



*Sheffield  
Hallam University*

# **Mapping Qualifications and Training for the Children and Young People's Workforce**

*Short Report 3*

**Qualification issues that inform the design of an  
Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF)**

**Sylvia Johnson  
Karen Dunn  
John Coldron**

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## **1. Background and context to the study**

In December 2004 DfES commissioned Sheffield Hallam University to produce a mapping of qualifications and training developments across the children and young people's (CYP) workforce to inform the development of an integrated qualifications framework (IQF).

The project was commissioned as part of the Government's commitment to learn from the Victoria Climbié case and secure the service implementation of the Green Paper *Every Child Matters* which highlighted the imperative for children and young people's services to communicate effectively and work in an integrated way.

The DfES has, in consultation with stakeholders, developed an understanding of the skills all staff within the workforce will need to have in common to provide an effective and integrated service. The Children's Workforce Strategy consultation document (DfES, 2005) provides a vision of the approaches by which a skilled workforce for children and young people's services can be achieved and maintained. The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge prospectus for the Children's Workforce, published in April 2005, outlines the basic skills and knowledge needed by people whose work brings them into regular contact with children, young people and their families.

An integrated service depends on an integrated workforce, that is, people who share a common vision of how to provide effective services, share knowledge and information and have a common career structure that provides pathways to move vertically and horizontally so that good practice and expertise can be best shared. An effective qualifications framework is a key part of developing such a workforce.

In working to inform such a framework, the scope of this project has been extensive. The mapping covers all major occupational groups within the children's workforce, nationally available and approved qualifications from levels 1 to 8 together with a mapping of the detailed content of significant qualifications against the Common Core. A database was constructed which could capture information about job roles linked to workforce clusters, information about relevant qualifications at individual module level, links between modules and the Common Core.

Contextualising studies undertaken in 6 Children's Trust Pathfinders (CTPs) provided indicators of the range of existing and planned training and development for all occupational groups and identified significant issues arising currently on the ground in implementation of the Children's Workforce Strategy. The 6 CTPs were Gateshead, Greenwich, North Lincolnshire, Trafford, West Sussex and Wokingham.

Finally it included discussion of major training pathways, gaps and variations in provision between different occupational sectors and some analysis of funding streams currently available or identified as possibly problematic.

## **The main research questions:**

### *For the CYP workforce*

- What is the list of relevant subjects (from QCA framework for sectors and subjects)?
- How do job roles cluster?
- What is the agreed list of job roles for each sector cluster?

### *About qualifications*

- What is the range of qualifications available in each of the clusters and occupational groups?
- What is the volume of qualifications and take up of qualifications?
- What are the constituent elements of qualifications, their commonalities and complementarities?
- What are gaps?

### *About training and development provision*

- What elements of existing training provision meet the skill expectations of the proposed core competencies?
- Where are the gaps in this 'match' and what would need to be developed to fill them?
- Are some occupational groups served better than others in respect of training provision allied to the proposed core competencies?
- Where does good practice in planned training programme development for the CYP workforce exist and how can this be shared?
- What forms of delivery are most useful?

This report is one of 6, each with a different theme and targeted at different audiences. These are listed below and details can be found at the end of this report.

Report 1	Developing and maintaining a database of qualifications for the children and young people's workforce
Report 2	Defining the children and young people's workforce in a changing scenario
Report 3	Qualification issues that inform the design of an integrated qualifications framework (IQF)
Report 4	The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge and its coverage by existing qualifications
Report 5	Training and qualifications issues, needs and gaps, including data from the contextualising studies
Report 6	Research review

## 2. About this report

This report discusses the issues that have arisen in the identification of qualifications and training and their inclusion in the database and which could influence any design of an IQF.

The work reported here is drawn from an analysis of data collected and the difficulties, in some cases of acquiring data, or acquiring it in a relevant format. The research raises a number of issues that influence the development of an Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF) for the children and young people's (CYP) workforce.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) published the outcomes of its consultation on a new Framework for Achievement in May 2005. This work is ongoing and will need to underpin the IQF. Some of the issues raised in this project have also been raised within the context of the FfA development.

## 3. Vision of an IQF

The Children's Workforce includes job roles within a number of sector specific workforce clusters, each falling under the auspices of a different Sector Skills Council; for example, Skills for Health, Training & Development Agency, Skills for Care and Development; typical roles within each of those clusters being Child nurse, teaching assistant, family support worker.

By identifying qualifications and training at each level of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that is appropriate for each role within each workforce cluster, it is possible to map qualifications and their individual module elements, against work roles within the workforce in a manner such as that shown in Figure 3.1.

Given such a mapping it should be possible for individuals within a given role to identify how they might move from their existing role to another role, and the qualifications they would need to be able to make such a move. Significant pathways, through and across the framework could be identified to facilitate transition from one role to another.

**Figure 3.1 Model of an Integrated Qualifications Framework Map**

	Cluster I				Cluster II		Cluster III		
	Role A	Role B	Role C	Role D	Role E	Role F	Role G	Role H	Role I
Level 8									
Level 7									
Level 6									
Level 5									
Level 4									
Level 3									
Level 2									
Level 1									

One of the aims in creating such a framework is to minimise the need for an individual to start a pathway at the lowest level if they wish to move occupational role.

Parallel with this research, it is noted that a number of Sector Skills Councils have been separately developing their own qualifications frameworks within sectors. These include, Skills for Justice, Training and Development Agency for Schools, and Lifelong Learning UK. During the lifetime of this project a number of changes to both Sector Skills Councils and qualification framework development have been taking place and what is reported here can only be a snapshot at the time work was conducted.

Whilst it has been possible to identify accredited qualifications and nationally endorsed training for occupational roles in the various clusters, and it has been largely possible (with the caveats in Section 3) to assign such qualifications to levels, it should be noted that this is only the first step in creating a useable IQF.

A number of issues have arisen during the course of this research project which have the potential to impact upon the successful development of an IQF. These are reported in subsequent sections.

#### **4. Level of qualifications**

The project collected information on qualifications at each of the new national qualification levels (1-8). These were linked to one or more of 125 roles across the following workforce clusters:

*Early Years*  
*Education & Training*  
*Health*  
*Parent and Family Support*  
*Playwork*  
*Social Care*  
*Sports and Leisure (including Health & Fitness and Outdoor Education)*  
*Voluntary Work*  
*Youth Justice*  
*Youth Work and Support*

This is a relatively new National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (September 2004), which supercedes the former 5 level National Qualifications Framework. It is not identical to the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (2001, Quality Assurance Agency, QAA) though broad comparisons are indicated by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). It should be noted that currently not all Higher Education Institutions use the framework in practice on a day to day basis, with many still referring to HE Levels 1, 2 and 3 rather than Levels 4, 5 and 6.

The confusion about levels of qualifications appears widespread and within CTPs those responsible for training and development are often confused about levels:

*“Does anybody really know, hand on heart, what Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 actually means? I ask you this in all seriousness as I think there is*

*enormous difference of opinion about what constitutes learning and practice at particular levels across professional groups, and this confusion needs to be addressed before we can begin to think of an integrated qualification framework.”*

(Head of Training and Development)

There was some evidence that in CTPs where advice and support on training/accreditation is still based within single organisations there is more work to do on the 'levelness' of joint training. Levelness is not clear for all integrated training although some is now categorised at Level 1, 2 and 3. This linked to the need for accreditation of core training to be developed.

As explained on the QCA website, there is currently a transition period operating (until 2006) whilst existing qualifications on the OpenQuals database are re-levelled. In particular this requires those that were assigned at Levels 4 and 5 to be assigned to one of Levels 4 to 8.

During this project there has been discussion with DfES and QCA specifically about NVQ Level 4 and NVQ Level 5 qualifications. Where a decision has yet to be made about new level assignment of a given qualification, the project team has recorded old NVQ4 as Level 4.

In building an integrated qualifications framework it is anticipated that such difficulties will be resolved.

However, non-accredited qualifications and training are in general not assigned to levels. This raises particular issues when such provision is mandatory for a particular role, for example DfES Introductory Training for Teaching Assistants, Induction Training for Social Workers. One solution is to assign non-levelled qualifications to Level 0, as has been recently observed in the TDA draft qualifications framework for the School Workforce. However, this can be misleading within the context of an IQF as such requirements for roles are not generally pre Level 1 requirements.

Currently within the 6 CTPs of the Contextualising Studies, there was an expressed preference for targeted **training** to meet immediate needs rather than for qualifications. In particular they were concerned to target specific immediate training needs, rather than longer term development needs that might be provided by full qualifications. This suggests that an IQF would need to be accompanied by some mechanism for members of the workforce to demonstrate learning at given levels from training that they had engaged in – a work-based learning framework at each level.

The project has not identified a significant number of Level 1 qualifications in any of the sectors (with the exception of Sports and Leisure). This could be significant for getting people to begin the pathway into a career in the CYP workforce.

The largest number of different qualifications exists at Level 3. For some roles there are very many 'appropriate' qualifications. This makes the development of progression pathways more complex than perhaps it needs to be. It would be more helpful if some qualifications at a given level for a given role were 'labelled' as the most significant. This

is an issue with which the research team had significant difficulties – no group was able to make such recommendations.

By contrast, there are far fewer qualifications available nationally at Level 4 and 5 which could inhibit progression to more senior workforce roles. The contextualising studies reported that the local availability of qualifications at these levels was indeed problematic (see Report 5).

Currently the titles given to qualifications do not imply a particular level. A Certificate may refer to a qualification at one of several levels. The same applies to the term Diploma. This is a further source of confusion for both managers and qualification applicants and holders.

*“Inconsistency in the names of qualifications can be very confusing, i.e. the same title of award (e.g. Certificate) can mean different things....and then is there a common currency of levels? We can spend hours discussing this in our Trust and it can become a 'content' based discussion as well as a level based one. It's a bit like the old 'how can your sociology degree be worth the same as my degree in nuclear physics?’”*

(Workforce Planning Manager)

There may be some merit in moving towards convergence on a limited set of names which do also provide an indication of level. Such an example might be:

Certificate	Level 2
Diploma	Level 3
HE/Higher/Advanced Certificate	Level 4
HE/Higher/Advanced Diploma	Level 5
Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma	Level 7

## 5. Levels of roles

Some occupational sectors are moving towards a situation where occupational roles are being described at a given level (in line with associated pay and contract negotiations) and that similar levels of qualification are deemed suitable for such equivalently levelled roles.

Hence for example, in Early Years, a Level 3 role is perceived by the sector as requiring Level 3 qualifications. However, this is **not** true in all sectors and the issue is clouded by ongoing sensitivities around pay and conditions negotiations.

In some, Youth Work for example, JNC levels do **not** match the qualification levels. The association of level to both qualification and to role is thus a potential source of confusion and political sensitivity (see Report Number 4 for a more detailed discussion of issues relating to roles within the workforce).



The reference to roles at a given level as well as qualifications at a given level offers the potential for confusion, particularly since there is not currently any consistency over the assignation of levels in either context, though most particularly in relation to roles.

## **6. Types of qualification**

### ***What to include in an IQF***

In selecting qualifications to include on the project database the project team had to make decisions about criteria for inclusion. This has been problematic and at some point the CWDC will need to take a view about this issue. The position is relatively straightforward in relation to NVQ where a nationally agreed set of occupational standards exists. The same applied to some other qualifications where national endorsement exists or where there is a set of nationally approved occupational standards – standards for qualified teacher status (QTS) for example.

This in itself raises the issues of what is meant by ‘qualifications’. Strictly speaking QTS standards are not a qualification. We have included these as our ‘qualification’ in the project database, rather than including all PGCE, BEd or BA/BSc with QTS awards, since it is the QTS which is common to all. We note too, that PGCE is commonly (currently) assessed at Levels 5 and 6, with a few Universities offering the award at Level 7. The TDA framework sets this at Level 7 rather than Level 6 (see Section 3 on levels).

The project has taken a decision not to include a very wide range of Foundation Degree, HNC, HND and degree courses because they do not incorporate a set of nationally agreed occupational standards. So for example, there are many HNC, HND and degree awards in Early Childhood Studies which are academic courses, not incorporating occupational standards. Whilst relevant in some senses we have not included these awards. How guidance is provided about such awards for prospective employees within the workforce and the status of such qualifications on an IQF are decisions that will need to be taken.

### ***Classification***

Within the new NQF, qualification categories: general, vocationally related, occupational no longer exist. However the rationale for this is unclear especially given the concerns expressed within some of the Sector Skills Councils about the significance of given qualifications for a particular job role.

Some concerns have been expressed about the appropriateness of general or vocationally related qualifications as evidence of preparedness to work in a given role, given that they provide no necessary evidence of skills in practice. Equally concern has been expressed about the adequacy of NVQ in providing the underpinning knowledge and understanding needed to fulfil complex roles in the CYP workforce. A number of small new pilot schemes are being introduced to ensure that those entering the workforce have both the skills and the knowledge to perform their roles effectively. For example, Greenwich appears to have pioneered a Cadet scheme, including a structured placement with learning in Health Education and Social Care. This is aimed at young people post 16 and is a 2 year course up to NVQ Level 2. The first pilot of 12 students

qualified this summer and a second cohort has recently started. Participants receive detailed guidance on future careers and on successfully completing the programme they choose a foundation degree or NVQ 3 or 4 route. There is a similar programme in Youth Work involving work-based learning training for pre-Youth Work qualifications devised with Goldsmiths and Greenwich Universities.

A separate point but one which relates to points made in Section 12 (p.16), User Issues, is the way in which qualifications are labelled within the IQF. In this project we have chosen to separately identify each qualification offered by different awarding bodies. In the case of NVQ this appears as duplication but in the case of all other qualifications it is not. What is available locally will also be important for the workforce, and being able to clarify precisely what a qualification is, who offers it and whether it is available locally will be important.

There is some evidence from contextualising studies that there would be merit in a simple, easy to read set of information about the fundamental issues around qualifications.

Whilst we have not specifically addressed this point within this project, it is also clear that any future work will necessarily involve information about credit rating of different qualifications. We expect this to clarify issues about different types of qualifications and their relative value.

### ***Focus of qualifications***

Some qualifications are not specifically designed to cover work with children, even though they are qualifications for a role that involves work with children. Examples include police training, many school wider workforce roles – e.g. catering staff. For some qualifications participants may elect to follow options which do have a focus on children and young people. In practice the holding of, say, an NVQ in Health and Social Care, may or may not be appropriate for a role in care work with children and young people. The nature of NVQ structures which provide for mandatory modules but also optional modules, sometimes selected from a very wide set resulting in two individuals with the same qualification having rather different knowledge and skill sets.

*“I find it very confusing, particularly when trying to determine how one candidate's qualification stands up against another's. On paper for example the volume of work leading to a qualification can't be easily distinguished and one Level 2 qualification looks the same as another Level 2 qualification. Dig a bit deeper and you will find that one may have taken half a day and one half a year. This raises the issue of how to acknowledge this kind of difference in input and work.”*

*(Senior Manager in Social Care)*

There may be merit in distinguishing such awards where a focus on work with children and young people has been followed so that managers can see more easily at the outset whether an individual has an appropriate qualification for work in the CYP workforce.

Some qualifications are designed for work with specific age groups of children and young people. The Children's Workforce Development Council may wish to take a view on this in the future. Clearly someone working with older teenagers will need a different skill set from those working with, say 5-8 year olds. Whilst this different skill set is acknowledged in some qualifications, and work with very young children is seen as requiring a specialised skill set as evidenced by the volume of Early Years specific qualifications, it does not appear to be explicitly acknowledged in others, for example, Youth Work qualifications or Social Care qualifications.

These issues have implications for the identification of suitable progression pathways.

### ***HE Qualifications***

By cross referencing National Occupational Standards (most of which lead only to Level 3 and 4), the Statement of Requirement for Foundation Degrees, Accreditation criteria for Degrees, Professional Standards for 'Institute' endorsed qualifications, it has been possible to identify generic course content leading to Professional Qualifications.

There is clearly a great deal of work already being undertaken in terms of workforce development; Early Years giving a clear progression from entry to Qualified Teacher Status, yet this provides a challenge in recording those qualifications which are held by the current workforce, but will no longer be valid in future years. There is no easily identifiable source of generic course content for these programmes, and it may be necessary to identify this through historical course curricula.

Degree Level Qualifications and above have additional elements of Management and Financial Accountability. Given the increased focus on management skills at degree level, it may be worth considering whether Management should be included at this level in Occupational Standards

A common thread running throughout programmes at HE Level is multi-agency work, and ethics.

Social Work, Psychology first qualifying degrees are not age specific and are followed by postgraduate qualifications. In the case of Psychology, this is very clearly one of five professional routes - Educational Psychology is the only route directly related to Children and Young People. Counselling and Sports Psychology are likely to have some element of work with children and young people but there is no clear guidance of inclusion of a youth element in the programme. Similarly Youth Work qualifications from a Youth and Community Studies Degree may have varying proportions of work with young people and adults.

Most children and young people specific programmes include elements of: Communication, Child and Young Person development, and Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of the Child.

Only psychology and parenting education programmes explicitly recognise the potentially high levels of stress for those occupations working with children and young people in distress, and the consequent need to establish clear and effective support mechanisms for the professional.

The Health Sector is being driven both by 'Every Child Matters' and the Service Framework Children and Young People. This Service Framework has ten major Service Areas all of which include a statement that health professionals working with Children and Young People will undertake specialist training. It is as yet unclear how, where or when this will be undertaken, although the context would suggest that this is a priority area. Information from the contextualising study in Trafford suggests that this is currently through unaccredited on the job training.

DfES Introduction of Foundation Degree in Youth Studies for Youth Workers has no clear link to the PAULO/NYA/LLUK plan to create an Honours Degree only professional qualification, although potentially filling a gap in the progression structure.

## **7. Qualification requirements for specific roles**

A further complexity in establishing the framework, and within it appropriate pathways, occurs because there are not currently universal **requirements** for qualifications for all roles at all levels. So for example, in order to become a teacher or a social worker, a minimum requirement is a degree. Progression from a lower level role to either of these roles, necessarily requires the individual to gain a degree. There may be a number of routes to do this but the end point is clear.

By contrast, there appear to be no qualification requirements for a number of support roles, which even as a 'Level 3 role' do not always require Level 3 qualifications, though some employers may do so. The goal for the individual is thus much less clear. They need to know the specific requirements of specific employers. From consultations carried out over a draft list of significant qualifications for the workforce, there appear to be varying requirements for qualifications in different parts of the country for obtaining a particular job role.

The research team had expected that it would be relatively straightforward to gain intelligence as to the expected or significant qualifications for each role. Whilst this was true for some roles and particularly valid for more senior professional roles, it was not possible to do this for many roles where qualifications at Level 3 were largely appropriate. In these instances, there was both conflicting advice and 'no advice' in that some roles can be fulfilled with a very wide range of qualifications. This may simplify an IQF but it does raise questions as to how individuals make choices given a lack of guidance on what would be deemed appropriate or significant. The CWDC may wish to consider how best to advise in such instances.

More standardisation of this between employer groups across the country would appear to be helpful in guiding individuals over progression and choices over which qualifications to gain when hoping to gain a specific job role.

## **8. Qualification frameworks within workforce sectors**

During this project there has been a gradual emergence of qualifications frameworks for specific sectors which support progression through a specific sector – e.g. Youth Justice, but do not necessarily support transition across sectors.

The trend appears to be towards more specification of particular qualifications for particular roles as Sector Skills Councils develop their own qualifications frameworks. This could be perceived either as beneficial or as troubling in the context of a skilled flexible workforce. The view of the research team is that it will be helpful for Sector Skills Councils to identify a simple qualifications framework with a limited number of significant qualifications at each level. If this could be achieved, progress towards the integration of these frameworks could follow.

Within this study we attempted to identify significant qualifications for each occupational cluster and role. In practice this proved almost impossible. As indicated above, where there was a gatekeeper qualification such as a degree in Social Work, this was easy to identify. However, where this was not the case and particularly for Level 2, 3 and 4 qualifications the picture was much more confused with conflicting feedback being gained from different groups consulted.

Given the fact that for some roles and clusters there are very many roles, the Sector Skills Councils may wish to consider whether the identification of some qualifications as significant is useful for both prospective students and for employers.

Within the CTPs this confusing overprovision is clearly unhelpful, especially where managers are unfamiliar with the qualifications relevant to workforce sectors that they themselves have not worked within.

*“Even though I am not an Early Years specialist I would say that a simplification of the Early Years qualification framework is essential. We are recruiting to a lot of posts which require capability to work with young children at the moment and I have almost given up trying to work out how one qualification relates to another! Almost every application form turns up a new qualification we haven't come across before. Even my Early Years specialists haven't heard of half of them. It becomes very difficult to make judgements about which qualifications are the most useful. It was pointed out to me by our HR staff that equal opportunities issues arise from this in that there can be a tendency to 'go with what you know' and appoint people from our own region who have qualifications we recognise from institutions we know.”*

(Head of Family Support)

### **Gaps in qualifications for some roles at some levels**

For some clusters roles are not currently defined at particular levels, or no qualifications exist at given levels. This may not be problematic of itself, but may generate unhelpful pathways for some individuals wishing to move from one role to another in the most direct route. It is anticipated that current work by Sector Skills Councils will shortly reduce such gaps. At the time of writing, the most obvious gaps identified by this project were:

- Qualifications in behaviour management

- Nationally approved qualifications in areas of supporting inclusion and working with disabled children and young people
- Middle tier qualifications in Social Care
- Management/leadership qualifications for the sector at Levels 3/4/5
- Commissioning
- Voluntary Sector Qualifications
- Qualifications in working specifically with Families and parents (being addressed)
- Middle level qualifications in mental health
- Transition is an area not widely addressed within qualifications
- Database skills for all workforce employees
- Level 1 qualifications in some clusters

## **9. Training vs qualifications vs occupational standards**

Within CTPs, priority is being given to tailor-made training, rather than to the acquisition of qualifications. This is seen as preferable in meeting current needs for integrated working and joint development in specific areas. Clearly there is a need for some integrated qualifications although the level at which these are pitched may prove problematic since such training may include a full range of staff roles from experienced specialist professional to inexperienced generic support worker.

The database produced by this project has included some limited amounts of nationally endorsed training such as that provided through Skills Active. It is clear, however, that there are very many training offerings through many thousands of training providers. The CWDC will need to establish clear criteria if some training provision is to be included and other provision excluded. One option, which we would recommend is the exclusion of all training insofar as it does not require participants to demonstrate new learning as a result of participation, hence giving no guarantee of skill or knowledge gain. On the other hand, a flexible IQF would provide opportunities for learners to 'put together' evidence of learning from training and gain accreditation from this.

There is also a decision to be made about the status of Occupational Standards, not currently linked to a qualification. So for example, teachers must gain qualified teacher status (QTS), but QTS of itself is not a qualification. The project includes this within the database as a 'qualification' at Level 6 although in practice the TDA are very clear that it is not actually a qualification and does not have a level.

## **10. Historical and international qualifications**

Any IQF will need to find a mechanism to deal with both historical and international qualifications.

This will need to be flexible given that the life of qualifications is limited and particular qualifications get modified over time even if they remain current. For individuals considering progression some element of historical validity of qualifications will be needed if they are not required to 'start again'. This volume adds what might be regarded as unnecessary complexity to the creation of any mappings between qualifications or to the creation of pathways.

Concurrent work by the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) in relation to international qualifications in the Early Years, Childcare and Playwork sectors may result longer term in the capacity to link the IQF to NARIC databases to support those individuals wishing to progress within the workforce but who enter with international qualifications. Similarly, work by Sector Skills Councils on their own Qualifications Frameworks can be linked into an IQF. Further discussion of this is found in the next section.

## **11. Workforce progression issues**

### ***Current concerns of CTPs in contextualising studies***

- There are key gaps in the Social Care framework. Whilst there appears to be plenty of provision in Social Care at Levels 1, 2 and 3 there then appears to be a real gap at Levels 4 and 5, with higher level professional roles requiring a degree in social work at Level 6. Unlike support for teaching, there is no bridge to this through a parallel professionally accredited higher level social work assistant. This is directly related to issues arising from the DH/DfES joint review of Social Care workforce called '*Options for Excellence*' and it will be important for the CWDC/ Skills for Care to consider this.
- Training and qualifications for enhanced roles *within* existing professional groups are viewed as crucial in the 6 CTPs. Examples of this are the extended social work career path up to practice and development consultant and practice supervisor roles.
- Four of the 6 CTPs identified large cohorts of learning support assistants who have been very well trained, and whose skill capacity considerably exceeds their level of recognition. Progression routes for these staff need urgent consideration.
- What might be thought of as 'cross cutting Skills Council issues' are indicated by the questions and concerns raised in CTPs. For example 'transition modules' which move Playworkers across to other Early Years work are being developed by Skills Active - which is a council which doesn't 'control' Early Years. Where are transitional modules to be located? This is important to clarify not least because it is evident that most people want to acquire qualifications which *may* let them move across the workforce but which could equally usefully provide insight into their existing job.
- Some CTPs, particularly those in rural locations, find Level 5 and 6 qualifications difficult to access.

### ***Transition between qualifications***

There are difficulties associated with mapping both knowledge and skills gained in each qualification to be able to identify what more would need to be done to progress from one qualification to a qualification at the next level if it sits within a different sub-framework. Some intensive work has already been completed to create transition modules between Early Years and Playwork. Report 5 highlights the needs for transition modules between teaching assistant roles and other roles within Social Care and Parent

and Family Support sectors. This report also highlights shortages more generally within the Social Care sector and this would suggest that it may be productive to develop other transition modules which would support an increase of employees in this sector.

More challenging is finding solutions to transition at higher levels. It may be helpful, for example for some pilot work with Universities to examine how transition from teaching qualifications (experiencing a demand for supply downturn) to social work qualifications (experiencing a shortfall of supply) might be facilitated from, say, a Level 5 or 6 base-line.

### ***Creating pathways***

The creation of suitable pathways for individuals within the workforce, as envisaged currently within the DfES, appears to depend upon a wide number of factors, not simply the creation of an IQF. These include:

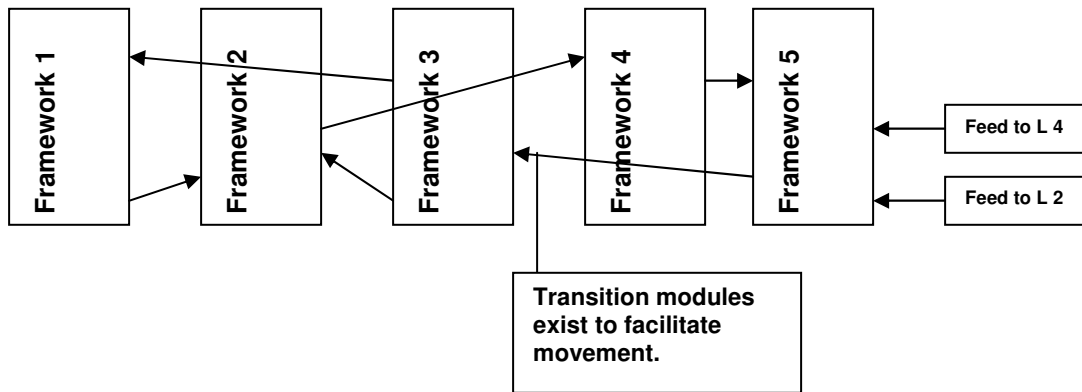
- the lack of any mandatory qualifications for some roles
- how to account for historical qualifications
- how to account for learning at work which may not be accredited
- lack of clarity about the significance of individual qualifications in some sectors
- the potential number of pathways between any two qualifications
- the availability of qualifications in a particular geographic area
- funding mechanisms for gaining qualifications or training
- the relevance of specific qualifications to work with children or young people
- the preference at local for multilevel training in some development aspects

The creation of an IQF which identifies qualifications at each level of the NQF for each role within the workforce will clearly assist in the identification of career pathways. However, there is a tension between detail and simplicity. The IQF will also need to fit well with the Framework for Achievement currently being developed by QCA.

The work of this project would suggest that it would be helpful for a number of significant, achievable pathways to be identified through the IQF by (a) providing a simple qualifications framework for each occupational sector (b) showing how these frameworks interlink and at what levels (c) separately identifying routes into each framework at each level. This is indicated in Figure 11.1.



**Figure 11.1 Model for linking Sector Specific Qualifications Frameworks**



## 12. Framework user issues

The following points have been made by staff within the CTPs in the contextualising studies concerning their needs for information about qualifications.

- Lists of qualifications without any status or significance attached to them will do little to assist managers in dealing with their confusions about what qualifications best equip staff to do particular jobs.
- Important that any database is easy to access and navigate, and is *kept up to date* (complaints that the EY database gives information about qualification now defunct and some that -on investigation- have never run).
- Managers in CTPs would like to be able to glean some sense of what are the most 'universal' qualifications i.e.; what is popular, delivered at credible colleges and institutions, widely recognised and represent value for money.
- Knowing what qualifications are available in your geographical area rated as important.
- Managers feel that knowing the extent to which qualifications map across to the Common Core would be very helpful (though this might well be used as a tick in the box approach to covering common core requirements).
- Cost of qualifications and patterns of study, particularly any work based learning modes which are felt to have 'knock on' benefits for workplaces.
- Detail about the extent to which qualifications cover issues such as multi professional team working; cross referral; communicating with children would be useful.

*“Going on line and finding a plethora of different qualifications - with detailed description of modular content is about as helpful to me as going into an estate agents and asking for information about all the semi-detached houses in Chichester. I need to find information much more smartly packaged than this. Just as I want to be able to go into XXXXX (name of estate agent) and say give me 5 brochures of semi-detached houses for £300,000 with*

*enclosed gardens and conservatories, I want to be able to find quickly and easily the 5 best qualifications for my Youth Workers, how much they will cost; which skills they will provide, where they are offered within a 30 mile radius of here and a contact for admissions. Is that too much to ask? Oh - and I would like my PA to be able to do this for me - so someone who may not have specialist knowledge.”*

(Head of Service)

*“We have a really good contact at our local HE institute who is a godsend as she comes and updates us on any new courses and qualifications available and can advise on what would be most useful. The great thing about her is she isn't touting for business, she passes on information about courses at local colleges and she will follow up queries we have.”*

(Training Officer)

### **13. Summary of issues and recommendations**

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Level - qualifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Confusion about levels of qualifications needs to be addressed on the ground</li><li>• There is a need to support multilevel training and what criteria apply at each level</li><li>• A decision will need to be made about how to represent non-levelled training on the IQF or whether to require level assignation for all training</li><li>• There may be a need to develop further Level 1 qualifications in some workforce clusters</li><li>• There appears to be a need to develop further Level 4 and 5 qualifications in some clusters</li><li>• The CWDC may wish to advise on new qualification names to support transparency over level.</li></ul> |
| Level - roles          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some consistency over nomenclature and level assignation to roles across the different workforce clusters would be helpful.</li></ul>  |
| Types of qualification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whilst the distinction between vocationally related and vocational qualifications has been removed, the need to acquire both knowledge and skills remains. Will an IQF flag any distinction in types of qualification?</li><li>• How will the IQF deal with similar awards offered by different awarding bodies – as one award or as separately identifiable awards?</li><li>• There is some evidence of the need for simple basic information about qualifications.</li></ul>   |

- Age focus of qualifications may be important in some areas. Should qualification titles indicate age focus?
- Optional modules within qualifications mean that different knowledge and skills may be achieved by individuals gaining the same qualification. Does this matter? Is it up to the employer to discern this?
- How can the IQF deal effectively with historical qualifications?
- Should management be a requirement for senior level post qualifications

Qualification requirements for specific roles

- Some roles within the workforce have mandatory qualification requirements, others do not. Should there be a mandatory requirement for all roles beyond a particular level? Would this simplify the IQF?

Qualification frameworks within workforce sectors

- There remains a different qualification requirement for some roles in different parts of the country. The CWDC may wish to provide advice on this.
- There appears to be a need to simplify some qualification sets in some workforce clusters, notably Early Years.
- Most workforce clusters are developing specialist qualification frameworks. This appears helpful and could lead to a simplified IQF structure.
- There are some notable gaps :
  - Qualifications in behaviour management.
  - Nationally approved qualifications in areas of supporting inclusion and working with disabled children and young people.
  - Middle tier qualifications in Social Care.
  - Management/leadership qualifications for the sector at Levels 3/4/5.
  - Commissioning.
  - Voluntary Sector Qualifications
  - Qualifications in working specifically with Families and parents (being addressed)
  - Middle level qualifications in mental health
  - Transition is an area not widely addressed within qualifications.
  - Database skills for all workforce employees
  - Level 1 qualifications in some clusters.

Training vs qualifications vs occupational

- A decision about criteria for inclusion of qualifications in the IQF will need to address the

standards	issue of whether or not to include nationally endorsed training and whether or not to include occupational standards where no generic qualification exists.
Historical and International Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration needs to be given on linking historical and international qualifications to the IQF.</li> </ul>
Workforce progression issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a growing body of skilled teaching assistants who could perform other roles and who need progression routes other than HLTA.</li> <li>• There is a need to consider progression to enhanced roles within the workforce.</li> <li>• There is a need to identify other key areas for transitional qualification/module development.</li> </ul>
Framework User Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the ground users want more than lists of qualifications.</li> <li>• Easy navigation and access to any Web based IQF is essential.</li> <li>• The IQF needs to link to providers in the region and information about costs in the same 'frame of information'.</li> <li>• Knowledge of links between qualifications and the Common Core would be helpful.</li> </ul>

## 14. Details of project reports

### Report 1

#### **Developing and maintaining a database of qualifications for the children and young people's workforce**

This report is aimed at those who will need to maintain a database of qualifications for the children's workforce. It discusses the issues arising and lessons learned from the construction of the database, updating and resource issues for maintenance.

### Report 2

#### **Defining the children and young people's workforce in a changing scenario**

This report is aimed at those who are focusing on the nature and composition of the children's workforce. It discusses issues that have emerged in (a) the identification of roles to include (b) the varying qualification requirements for given roles that have merged and (c) issues on the ground about roles which emerged in the contextualising studies.

### **Report 3**

#### **Qualification issues that inform the design of an integrated qualifications framework (IQF)**

This report is aimed at those responsible for the development of an Integrated Qualifications Framework. It discusses the issues that have arisen in the identification of qualifications and training and their inclusion in the database and which could influence any design of an IQF. It also discusses issues emerging from the research on the needs of users in relation to knowledge about qualifications and training.

### **Report 4**

#### **The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge and its coverage by existing qualifications**

This report is for those who are concerned to progress coverage of the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge by those within the children's workforce. It discusses the findings from an analysis of the extent to which existing qualifications cover the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge and the perceptions on the ground of the significance of the Common Core as identified within the contextualising studies.

### **Report 5**

#### **Training and qualifications issues, needs and gaps**

This report is for those responsible for the further development of qualifications and training for the children's workforce. It identifies qualification and training needs that emerged from the contextualising studies and provides information from the database and from an analysis of the LSC Individual Learner Record of take up of qualifications within the sector.

### **Report 6**

#### **Research review**

This report provides a summary of the research objectives, scope, methodology and outcomes.

## **SHU Project Team**

### **Project Directors**

Sylvia Johnson  
Karen Dunn  
John Coldron

### **Project Managers**

Ihsan Caillau  
Michael Coldwell

### **Project Team**

Paul Close  
Helen Finlayson  
Damien Fitzgerald  
Ros Garrick  
Lesley Gornall  
Anne Hollows  
Janet Kay  
Anne Morgan

### **Database Designer**

Dave Jefferies

### **Project Administrator**

Brenda Bottomley

### **Contact**

Brenda Bottomley  
Centre for Education Research  
33 Collegiate Crescent  
Sheffield  
S10 2BP

Tele: 0114 225 5652

Email: [B.Bottomley@shu.ac.uk](mailto:B.Bottomley@shu.ac.uk)

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