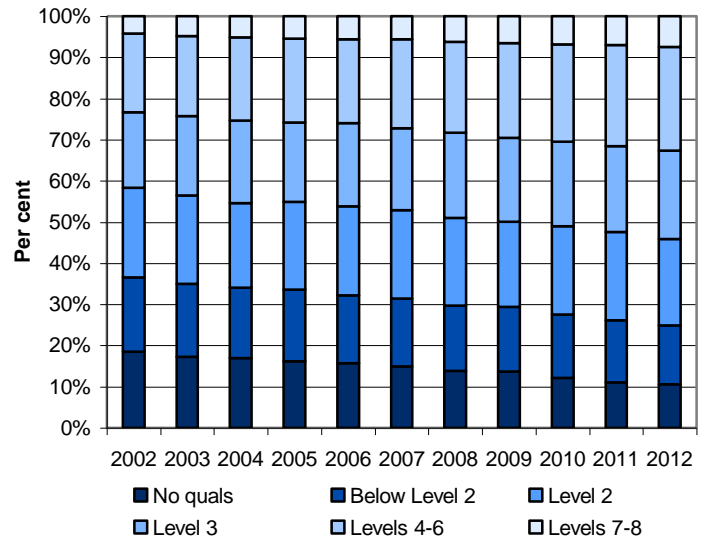
### Level 2 or above

- The proportion of working age adults with a highest qualification of at least level 2 has increased for all age categories between 2007 and 2012 (*Chart 21*).
- Overall there was a 6 percentage point increase for working aged adults in Wales, with the largest increase seen in adults aged 50-59 (7 percentage points) (*Chart 21*).

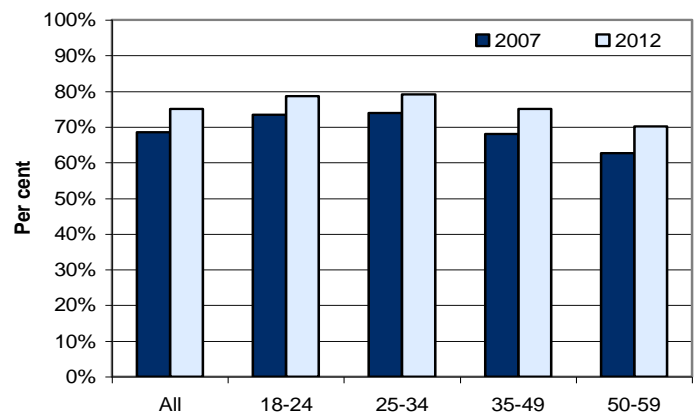
### Level 4 or above

- The proportion of working age adults with a degree level qualification has risen for all age categories between 2007 and 2012 (*Chart 22*).
- Overall there was a 5 percentage point increase for working aged adults in Wales, with the largest increase (9 percentage points) seen in adults aged 35-49 (*Chart 22*).

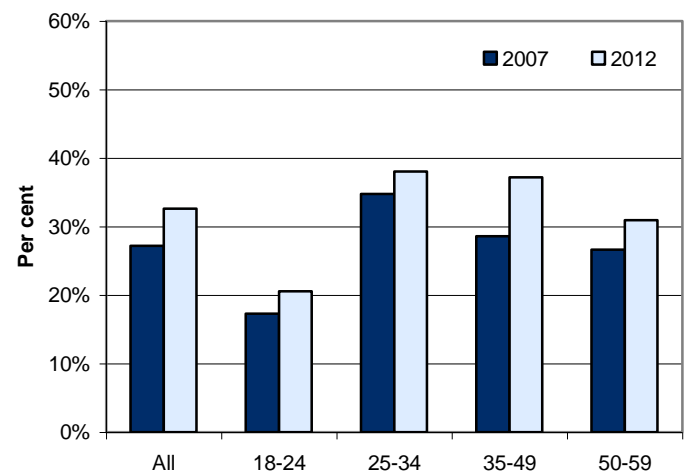
**Chart 20. Level of highest qualification held by working age adults, 2002-2012**



**Chart 21. Proportion of working age adults qualified to at least level 2, by age group, 2007 and 2012**



**Chart 22. Proportion of working age adults qualified to at least level 4, by age group, 2007 and 2012**



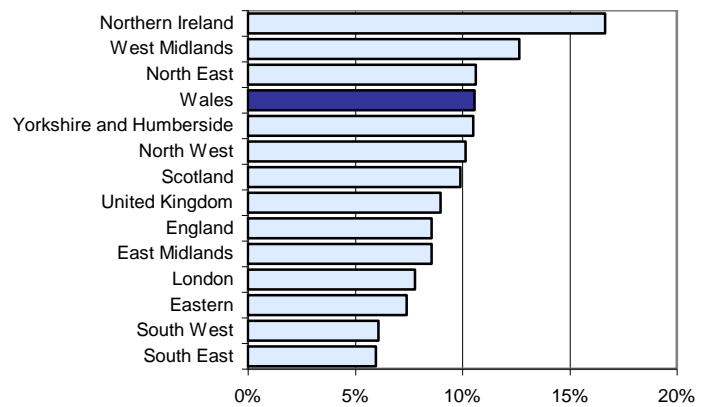
## UK comparisons

- In the UK as a whole, 9 per cent of adults of working age are reported as not having a qualification (*Chart 23*).
- Wales has a higher proportion of adults of working age reported as without qualifications than England and the same proportion as the English region of North East. (*Chart 23*).
- The proportion of adults qualified to at least level 2 in Wales is greater than Northern Ireland but lower than Scotland, England and the UK as a whole (*Chart 24*).
- Wales has a similar proportion of adults qualified to at least level 2 as the English regions North West and East Midlands. (*Chart 24*).
- The proportion of adults qualified to at least level 4 in Wales is greater than in Northern Ireland but lower than Scotland, England and the UK as a whole (*Table 3*).

## UK comparisons over time

- Since 2002 there has been a gradual decrease in the proportion of adults reported as having no qualifications in all parts of the UK. (*Chart 25*).
- The gap between Wales and the UK in the proportion of adults reported with no qualifications has slightly narrowed from 4 percentage points in 2002 to 2 percentage points in 2012 (*Chart 25*).
- Since 2002, the proportion of adults with at least level 2 qualifications has increased gradually in Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. (Data showed a decrease in 2011 for Northern Ireland, but there are larger confidence intervals around the series for Northern Ireland given the smaller sample size). (*Chart 26*).
- Wales has seen the highest increase in proportion of adults with at least level 2 qualifications since 2002. This has resulted in the gap between Wales and the UK narrowing from 3 percentage points in 2002 to 2 percentage point in 2012 (*Chart 26*).

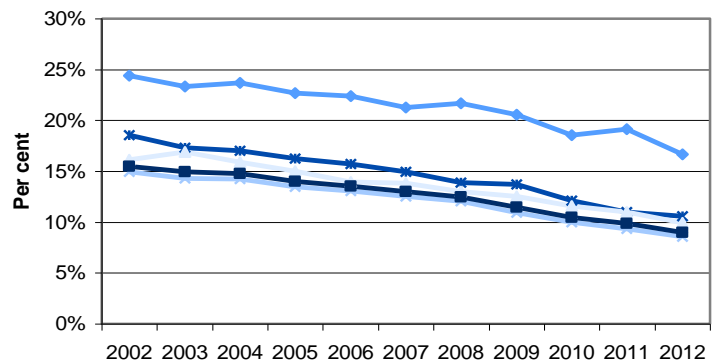
**Chart 23. Proportion of working age adults with no qualifications, by UK country and region, 2012**



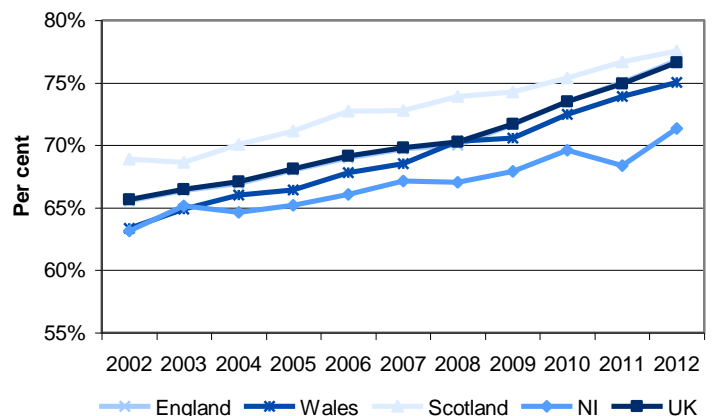
**Chart 24. Proportion of working age adults qualified to at least level 2, by UK country and region, 2012**



**Chart 25. Proportion of working age adults with no qualifications, by UK country, 2002-2012**



**Chart 26. Proportion of working age adults with at least level 2 qualifications, by UK country, 2002-2012**





**Table 1: Level of highest qualification held by adults of working age in Wales, 2012 (a)**

	Percentage of adults of working age qualified at each NQF level						
	No qualifications	Below Level 2	Level 2	Level 2+	Level 3	Levels 4-6	Level 4+
<b>By gender</b>							
Males	11	14	21	<b>75</b>	24	23	<b>30</b>
Females	10	14	21	<b>75</b>	19	27	<b>35</b>
Persons	11	14	21	<b>75</b>	21	25	<b>33</b>
<b>By age</b>							
18-24	8	14	22	<b>79</b>	36	18	<b>21</b>
25-34	8	13	20	<b>79</b>	21	29	<b>38</b>
35-49	9	16	20	<b>75</b>	17	28	<b>37</b>
50-59	15	15	22	<b>70</b>	17	23	<b>31</b>
60-64 (males only)	18	12	20	<b>70</b>	22	20	<b>28</b>
<b>By ethnic origin (b)</b>							
White	11	15	22	<b>74</b>	20	25	<b>33</b>
Non-white	15	14	13	<b>71</b>	11	36	<b>46</b>
<b>By disability status</b>							
Disabled	20	17	21	<b>63</b>	17	20	<b>25</b>
Not disabled	7	14	21	<b>79</b>	23	27	<b>35</b>
<b>By economic activity and main job (c)</b>							
In employment	6	13	21	<b>81</b>	21	29	<b>39</b>
of which:							
Managers, Directors & senior officials	4	10	19	<b>86</b>	19	37	<b>47</b>
Professional occupations	0	1	3	<b>98</b>	6	56	<b>89</b>
Associate professional & technical	2	8	19	<b>90</b>	21	41	<b>51</b>
Administrative & secretarial	2	15	30	<b>82</b>	23	26	<b>29</b>
Skilled Trades occupations	8	14	24	<b>77</b>	36	17	<b>18</b>
Caring, Leisure & other service occupati	5	14	25	<b>82</b>	32	21	<b>25</b>
Sales and Customer Service occupations	9	18	30	<b>73</b>	22	18	<b>20</b>
Process, plant & machine operatives	12	30	32	<b>58</b>	18	8	<b>8</b>
Elementary occupations	20	25	27	<b>55</b>	17	10	<b>11</b>
ILO unemployed or economically inactive	25	20	22	<b>55</b>	15	15	<b>33</b>

Source: Annual Population Survey 2012

(a) Adult working age is defined as 18-64 for males and 18-59 for females.

(b) Those who have reported DDA (current disability) and/or work limiting disability.

(c) Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) 2010, therefore not directly comparable with data for previous years on a SOC2000 basis.

Data for 2001-2012 are available on the Welsh Government interactive website [StatsWales](http://StatsWales)

**Table 2: Level of highest qualification held by adults of working age in Wales, by local authority, 2012 (a)**

	Percentage of adults of working age qualified at each NQF level						
	No qualifications	Below Level 2	Level 2	Level 2+	Level 3	Levels 4-6	Level 4+
Isle of Anglesey	11	12	20	<b>77</b>	22	28	<b>35</b>
Gwynedd	9	12	25	<b>79</b>	21	26	<b>33</b>
Conwy	9	13	22	<b>78</b>	20	28	<b>36</b>
Denbighshire	9	16	25	<b>76</b>	20	25	<b>31</b>
Flintshire	9	14	21	<b>77</b>	23	27	<b>33</b>
Wrexham	9	15	22	<b>76</b>	24	24	<b>30</b>
Powys	8	15	20	<b>76</b>	21	27	<b>36</b>
Ceredigion	8	10	20	<b>83</b>	26	27	<b>36</b>
Pembrokeshire	11	14	19	<b>75</b>	23	26	<b>32</b>
Carmarthenshire	13	13	23	<b>74</b>	18	25	<b>32</b>
Swansea	9	13	19	<b>77</b>	23	27	<b>35</b>
Neath Port Talbot	15	17	22	<b>68</b>	20	20	<b>25</b>
Bridgend	11	17	20	<b>72</b>	21	23	<b>30</b>
The Vale of Glamorgan	7	12	19	<b>81</b>	20	32	<b>42</b>
Cardiff	9	13	16	<b>79</b>	22	29	<b>41</b>
Rhondda Cynon Taf	15	15	21	<b>70</b>	22	20	<b>27</b>
Merthyr Tydfil	13	18	22	<b>69</b>	21	20	<b>26</b>
Caerphilly	14	17	24	<b>68</b>	20	18	<b>24</b>
Blaenau Gwent	14	19	29	<b>66</b>	21	15	<b>17</b>
Torfaen	12	18	23	<b>70</b>	21	22	<b>27</b>
Monmouthshire	6	16	21	<b>84</b>	22	31	<b>41</b>
Newport	10	13	16	<b>74</b>	20	28	<b>33</b>
<b>Wales</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>33</b>

Source: Annual Population Survey 2012

(a) Adult working age is defined as 18-64 for males and 18-59 for females.

**Table 3: Level of highest qualification held by adults of working age in the United Kingdom, 2012 (a)**

	Percentage of adults of working age qualified at each NQF level						
	No qualifications	Below Level 2	Level 2	Level 2+	Level 3	Levels 4-6	Level 4+
England	9	15	19	<b>77</b>	21	28	<b>37</b>
North East	11	16	22	<b>73</b>	22	23	<b>29</b>
North West	10	15	21	<b>75</b>	22	26	<b>33</b>
Yorkshire & Humberside	11	16	21	<b>74</b>	22	25	<b>32</b>
East Midlands	9	16	21	<b>75</b>	23	25	<b>31</b>
West Midlands	13	15	21	<b>72</b>	21	24	<b>30</b>
Eastern	7	16	21	<b>77</b>	21	28	<b>35</b>
London	8	12	13	<b>80</b>	16	38	<b>51</b>
South East	6	14	19	<b>80</b>	21	30	<b>39</b>
South West	6	14	21	<b>80</b>	23	28	<b>36</b>
Wales	11	14	21	<b>75</b>	21	25	<b>33</b>
Scotland	10	13	18	<b>78</b>	18	33	<b>42</b>
Northern Ireland	17	12	21	<b>71</b>	20	23	<b>30</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>37</b>

Source: Annual Population Survey 2012

(a) Adult working age is defined as 18-64 for males and 18-59 for females.

## Percentage of adults of working age with no qualifications

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



Cartographics ML/180/13.14 (Oct 2013)

## Percentage of adults of working age qualified to at least NQF Level 2

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Cartographics ML/180/13.14 (Oct 2013)

## Percentage of adults of working age qualified to at least NQF Level 4

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Cartographics ML/180/13.14 (Oct 2013)

## Notes

### 1. Policy/operational context

This Statistical Bulletin presents the annual snapshot of qualification levels of the working age population in Wales.

The statistics are used within the Welsh Government to monitor trends in qualification levels and specifically are included within the *Programme for Government* indicator set and the *Tackling Poverty Action Plan*.

*Learning Country: Vision into Action* included targets to increase the percentage of working age adults with a qualification equivalent to level 2 or above to 70 per cent, level 3 or above to 50 per cent and level 4 or above to 30 per cent by 2010. All targets were achieved.

### 2. Background to the Labour Force Survey/Annual Population Survey

The data presented in this Bulletin are based on the results of the Annual Population Survey for 2004-2012, and from the annual Local Labour Force Survey for Wales for 2001-2003, both of which were household surveys carried out by the Office for National Statistics.

From 2001, annual Local Labour Force Survey (LLFS) data collected in Wales were based on a significantly enhanced sample. This larger sample allowed for more detailed and more robust analysis, particularly for sub-Wales geographies.

Developments to the LLFS led to the Annual Population Survey (APS) which now provides annual datasets updated on a rolling quarterly basis from the Labour Force Survey. The data presented here are based on the year ending 31 December 2011 and were first published at the end of June 2012.

For years labelled 2001 to 2003, the actual periods covered are the 12 months running from March in the year given to February in the following year (e.g. 2001 = 1 March 2001 to 28 February 2002). Note therefore that there is a two-month overlap between the last period presented on the former March to February basis (2003), and the first period on the new basis (2004).

The annual LLFS/APS datasets are derived from a sample of approximately 23,000 people of working age across Wales, with a minimum of around 800 people of working age in most local authorities in Wales.

Data in this bulletin are presented for working age adults referring to males aged 18-64 and females aged 18-59, according to their age at the start of the academic year. This reflects state pension ages in the UK up until March 2010. Between April 2010 and March 2020 the state pension age for women will gradually increase from 60 to 65. The working age definition for data covering April 2010 onwards is therefore now 16-64. In time this bulletin will reflect this new definition but has been left unchanged currently in order to maintain a historical back series. (Estimates on the new basis would only be available from 2008 onwards).

### 3. Revisions

For this edition there have been no revisions to previously published figures.

### 4. Key Quality Information

As the data come from a survey, the results are sample-based estimates and are therefore subject to differing degrees of sampling variability, i.e. the true value for any measure lies in a differing range about the estimated value. This range or sampling variability increases as the detail in the data increases; for example local authority data are subject to higher variability than regional data.

#### Ethnicity

For the analysis of qualifications by ethnicity, persons in full-time education have been excluded. This change has been made to remove the impact of international students who attend higher education in Wales and thus inflate the proportion with Level 3 qualifications.

#### Income Levels

It was discovered that the 2007 ([SB 63/2008](#)), 2008 ([SB 61/2009](#)) and 2009 ([SB 87/2010](#)) editions of this bulletin contain income level figures calculated for the UK as a whole, rather than Wales. Therefore comparisons between this edition and these previous editions should not be made. The corrected data can be made available if required. Please use contact details shown at the front of this bulletin.

#### Proxy response

If the respondent is not available at the time of interview, questions may be answered by proxy through another member of the household. For information on highest qualifications, around two-thirds (68 per cent) of responses have been derived from a respondent's own answers. 21 per cent were obtained from a spouse or partner whilst 11 per cent were obtained from another proxy.

Section 11 of the LFS User Guide Volume 1 presents findings from a follow up study to test the accuracy of results from proxy respondents:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/labour-market/labour-market-statistics/index.html>

The results for highest type of qualification held show nearly two thirds matching with significant net error from proxies understating qualifications. However there was wide variation in the standard of proxy response. This variation is both in terms of the relationship of the proxy to the subject (parents were much better than spouses or children) and also by the level and type of qualifications held. Reporting was much better for those subjects holding degrees (80 per cent matched) than for those holding lower or vocational qualifications (30 per cent matched).

#### Non-response

Information on highest qualification is derived from a number of questions in the survey. Overall, the highest qualification was unknown or unable to be derived for less than 2 per cent of respondents. These respondents have been excluded from the analysis in this Bulletin.

## Allocation of qualifications with unknown levels

Whilst other questions in the survey are used to allocate qualifications to NQF levels as far as possible<sup>b</sup>, for some categories the respondents are distributed into levels using proportions that have been fixed for many years. This is currently true for 'Other' qualifications, Trade Apprenticeships, Scottish CSYS qualifications and SCE Highers or equivalent. These qualifications account for 10.8 per cent of responses, mainly consisting of Trade Apprenticeships (4.5 per cent) and 'Other' qualifications (6.3 per cent). 'Other' qualifications are apportioned across NQF levels Below Level 2, Level 2 and Level 3 in the ratio 55:35:10; Trade apprenticeships are apportioned across Level 2 and Level 3 in the ratio 50:50 and Scottish CSYS qualifications are apportioned across Level 2 and Level 3 in the ratio 33:67. This is a long standing calculation based on detailed analysis of qualifications from the General Household Survey. SCE Highers are apportioned across Level 2 and Level 3 in the ratio 37:63 based on data from previous years. The aim had been to reconsider these ratios for this analysis of the 2012 data, in line with work taking place across other GSS departments, however this review of methodology has not yet been finalised and therefore we will incorporate as soon as this is finalised.

## Coherence

The figures may differ to those published from statistical publications by other government departments due to a slight difference in source and/or methodologies for deriving levels of qualifications. Also other tables may be based on all persons of working age (16-64) whilst this Bulletin is restricted to those aged 18-59/64 (*adults of working age*).

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills have developed an enhanced method of producing qualification estimates from the Labour Force Survey, including the use of administrative records to improve the quality of the attainment data recorded on the LFS and imputation of qualification levels for those with unknown qualifications. Details can be found on the Data Service website here <http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/statistics/statisticalfirstrelease/methodology/>

Data is also available from the Census of Population on highest qualification levels. The 2011 census indicated that one in four of the population of Wales aged 16 and over (26 per cent, 651,000) reported having no recognised qualifications and just under one in four of the population of Wales aged 16 and over (24 per cent, 614,000) reported having a qualification at level 4 (degree level) or above. The difference between the level of qualifications reported through the Census and the APS data in this bulletin is in part explained by the wider age range of the Census data. That is both including 16/17 year olds who may not yet have completed their education, and the older age groups. Additional factors to consider are the APS asks more detailed questions about qualifications than the Census. In addition the APS is an interviewer-administered survey whereas the Census is self-completed. Therefore the interviewer can probe the respondent with further questions to try to establish whether details have been recalled correctly. However, the APS is a sample survey whereas the Census is a more comprehensive count. Similar issues applied to the 2001 Census. Further data on highest qualification levels from the census is still due to be published by ONS, this will provide us with data for other age groups and enable us to make more of a direct comparison with the APS results.

The biggest benefit of the Census data is to be able to analyse within local authority, down to community level, and in cross tabulations with small subgroups of the population not possible through the APS.

## Changes to LFS qualification questions

Significant changes were made to the LFS Education section in January 2011 after a full Education and Training review had been completed in partnership between ONS and BIS. The aim of the review and re-design of the education section was to improve the collection of education data and update the questions to reflect recent changes to the UK education landscape. This included extending the list of

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<sup>b</sup> For instance the numbers of GCSEs held by a respondent are used to distribute persons whose highest qualification was a GCSE between levels 1 (less than 5 GCSEs) and 2 (5 or more).



qualifications to reflect the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and new questions to allow more accurate classification of foreign or other qualifications into levels.

## 5. Qualifications used in the Labour Force Survey and their National Qualification Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland (NQF EwNI) levels <sup>c</sup>

Below is a list of the qualifications specifically included in the Labour Force Survey questionnaire and provides details of the NQF EwNI level to which they have been assigned for the purposes of statistical analysis.

Data have previously been presented as NVQ equivalencies. The NQF EwNI has nine levels; Entry Level followed by Level 1 to Level 8. In Wales the NQF EwNI forms part of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales; a meta framework which also includes all Higher Level learning within the University Sector and Quality Assured Lifelong Learning.

Further information about the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales can be found [here](#).

### **NQF Levels 7-8 (previously NVQ level 5 or equivalent)**

Higher degree  
NVQ level 5  
Level 8 Diploma <sup>3</sup>  
Level 8 Certificate <sup>3</sup>  
Level 7 Diploma <sup>3</sup>  
Level 7 Certificate <sup>3</sup>  
Level 8 Award <sup>3</sup>

### **NQF Levels 4-6 (previously NVQ level 4 or equivalent)**

First degree/Foundation degree  
Other degree  
NVQ level 4  
Level 6 Diploma <sup>3</sup>  
Level 6 Certificate <sup>3</sup>  
Level 7 Award <sup>3</sup>  
Diploma in higher education  
Level 5 Diploma <sup>3</sup>  
Level 5 Certificate <sup>3</sup>  
Level 6 Award <sup>3</sup>  
HNC, HND, BTEC higher etc.  
Teaching (further, secondary and primary education, foundation stage<sup>1</sup> and level not stated)  
Nursing etc.  
RSA higher diploma  
Other higher education qualification below degree level  
Level 4 Diploma <sup>3</sup>  
Level 4 Certificate <sup>3</sup>

### **NQF Level 3 (previously NVQ level 3 or equivalent)**

Level 5 award <sup>3</sup>  
NVQ level 3  
Advanced/Progression (14-19) Diploma <sup>3</sup>  
Level 3 Diploma <sup>3</sup>  
Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate<sup>1</sup>  
International Baccalaureate<sup>1</sup>  
GNVQ/GSVQ Advanced  
2+ A levels, 4+ AS levels or equivalent  
RSA advanced diploma  
OND, ONC, BTEC, SCOTVEC national etc.

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<sup>c</sup> Please note the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework has different levels

<sup>1</sup> These qualifications were added to the list included on the LFS questionnaire in either 2004 or 2005. This slightly improved the estimates, as they may previously have been incorporated in "Other qualifications" or left out altogether by a respondent. 18

City and Guilds advanced craft/Part 1  
Scottish 6 Year Certificate/CSYS (67%)  
3 or more SCE higher or equivalent  
Access to HE qualifications<sup>1</sup>  
Trade apprenticeship (50%)  
Other qualifications (10%)  
Level 3 Certificate<sup>3</sup>

**NQF Level 2 (previously NVQ level 2 or equivalent)**

Level 4 Award<sup>3</sup>  
NVQ level 2  
Intermediate Welsh Baccalaureate<sup>1</sup>  
1 A level, or 2/3 AS levels, or equivalent  
Trade apprenticeship (50%)  
GNVQ/GSVQ intermediate  
RSA diploma  
City and Guilds craft/Part 2  
BTEC, SCOTVEC first or general diploma  
Higher (14-19) Diploma<sup>3</sup>  
Level 2 Diploma<sup>3</sup>  
5+ O levels, GCSE grade A\*-C, CSE grade 1 or equivalent  
Scottish 6 Year Certificate CSYS (33%)  
1 or 2 SCE higher or equivalent  
Other qualifications (35%)  
Level 2 Certificate<sup>3</sup>  
Level 3 Award<sup>3</sup>

**Below NQF Level 2 (previously NVQ level 1 or equivalent)**

NVQ level 1  
Foundation Welsh Baccalaureate<sup>2</sup>  
GNVQ, GSVQ foundation level  
Foundation (14-19) diploma<sup>d</sup>  
Level 1 Diploma<sup>3</sup>  
Up to 4 O levels, GCSE grade A\*-C, CSE grade 1 or equivalent  
GCSE below grade C, CSE below grade 1  
BTEC, SCOTVEC first or general certificate  
SCOTVEC modules  
RSA other  
City and Guilds foundation/part 1  
Level 1 Certificate  
Level 2 Award  
YT, YTP certificate  
Key skills qualification<sup>1</sup>  
Basic skills qualification<sup>1</sup>  
Entry level qualification<sup>1</sup>  
Entry level Diploma<sup>3</sup>  
Entry level Certificate<sup>3</sup>  
Level 1 Award<sup>3</sup>  
Entry level award  
Other qualifications (55%)

The percentages in brackets denote that a qualification is split across levels when calculating the number of persons with that qualification. This is done for those qualifications where the LFS does not collect sufficient information to allow a more accurate breakdown of the qualification

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<sup>2</sup> This qualification was added to the list included on the LFS questionnaire in 2008

<sup>3</sup> This qualification was added to the list included on the LFS questionnaire in 2011