

Improving the Collection of Qualifications Data

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Qualifications Data*

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a three-stage research project conducted by MORI Social Research Institute on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills, between March and October 2005.

Background and Objectives

Within the LFS, individuals are asked to list all their qualifications, starting with the highest – which is then assigned to the corresponding NQF Level. Those whose qualifications do not fit into the existing pre-code list are recorded as having ‘Other’ qualifications along with all foreign and professional qualifications. ‘Other’ responses are only used in the calculation of highest qualification if this is the sole qualification reported – generally around 8% of respondents. In subsequent statistical analyses of achievement against attainment targets, these ‘Other’ qualifications are apportioned across NQF Levels 1, 2 and 3 in a formula based on detailed analysis of the ‘Other’ qualifications from the General Household Survey 1991/92¹.

There is evidence that the LFS under-reports the achievement of lower level qualifications, particularly among older respondents. Various cognitive and linguistic reasons have been documented for this under-reporting, including respondents getting the name of the qualification wrong, not recognising the name/ category of the qualification, forgetting that they have the qualification, disregarding or discounting qualifications that they have, and perhaps associating the term ‘qualifications’ with the academic rather than the vocational².

This project aimed to:

- review the accuracy of the formula currently used to apportion ‘Other’ qualifications across Levels 1, 2 and 3;
- explore what people count as qualifications, and how they perceive qualifications as opposed to ‘learning’;
- ascertain what people understand by ‘vocational’ qualifications and how far they associate these with ‘qualifications’ *per se*; and
- develop and pilot improved questions on qualifications with a view to improving the LFS questionnaire as well as other Government surveys.

¹ pp339-346, Employment Gazette, July 1992

² Campanelli, P and Channell, J. 1996. *The Conceptualisation of Qualifications by Individuals RS9*. London: DfEE.

Phase One

Phase One of the research consisted of coding highest qualification 'Other' responses from the Spring 2004 LFS, as well as undertaking a thorough demographic analysis of the highest qualification 'Other' group.

Profile analysis of the group providing 'Other' as their highest qualification compared with the overall LFS profile reveals significant differences in age profile (and linked to this, age completed full-time education); country of origin (and linked to this, ethnicity); and occupational level. There are no significant differences by gender, economic activity status, or type of interview (personal vs. proxy). The key points are:

- Those whose highest qualification is coded under 'Other' are more likely to fall into the older age groups compared with the LFS population as a whole. Around three in ten of those providing 'Other' as their highest qualification are aged 55 and over.
- Those whose highest qualification was coded under 'Other' are more likely to have left school before they reached sixteen. The proportion is more than double that found in the LFS as a whole (39% compared with 17%). This is linked to the older age profile among the 'Other' group.
- Roughly a third of people whose highest qualification is coded as 'Other' were born outside the UK (37%), compared with 10% for the LFS as a whole. Linked to this, there is a higher prevalence of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups among the 'Other' highest qualification group.
- Compared with results from the LFS as a whole, there are lower proportions of people in managerial and professional occupations, and higher proportions in semi-routine and routine occupations, among the 'Other' group.

Partial qualifications are termed as "thin", with categorisation of full or thin qualifications dependent on the number of guided learning hours associated with attaining that qualification. Guided learning hours are a measure of the amount of tutor or similar input that is typically required for a candidate to achieve a qualification or unit.

Currently, highest qualifications that have been coded as 'Other' are apportioned across NQF Levels 1, 2 and 3 in the ratio 55: 35: 10. The coding exercise from Phase One suggests the current formula needs to be updated in order to account fully for higher level qualifications (above Level 3) and possibly for 'thin' qualifications (although these may have already been accounted for in the original formula). Adjusting the formula in line with the outcomes of the coding exercise would mean the following allocation (from NQF Level 1 to 4+): 7: 26: 10: 17. In addition, *in theory* 40 percent would be allocated to a 'thin' category.

Some thin qualifications are already captured within the LFS (e.g. part GNVQs, key skills, less than five GCSEs), but there is clearly a gap in terms of less specific qualifications/ responses such as 'first aid'; 'marketing'; 'computer course', etc. This poses a problem in terms of how to treat these qualifications in any analyses of NQF levels attained vs. qualification targets, as they are outwith the current NQF categorisation. Another issue to be borne in mind here is the consistency of time series data for analysis. Therefore in practice, the DfES will need to assign these 'thin' qualifications to one or more NQF Levels for the purposes of their analyses. In practice, due to the nature of 'thin' qualifications, these should probably be assigned to Level 2 or below. The main reasons for this relate to their nature as thin qualifications (i.e. putting them at a lower level than similar qualifications that are full in width), added to the fact that as highest qualification 'Others', they are the *only* qualification held.

It is also important to bear in mind that any changes made to the LFS qualifications question wording, precodes or interviewer guidance will have implications for the future allocation of those in the 'Other' category. For example, amending the precodes to include a specific category for degree level qualifications obtained overseas, will impact on the proportion of highest qualification 'Others' that should be apportioned to NQF Level 4 and above (as the current recommended allocation is currently based on results including a substantial proportion that are foreign degrees). This will need to be closely monitored in the light of any changes that are made.

Phase Two

This phase of the research looked at how people answered questions about qualifications (focusing on the qualification questions currently used in the Labour Force Survey). In addition, the research explored people's understandings of 'learning' and 'qualifications' in general and of their own learning experiences and qualifications in particular. In total, 39 face-to-face cognitive depth interviews were conducted with respondents, using a topic guide. Each interview lasted approximately 45-60 minutes.

The research found that, although some respondents answered the LFS question accurately, others can misreport, over-report and under-report the qualifications that they hold, due to a number of factors:

- ***Comprehension***
Respondents misunderstand concepts and terms within the question or misunderstand the question as a whole. The terms 'qualifications' and 'highest' could be interpreted differently according to different people's terms of reference.
- ***Judgment***
Respondents make active decisions not to include qualifications that they hold or they do not recognise these achievements as qualifications. This is sometimes because of the learning environments where they were achieved – people tend to associate qualifications with school or college, rather than work or leisure – and sometimes

because people discount qualifications that are not relevant to them now or they have never used.

- ***Recall***
Respondents do not remember all of the qualifications they have acquired, in particular if they are not currently using them, or if they have done lots of different qualifications.
- ***Recognition/Awareness***
Respondents lack awareness of how qualifications are structured, what qualifications are available, and where these are situated within the qualifications framework.

People tend to be more familiar with the term 'academic' than they are with the term 'vocational', although most recognise and can provide examples of professional qualifications or apprenticeships. Overall, people are unclear about the concepts of 'full' and 'part' qualifications, and find it difficult to conceive how 'part' of a qualification could be valuable, or an end in itself.

People also have patchy and imprecise awareness about the NQF and how their qualifications sit within it. For this reason, clear and concise information on the NQF and progression routes between qualifications needs to be made available to everybody, as people of all ages and from various backgrounds are potential students, who educational bodies should be targeting. The work currently being done by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) on the Framework of Achievement should help with this; its aim being to create a simplified framework with standardised qualification titles.

There are six key recommendations resulting from this stage of the research:

- ***Terminology***
The term 'starting with the highest' was found to be problematic. We recommend removing the term 'starting with the highest' from questions asking people to report the qualifications that they have.
- ***Frames of reference***
There is a degree of ambiguity surrounding the frames of reference that respondents use to think and talk about qualifications. To minimise this, clearer guidance needs to be included within the survey question so that there is less scope for ambiguity.

In an absence of understanding about the NQF, respondents make decisions according to their own personal frames of reference, and so guidance should clearly relate to all possible learning environments and state which qualifications should be considered.
- ***Perceived relevance of qualifications***
Respondents may think only about qualifications and skills that they use currently/regularly or that they have gained recently. It is therefore important to retain guidance to respondents that they should

report all qualifications not just those that they have recently gained or that they use currently/most regularly.

- ***Omission of leisure based qualifications***
Respondents often do not report or recognise qualifications that they have gained through leisure activities / in their spare time. Guidance should include an explicit reference to leisure/own time activities to encourage respondents to recall and report any qualifications associated with these types of activity.
- ***Under-reporting of qualifications***
Some respondents who originally report that they have no qualifications, do in fact have them. This oversight could be avoided through asking anyone saying 'no qualifications' explicit follow-up questions about taught and self-taught courses, which may help to capture any respondents who in fact do have some form of qualification.

Phase Three

Phase 3 of the research tested the revised qualifications questions developed in Phase 2, quantitatively. The recommendations from Phase 1 and Phase 2 were put into effect.

A telephone survey of 1,010 working age adults in England was conducted in August and September 2005, and the results compared to those for the Autumn 2005 LFS. A Random Digit Dialling methodology was used, with quotas set on key demographic variables. The MORI survey data were also weighted by age, gender, ethnicity, work status and occupation, in order to ensure comparability.

In terms of highest NQF level held, the MORI survey shows significantly more people who say they have Level 4+ qualifications (35% compared with 27% in the LFS), and a significantly lower proportion reporting no qualifications at all (6% compared with 13% in the LFS). Proportions as other NQF Levels were broadly in line with the LFS findings.

Looking at individual level qualifications, significantly more people reported GCSEs, A Levels, Degree level qualifications, Diplomas of Higher Education, N/SVQs, O Levels and HNC/HND qualifications in the MORI survey, than in the LFS. It is interesting that the most striking differences of these *specific* qualifications lie at different levels, with GCSEs (NQF Level 1 or 2), A Levels (NQF Level 2 or 3) and degree level qualifications (NQF Level 4).

Some of these findings are broadly in line with expectations given that respondents are encouraged to report *all* qualifications they have *ever* gained in the MORI survey, regardless of hierarchy or current relevance. For example, it is possible that respondents who hold a qualification higher than GCSE or A Level, may be less likely to report those *as well as* their higher qualification, under the current LFS.

The overall proportion of 'Others' as a highest qualification (not including those for whom the level was unknown due to missing information) was four percent, compared with 8% in the LFS. This was based on largely the same assignment process followed in the LFS. One important exception was that foreign qualifications that *could* be coded to a NQF Level, were actually assigned to that level rather than left in the 'Other' category.

The impact of the revised questions is difficult to isolate. However, comparing the findings of the survey against the LFS, and in the light of what we know from the qualitative research, the results suggest that the changes that have been made to the questions have encouraged more people to report more qualifications, in particular those gained outside of a formal education environment. A fifth of respondents (21% and 19% respectively) report having qualifications either connected with personal interests or things they like doing in their spare time, or as a result of studying at home in their own time. We know from the qualitative research that some people discount such qualifications when answering the standard LFS question, which does not explicitly prompt them about these types of settings.

We do need to ask whether changes made to the questions may have encouraged over-reporting, rather than just addressing under-reporting, similarly whether there was any response bias in the tendency to participate in the survey, which over-represented more highly-qualified groups. However it is difficult to explain such differences solely as a result of over-reporting or response bias, especially given the fact that the survey data was weighted in line with the population on a range of demographic factors including occupation. There are some patterns here which suggest that the questionnaire revisions do help to broaden the reporting of qualifications as well as to reduce the proportion of highest qualifications recorded as 'Other', via the coding of foreign qualifications.

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of a three-stage research study undertaken by MORI Social Research Institute on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) between March and October 2005. The three phases of the research comprised:

- Phase 1, coding and subsequent analysis of highest qualification 'Others' taken from the Spring 2004 sweep of the Labour Force Survey (LFS), with a view to identifying the factors that lead to qualifications being coded as 'Other';
- Phase 2, cognitive depth interviews exploring how people think about qualifications and the factors that impact on reporting of their own qualifications, including developing and testing a revised question about qualifications obtained; and finally
- Phase 3, a survey of 1,000 people about their learning and qualifications, quantitatively testing the revised question.

1.1 Research Background

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) collects a range of data on individuals' characteristics, labour market activities and education, including qualifications. Information from the LFS is used to inform Ministers and policymakers on learning issues, including the achievement of national targets according to National Qualification Framework (NQF) levels.

Within the LFS, individuals are asked to list all their qualifications, starting with the highest – which is later assigned to the corresponding NQF Level as part of the analysis. Those whose qualifications do not fit into the existing pre-code list are recorded as having 'Other' qualifications. In addition, all foreign and professional qualifications are recorded as 'Other'. 'Other' responses are only used in the calculation of highest qualification if this is the sole qualification reported – for example, if a respondent has reported an overseas qualification (e.g. a degree) and a UK qualification such as NVQ Level 3, their highest qualification would be categorised at NQF Level 3. Generally around 8% of respondents have 'Other' recorded as their highest qualification. In subsequent statistical analyses of achievement against attainment targets, these 'Other' qualifications are apportioned across NQF Levels 1, 2 and 3 in a formula based on detailed analysis of the 'Other' qualifications from the General Household Survey 1991/92.

However, the formula for apportioning 'Other' qualifications is based on data that is over a decade old, and requires updating in the light of changes in participation in post-compulsory education, the development of new vocational qualifications and escalating achievement levels, underpinned by Government emphasis on ensuring that everyone is qualified to at least NQF Level 2 or equivalent.

Furthermore, there is evidence that the LFS under-reports the achievement of lower level qualifications, particularly among older respondents. Various cognitive and linguistic reasons have been documented for this under-reporting, including respondents getting the name of the qualification wrong, not recognising the name/ category of the qualification, forgetting that they have the qualification, and disregarding or discounting qualifications that they have³.

Finally, the qualifications system itself is continually evolving and becoming more complex in an effort to improve quality and progression routes, broaden the qualifications base, and attract a wider range of people to 'stay on' or return to education. Since the introduction of GCSEs in the late-1980s, a new tier of A Levels (the AS level) and Vocational GCSEs and A Levels have been introduced, and there are further plans to re-structure A Levels. In addition, more or less the entire vocational education framework has been re-vamped, to gradually move away from qualifications linked explicitly to particular Awarding Bodies (e.g. City and Guilds, RSA), to a system of standardised and generically-titled NVQs and other vocational awards, approved and regulated by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) under a common National Qualifications Framework. A key issue for monitoring qualification levels is, how do people understand, recognise, and report these qualifications?

There is some evidence to suggest under-reporting of vocational qualifications – perhaps because people associate the term 'qualifications' with the academic rather than the vocational. For instance, MORI research among low-qualified adults for the *Campaign for Learning*⁴ found that they associated 'qualifications' with school/college – actively 'being taught', and exams. 'Learning' was viewed as distinct – suggesting that the term 'qualification' may not be immediately associated with activities such as e-learning, work-based learning or the accreditation of prior learning, which are all avenues that the Government has encouraged in its efforts to both increase and widen participation, and subsequently raise attainment.

1.2 Research Objectives

This project looks at how people understand and respond to questions about qualifications, with a view to improving the qualifications data that is collected via the LFS and other social surveys. The project has the following objectives:

- To review the accuracy of the formula currently used to apportion 'Other' qualifications across Levels 1, 2 and 3;
- To explore what people count as qualifications, and how they perceive qualifications as opposed to 'learning';

³ Campanelli, P and Channell, J. 1996. *The Conceptualisation of Qualifications by Individuals RS9*. London: DfEE.

⁴ MORI Social Research Institute, 2003. *First Steps into Learning*. London: The Campaign for Learning.

- To ascertain what people understand by ‘vocational’ qualifications and how far they associate these with ‘qualifications’ *per se*; and
- To develop and pilot improved questions on qualifications with a view to improving the LFS questionnaire as well as other Government surveys.

Phase One

This part of the research sought to code the ‘Other’ verbatims that occurred under the LFS highest qualification question, to relevant National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Levels 1 to 4+. The research was based only on responses where ‘Other’ was the only, and therefore the highest, qualification reported. In addition, the coding exercise took account of whether there was sufficient information recorded in the verbatim to be able to assess whether this was a ‘full’ or a ‘thin’ qualification. Specifically, this phase of the research sought:

- To gather information on the range and types of qualification that are classified as ‘Other’, and assign as many as possible to an NQF level;
- To ascertain the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents falling into this category;
- To review the accuracy of the formula currently used to apportion ‘Other’ qualifications across NQF Levels;
- To assess the factors which contribute to the allocation of responses in ‘Other’; and
- To recommend an improved methodology for capturing and/or allocating ‘Other’ qualifications.

Phase Two

The qualitative phase of the research was divided into two elements. Firstly, a series of depth interviews was conducted with the aim of cognitively testing the existing LFS qualifications question. This was then reviewed and a new question was devised and tested in a second series of interviews. The main aims of this part of the project were:

- To explore how people understand the current qualifications questions used in the LFS;
- To assess how people recall and make judgements about their own qualifications;
- To explore how people talk and think about learning and qualifications generally, and ascertain how far they are aware of the National Qualifications Framework and how qualifications relate to each other.

Phase Three

The third and final phase of the research sought to quantitatively test the newly revised qualifications question in a survey, and compare the results against findings from the LFS. More specifically, its aim was to:

- Analyse the breakdown of highest qualifications (according to NQF Level) and explore the demographic composition of those reporting them, compared to that reported in the LFS;
- Assess how far the proportion of highest qualification ‘Other’ responses could be reduced;
- Ascertain whether the revised question had encouraged greater reporting of vocational and/or “thin” qualifications.

The ultimate objectives of the research are to make recommendations both for an improved methodology for capturing and/or allocating ‘Other’ qualifications and for improving the standard qualifications question to ensure that surveys report the achievement of qualifications more accurately.

1.3 Structure of this Report

The remainder of this report sets out the methods used at each phase of the research, before moving on to discuss their findings. The report structure is as follows:

- Apportioning Other Qualifications in Phase One;
- Accuracy of Reporting Qualifications from Phase Two;
- Testing New Qualifications in Phase Three;
- Looking Ahead: Conclusions and Recommendations.

1.4 Reporting the Quantitative Findings

The figures quoted in the charts are percentages, and the base size from which the percentage is derived is indicated at the foot of the graphic. Please note that the base size may vary, as some questions are asked only of a proportion of the sample.

Where an asterisk (*) appears in the charts, this indicates a percentage of less than one, but greater than zero. Where percentages do not add up to 100% this can be due to a variety of factors – such as the exclusion of ‘Don’t know’ or ‘Other’ responses, multiple responses or computer rounding.

Only ‘statistically significant’ differences have been highlighted throughout the report; the differences required for significance at various levels are explained in the Appendices.

1.5 Interpreting of the Qualitative Findings

Two of the key strengths of qualitative analysis are that it allows issues to be explored in detail and enables researchers to test the strength of people's opinion. However, it needs to be remembered that qualitative research is designed to be *illustrative* rather than *statistically representative* and therefore does not allow conclusions to be drawn about the extent to which views are held. In addition, it is important to bear in mind that we are dealing with perceptions, rather than facts.

When interpreting the quantitative findings, it is important to remember that the results are based on a sample of the general public, rather than the entire population. Consequently, results are subject to sampling tolerances and so not all differences between sub-groups are statistically significant. Where there are significant differences that reveal interesting patterns in the data these have been commented on within the report. Where the base is small (i.e. under 100) caution is advised. A guide to statistical reliability is included in the appendices.

1.6 Publication of Data

Our standard Terms and Conditions apply to this, as to all studies we carry out. Compliance with the MRS Code of Conduct and our clearing of any copy or data for publication, web-siting or press release which contains any data derived from MORI research is necessary. This is to protect our client's reputation and integrity as much as our own. We recognise that it is in no one's best interests to have survey findings published which could be misinterpreted, or could appear to be inaccurately, or misleadingly, presented.

1.7 Acknowledgements

MORI would like to thank Tony Clarke, Jill Bodey, John Kerr and the rest of the Steering Group for their valuable advice and guidance throughout the project. We would also like to thank the Coding Team at MORI Data Services for their assistance with Phase One of this project, and all of the people who participated in an interview during Phase Two or Phase Three. Finally, we would like to thank Marie Thornby (former project manager at MORI) for her invaluable contribution to Phases One and Two.

2. Phase One: Apportioning “Other” Qualifications

In this section we outline the methodology and results of Phase One, which consisted of coding highest qualification ‘Others’ reported in the Spring 2004 LFS to a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level.

2.1 Methodology

Phase One was based on desk research using analysis of LFS data for Spring 2004. An SPSS file containing all those whose highest qualification was recorded as ‘Other’ was provided by ONS - 4, 380 cases in total. A coding exercise was then conducted, aiming to assign these ‘Others’ to an NQF level wherever possible.

As well as the full ‘Other’ verbatim responses, the file included key demographic variables for analysis, and other variables that could either help to indicate the level of the qualification (for example, occupation, age left full-time education, country of birth/ year came to UK), or that might be related to reasons why it could not be coded (for example, country of birth, whether the interview was a personal or proxy response).

Initial Coding Approach

The initial approach to coding ‘Others’ was split into three stages:

Stage One. The research team scrutinised an initial batch of verbatims and flagged up any that could be directly assigned to NQF level. This process also informed the briefing materials provided to the coding team, in terms of common terms/ qualifications that might crop up.

Stage Two. The coding team coded the rest of the data, adhering to guidelines provided by the research team and agreed with DfES. One of the key guidelines to bear in mind at this stage is that, where there was a question mark about the level within a defined range of possible levels, the mid-point or lower level was applied. For example, where an entry might say ‘gas installation’, we know that qualifications in this field are at Level 2 or 3, but we do not have the information to determine for certain which level applies – so the lower of the two would be applied here (Level 2) and considered their highest qualification.

Another key factor to take into account was the ‘width’ of the qualification: that is, whether the qualification could be ascribed as full or partial (termed “thin”), or whether there was insufficient information to be able to tell. Categorisation of full or thin qualifications is dependent on the number of guided learning hours associated with attaining that qualification. Guided learning hours are a measure

of the amount of tutor or similar input that is typically required for a candidate to achieve a qualification or unit.

Stage Three. The fully coded data was then quality-checked in detail by the research team. Codes were re-assigned where necessary. At this stage, particular qualification areas were investigated in detail, such as memberships of professional bodies, industry terms such as ‘CORGI registered’, etc. – in order to ascertain whether this was associated with a particular level of qualification or not. Sources for checking these particular qualifications included professional body and SSC websites and the QCA’s “Open Quals” website.

At this stage, the research team also referred to other variables present within the dataset in order to help estimate qualification level. For example, in many cases where general ‘subject’ qualifications might be listed, an examination of the accompanying occupational classification, and age left full-time education, meant that the coded qualification level could be fine-tuned further. An example is shown below:

‘Other’ response	Possible width and outcome code	Occupation	End width and outcome code
Accountancy	Level 1-5: coded Level 3	Chartered Accountant	Level 4-5: coded Level 4

Using this initial approach, we were able to code three-quarters of the Other qualifications listed (73%). Among these, coders felt sure they had assigned the appropriate level in a third of cases (35%). In the remainder of these cases, there was a degree of uncertainty due to the possible range of levels of the qualification. For example, a qualification might be coded at Level 2, but it could possibly be at Level 1, 2 or 3 because it is offered at those levels. There was insufficient information recorded in the verbatim to be able to assign this more precisely.

Revised Coding Approach

After discussions with DfES and the Project Steering Group, the coding strategy was refined in order to minimise the number of ‘uncertain’ and ‘uncoded’ verbatims remaining after the first approach. It was agreed that further investigations would be made for assigning these cases to NQF Level, due to the high proportion of these cases remaining within the data.

It was agreed with DfES that all uncoded cases would be assigned as ‘thin qualifications’. Such qualifications were either short courses that were categorised as ‘thin’ (based on the number of guided learning hours they entailed) e.g. first aid; units of qualifications; or could not be categorised as full on the basis of the QCA’s guided learning hour-based equivalences. This group also

included some cases whose qualification level was unknown due to insufficient information being recorded about them in the verbatim.

In addition to this, and based on analysis of the NISVQ⁵ database, an agreed allocation strategy was reached for the most commonly occurring groups of 'uncertain' cases. This was implemented using random assignment: each 'uncertain' case associated with a particular type of qualification was assigned to an NQF level at random, within the range of NQF Levels that are associated with that particular type of qualification.

The proportion of the cases attributed to each possible NQF level was set in advance based on analysis of the NISVQ database and the mechanism to assign each case to a NQF level was a random selection function within the quantum computer package.

Qualifications were allocated based on the distribution of awards at each NQF level, for each of these most commonly occurring types of qualification in the 'uncertain' group. The levels included a 'thin' qualification category, for example for qualifications such as CLAIT; Health and Safety certificates; Manual Handling certificates.

An example is *'Hairdressing'*. We know from the Openquals database that Hairdressing qualifications can be awarded at NVQ Levels 1, 2 and 3. It is also possible that some hairdressing qualifications recorded here are 'thin' e.g. units of an NVQ only. Cross-referenced against the NISVQ, the agreed formula for allocating Hairdressing qualifications was 20% thin, 20% Level 1, 50% Level 2, and 10% Level 3.

Once this was implemented for each of the main 'uncertain' types of qualification, the remainder of the uncertain cases was allocated across NQF levels, also using random assignment, based on the allocation of all coded cases to date.

This meant that each verbatim listed under 'Other' was now coded either to an NQF Level or to the stand-alone category of 'thin' qualification. Thin qualifications can be at any NQF Level, and are not just confined to qualifications below Level 2.

2.2 Coding Outcome by NQF Level

The overall outcome from the coding exercise is shown in the table below. Two-fifths of the coded qualifications (40%) were coded as 'thin' (without being assigned to a NQF Level). The main reasons for this relate to insufficient information in the verbatim to record otherwise, or that the verbatim suggested a course or skill that was part of a NQF Level qualification, but not a full qualification in itself. Examples include CLAIT, first aid, food hygiene, health and safety, HG have V licences, and short courses in business or management.

⁵ NISVQ, the National Information System for Vocational Qualifications held by DfES.

Outcome of ‘Other’ highest qualifications: coded to NQF level

	Percentage
<i>Base: All respondents whose highest qualification was coded as ‘Other’</i>	<i>(4,379)</i>
NQF Level 1	7
NQF Level 2	26
NQF Level 3	10
NQF Level 4+	17
Thin qualification	40

Source: MORI

In the next section we explore patterns in the demographic characteristics of respondents within each coded group. This is followed by a comparison of the overall coding outcome with the existing formula used to apportion NQF Levels among those with ‘Other’ as their highest qualification.

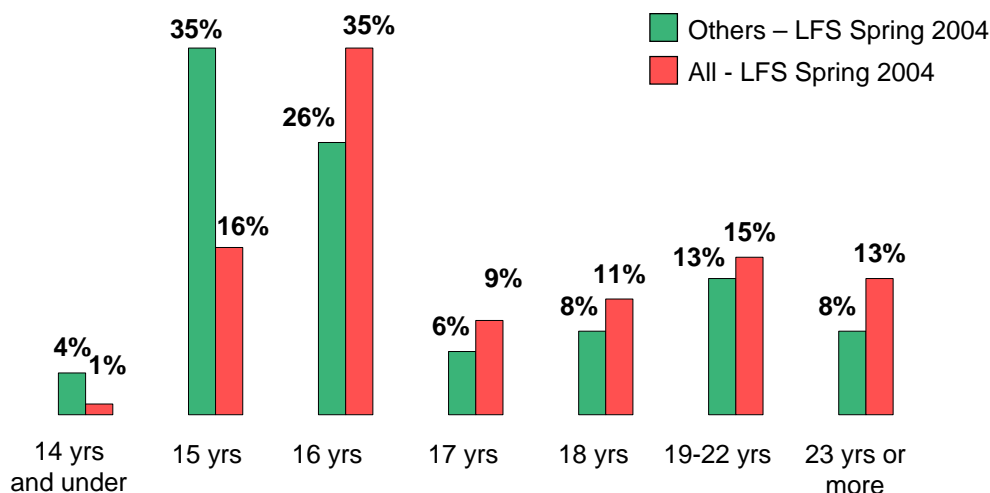
2.3 Other Key Findings from Phase One

Profile of the highest qualifications ‘Other’ group compared with the LFS as a whole

Those whose only and therefore highest qualification is coded under ‘Other’ are more likely to fall into the older age groups compared with the LFS population as a whole. Around three in ten of those providing ‘Other’ as their highest qualification are aged 55 and over.

In the LFS as a whole, 17% of the working age population left full-time education before they reached sixteen. Among those whose highest qualification was coded under ‘Other’, the proportion is more than double this (39%). This is linked to the older age profile among the ‘Other’ group: the school leaving age in the UK was raised from 14 to 15 in 1947, and from 15 to 16 in 1972.

Chart 1: Age completed full-time education of those who provided 'Other' as their highest qualification, compared to the LFS overall



Base: All respondents (4,379), Other as highest qualification

Source: MORI analysis of LFS, Spring 2004

Roughly a third of people whose highest qualification is coded as 'Other' were born outside the UK (37%), compared with 10% for the LFS as a whole. The table below shows the country of origin for all those whose highest qualification was 'Other'.

Country of birth of all those whose highest qualification was coded as 'Other' (coded to world regions)

	Percentage
<i>Base: All respondents whose highest qualification was coded as 'Other'</i>	<i>(4,379)</i>
United Kingdom	63
Rest of Europe	11
Africa	7
Bangladesh, India and Pakistan	7
Middle East and Asia	6
North America, Australia and New Zealand	4
Caribbean and South/ Central America	1
Rest of the world and in transit	*

Source: MORI

Linked to this, there is a higher prevalence of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups among the 'Other' highest qualification group, than in the LFS as a whole (20%, compared with 8% overall).

There are no differences in economic activity status between those whose highest qualification was coded 'Other' and the LFS as whole. However, there are lower proportions of people in managerial and professional occupations, and higher proportions in semi-routine and routine occupations, among the 'Other' group. Semi-routine occupations include chefs/cooks; care assistants and home carers; fork lift truck drivers; catering assistants. Routine occupations include cleaners; bar and waiting staff; HGV and bus/ coach drivers.

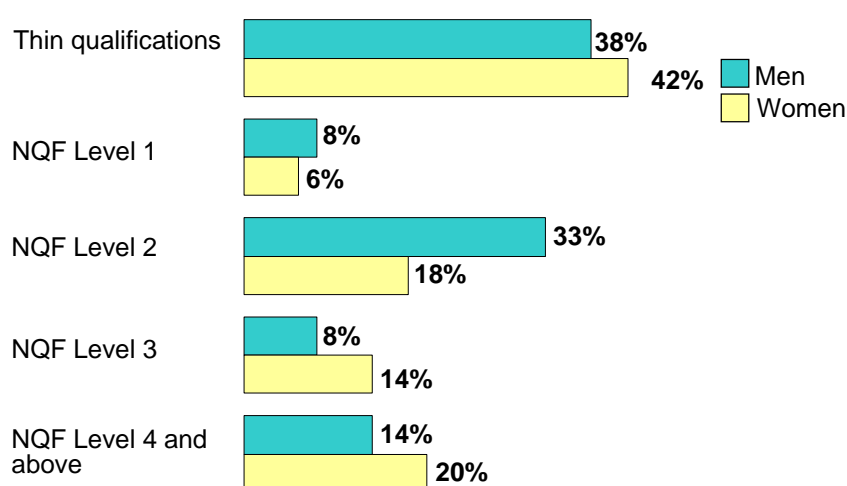
Looking at personal versus proxy responses, there is no significant difference between these groups in the likelihood to provide 'Other' as highest qualification. Proxy responses comprise 31% of the total LFS, compared with 32% of the highest qualification 'Other' group.

Profile of the highest qualifications 'Other' group, by coded NQF level

Using the method we have developed to apportion qualifications, analysis by gender shows that, among those whose highest qualification is coded 'Other', men are almost twice as likely to hold a qualification at NQF Level 2, while women are more likely than men to have a qualification at Level 3 or Level 4+. They are also more likely to have a 'thin' qualification.

Looking at the verbatims bears this out. For example, HGV, forklift, and manual craft qualifications concentrated at Level 2 are more prevalent among men than women; there are concentrations of care/ childcare and nursing qualifications at Level 3 (more likely to be held by women); and concentrations of nursing, teaching and associate medical qualifications (such as physiotherapy/ radiography) at Level 4+ (again, more likely to be held by women).

Chart 2: Coded NQF level by gender



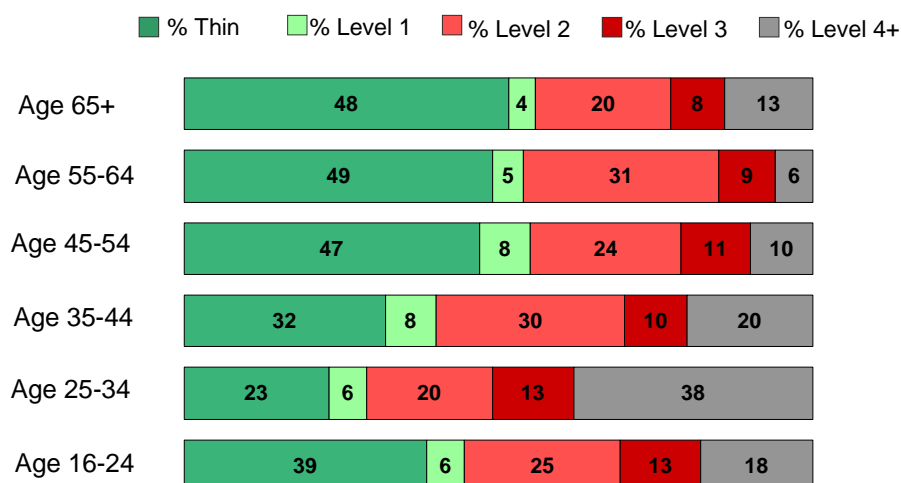
Base: All respondents (4,379), Other as highest qualification

Source: MORI analysis of LFS, Spring 2004 |

The distribution of qualifications by age is shown in Chart 3 and reveals the following key points:

- The proportion with Level 1 as their highest qualification is fairly uniform across age groups;
- Those aged 35-44 and 55-64 are more likely than average to have Level 2 as their highest qualification (30% and 31% respectively, compared with 26% overall);
- The incidence of Level 3 qualifications is comparatively low and declines with age;
- Level 4+ qualifications are most prevalent among the 25-34 year old age bracket. Almost four in ten of this group (38%) hold a Level 4+ qualification, compared with 17% overall. Looking at the verbatims here, degree level qualifications stand out as being more prevalent among this age group;
- Thin qualifications are more common among the older age groups. Almost half of those aged 45 and above have a 'thin' qualification as their highest.

Chart 3: Coded NQF level by ageband



Base: All respondents (4,379), Other as highest qualification

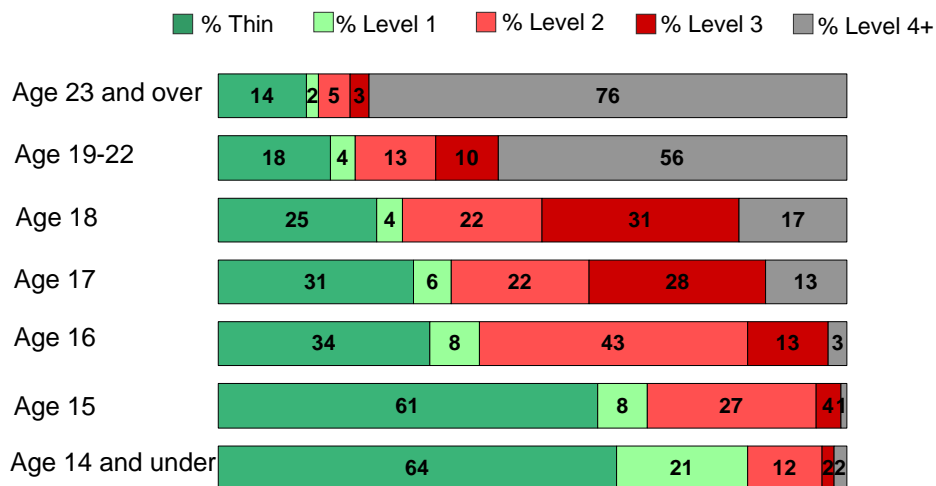
Source: MORI analysis of LFS, Spring 2004

Looking at the age that respondents completed their full-time education also reveals some interesting patterns, mostly in line with what we might expect given the links between qualifications and the traditional ages at which these are taken:

- People who left school aged 14 or below are more likely than average to hold a Level 1 qualification (21% compared with 7% overall);

- People leaving full-time education at 16 are more likely than average to have Level 2 as their highest qualification (43%, compared with 26% overall). Many of the verbatims here include HGV/ forklift and manual craft qualifications;
- Those who left full-time education at age 17 or 18 are more likely than others to have Level 3 as their highest qualification (28% and 31% respectively, compared with 10% overall). There is a concentration of A Level equivalent/ high school graduation qualifications here;
- The incidence of Level 4+ qualifications is overwhelmingly highest among those who left full-time education aged 19-22 (56%) or 23 and above (76%). Degrees/ degree level qualifications predominate here;
- Those leaving school at 14 or under, or at age 15, are by far the most likely to have a 'thin' qualification as their highest (64% and 61% respectively, compared with 40% overall).

Chart 4: Coded NQF level by age completed full-time education



Base: All respondents (4,379), Other as highest qualification

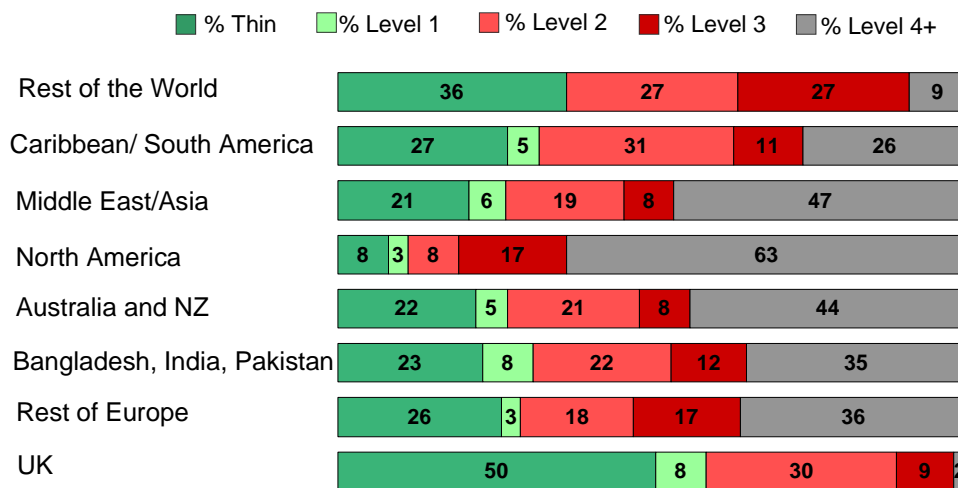
Source: MORI analysis of LFS, Spring 2004

As discussed, those providing 'Other' as their highest qualification are more likely than the population of the LFS overall to be from outside the UK. Among those whose highest qualification was 'Other', an examination by country of birth (coded into world regions) reveals the following:

- The distribution of Level 1 qualifications is fairly uniform across the regions;
- Level 2 qualifications are more common among people whose country of birth was the UK (30% vs. 26% overall);
- People from the rest of Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand are more likely than average to have a Level 3 qualification as their highest (17% compared with 10% overall). These tend to be A Level equivalents/ high school graduation certificates, etc;

- There is a very high incidence of Level 4+ qualifications among those born outside the UK. For instance, 63% of people born in North America, Australia and New Zealand have Level 4+ as their highest qualification; 44% of those born in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan; and 47% of those born in the Middle East and elsewhere in Asia. This is linked to the coding structure for foreign qualifications which collates all of these under the 'Other' code, even if the respondent has specified that they have a degree or postgraduate qualification, or equivalent. Most of the Level 4+ qualifications here were overseas degrees or postgraduate qualifications. In contrast, just 2% of people born in the UK have provided an 'Other' as their highest qualification which has been subsequently coded at Level 4+.
- Half the people born within the UK hold a qualification coded as 'thin' as their highest (50%), compared with 40% overall.

Chart 5: Coded NQF level by coded country of birth



Base: All respondents (4,379), Other as highest qualification

Source: MORI analysis of LFS, Spring 2004

Analysis of the age that people first came to the UK to live shows that 13% were aged under-18, with just 7% who came aged under-16. This indicates that the vast majority of those whose highest qualification is coded 'Other' finished compulsory schooling before coming to this country.

Patterns by ethnicity are linked to country of birth. The key points to note here are that those from a white ethnic background are more likely than others to have a qualification coded as 'thin', while those from all BME groups are more likely to have a qualification coded to NQF Level 4 and above.

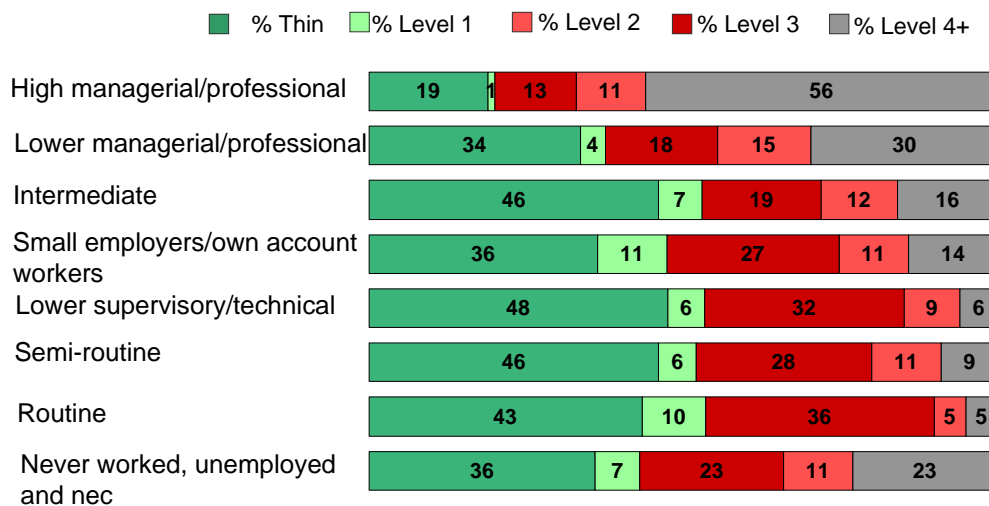
Looking at economic activity, the profile of those who provided 'Other' as their highest qualification is no different to that in the LFS as a whole, and there are no major differences according to NQF Level. However, there *are* differences by socio-economic classification:

- There is relative uniformity in the distribution of Level 1 qualifications, although – as we might expect – the incidence of these is very low

among those in higher and lower managerial and professional groups (1% and 4% respectively, compared with 7% overall);

- Level 2 qualifications are more common among those in lower supervisory and technical positions (32%) and routine occupations (36%);
- Again, Level 3 qualifications are distributed fairly evenly, although those in lower managerial and professional group are more likely than average to have this as their highest qualification (15% compared with 10%) and those in routine occupations are less likely than average (5%);
- As we might expect, Level 4+ qualifications predominate among those in higher and lower managerial and professional groups (56% and 30% respectively, compared with 17% overall). These qualifications are also more common among the group ‘never worked, unemployed and not elsewhere classified’ (23%);
- Thin qualifications are more common among those in lower supervisory/ technical (48%) and intermediate and semi-routine occupations (46% each). Those in higher managerial and professional positions are least likely to have provided a highest qualification that has been coded as thin (19%).

Chart 6: Coded NQF level by NS-SEC class (main job)



Base: All respondents (4,379), Other as highest qualification

Source: MORI analysis of LFS, Spring 2004

There are few differences in coded highest qualification by personal or proxy response. The key points here are:

- Proxy responses are more likely to have been coded into NQF level 2 (32% compared with 23% among personal interviews); and
- Personal responses are more likely to have been coded into the ‘thin’ qualification category (43% compared with 35%).

2.4 Conclusions and Recommendations from Phase One

The coding exercise raised several pointers towards both reducing the number of highest qualifications coded as 'Other' and fine-tuning the way that these qualifications are allocated across NQF levels.

Allocating 'Other' qualifications

Currently, highest qualifications that have been coded as 'Other' are apportioned across NQF Levels 1, 2 and 3 in the ratio 55: 35: 10. The coding exercise from Phase One suggests this formula needs to be updated. The implications of this are discussed in more detail in the Looking Ahead section of this report.

Recommendation 1: The formula to apportion Other qualifications across NQF levels should be updated.

Analysis by key demographic variables suggests that 'Other' qualifications should be allocated in different proportions according to age left full-time education and whether or not the respondent was born in the UK. This latter variable should only be taken into account if foreign qualifications continue to be left within the 'Other' group⁶. Data could be adjusted in line with patterns in age left full-time education (both retrospectively, for earlier years, and in future surveys). However, those still in full-time education whose highest qualification was recorded as 'Other' would need to be allocated across NQF levels using a different variable. Current age may be a possibility (for example, using the highest qualification profile of the age immediately below current age, i.e. the qualification level that person had attained prior to their current course). Another avenue for this group may be to allocate level according to qualification aim.

Recommendation 2: Other qualifications should be distributed across NQF levels depending on age left full-time education and potentially whether born in the UK.

Reducing the number of highest qualifications coded as 'Other'

The simplest way of reducing the number of highest qualifications coded as 'Other' is to back-code these to the existing NQF framework as a matter of course. However, we understand that time constraints in preparing the data from month to month rule this out. Instead, there are a number of issues that could be addressed by revising the precode list and improving the interviewer guidelines.

Precode list

It is clear that foreign qualifications form a substantial minority of the 'Other' highest qualifications. These are often broadly equivalent to the comparable qualification in the UK (e.g. Degree) and could be coded as such via the addition of new precodes (e.g. Qualifications gained overseas: degree level; A Level equivalent; school leaving/ matriculation certificate; other foreign qualifications).

⁶ The impact of coding foreign qualifications to NQF level is examined in Section 4

We would also recommend splitting out ‘Other professional qualifications’ and ‘Other vocational or work-related qualifications’ as this will enable more detailed disaggregating of the ‘Other’ group, in terms of applying NQF classifications. For example, if ‘Other professional qualifications’ is the only and therefore highest qualification provided, these could potentially be assigned to NQF Level 4+ (although, initially at least, the verbatims here would need to be checked to ensure this was the case).

Areas that predominantly consist of ‘thin’ qualifications, such as health and safety; food hygiene; secretarial qualifications, etc. could also be presented as distinct pre-codes within the ‘Other’ group. Allocation to NQF level could then be carried out in line with NISVQ data as per the coding strategy adopted here. However, the drawback of this approach would be that it would take longer for the interviewers to code responses at the point of interview.

Recommendation 3: Split out “other professional qualifications”, “other vocational or work related qualifications”, and “other foreign qualifications” as distinct precodes.

Interviewer briefing

Another recommendation would be to improve the briefing materials issued to interviewers, in order to help address the more commonly occurring problems. Most pointers relate to probes and follow-ups. For example, a recurrent feature of the verbatims listed was that occupation or subject was recorded, as opposed to qualification title or level. Examples are pharmacy; accountancy; computer programming; hairdresser; engineer; carpenter. In these cases, interviewers could be briefed to follow up and probe about which qualifications, if any, that particular job or subject entailed.

Another briefing point relates to membership of professional bodies. A small number of very specific verbatims were recorded such as member of the Royal College of Surgeons; Member of the Institute of Linguistics; Member of the Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists. These could be back-coded to the first precode in the existing list which includes ‘graduate membership of a professional institute’. It may be that interviewers need clearer guidelines on where to code this type of response.

Recommendation 4: Improve briefing and guidance given to interviewers in terms of qualification probes and follow-ups.

3. Phase Two: Understanding and Reporting of Qualifications

There is evidence that the current LFS under-reports the achievement of lower level qualifications, particularly among older respondents. Various cognitive and linguistic reasons have been documented for this under-reporting, including respondents getting the name of the qualification wrong, not recognising the name/ category of the qualification, forgetting that they have the qualification, and disregarding or discounting qualifications that they have⁷.

The qualitative phase of this research explored the extent to which this was the case when people answer the current LFS qualifications question, what factors influence this, and how improvements can be made.

3.1 Methodology

In total, 39 face-to-face interviews were conducted by MORI researchers between 9th May and 2nd June. Interviews took place in respondents' homes. Each interview lasted approximately 45-60 minutes and was tape-recorded with the agreement of the interviewee. Respondents were paid £25 as a thank you for agreeing to participate in the research.

The interviews were conducted in two stages: 24 interviews between the 9th and the 24th May, and 15 between the 1st and 2nd of June. Between these stages, the topic guide was revised to hone the qualifications question and cognitively test the effect of the changes that were made.

Participants were recruited face-to-face, with a fresh group recruited for each stage. Recruitment took place in five areas according to quotas based on gender, age, social class, work status and broad occupational classification. As one of the objectives was to investigate possible under-reporting by people who hold lower-level qualifications, qualifications level was also determined at this stage, using the standard LFS question.

This approach may have prompted some respondents to spend time thinking about their learning experiences and qualifications prior to the interview, and should be borne in mind when interpreting the research findings.

A topic guide was used by the interviewer as a prompt to explore respondents' cognitive processes relating to specific survey questions as well as to draw out respondents' experiences of, and attitudes towards, learning and qualifications in general. Topic guides have been included in the appendices.

⁷ Campanelli, P and Channell, J. 1996. *The Conceptualisation of Qualifications by Individuals RS9*. London: DfEE.

3.2 Asking Questions about Qualifications

The first group of respondents were asked to give a ‘top of mind’ response to the following LFS question. Stage One respondents were not shown an accompanying list of qualifications to choose from, nor did the interviewer read out any example qualifications.

Q1: “What qualifications do you have, starting with the highest?”

Stage Two respondents were asked similarly to give a ‘top of mind’ response, this time for two slightly different survey questions. Standard guidance (also shown below) was given by the researchers about which learning environments to consider.

The first question was from the LFS (to identify whether the respondent held *any* qualifications), the second was a variation on the LFS ‘highest qualification’ question, in order to find out which qualifications they had:

“I would now like to ask you about education and work-related training. Please think about ALL the qualifications you have ever gained, even if it was a long time ago, or they are not relevant to you now.

Q1: Do you have any qualifications...”

...from school

...from college or university

...connected with work

...from government schemes

...from a Trade/ Modern Apprenticeship

...from having been educated at home, when you were of school age?

...no qualifications

...don’t know.

IF HAS QUALIFICATIONS

Q2: “What qualifications do you have?” Please tell us about ALL the qualifications you have ever gained from school, college, university, work, any Apprenticeships or government schemes, or from studying at home.

SPLIT SAMPLE (50:50) WITH:

Q2: “What qualifications do you have?” Please tell us about ALL the qualifications you have ever gained from studying at home, any Apprenticeships or government schemes, work, or from school, college, or university.

TO EXPLORE WHETHER ORDERING OF LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IMPACTS ON RESPONSES

A problem encountered with the wording at the second stage involved respondents automatically listing all of their qualifications at the initial question on whether they had *any* qualifications (because they had been asked to think about all of the qualifications that they had ever gained) rather than giving the *Yes/No* answer as required. This is likely to be an effect of the interview mode. In a social survey such as the LFS, the respondent would be trained into providing brief perfunctory answers rather than to expand and probe – whereas in this research, respondents were conscious upfront that the sole focus of the interview would be on qualifications and learning.

A summary of the main findings from the qualitative phase of the research is included below.

3.3 Academic and Vocational Qualifications

When asked to report their qualifications starting with the highest, respondents commonly thought about qualifications gained at school or college, and to a lesser extent about those obtained through their work environment.

On further probing, people tended to be more familiar with the term ‘academic’ than they were with the term ‘vocational’, although most recognised and could provide examples of professional qualifications or apprenticeships.

Academic qualifications were more familiar and were generally regarded as exams completed while at school or university. They could be defined as something theoretical, which involves sitting down to learn, rather than learning by doing. They were considered to be a measure of an individual’s academic, rather than practical intelligence.

I don't like academic, I prefer more practical skills because an academic skill doesn't set you up for life or for a job. Basically, unless you're gonna be a scientist, you don't need chemistry, and things like that, stuff that's all on paper and it don't actually teach you anything unless you're going down that road. You're not going to walk down the road blurting out the periodic table

SN102

People who have academic qualifications have jobs where they sit around pushing pens

SN104

Qualifications were also linked to perceptions of occupational and earnings ‘hierarchy’, for example with degrees seen as affording higher social status/respect and better wages.

Yeah there is a hierarchy, it [a degree] does open doors and it does allow people to make earnings far beyond their abilities a lot of the time but they had an academic career and I think it's a bit of luck there, I'm not bitter about it but I do know in other countries that if you are a tradesman you are actually regarded as, you know respected...

SN 103

The term 'vocational qualification' however, appeared to be unclear to many respondents - some had heard of the phrase and had a basic understanding of what vocational qualifications were, but could not convey the term coherently:

I mean you've got NVQs and they go up to Level five and more and GNVQs go up. I've heard of it [vocational qualifications] but never really understood quite what it actually means.

SN 204

Respondents sometimes discounted qualifications gained through work *even if they had completed an assessment and/or gained a certificate*. For example, a respondent who had completed British Airways Grades 1, 2, 3 in Airline Procedures did not mention these specifically when asked to report what qualifications she held.

There was some evidence that those who gained no qualifications from their formal school education, but who had later completed qualifications via work, were a little confused about whether these 'counted' as qualifications or not.

Interviewer: What qualifications do you have, starting with the highest?

Respondent: None. I've got one CITB scaffolding and that is it. I left school without no qualifications.

SN103

At the second interview stage, the aim was to rectify these misunderstandings, and so respondents were given specific guidance regarding the environments in which a qualification could be gained. It seemed that respondents picked up mostly on the terms 'education' and 'work related training'.

It's very easy to assume that the only qualifications you ever get are at school

SN203

For those who were unfamiliar with the term 'vocational qualification', it became clearer to them when rephrased as 'work related qualification'. This description prompted respondents to suggest various qualifications that facilitate employment, indicating awareness of the system by which skills are needed to progress in the workplace, although the terminology was outside their understanding.

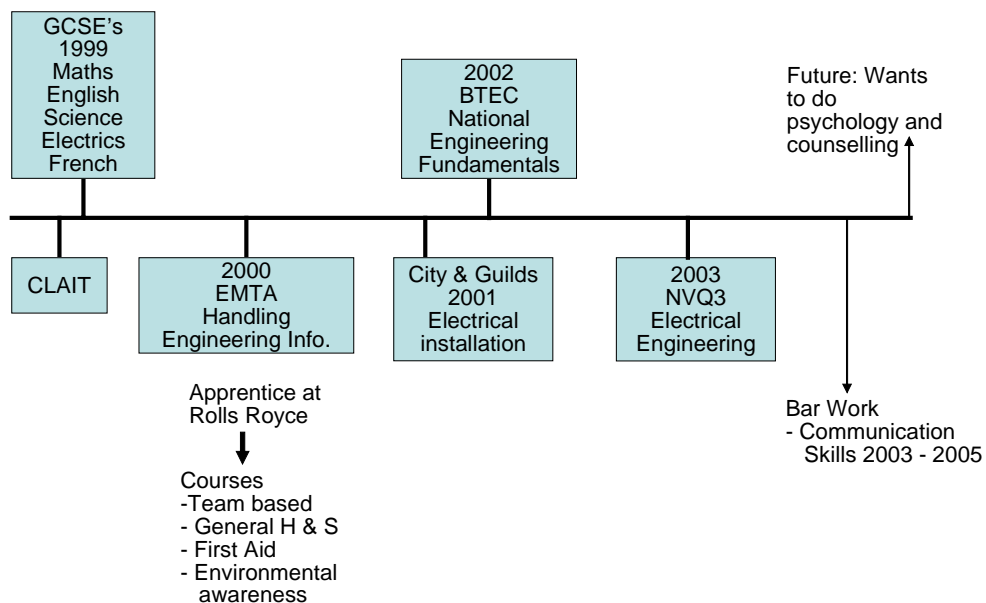
This indicates that people were not simply discounting qualifications because they think that they are at a lower level, but rather they are unsure about whether they count as a qualification if they are gained outside of the formal learning environment.

3.4 Qualifications vs. Learning Experience

Respondents often do not report or recognise qualifications that they have gained through various life experiences.

During the interviews, participants were asked to plot a timeline of their learning experience and achievements and map onto it the skills and qualifications that they have gained throughout the course of their lives (example below). The timeline encouraged respondents to think in-depth about their life experiences, and link personal, educational and occupational aspects together. This worked as an effective reference tool, and its chronological structure often led respondents to recall additional skills they had learned or courses they had attended, which had initially been overlooked.

Female respondent – NQF Level 3



Even without the use of a timeline, many respondents put their qualifications into chronological order, starting with school. Even respondents, who left school without qualifications, began with the school environment before tracing their steps forward. Respondents indicated that the chronological technique helped them to recall and review their learning experiences.

I ranked them in time that I've done them. I always start from the beginning so I go back and think, when was the first time I did formal qualifications?

SN 207

The timeline helped one respondent to recall exams he had taken prior to GCSEs; although he was still unsure whether they *counted* as a qualification:

Interviewer: So if we go back to the start, I suppose your GCSEs must have been the first qualifications you did. Is that right?

R: Yeah. I would have thought so yeah. I mean it depends, as a child I used to do drama exams and got graded; I suppose like with music you get grades don't you? But I don't know whether you would count them.

SN 120

He had not mentioned these exams earlier in the interview when the LFS question was originally asked. The timeline helped to evoke thoughts *beyond* academic qualifications by extending the question to encompass *all* achievements gained so far through school/college, at work, as well as in leisure time.

Another respondent discounted his Power Boat Handling Certificate NVQ level 2, which he had completed just three years earlier. He considered the course to be something accomplished in his spare time and so did not count it as a qualification due to the fact it was not completed within school or college.

Interviewer: Have you got any qualifications?

Respondent: No. Only ones that I took up by myself, like, NVQs and powerboat certificates and that sort of thing

SN214

Short courses completed at work were also frequently forgotten before the timeline stage of the interview, which delved deeper into the process of working life. Guidance asking for *all qualifications ever gained* (including a reference to those gained at work or in leisure/ own-time activity) was therefore incorporated into the revised questionnaire, to help address this.

3.5 Relevance of Qualifications

Respondents may think only about qualifications and skills that they use currently/regularly or that they have gained recently.

As we have already highlighted; some respondents constructed virtual qualification hierarchies or shortlists. This technique involved respondents sifting mentally through the qualifications they perceived they held, making judgements about the value and the relevance of these qualifications and reporting only a final shortlist.

I only told you ones that I thought that would be recognised. I've got others, I've got RSA in typing and such like but they're not ones that stay in my mind because they're basically not ones I use

The value of a qualification was defined by people in a variety of ways:

- how *useful* it could be (for gaining employment or promotion),
- how *relevant* the qualification was (such as whether they use their skills on a day to day basis); and
- how *important* it was (according to the personal effort put in to achieve the qualification).

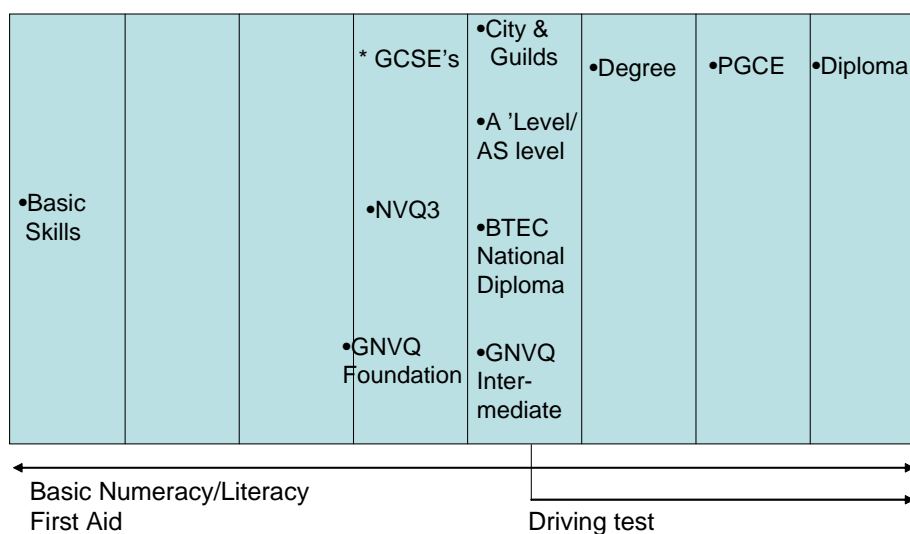
For some people, the relevance of a qualification indicates how they might rank it; so if they regularly use the skills they learnt, the qualification is viewed as highly valuable. For example, someone with a Corgi Engineering certificate who used their practical skills on a daily basis regarded the certificate to be equivalent to Level 3 on the NQF scale, ahead of A Levels.

3.6 Ambiguity Surrounding Qualifications Frames of Reference

There is a degree of ambiguity surrounding the frames of reference that respondents use to think and talk about qualifications. In an absence of understanding about the NQF, respondents make decisions according to their own frames of reference.

A 'qualifications spectrum' was used to determine the value that respondents place on their own qualifications in comparison to other existing qualifications. The respondents were told that the spectrum indicated 'progression', with the left hand side representing the beginning of the spectrum and the right hand side representing the end. They were asked to place their own qualifications on the spectrum at the level they thought most applicable, as well as a range of other common qualifications which they did not have. An example is shown in the chart below.

Female respondent – NQF Level 4



Findings showed that respondents lack general awareness of how qualifications are structured, what qualifications are available and where these are situated within the qualifications framework. Although all respondents were able to complete the qualifications spectrum task, this did not necessarily resemble the relationships between qualifications as set out in the National Qualifications Framework.

Respondents do not always have the tools available in order to fully understand questions about qualifications. For example, the notion that qualifications are part of a National Qualifications Framework, within which they are assigned a distinct level to indicate progression, is not a concept that respondents are universally familiar with. Without this contextual information, respondents make judgements about the value of qualifications (both their own and also qualifications more generally) relating to what they think is personally most important, useful or relevant as well as using varying degrees of guesswork. Therefore, respondents who understood the intended meaning of the term *'highest qualification'* (that this referred to the highest qualification that they had personally achieved) gave answers based on different frames of reference.

In particular, notions of hierarchy were influenced by the personal importance that respondents assigned to a qualification they had achieved.

It's [City & Guilds Craft in Metalwork] the most important thing to me...being a goldsmith was my life, and I didn't know anything else.

SN 206

Respondents also used several identifiable cognitive mechanisms in order to make a decision about which of their qualifications was the highest. Common mechanisms employed by respondents to define their reference framework included chronological ordering; reviewing recent qualifications gained or

qualifications that they currently use (particularly in their job); and constructing virtual qualification hierarchies or qualification shortlists.

Understanding of the term 'qualification'

There were varying interpretations of the term 'qualification', with two main understandings prevalent. The first reflected a strong consensus that qualifications were an indication that you have gained a particular skill or set of skills, or that you have met set goals and criteria within a particular field. As such, a qualification is something for which you have received a *certificate*.

A qualification is like a certificate saying you have gained this skill, or you have done enough work to qualify to finish this course, you have got to the end of this course

SN 208

It's a target that you set out to achieve and it's a certificate, you get presented with a certificate which is recognised by employers, simple as that really.

SN 205

The second understanding was that a qualification was something that equipped you to do a particular job or to enter a particular occupation.

Something you're qualified to do, something you're skilled at. You've passed a test and know what you're doing

SN 210

Something to do with work. Something you qualify for - You qualify to do a certain job or whatever it is you want to do.

SN 115

Somebody who has studied and worked hard to get a qualification for a particular job they want to go for.

SN 106

These understandings were held among people who had attained both lower level and higher level qualifications (whether academic, vocational or professional) and who had reported both positive and negative learning experiences.

3.7 Conclusions and Recommendations from Phase Two

The research found that, although some respondents answered the LFS question accurately, others can misreport, over-report and under-report the qualifications that they hold, due to a number of factors:

Comprehension

Respondents misunderstand concepts and terms within the question or misunderstand the question as a whole. The terms 'qualifications' and 'highest'

could be interpreted differently according to different people's terms of reference.

Judgment

Respondents make active decisions not to include qualifications that they hold or they do not recognise these achievements as qualifications. This is sometimes because of the learning environments where they were achieved – people tend to associate qualifications with school or college, rather than work or leisure – and sometimes because people discount qualifications that are not relevant to them now or they have never used.

Recall

Respondents do not remember all of the qualifications they have acquired, in particular if they are not currently using them, or if they have done lots of different qualifications.

Recognition/Awareness

Respondents lack awareness of how qualifications are structured, what qualifications are available, and where these are situated within the qualifications framework.

Awareness of qualifications in general

Respondents have patchy and imprecise awareness about qualifications in general and even about their own qualifications and how these sit within the NQF. This is important not just from a policy perspective but in light of the current LFS question which asks respondents to report their qualifications starting with the highest (according to the NQF). For this reason, clear and concise information on the NQF and progression routes between qualifications should be made available to everybody, as people of all ages and from various backgrounds are potential students, who educational bodies should be targeting. Another reason to improve information about the NQF is that parents can have a very patchy understanding of the current framework, which is not conducive to them offering informed advice to their children. The work currently being done by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) on the Framework of Achievement should help with this; its aim being to create a simplified framework with standardised qualification titles.

There are six key recommendations resulting from this stage of the research:

Terminology

The term 'starting with the highest' was found to be problematic as it introduces an ordering which is not logical to everyone. People tend to think chronologically rather than hierarchically, and in addition they may not have sufficient understanding of the NQF to be able to recognise which qualification is their highest anyway. We recommend removing the term 'starting with the highest' from the question asking people to report their qualifications.

Recommendation 5: Remove the term "starting with the highest".

Frames of reference

There is a degree of ambiguity surrounding the frames of reference that respondents use to think and talk about qualifications. To minimise this, clearer guidance needs to be included within the survey question so that there is less scope for ambiguity.

In an absence of understanding about the NQF, respondents make decisions according to their own personal frames of reference, and so guidance should clearly relate to all possible learning environments and state which qualifications should be considered.

Recommendation 6: Clarify the learning environments and which qualifications should be considered by encouraging people to report all qualifications they have.

Perceived relevance of qualifications

Respondents may think only about qualifications and skills that they use currently/regularly or that they have gained recently. It is therefore important to retain guidance to respondents that they should report all qualifications not just those that they have recently gained or that they use currently/most regularly.

Recommendation 7: Ensure guidance is clear that respondents should report ALL qualifications they have ever gained.

Clarity of guidance

The guidance provided to respondents in the question wording employed during the qualitative phase (revised question, Stage 2) proved useful but overly extensive, meaning that respondents were not always able to pick up all the salient points. As a result, this guidance should be reviewed and amended to make it more concise, in the questions used for Phase 3.

Recommendation 8: Condense revised question guidance to respondents where possible.

Omission of leisure based qualifications

Respondents often do not report or recognise qualifications that they have gained through leisure activities / in their spare time. Guidance should include an explicit reference to leisure/own time activities to encourage respondents to recall and report any qualifications associated with these types of activity. Alternatively, this could be included as a separate setting within the qualifications question.,

Recommendation 9: Explicitly prompt respondents to think about qualifications associated with leisure/spare time activities.

Under-reporting of qualifications

Some respondents who originally report that they have no qualifications, do in fact have them. This oversight could be avoided through asking anyone saying

'no qualifications' explicit follow-up questions about taught and self-taught courses, which may help to capture any respondents who in fact do have some form of qualification.

Recommendation 10: Prompt respondents who say they have no qualifications about whether they have completed any taught/self-taught courses.

4. Phase Three: Testing New Questions

The third phase of the research was designed to test the newly refined qualifications questions developed in Phase Two. This section begins with a review of the revised questions which were developed by MORI.

We then analyse the results of the research, in particular focusing on National Qualification Framework (NQF) levels attained and the demographic profiles associated with each level, comparing the findings with those of the latest available LFS data (Autumn 2005).

4.1 Methodology

A telephone survey of 1,000 working age adults in England was undertaken in August and September 2005. The sample was generated using Random Digit Dialling (RDD)⁸ and quotas on ageband, gender, work status and ethnicity were set according to the 2001 Census returns for England, in order to ensure that the survey was as close to the population profile as possible. Further technical details including a sample profile can be found in the Appendices at the end of this report.

In addition, weighting was applied to correct for small discrepancies between the quota targets and the achieved interviews. Further weighting was also applied by Standard Occupational Classification (based on the working age population in England according to the LFS). This was done to ensure that any differences in reported qualifications due to differences between the sample profile and the LFS profile were minimised.

Only statistically significant differences have been highlighted during the subsequent analysis in this report.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to mirror many of the qualifications questions on the LFS, with some refinements designed to try to improve the accuracy of reported qualifications. As well as standard demographic questions, respondents were asked whether they had any qualifications from a variety of sources, and then – if they said that they did have qualifications – which ones they had. A series of more detailed questions was then asked about specific numbers, grades and levels of these qualifications.

⁸ RDD involves selecting initial samples from listed residential records (selecting by specific regions where required) to produce a sample representative of the geographic area(s) under study. The last 2 digits of the listed telephone number are randomised to produce the RDD sample. This is screened to remove any known business or TPS registered numbers which are replaced through a repetition of the randomisation process.

The main differences between the LFS qualifications questions and the revised questions used in this survey are as follows:

Introduction

The LFS introduces the education and training section with *'I would now like to ask you about education and work-related training.'* In the Phase 3 survey, this was replaced with *'I would now like to ask you about education, learning and training.'* The aim of this was to encourage respondents to think about a broader spectrum of qualifications than those gained from education (which has connotations of school/ college/ university) and work.

Guidance

In the LFS, respondents are asked whether they have any qualifications from a variety of settings without guidance on what types of qualification to consider (or discount). In our survey, guidance was provided to respondents to *'think about all qualifications you have ever gained, even if it was a long time ago, or even if you feel they are not relevant to you now.'* This was to address respondents' inclination (reported in Phase Two) to focus on those qualifications that are most recent and/ or most relevant to their current situation.

Settings

The LFS then asks respondents to report whether they have any qualifications gained from a range of settings – this approach was replicated in the MORI survey, with each setting read out as a separate component of the question.

The chart below shows each version of the question on 'any qualifications'.

LFS Question:

Do you have any qualifications...

- From school, college or university?
- Connected with work?
- From government schemes?
- From a Modern Apprenticeship?
- From having been educated at home, when you were of school age?
- No qualifications
- Don't know

Revised Question (MORI):

Do you have any qualifications...

- From school?
- From college or university?
- From studying at home when you were a child?
- None of these

- Connected with work?
- From a government training scheme?
- From a recognised Trade/ Modern Apprenticeship?
- None of these

- From studying at home in your own time?
- Connected with any personal interests or things you like doing in your spare time?
- None of these

The key differences in the revised MORI question were:

- The settings covered in the question were re-grouped to cover qualifications attained in traditional educational settings; qualifications connected with work, training, or skills development through a recognised apprenticeship; and finally, qualifications gained from studying at home or connected with personal interests.
- School was split out from college/ university as the qualitative research found that some people discount school-based qualifications if they were at a perceived low level of attainment, or deem them as irrelevant if they are not or have never been 'used'. It was felt that separating school-based qualifications from college/university would help to address any such perceptions by encouraging people to think of school as a stand-alone category not linked to other settings perceived as being primarily 'academic' or at a higher level.

Which qualifications?

If respondents say they do have a qualification, they are then asked which one(s) they have. The LFS question asks *'Which qualifications do (you think) you have, starting with the highest qualification?'* The qualitative research undertaken in Phase 2 found that the term 'starting with the highest' was particularly problematic for some respondents, as many think chronologically about their qualifications rather than hierarchically. In addition, some respondents have scant knowledge about the NQF and how qualifications relate to each other, so they interpret 'highest' according to their own frames of reference. In this survey, 'starting with the highest' was removed and respondents were simply asked 'Which qualifications do you have?' This was followed up by further guidance to *'report all qualifications you have ever gained from school, college, university, work, apprenticeships or government schemes, or from studying at home or in your own time'*.

Check question

This was followed up by a question checking that the respondent had mentioned all their qualifications. If they had not, they were asked to report those that had not been mentioned initially.

Pre-code qualifications list

Finally, the pre-code list of qualifications was updated to include more recent qualifications such as GCSEs in vocational subjects and La A Levels. Currently in the LFS, these qualifications are not separately identified (Are A Levels are coded as A Levels, and Vocational GCSEs are coded as GCSEs).

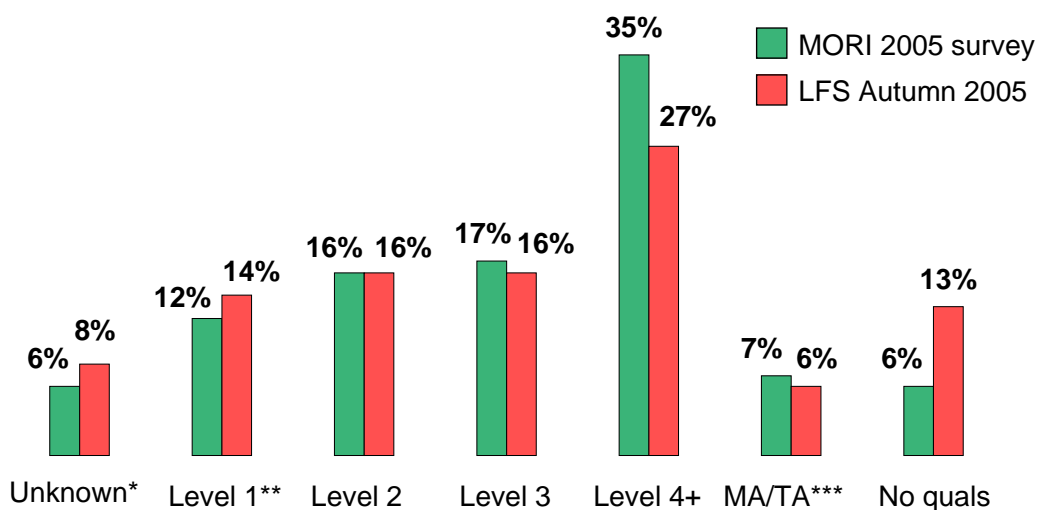
Drawing on the findings from Phase One, 'Other qualifications' were split into four categories: Other professional qualifications; Other vocational/ work-related qualifications; Other foreign qualifications; and Other. Anyone providing any of these 'Other' qualifications was asked to describe them in full. The results of this development are outlined later in this Chapter.

4.2 NQF Profile Obtained in the Phase 3 Survey

The chart below shows the distribution of the highest qualification levels held by the 1,010 respondents whom MORI interviewed compared with data from the Autumn 2005 LFS. LFS data is based on responses from the working age population in England only, and is based on all such responses (personal *and* proxy). Analysis shows only marginal differences in NQF levels between these two groups, therefore it was decided to base comparisons on all LFS responses, not just personal ones.

In terms of highest NQF level held, the MORI survey shows significantly more people who say they have Level 4+ qualifications (35% compared with 27% in the LFS); and correspondingly a significantly lower proportion reporting no qualifications at all (6% compared with 13% in the LFS). There is also a difference in the unknown/ other group, part of which is due to 'Other' foreign qualifications recorded in Phase 3 having been reassigned to a NQF level.

Chart 7: Highest NQF level MORI 2005 survey vs. LFS Autumn 05



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005
62,937 members of the working age general public in England, LFS Autumn2005

Source: MORI and MORI analysis of LFS, Autumn 05

* "Other qualifications" figure used from LFS

** "Below Level 2" figure used from LFS

*** "Modern Apprenticeships" figure used from LFS

Overall, 94% of respondents report holding a qualification of some sort, while six percent report holding none. Analysis by key demographic variables show that those with no qualifications are more likely to:

- be aged 45-54 and 60-64, and, linked to this;

- have left full time education aged 15 or younger and;
- if working or have ever worked, to have done so as Process, Plant and Machine Operatives or in Elementary Occupations and;
- be currently not working or to have never worked.

4.3 Qualifications Sources

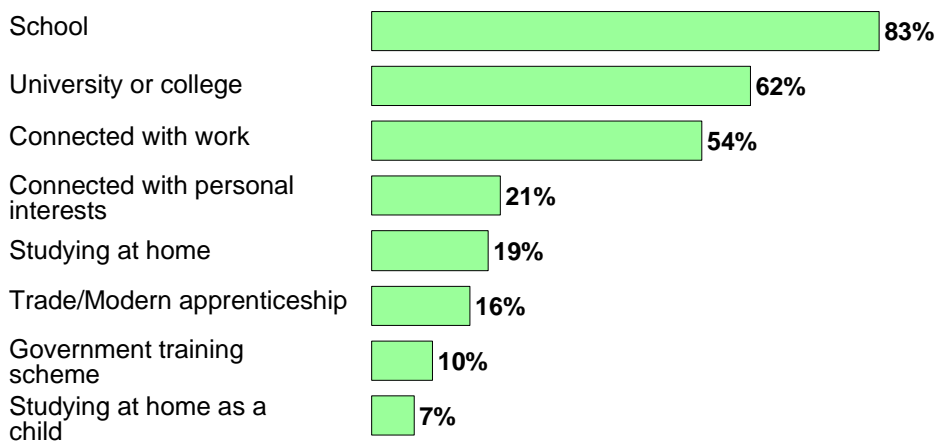
Respondents were asked whether they had any qualifications from a variety of settings. It should be noted that a) these settings are *not* mutually exclusive and b) setting cannot be linked to specific qualifications or Levels achieved because of how the question was asked.

The vast majority of respondents (83%) say they have qualifications *from school*. Younger respondents aged 16-44 are more likely to say they have gained a qualification from school, as well as those working in Professional occupations, Associate Professional and Technical occupations, as Managers and Senior Officials and in Administrative and Secretarial occupations.

The majority of respondents (62%) also say they hold qualifications *from university or college*. These people are also more likely to hold Level 4+ qualifications as their highest (55% compared with 35% overall). Those aged 25 or older are more likely to report having a qualification from university or college, which is expected given the ages at which qualifications from such institutions are traditionally gained.

Those working in Professional occupations, Associate Professional and Technical occupations or as Managers and Senior Officials are more likely to hold qualifications from university or college, again in line with expectations due to the nature of these occupational groups. Those in work (either full or part-time) are also more likely to hold qualifications from these sources.

Chart 8: Sources of qualifications



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005

Source: MORI

More than half (54%) of respondents say they hold qualifications *connected with work*. Men are more likely to report that they hold qualifications associated with work, as well as those aged 25 or older and those from a white ethnic background. As well as the managerial and professional occupational groups, those working in Skilled Trades are also more likely to report such qualifications. Also as expected, those currently working (full or part-time) are more likely to report that they hold qualifications from work.

A fifth (21%) of respondents report qualifications *connected with any personal interests or things they like doing in their spare time*. Those working in Professional occupations are more likely to hold qualifications from these sources.

A fifth (19%) also report qualifications as a result of *studying at home in their own time*. Those aged 35 or older and those from a white ethnic background are more likely to have gained a qualification as a result of studying at home in their own time. Again, the higher occupational groups, and those currently working, are more likely to report having qualifications from this source.

These two sources are particularly interesting because they cover learning that is not specifically asked about in the LFS. The breakdowns by NQF Level shown in the table below indicate that those who claim to have qualifications from these sources are more likely than average to hold NQF Level 4+ qualifications.

Highest NQF level by sources of qualifications

	<i>Connected with personal interests (%)</i>	<i>Studying at home in their own time (%)</i>
<i>Base: All respondents saying they have gained a qualification from that source</i>	<i>(208)</i>	<i>(69)</i>
Unknown	5	4
Level 1	11	9
Level 2	10	14
Level 3	14	14
Level 4+	49	52
MA/TA	9	7

Source: MORI

Sixteen percent of people report holding qualifications from *a recognised Trade or Modern Apprenticeship*. These respondents are more likely than average to record a Level 3 qualification as their highest (24% compared with 17% overall). Unsurprisingly, it is also six times more likely that their highest qualification is a Modern or Trade Apprenticeship (43% compared with 7% overall).

Men, those aged 35 or older, those working full-time and those from a white ethnic background are more likely to report they hold a recognised Trade or

Modern Apprenticeship. The same applies for those working in Skilled Trades and as Process, Plant and Machine Operatives, which is in line with expectations given the nature of these types of occupations.

One in ten respondents (10%) say they have qualifications from a *government training scheme*. They are more likely to report holding a Level 3 qualification (28% compared with 17% overall) or a Modern or Trade Apprenticeship (14% compared with 7% overall) as their highest. Respondents working in Skilled Trades and those working full-time are more likely to report qualifications from this source.

Finally, seven percent report holding qualifications as a result of *studying at home when they were a child*. Those working in Professional occupations are more likely than average to report holding a qualification as a result of studying at home when they were a child.

Level 4+ qualifications are highest among people with qualifications from any sources *except* those who say they have gained qualifications from Modern/ Trade Apprenticeships or from government schemes.

Looking at figures from the Spring 2005 LFS, the proportions saying they have qualifications from these different sources are somewhat different. Four-fifths (80%) of respondents say they have qualifications from school, college, or university. Although it is not possible to disaggregate school from college/ university in the LFS, we know that more people in the MORI survey report qualifications from school (83%) than from these three sources combined in the LFS.

In the LFS, two-fifths (41%) say they have qualifications connected with work, compared with more than half in the MORI survey (54%). Small proportions say they have qualifications from government schemes (3%), Modern Apprenticeships⁹ (1%) or from studying at home while of school age (*%) – all of which appear more prevalent in the MORI survey. Including Trade with Modern Apprenticeships does appear to encourage more people to report qualifications here, as 16% reported they had qualifications from this source in the MORI survey.

4.4 Demographic Analysis by NQF Level

Below is a detailed analysis of the demographic profile of the respondents interviewed in Phase Three. It breaks down the highest NQF levels reported by:

- Gender;
- Age;
- Age left full-time education;

⁹ Note, LFS does not include the phrase 'Trade'

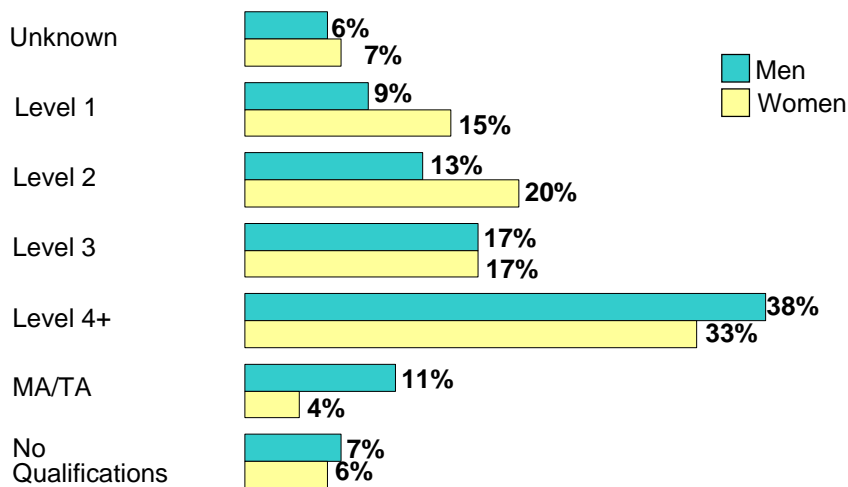
- Ethnicity;
- Whether born in or outside the UK;
- Work status and;
- Occupation.

Gender

Analysis of highest qualification level by gender shows that women are more likely to hold a highest qualification at Level 2 and at Level 1, while men are more than twice as likely to hold a Modern or Trade Apprenticeship as their highest qualification. They are also more likely than women to hold qualifications at Level 4+.

This general pattern is consistent with that shown in the LFS, although the actual distribution of highest qualifications levels is different (as discussed earlier). A key difference lies in the proportions saying they have a Level 4+ qualification: equal proportions of men and women in the LFS (27% each), but significantly more men in the MORI survey (38% compared with 33%).

Chart 9: Highest NQF level broken down by gender



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005

Source: MORI

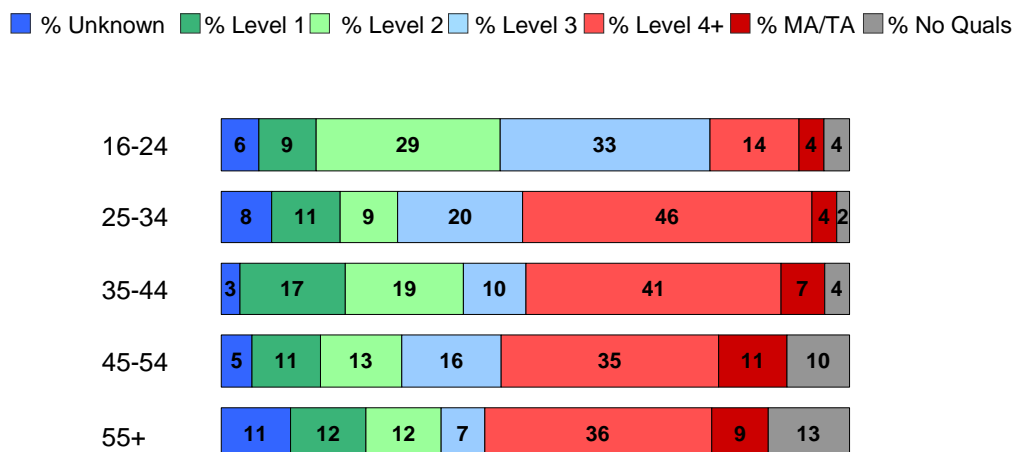
Age and age left full-time education

The chart below shows the distribution of highest qualification levels by age. Key points to note are:

- Level 1 highest qualifications are most likely to be reported by 35-44 year olds (17% compared with 12% overall). This is in line with the LFS where 22% of this age group report Level 1 as their highest qualification;

- Level 2 qualifications are most common among 16-24 year olds (29% compared with 16% overall). The same holds true for qualifications at Level 3 (33% of 16-24 year olds compared with 17% overall). This is understandable given the traditional age at which qualifications such as GCSEs and A Levels are taken, and is in line with the pattern found in the LFS. A key point to note here is that 16-24 year olds in this survey are more likely to report Level 3 qualifications as their highest, than in the LFS (33% compared with 28%);
- Level 4+ qualifications are most frequently reported as the highest by those aged 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54 (46%, 41%, and 35% respectively, compared with 35% overall). Comparing the Phase 3 survey to the LFS, those aged 55 years and over are much more likely to report a highest qualification at Level 4+ (36% compared with 27% in the LFS). Unsurprisingly, those aged 16-24 are less likely than respondents overall to hold a Level 4+ qualification as their highest (14% compared with 35% overall);
- Trade or Modern Apprenticeships are most commonly held as the highest qualification by those aged 45-54 and 60-64 (11% and 16% respectively, compared with 7% overall);
- Older people aged 55 and over are twice as likely as the average to report holding no qualifications (13% compared with 6% overall). This compares with 23% in the LFS. Just one in ten 45-54 year olds report having no qualifications in the Phase 3 survey, compared with 16% in the LFS;
- Those aged 55 and over are more likely than average to have an unknown NQF level (11% compared with 6% overall) – similar to the pattern shown in the LFS.

Chart 10: Highest NQF level by age



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005

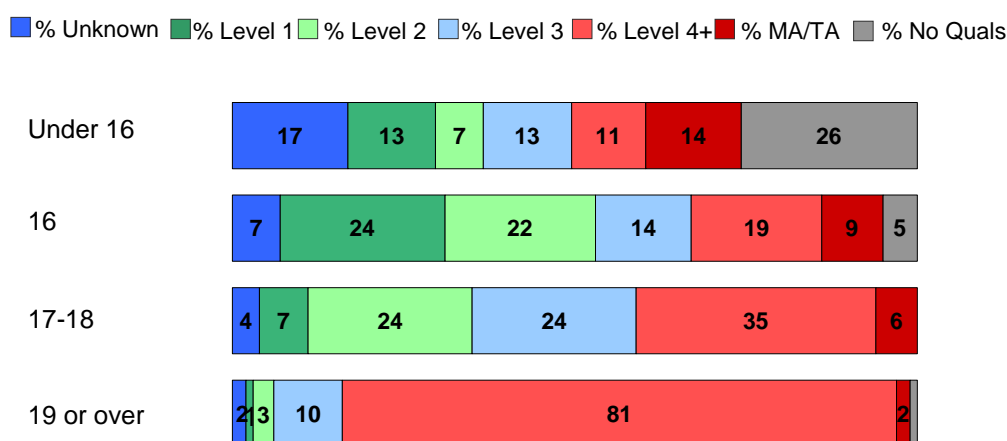
Source: MORI

Looking at the age respondents reported leaving full-time education, there are several statistically significant differences. On the whole, the later people leave full-time education, the higher the level of qualification they report. This is in line with what we would expect given the links between qualifications and the traditional ages at which they are taken:

- Respondents who left full-time education aged 16 are twice as likely to report their highest qualification at Level 1 (24% compared with 12% overall);
- Those who left aged 16 or 17-18 are more likely than average to report their highest qualification as being at Level 2 (22% and 24% compared with 16% overall). This makes sense given that most Level 2 qualifications (such as O Levels or GCSEs) are traditionally taken at the age of 16, and is in line with the LFS;
- Respondents who left full-time education aged 17 or 18 are more likely to report their highest qualification as being at Level 3 than average (24% compared with 16% overall). This is in line with the LFS and again is understandable given that Level 3 qualifications such as A Levels are conventionally taken at the age of 18;
- Those who left full-time education aged 19 or older are twice as likely to report their highest qualification at Level 4 or above (81% compared with 35% overall). Unsurprisingly, those who left full-time education aged 16 or younger are less likely than average to report holding a Level 4+ qualification (11% of those who left before they were 16 and 19% of those who left aged 16 compared with 35% overall). The fact that the proportion who report a Level 4+ qualification at all is so high, given their early school leaving age, may be explained by these people having gained a professional or degree level qualification at a later stage in their lives;

- Respondents who left before they were 16 are twice as likely as the average to hold a Modern or Trade Apprenticeship as their highest qualification (14% compared with 7% overall) – in line with the LFS;
- Respondents who left full-time education before they turned 16 are four times more likely than average to report no qualifications (26% compared with 6% overall). Again, the pattern here is in line with the LFS, although the actual proportion of those who left before 16 who report no qualification is much lower in the Phase 3 survey (it compares with 40% in the LFS);
- Those who left aged 15 or younger are more likely than average to have an unknown NQF level (17% compared with 6% overall).

Chart 11: Highest NQF level broken down by age left full-time education



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005

Source: MORI

Ethnicity and whether born in or outside the UK

Analysis of highest level of qualification by ethnicity reveals that those from BME groups are less likely than average to hold Modern/Trade Apprenticeships as their highest qualification (2% compared with 8% overall). There are no other statistically significant differences.

Analysis by whether respondents were born in or outside the UK reveals that those born overseas are more likely than average to hold Level 4+ qualifications as their highest (51% compared with 35% overall). Linked to this, almost half of those born overseas left full-time education aged 19 or older (45%) compared with just a fifth of those born in the UK (22%).

Looking at whether respondents were born in the UK or overseas and highest NQF level, a key point to note is that Level 4+ qualifications are more likely to be reported as the highest by those born overseas in the Phase 3 survey (51%) than in the LFS Spring 2005 survey (27%). Linked to this, those born overseas are also less likely to have an Unknown NQF level in the Phase 3 survey (9%)

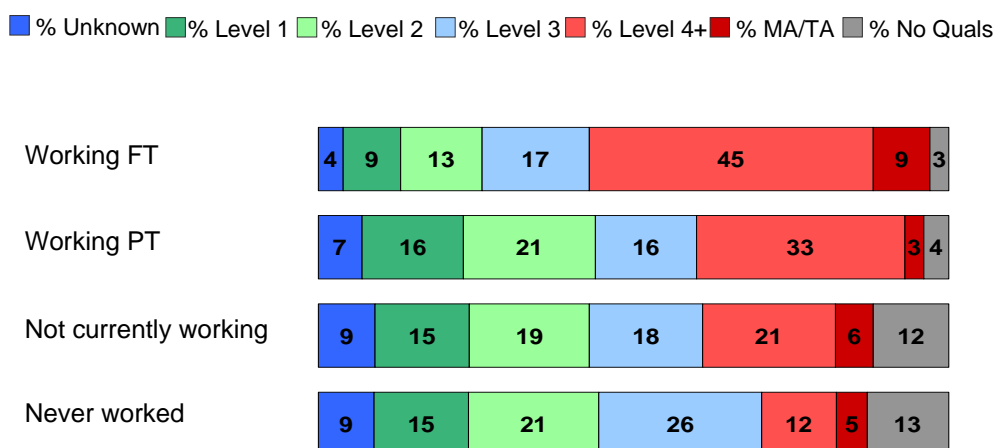
than in the LFS Spring 2005 survey (31%). This can be attributed to the coding of Other foreign qualifications in the Phase 3 survey, which is discussed in more detail later in this Chapter.

Work status and SOC classification

Analysis of highest level of qualification held by work status shows that:

- Those working full-time are more likely to report holding a Level 4+ qualification (45% compared with 35% overall) or a Modern or Trade Apprenticeship (9% compared with 7% overall) as their highest qualification);
- There are no significant differences to note for those working part-time;
- Those currently not working are less likely than average to report holding a Level 4+ qualification as their highest (21% compared with 35% overall) and are more likely to report their highest qualification as being at Level 1 (15% compared with 12% overall). They are also twice as likely than respondents overall to report no qualifications (12% compared with 6% overall);
- Respondents who have never worked are also less likely than average to report holding a Level 4+ qualification as their highest (12% compared with 35%) and are more likely than respondents overall to hold a Level 3 qualification as their highest (26% compared with 17%). They are also twice as likely to report holding no qualifications than the average (13% compared with 6% overall);
- Those currently working (full or part-time) are twice as likely to hold Level 4+ qualifications (42%) as their highest than those who are not currently or have never worked (21%);
- As expected, those still in education (most likely to be aged 16-24) are more likely to hold their highest qualification at Level 2 or 3 (41% and 29% respectively);
- The NQF level is more likely to be unknown for those currently not working (9% compared with 6% overall).

Chart 12: Highest NQF level broken down by work status



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005

Source: MORI

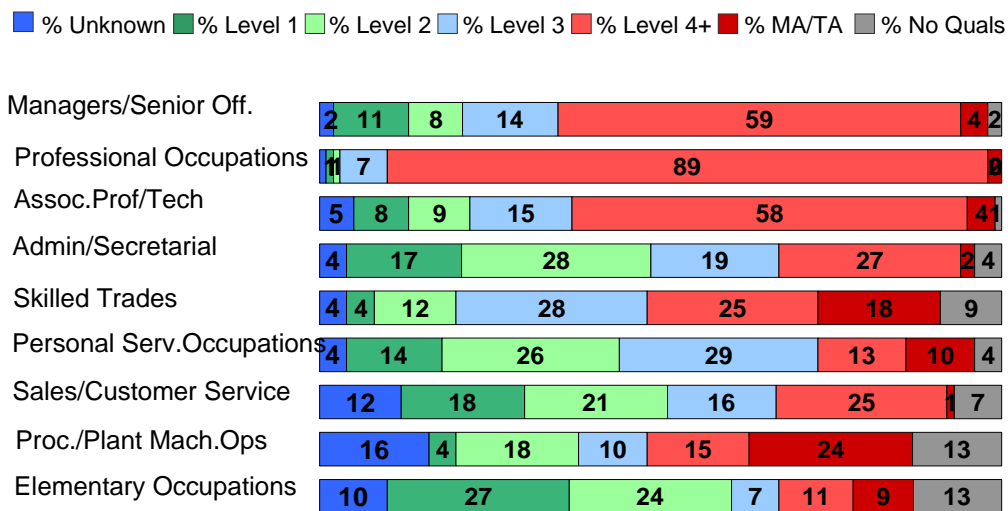
Looking at differences by occupation (using Standard Occupational Classifications – or SOC) there are some notable differences, mainly in line with what we would expect in terms of qualification requirements at those occupational levels:

- Understandably those in Professional occupations are more than twice as likely than the average to report holding Level 4+ qualifications as their highest (89% compared with 35% overall), as are those in other higher occupational classifications such as Managers and Senior Officials and Associate Professional and Technical occupations (59% and 58% respectively). This pattern is similar to the LFS although all of these occupational groups are more likely to report a highest qualification at Level 4+ in the Phase 3 survey, in particular Managers and Senior Officials (59% compared with 43% in the LFS) ;
- As in the LFS, Level 3 qualifications are most likely to be reported as the highest by those working in Skilled Trades and Personal Service Occupations (28% and 29% compared with 17% overall);
- Also in line with the LFS, Level 2 qualifications are most frequently reported as the highest by respondents working in Administrative and Secretarial occupations, Personal Service and Elementary Occupations (28%, 26% and 24% compared with 16% overall);
- Level 1 qualifications are most likely to be reported as the highest by respondents working in Elementary Occupations (27% compared with 12% overall);
- Respondents working in Skilled Trades and as Process, Plant and Machine Operatives are more likely than average to hold a Modern or Trade Apprenticeship as their highest qualification (18% and 24% respectively compared with 7% overall). This compares with 23% of

those in Skilled Trades occupations and just 10% of those in Process, Plant and Machine Operative occupations in the LFS;

- Those working in Elementary Occupations and as Process, Plant and Machine Operatives are most likely to report holding no qualifications (13% each compared with 6% overall). Again this pattern is in line with the LFS, but a higher proportion of these groups report no qualifications;
- Respondents working as Process, Plant and Machine Operatives and in Sales and Customer Service Occupations are more likely than average to have an unknown NQF level (16% and 12% compared with 6% overall).

Chart 13: Highest NQF level broken down by SOC



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005

Source: MORI

4.4 Breaking Down Academic and Vocational Qualifications

The most frequently mentioned qualifications held are GCSEs (43%), A Levels (33%), O Levels or equivalent (33%) and degree level qualifications¹⁰ (25%). Other qualifications held by significant minorities are NVQs and SVQs (15%), CSEs (14%) and City & Guilds (14%), as shown in the table overleaf.

¹⁰ Defined as a degree level qualification obtained in the UK, including foundation degrees, graduate membership of a professional institute, PGCE or higher.

List of all qualifications reported – MORI Phase 3 Survey and Autumn 2005 LFS

	<i>MORI 2005</i>	<i>Autumn 2005 LFS</i>
<i>Base: All respondents reporting qualifications</i>	<i>(946)</i>	<i>(62,710)</i>
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
GCSE	43	31
A Level	33	25
O Level or equivalent	33	30
Degree level qualification	25	18
NVQ/SVQ	15	12
CSE	14	12
City & Guilds	14	12
HNC/HND	7	4
Diploma in higher education	6	2
BTEC/BEC/TEC/EdExel	6	4
RSA/OCR	6	6
Teaching qualification (excl. PGCE)	4	2
GNVQ/GSVQ	4	2
ONC/OND	3	2
AS-level	3	3
Nursing or other medical qualification not yet mentioned	2	2
Standard/Ordinary (O) Grade (Scotland)	2	1
Other higher education qualification below degree level	1	1
Higher (Scotland)	1	1
Certificate of sixth year studies (CSYS) or equivalent	1	*
Access to HE	1	*
GCSE in a vocational subject	1	n/a
Youth Training/YT Certificate	1	*
Key Skills	1	1
Basic Skills	1	1
SCOTVEC, SCOTEC or SCOTBEC	*	*
International Baccalaureate	*	*
Vocational AS level (VCE) or equivalent	*	n/a
National Qualifications (Scotland)	*	*
Other qualifications: vocational or work related	19	n/a
Other qualifications: professional	12	n/a
Other qualifications: foreign	4	n/a
Other	18	36

Source: MORI and Autumn 2005 LFS

Compared with results from the LFS, we can see there are significantly more people reporting GCSEs, A Levels, Degree level qualifications, Diplomas of Higher Education, N/SVQs, O Levels and HNC/HND qualifications in the MORI survey.

It is interesting that the most striking differences of these *specific* qualifications lie at different levels, with GCSEs (NQF Level 1 or 2), A Levels (NQF Level 2 or 3) and degree level qualifications (NQF Level 4).

Some of these findings are broadly in line with expectations given that respondents are encouraged to report *all* qualifications they have *ever* gained in the MORI survey, regardless of hierarchy or current relevance. For example, it is possible that respondents who hold a qualification higher than GCSE or A Level, may be less likely to report those *as well as* their higher qualification, under the current LFS, as this encourages them to start with the highest and they may infer from this that other qualifications are not as important.

Academic qualifications

Nine in ten (89%) respondents who report having GCSEs say they have at least one at grade C or above. The proportion who have 5 or more GCSEs at Grade C or above (the equivalent to a Level 2 qualification) is lower at three in five (59%). A quarter of those who hold GCSEs have between five and seven passes at Grade C or above (23%) and a further third hold eight or more (36%).

A third of respondents (33%) report having O Levels. Of these, three quarters (74%) hold 5 or more passes. Similar proportions hold between five and seven (36%) and eight or more (38%).

Just over half (52%) of respondents who hold a CSE hold at least one pass at Grade 1. The proportion that holds five or more Grade 1 CSE passes is lower at a quarter (24%). One in seven (15%) respondents who hold CSEs have between five to seven Grade 1 passes, while a tenth (9%) hold eight or more such passes.

Of those who have A Levels, the majority have more than one (81%). Of the 29 respondent who hold AS-levels, most (13) have one, seven have two or three and a further eight respondents report holding four or more.

Of those who have degree level qualifications, the majority hold a first degree (60%), a quarter (24%) have a higher degree (including a PGCE), just under a fifth (18%) have a foundation degree, while eight percent are a graduate member of a professional association.

Among those with a higher degree, nearly half (47%) have a Masters, a fifth (21%) have a PGCE, while one in eight hold a Doctorate (13%). One in six (17%) say they hold some other postgraduate degree or professional qualification.

As a proportion of all the respondents interviewed¹¹, one in seven (14%) hold a first degree, six percent have a higher degree (including PGCE) and four percent have a foundation degree.

Scottish qualifications

Two percent of those who hold qualifications report having Standard/Ordinary (O) Grades, while one percent each report having Highers or a Certificate of Sixth Year Studies (CSYS) or equivalent.

Vocational qualifications

One in seven (15%) of those who have a qualification hold an NVQ or SVQ. Among those who hold N/SVQs most have obtained a qualification at Level 2 (45%) or Level 3 (40%). A quarter (23%) hold a Level 1 NVQ or SVQ, while one in ten (9%) hold a Level 4 N/SVQ. Just one in fifty (2%) have N/SVQ Level 5.

A further one in seven (14%) of those with some sort of qualification say they have a City & Guilds qualification. Of these, equal proportions hold a Foundation, Craft or Advanced Craft level (36%, 34% and 33% respectively).

Four percent (N=38) of those reporting a qualification say they hold a GNVQ or GSVQ. Of these, half hold an advance level qualification while significant minorities hold either a full intermediate level or part of an intermediate level. A few respondents hold a full foundation level or part of a foundation level GNVQ/GSVQ.

Six percent (N=58) of respondents with a qualification have one awarded by RSA/OCR. Small proportions hold either a diploma, an advanced diploma or certificate or a higher diploma. The majority hold some other RSA (including Stage I, II and III).

Six percent (N=53) of those who report holding a qualification say they have a BTEC/BEC/TEC/EdExel qualification. Of these the majority hold a National Certificate or National Diploma level, while small proportions hold a first or general certificate, a first or general diploma and a Higher level BTEC.

GCSEs, AS and A Levels in vocational subjects have all been introduced during the past two to three years. As such it is no surprise that just eight respondents have a GCSE in a vocational subject. Most have at least one grade C or above. Three respondents hold a vocational AS level (VCE) or equivalent, one holds one vocational AS level, one holds two or three and the other respondent holds four or more.

A fifth (19%) of respondents who report holding a qualification say they have some 'Other vocational or work related' qualification. This code was introduced into the questionnaire at Phase Three after the recommendations made at Phase

¹¹ N=1,010

One you to allow more disaggregated analysis of the 'Other' responses, and is discussed in more detail at the end of this Chapter.

Teaching qualifications

Four percent of respondents who report qualifications say they have a teaching qualification that is not a PGCE, while one percent have a PGCE. Of those who have some sort of a teaching qualification (including a PGCE), just over a third (36%) are qualified to teach further education. Around a quarter respectively are qualified to teach Key Stages 2, 3 or 4 (28%, 28% and 25% each) and a fifth (19%) are trained to teach Key Stage 1. One in fifty (2%) are trained to teach foundation stage.

Other professional qualifications

One in eight (12%) respondents who report holding a qualification say they have some 'Other professional' qualification. This code was also introduced into the questionnaire at Phase Three, after the recommendations made at Phase One, to allow more disaggregated analysis of the 'Other' responses. Results are discussed later in this Chapter.

Foreign qualifications

Four percent of those who say they have a qualification say they have 'Other foreign' qualifications. This code was another introduction into the questionnaire at Phase Three.

Of those who say they have foreign qualifications, most *either* have degree level or above (46%) *and/or* equivalent to at least 2 A Levels/NVQ Level 3 (44%). A quarter (23%) hold foreign qualifications equivalent to at least 5 GCSEs/NVQ Level 2. This supports the findings from Phase One, which revealed that a high proportion of highest qualifications coded as 'Other' were foreign degrees or school-leaving qualifications equivalent to NQF Level 3.

4.5 Respondents Reporting No Qualifications

Those respondents reporting no qualifications were asked a series of questions to explore whether they had completed any learning or training at all, including parts or units of a course or qualification.

One in ten (11%) respondents with no qualifications say they have completed a taught course since leaving school. Of those who have not completed a taught course, a further one in ten (9%) say they have completed a module or unit that was part of a course or qualification.

Only two respondents reporting no qualifications say they have completed some self taught learning, working on their own from a package of materials provided by an employer, college, commercial organisation, learning resource centre or other training provider. In addition, four respondents say that since leaving school they have started a course or some form of learning or training which they

did not complete. All four of these respondents' learning was based in a college. Reasons given for not completing the course were difficulties dealing with childcare or family commitments, personal and health reasons.

To check whether we had identified everyone holding qualifications, those respondents reporting no qualifications were asked to confirm that they had no qualifications and school. Of the 53 respondents reporting no qualifications, two said that they did have qualifications and they were redirected back to the questions relating to qualifications.

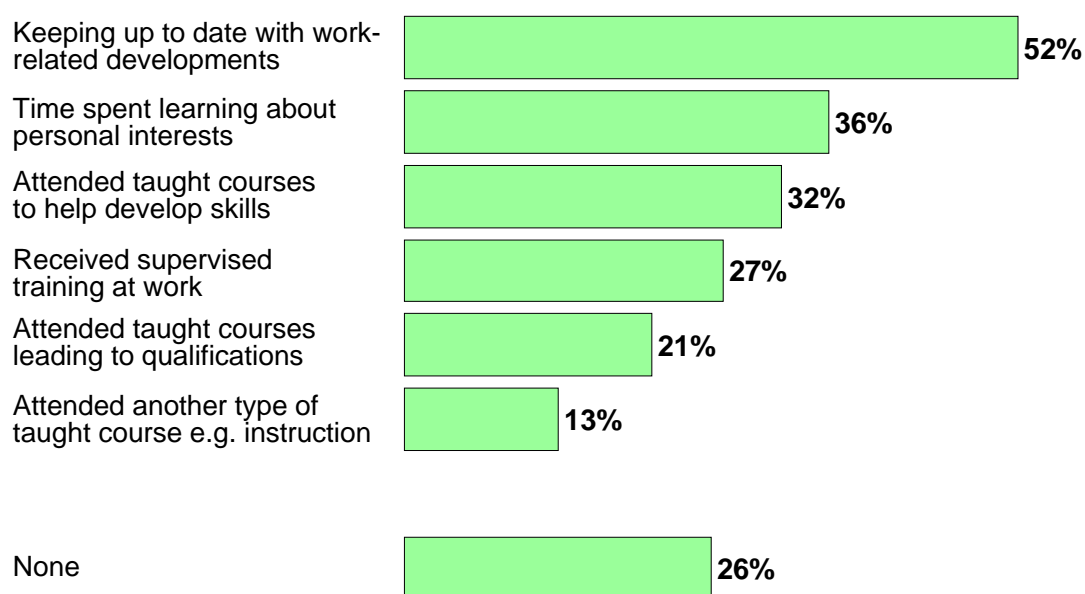
4.6 Learning History and Attitudes

In order to gain insight into the reasons why people choose to participate (or not) in learning and training, attitudinal questions were asked to determine various perceptions among respondents. These questions highlight the factors that encourage or prevent people from taking part in learning or studying, and identify people's attitudes towards the qualifications and learning.

Participation in learning and training courses

Three quarters (74%) of people say they have been involved in some form of learning or training over the past 12 months. Most common is time spent keeping up to date with work developments (52%), followed by time learning about personal interests and hobbies (36%), and attendance at taught courses designed to develop job-related skills (32%). One in five (21%) have attended courses which can lead to a qualification.

Chart 14: Participation in learning or training in the past 12 months



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005

Source: MORI

Respondents aged 25-44 most often claim to have spent time keeping up to date with developments in the type of job role they do (57% in past 12 months, 62% currently). The occupational categories within which the majority of people have kept/are keeping up to date with such developments are; those in Professional Occupations (81% in past 12 months and currently), Associate Professionals/Technical Workers (74% in past 12 months, 77% currently), and Managers/Senior Officials (72% in past 12 months, 74% currently).

Those currently in education are most likely to claim they have spent time learning about personal interests without attending a taught course (48%). By the same token, respondents with an NQF level of 4+ (and therefore a more profound level of education) are also more likely to say they have learned about personal interests (43% compared to 23% amongst those with no qualifications).

Results of taking part in learning and training

Gaining confidence is considered to be the biggest result of taking part in learning/training (71%). This is followed by feeling able to do a job better (65%), and learning new skills for a specific job role (59%).

Chart 15: Results of taking part in learning and training



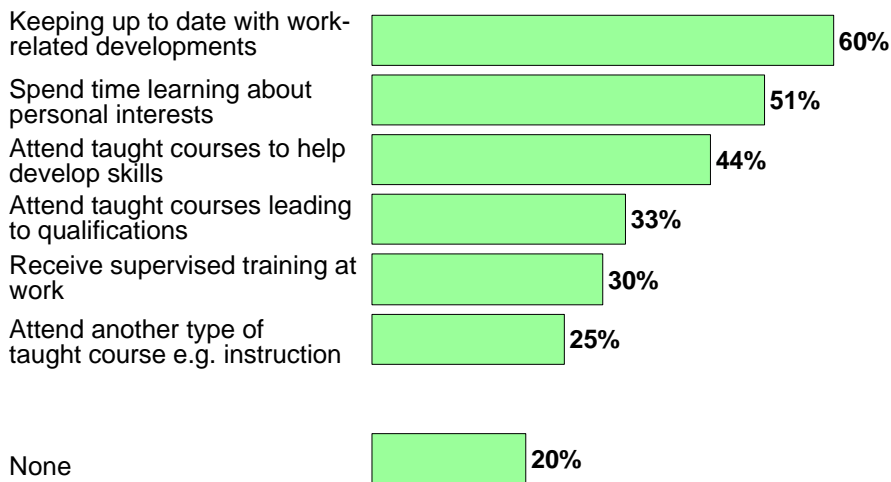
Base: (760) All respondents who have done learning & training courses in the last 12 months, Aug – Sep 2005 Source: MORI

In light of these findings, it is somewhat unsurprising that it is people working full time that most frequently claim to have done learning or training (83% in past 12 months, 86% currently).

Likelihood of learning or training in the next year

Four out of five people (80%) plan to be involved in some form of learning or training in the next year. Plans reflect the most popular forms of learning and training that respondents have undertaken in the past twelve months; 60% of people plan to spend time keeping up to date with work developments, 51% of people intend to learn about personal interests or hobbies, and 44% of people say they will be attending taught courses designed to develop job-related skills in the next 12 months.

Chart 16: Planned learning or training in the next year



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005

Source: MORI

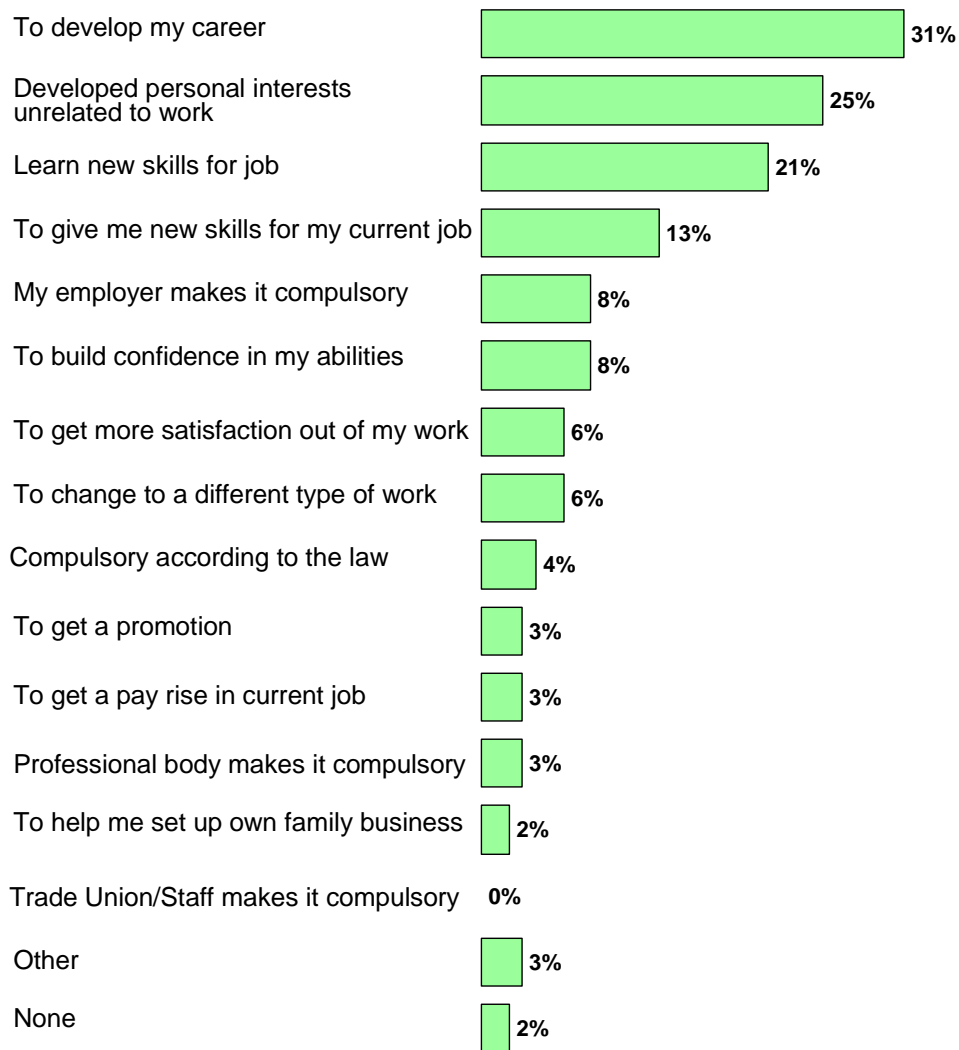
As might be expected, it is younger people aged 16-24 (who are more likely to still be in education) who plan to be involved in learning or training in the next year (88% compared to 71% of respondents aged 45-64). Out of this younger group, almost two thirds of people plan to attend taught courses that can lead to gaining qualifications (63%).

Furthermore, respondents with NQF level 4+ are more than twice as likely as those with no qualifications to express an interest in learning or training in the next year (89% compared to 38% respectively). This suggests that people who have never previously achieved a qualification are less inclined to want to do so in the future, whereas those that have gained higher level qualifications are confident in their abilities (as discussed earlier) and almost certainly feel better equipped to learn in future.

Reasons for wanting to learn or train in the future

The key motive among respondents for wanting to learn in the next year is to develop their career (31%), followed by a desire to develop personal interests (25%), and to gain new job-related skills (21%).

Chart 17: Reasons for wanting to learn or train in the next year



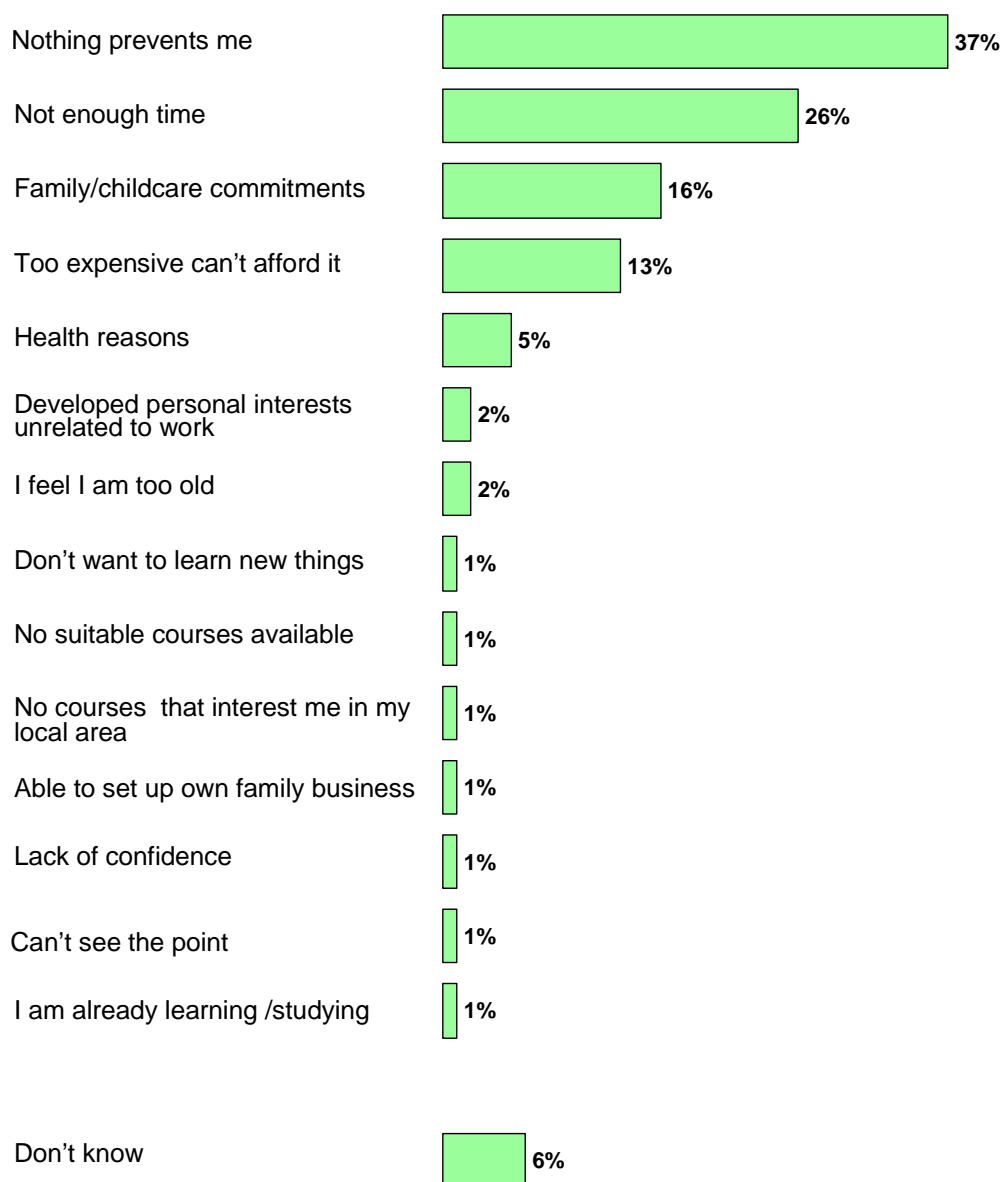
Base: (760) All respondents who have done learning & training courses in the last 12 months, Aug – Sep 2005 Source: MORI

Developing a career is an especially important reason for wanting to learn among the younger age group (42% among 16-24 year olds); whereas older respondents are more likely to say they would like to learn to develop personal interests unrelated to work (34% of 45-64 year olds).

Barriers to learning or training in the next year

Although a significant minority of respondents say that nothing prevents them from learning (37%); the biggest obstacle to learning is not having enough time (26%). This is followed by family/childcare commitments (16%) and the fact that learning or studying is considered too expensive or unaffordable (13%).

Chart 18: Barriers to learning or training in the next year



Base: 1,010 members of the working age general public in England, Aug – Sep 2005

Source: MORI

Those in full time employment are most likely to claim that lack of time is one of the reasons they are deterred from learning (36%).

Attitudes towards learning

Respondents were read the following statements and asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with them:

‘Learning is something you should do throughout your life’

Almost all the people questioned (96%) agree that learning is something that should be done throughout life. Respondents working in Managerial, Professional and Associate Professional/Technical roles were in strongest agreement with the above statement (88%, 87% and 81% strongly agreed respectively).

Those currently in education also strongly agree that learning should be done throughout life (85%), along with those that have most experience of learning, having remained in education until the age of 19+ (84%), and those with the highest NQF level (86%).

‘Learning is only worthwhile if there is a qualification at the end of it’

The majority of respondents (83%) believe that learning is worthwhile, even without a qualification at the end of it. Full time workers disagree most strongly with the above statement (61%). This could be because they believe they continue to learn whilst at work, without receiving a qualification as a merit of achievement, but with other incentives such as career progression. This finding is supported by the fact that respondents currently in education (who are undoubtedly studying in order to gain a qualification) are far less likely to consider learning worthwhile *without* a qualification (41%).

Interestingly, it is the people with high grade qualifications who disagree most strongly that qualifications make learning worthwhile. More than three quarters (76%) of respondents within the NQF level 4+ category disagree with the above statement. This is in contrast to less than half of those with no qualifications (48%), and might help to explain why these people are discouraged from learning in any form; whether it is for personal enjoyment, to develop their career, or improve confidence in their own abilities.

4.7 Assessment of ‘Other’ Responses

In the Phase 3 survey, six percent of respondents overall had their highest qualification coded as ‘unknown’ NQF Level. This ‘unknown’ category combines two different types of qualification:

- genuinely unknown levels (because there was insufficient information recorded about the qualification, for example the respondent knew they had a BTEC but did not know the specific level they had achieved); *and*
- ‘Other’ qualifications, that did not fit into the existing codeframe, and therefore could not be assigned to a level.

Both these cases have only been coded as ‘unknown’ NQF if they were the only, and therefore the highest, qualification provided.

The overall proportion of 'Others' as a highest qualification (excluding the 'unknowns' described above) was actually four percent in total (N=41). This was based on largely the same assignment process followed in the LFS (i.e. assigning 'Other' as a highest qualification only if it was the only qualification provided). ***One important exception to this was that foreign qualifications that could be coded to a NQF Level, have actually been assigned to that level rather than left in the 'Other' category.*** The proportion providing 'Other' as their only, and therefore highest, qualification is therefore significantly lower in the MORI survey than in the LFS. This is in part a result of coding the other-foreign qualifications and following them up to determine an equivalent NQF level.

In terms of the other qualifications provided overall, one in five respondents (19%) provided an 'Other- vocational' qualification that was not covered by the precoded list. Around one in ten provided an 'Other- professional' qualification (12%) and around one in twenty (4%) provided an 'Other- foreign' qualification. In addition, one in five (18%) also provided a qualifications that was coded as a general 'Other'.

Other professional qualifications

Twelve percent of respondents who had qualifications mentioned ones that were coded as 'Other professional'. These included qualifications such as: financial and accountancy qualifications (for example Financial Planning Certificates, CIMA and AAT); memberships of professional bodies such as the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, Society of Radiography, Chartered Institute of Building, and Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development; being a chartered engineer, chemist, or librarian; and Army or Navy Officer exams.

A small number of qualifications mentioned here were miscoded. Examples include sports coaching qualifications; Pitmans qualifications; qualifications in using AutoCAD; and HGV1 driving licence – all of these should have been coded as other vocational qualifications.

Other vocational qualifications

One in five respondents (19%) say they have achieved an 'Other – vocational' qualification. Verbatim responses recorded here include basic computer courses; first aid; food hygiene; health and safety; manual handling; 'Microsoft' qualifications; and 'typing' qualifications. These types of qualification are broadly in line with many of the verbatims seen at Phase One which were coded as 'thin' qualifications.

There were a small number of miscodes here. These included four mentions of NVQs (level unspecified), one BTEC, and one HNC.

Other foreign qualifications

Respondents who reported foreign qualification(s) were asked a follow-up question to determine the relevant NQF level(s). Of these, almost half (N=16)

held a degree-level qualification or higher. Just three people could not assign their foreign qualification to an equivalent NQF-based category.

5. Looking Ahead

In this section we discuss the conclusions of the research project overall and summarise the recommendations which have emerged from each phase.

5.1 Conclusions from Phases One, Two and Three

Apportioning 'Other' qualifications

Currently, highest qualifications that have been coded as 'Other' are apportioned across NQF Levels 1, 2 and 3 in the ratio 55: 35: 10. The coding exercise from Phase One suggests **this formula needs to be updated** to account more fully for higher level qualifications (above Level 3) and possibly also for 'thin' qualifications. Some thin qualifications are already captured within the LFS (e.g. part GNVQs, key skills, less than five GCSEs), but there is potentially a gap in terms of less specific qualifications/ responses such as 'first aid'; 'marketing'; 'computer course', etc.

Adjusting the formula in line with the outcomes of the Phase 1 coding exercise would mean the following allocation (from NQF Level 1 to 4+): 7: 26: 10: 17. In addition, *in theory* 40 percent would be allocated to a 'thin' category. This poses a problem in terms of how to treat these qualifications in any analyses of NQF levels attained vs. qualification targets, as they are outwith the current NQF categorisation.

Therefore in practice, the **DfES will need to assign these 'thin' qualifications to one or more NQF Levels for the purposes of their analyses**. Due to the nature of 'thin' qualifications, these should probably be assigned to Level 2 or below. The main reasons for this relate to their nature as thin qualifications (i.e. putting them at a lower level than similar qualifications that are full in width), added to the fact that as highest qualification 'Others', they are the only qualification held. If they were at a higher level, one would assume that the respondents had obtained some other form of qualification as well (for example, at least at Level 2. The main reason for a qualification being coded as 'thin' relates to it suggesting a course or skill that was *part of* a NQF Level qualification, but not a full qualification in itself. Examples include CLAIT, first aid, food hygiene, health and safety, and short courses in business or management.

The demographic analysis presented in Chapter 2 demonstrates that there are key differences in the NQF levels assigned, by several different variables. In particular, this suggests a case for **apportioning 'Other' qualifications in different proportions according to age left full-time education and whether or not the respondent was born in the UK**. Among the highest qualification 'Other' group, Phase 1 analysis indicates that the most appropriate distinctions in how NQF levels are apportioned by age left full-time education would be at 15 years and under, 16, 17-18, and 19+. For country of birth, born in UK and born outside UK would be the simplest and most practical way to apportion Levels.

Another issue that needs to be addressed is **how to adjust any new formula over time**. It would seem obvious, given the analysis was done using the Spring 2004 data, that an updated ratio should be adopted from that point. The formula could then be adjusted in line with patterns in age left full-time education (both retrospectively, for earlier years, and in future surveys). However, those still in full-time education whose highest qualification was recorded as 'Other' would need to be allocated across NQF levels using a different variable. Current age may be a possibility (for example, using the highest qualification profile of the age immediately below current age, i.e. the qualification level that person had attained prior to their current course). An example might be for someone aged 19 who is currently still in continuous full-time education: we would examine the known highest qualification profile of those aged 18, and allocate the unknown 'Other' to the most common category (e.g. NVQ Level 2). Apportioning level according to current qualification aim (for this group) is another possibility.

Other issues to bear in mind when considering the implementation of any future changes to the formula would be **trends in levels of achievement** (especially in the light of increasing public scrutiny on success rates for vocational qualifications/ Apprenticeships); the **prevalence of foreign qualifications**; and the **development of new vocational qualifications**. As the LFS now routinely collects the details of other qualifications, it would be possible to repeat the coding exercise undertaken in 2004, in order to validate/ update any new formula. Perhaps the next timely interval to explore updating the apportionment formula would be in 2008, when the LFS is linked to the Integrated Household Survey.

It is also important to bear in mind that any **changes made to the LFS qualifications question wording, coding frame, or interviewer guidance will have implications for the future allocation of those in the 'Other' category**. For example, amending the precodes to include a specific category for degree level qualifications obtained overseas, will impact on the proportion of highest qualification 'Others' that should be apportioned to NQF Level 4 and above (as the current recommended allocation is currently based on results including a substantial proportion that are foreign degrees). This will need to be closely monitored in the light of any changes that are made.

The results of the Phase 3 survey bear this out; as higher level foreign qualifications have been included within the NQF levels, and removed from the 'Other/ unknown' group, we would expect the composition of that group to have shifted towards more lower level qualifications.

Reducing the number of highest qualifications recorded as 'Other'

The simplest way to do this is of course to back-code 'Other' qualifications as a matter of course. However, time and cost issues – in particular given the scale and frequency of the LFS – render this impossible.

We set out some recommendations for reducing 'Other' qualifications, at the end of Phase 1. Phase 3 provided an opportunity to test these recommendations out in practice. Specifically, other qualification pre-codes were split into four different types: other professional, other vocational, other foreign, and other. As well as this, interviewers were given detailed guidance to prompt for more detail if respondents gave a subject or occupation as their answer, rather than an actual qualification.

Overall, six percent of respondents in the Phase 3 survey had their highest qualification coded as 'Unknown', including 'Other'. Of these, just 41 had a highest qualification coded as 'Other', representing four percent of the total. This compares with nine percent in the most recent LFS. The difference may be partly explained by the fact that, in this survey, other foreign qualifications were recorded as such and specifically followed up to allow them to be coded to a NQF Level.

We conclude that routinely recording foreign qualifications as such, and following these up to determine their equivalence to UK qualifications, will increase the likelihood that they can be assigned to the NQF, and therefore reduce the proportion providing other as their only and therefore highest qualification.

After Phase 1, we originally felt that by recording 'Other professional' and 'Other vocational' qualifications separately, we would be in a position to be able to better assign these to an NQF level if they were the only and therefore highest qualification. For example, 'Other professional' qualifications could be apportioned to Level 4+ and 'Other vocational' qualifications across Levels 1, 2 and 3 according to the profile of vocational awards found in the NISVQ database. Examination of the verbatims coded to these categories reveals a small degree of miscoding between the two. The existence of this miscoding (albeit small) suggests that the addition of extra codes to differentiate 'Other' qualifications in this way may not be particularly helpful.

The impact of the revised qualifications questions

The impact of the revised questions is difficult to isolate. However, comparing the findings of the survey against the LFS, and in the light of what we know from the qualitative research, the results suggest that the changes that have been made to the questions have encouraged more people to report more qualifications, in particular those gained outside of a formal education environment. A fifth of respondents (21% and 19% respectively) report qualifications either connected with personal interests or things they like doing in their spare time, or as a result of studying at home in their own time. We know from the qualitative research that they are most likely to discount such qualifications when answering the standard LFS question, which does not explicitly probe about them in the same way as more formal settings.

The key differences between the Phase 3 results and those from the LFS are more people reporting Level 4+ qualifications (35%, compared with 27% in the LFS), and fewer reporting no qualifications at all (6%, compared with 13% in the

LFS). Discounting the additional foreign qualifications that were followed up and coded at Level 4+ (which is not currently done in the LFS) would only reduce the overall percentage with qualifications at that level to 34%, still significantly higher than the LFS.

As we discuss in Chapter 4, it is interesting that the most striking differences of these *specific* qualifications lie at different levels, with GCSEs (NQF Level 1 or 2), A Levels (NQF Level 2 or 3) and degree level qualifications (NQF Level 4).

Some of these findings are broadly in line with expectations given that respondents are encouraged to report *all* qualifications they have *ever* gained in the MORI survey, regardless of hierarchy or current relevance. For example, it is possible that respondents who hold a qualification higher than GCSE or A Level, may be less likely to report those *as well as* their higher qualification, under the current LFS, as this encourages them to start with 'the highest'.

However, it is somewhat surprising that the greatest shift - at aggregate NQF Level - has been an increase at Level 4+, and we do need to ask whether changes made to the questions may have encouraged over-reporting, rather than just addressing under-reporting. Take, for example, just one type of qualification. In the LFS, 18% say they have a degree level qualification including Foundation degrees, graduate memberships of a professional body, PGCEs, or higher. This compares with 25% in the Phase 3 survey. The survey data are weighted by age, gender, ethnicity and occupation, so the difference is unlikely to be as a result of differences in the demographic profile. Respondents who say they have a degree level qualification are asked what type and level of qualification this is, in more detail. If we discount those who answered 'Other' or 'don't know' at this question (N=20) and assume they have over-reported (as they are unable to specify the details of their qualification), we are left with a figure of 21% in possession of a degree level qualification overall, which is more in line with the LFS. However, this is a large assumption to make.

It is possible that there has been an element of 'response bias' in the survey. At the introduction, respondents were told only that the research was about education and learning, which was the bare minimum necessary to inform them about the survey content, but which may still conceivably have deterred some people with no or low qualifications from taking part.

Comparing the unweighted sample profile to that of the LFS, for example, we know that more people from higher-level occupational groups participated, and fewer from elementary occupations and who have never worked. Weighting has corrected for *demographic characteristics* including occupation and work status, but it cannot correct fully for any *attitudinal patterns* that might underlay them, for example if people who refused to take part in the survey did so because they felt qualifications/ learning are not important, or were not interested in these issues, perhaps because they themselves have no or low qualifications. It is difficult to measure the extent of response bias of this kind from this type of survey, as we do not know the profile of those who refused to take part.

On the other hand, there are some patterns here which suggest that the questionnaire revisions do help to broaden the reporting of qualifications, in particular those gained from informal settings such as home-based study, as well as to reduce the proportion of highest qualifications recorded as 'Other'.

Appendices

Statistical Reliability

Sample Profile

Questionnaires/Topic Guide

Statistical Reliability

It should be remembered that a sample, not the entire population were interviewed for this survey. Therefore the figures obtained may not be exactly those if everyone had been interviewed (the “true” values). However, the variation between the sample results and the “true” values can be predicted from the knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which this prediction can be made is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the “true” value will fall within a specified range.

The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the “95% confidence interval”.

For example, with the total sample size of 1010 completed telephone interviews, where 50% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the “true” value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of +/- 3 percentage points from the sample result; in fact the actual result is proportionately more likely to be closer to the centre (50%) than the extremes of the range (47% or 53%).

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels			
Sample Size	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	\pm	\pm	\pm
400	3	5	5
500	3	4	4
800	2	3	4
1,000	2	3	3
1,010	2	3	3

Source: MORI

When the results are compared between separate sub-groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be “real”, or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one - i.e. if it is “statistically significant” - it is again necessary to know the total population, the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer, and the degree of confidence chosen. Assuming “95% confidence interval”, the differences between the two sub-sample results must be greater than the values given in the table on the next page.

Differences required for significance at or near these levels			
Sample Size	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	\pm	\pm	\pm
500 (male) vs. 510 (female)	4	6	6
684 (working full/part time) vs. 325 (not working)	4	6	7
173 (16-24 yrs) vs. 374 (45-64 yrs)	5	8	9
909 (white) vs. 99 (BME)	6	10	10
127 (managers) vs. 67 (plant/machine operators)	9	14	15

Source: MORI

Sample Profile

Sample profile			
	Number	Unweighted	Weighted
	<i>n</i>	%	%
Total	1,010	100%	100%
Sex			
Male	470	47%	50%
Female	540	53%	50%
Age			
16 to 24	154	15%	17%
25 to 34	211	21%	22%
35 to 44	257	25%	23%
45 to 54	221	22%	21%
55 to 59	120	12%	12%
60 to 64	47	5%	4%
Ethnicity			
White	920	91%	90%
Mixed	5	1%	1%
Asian or Asian British	50	5%	6%
Black or Black British	17	2%	2%
Chinese	2	*%	*%
Any other ethnic background	13	1%	1%
Refused	3	*%	*%
Work status			
Working full time	544	54%	53%
Working part time	164	16%	15%
Not working	302	30%	32%

Sample profile continued

	Number	Unweighted	Weighted
	<i>n</i>	%	%
Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)			
Managers/Senior Officials	161	16%	13%
Professional Occupations	153	15%	11%
Associate. Professional/Technical	171	17%	12%
Admin/Secretarial	122	12%	11%
Skilled Trades	79	8%	10%
Personal Service Occupations	60	6%	7%
Sales/Customer Service Occupations	70	7%	7%
Process/Plant/Machine Operatives	49	5%	7%
Elementary Occupations	71	7%	11%
Never worked	74	7%	12%

Source: MORI

Questionnaire (Phase Three)

Good morning/afternoon/evening. I'm from MORI, the independent market and opinion research company. We're conducting a survey (*on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills*) about education and learning – could you help us by answering some questions and giving your opinions?

The survey is completely confidential – no information that can identify you will be passed on to the DfES or anyone else. The interview will take no more than 15 minutes.

REASSURE IF NECESSARY:

- 1. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and results will be reported in the form of aggregated statistics only.**
- 2. We work strictly within the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.**
- 3. The contact at the DfES is Tony Clarke (T: 0114 259 1087)**

- Yes – Proceed with interview
- No - Refused

SCREENING DEMOGRAPHICS (FOR QUOTAS)

ASK ALL UNLESS SPECIFIED OTHERWISE

QS1. What was your age last birthday?

ENTER AGE IN YEARS. CATI ASSIGN TO THE PRECODE LIST BELOW.

Refused

IF REFUSE AT QS2a, OTHERS GO TO Q3::

QS1b. **Is it...?** READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- 1) 16-24
- 2) 25-34
- 3) 35-44
- 4) 45-54
- 5) 55-59
- 6) 60-64 THANK AND CLOSE IF WOMAN
- 7) 65+ THANK AND CLOSE

Refused (DO NOT READ OUT) – Thank and close interview.

QS2a. Gender

CODE ONE ONLY

- (1) Male
- (2) Female

QS3. To which of these ethnic groups do you belong?

READ OUT, CODE ONE ONLY

- (1) ...White

- (2) ...Mixed
- (3) ...Asian or Asian British
- (4) ...Black or Black British
- (5) ...Chinese
- (6) ...Any other ethnic background
- (7) ...Refused (DO NOT READ OUT)

QS4a. **Now I'd like to ask you about your current employment status. Which of the following statements apply to you? Please select as many as apply. I am...**

READ OUT, MULTICODE OK.

- (1) ...Working full-time (31 hours or more per week)
- (2) ...Working part-time (less than 31 hours per week)
- (3) ...On a Modern/Trade Apprenticeship involving paid work
- (4) ...On a Modern/Trade Apprenticeship not involving paid work
- (5) ...On a local or government training scheme (including New Deal) involving paid work
- (6) ...On a local or government training scheme (including New Deal) not involving paid work
- (7) ...Registered unemployed/signing on for JSA
- (8) ...Not registered unemployed but seeking work
- (9) ...Long-term sick or disabled
- (10) ...Retired
- (11) ...At home – looking after the home or family
- (12) ...At home - not seeking work
- (13) ...In full-time education
- (14) ...In part-time education
- (15) OTHER (SPECIFY)
- (16) REFUSED

IF MORE THAN ONE AT QS4a, OTHERS GO TO Q1a IN SECTION A

QS4b. **And which one of these would you say is your MAIN activity?** SINGLE CODE ONLY. *NOTE TO CATI PROGRAMMER: ONLY ALLOW ACTIVITIES CODED AT QS4a. TRANSFER CODE FROM Q4a IF THAT WAS SINGLE CODED. THEN USE QS4b FOR QUOTAS.*

- (1) ...Working full-time (31 hours or more per week)
- (2) ...Working part-time (less than 31 hours per week)
- (3) ...On a Modern/Trade Apprenticeship involving paid work
- (4) ...On a Modern/Trade Apprenticeship not involving paid work
- (5) ...On a local or government training scheme (including New Deal) involving paid work
- (6) ...On a local or government training scheme (including New Deal) not involving paid work
- (7) ...Registered unemployed/signing on for JSA
- (8) ...Not registered unemployed but seeking work
- (9) ...Long-term sick or disabled
- (10) ...Retired
- (11) ...At home – looking after the home or family
- (12) ...At home - not seeking work
- (13) ...In full-time education
- (14) ...In part-time education
- (15) OTHER (SPECIFY)
- (16) REFUSED

SECTION A: EDUCATION, TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

I would now like to ask you about education, learning and training.

ASK ALL

Please think about ALL the qualifications you have ever gained, even if it was a long time ago, or even if you feel they are not relevant to you now.

Q1a: Do you have any qualifications...

INTERVIEWER READ OUT. MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...from school
- (2) ...from college or university
- (3) ...from studying at home when you were a child?
- (4) NO/NONE OF THESE (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

Q1b: Do you have any qualifications...

INTERVIEWER READ OUT. MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...connected with work
- (2) ...from a government training scheme
- (3) ...from a recognised Trade/ Modern Apprenticeship?
- (4) NO/NONE OF THESE (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

Q1c: Do you have any qualifications...

INTERVIEWER READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...from studying at home in your own time
- (2) ...connected with any personal interests or things you like doing in your spare time?
- (3) NO/NONE OF THESE (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

ASK ALL RESPONDENTS REPORTING QUALIFICATIONS- IF ANY AT Q1a (CODE 1-3), 1b (CODE 1-3), OR 1c (CODE 1-2), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q37 (SECTION B)

Q2a: What qualifications do you have?

Please tell us about ALL the qualifications you have ever gained from school, college, university, work, any Apprenticeships or government schemes, or from studying at home or in your own time. DO NOT READ OUT. MULTICODE OK

- (1) Degree level qualification obtained in the UK, including foundation degrees, graduate membership of a professional institute, PGCE, or higher
- (2) Diploma in higher education
- (3) HNC/HND
- (4) ONC/OND
- (5) BTEC/BEC/TEC/EdExel
- (6) SCOTVEC, SCOTEC or SCOTBEC
- (7) Teaching qualification (excluding PGCE)
- (8) Nursing or other medical qualification not yet mentioned
- (9) Other higher education qualification below degree level
- (10) A-level
- (11) Vocational A-level (VCE)
- (12) Higher (Scotland)
- (13) Welsh Baccalaureate
- (14) International Baccalaureate
- (15) NVQ/SVQ
- (16) GNVQ/GSVQ
- (17) AS-level
- (18) Vocational AS level (VCE) or equivalent
- (19) Certificate of sixth year studies (CSYS) or equivalent
- (20) Access to HE
- (21) O-level or equivalent
- (22) Standard/Ordinary (O) Grade (Scotland)
- (23) GCSE
- (24) GCSE in vocational subject
- (25) CSE
- (26) National Qualifications (Scotland)
- (27) RSA/OCR
- (28) City & Guilds
- (29) Youth Training/ YT Certificate
- (30) Key Skills
- (31) Basic Skills
- (32) Entry Level Qualifications (Wales)

- (33) Other qualifications: professional
- (34) Other qualifications: vocational or work related
- (35) Other qualifications: foreign

- (36) Other

- (37) NONE OF THESE (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

(38)DON'T KNOW (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

Q2b. **You said you have qualifications from** (TEXT SUBSTITUTION OF ANY YES AT Q1a, 1b and 1c). **Have you told me about all the qualifications you have ever obtained from (THIS/ THESE) SOURCE(S)?**

(1)Yes – have covered all qualifications GO TO FILTER
AT Q2c

(2)No – have not covered all qualifications GO BACK TO
Q2a, THEN
SKIP Q2b, AND
GO TO FILTER
AT Q2c

ASK RESPONDENTS REPORTING ANY QUALIFICATIONS (IF Q2a = 1-36), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q37 (SECTION B)

Q2c: **Which of these qualifications, if any, have you gained in the last three years?** DO NOT READ OUT. MULTICODE OK. NOTE TO CATI: ONLY ALLOW QUALS REPORTED AT Q2a.

ASK IF MORE THAN ONE GAINED IN THE PAST 3 YEARS (2 OR MORE CODES 1-36 AT Q2c), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q3

Q2d: **And which qualification was the most recent you have gained?** DO NOT READ OUT, SINGLE CODE ONLY. NOTE TO CATI: ONLY ALLOW QUALS GAINED IN LAST 3 YEARS AT Q2c.

- (1) Degree level qualification obtained in the UK, including foundation degrees, graduate membership of a professional institute, PGCE, or higher
- (2) Diploma in higher education
- (3) HNC/HND
- (4) ONC/OND
- (5) BTEC/BEC/TEC/EdExel
- (6) SCOTVEC, SCOTEC or SCOTBEC
- (7) Teaching qualification (excluding PGCE)
- (8) Nursing or other medical qualification not yet mentioned
- (9) Other higher education qualification below degree level
- (10)A-level
- (11)Vocational A-level (VCE)
- (12)Higher (Scotland)
- (13)Welsh Baccalaureate
- (14)International Baccalaureate
- (15)NVQ/SVQ
- (16)GNVQ/GSVQ
- (17)AS-level
- (18)Vocational AS level (VCE) or equivalent
- (19)Certificate of sixth year studies (CSYS) or equivalent
- (20)Access to HE
- (21)O-level or equivalent
- (22)Standard/Ordinary (O) Grade (Scotland)

- (23)GCSE
- (24)GCSE in vocational subject
- (25)CSE
- (26)National Qualifications (Scotland)
- (27)RSA/OCR
- (28)City & Guilds
- (29)Youth Training/ YT Certificate
- (30)Key Skills
- (31)Basic Skills
- (32)Entry Level Qualifications (Wales)
- (33)Any other professional qualifications
- (34)Any other vocational or work related qualifications
- (35)Any other foreign qualifications
- (36)Other (SHOW TEXT FROM Q2a IF APPROPRIATE)
- (37)NONE OF THESE
- (38)DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A =33 OTHER PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

Q3. **You say you have professional qualification(s). Please could you describe this/ these qualification(s).** PROBE FULLY AND WRITE IN.

IF Q2A =34 OTHER VOCATIONAL/ WORK-RELATED QUALIFICATION

Q4. **You say you have work-related or vocational qualification(s). Please could you describe this/ these qualification(s).** PROBE FULLY AND WRITE IN.

IF Q2A =35 OTHER FOREIGN QUALIFICATION

Q5. **You say you have (a) foreign qualification(s). Is this/ are these... READ OUT. MULTICODE OK.**

- (1) ...Degree level or above
- (2) ...Equivalent to at least 2 A-levels/ NVQ Level 3
- (3) ...Equivalent to at least 5 GCSEs/ NVQ Level 2
- (4) ...Or something else (SPECIFY)
- (5) DON'T KNOW (DO NOT READ OUT)

IF Q2A =35 OTHER FOREIGN QUALIFICATION

Q6. **Please could you describe this/ these qualification(s).** PROBE FULLY AND WRITE IN.

IF Q2A =36 OTHER QUALIFICATION

Q7. **ENTER DESCRIPTION OF "OTHER QUALIFICATION HERE".** PROBE FULLY AND WRITE IN.

IF Q2A= 1, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q11

Q8. **Is your degree level qualification . . .?**
READ OUT & CODE THE FIRST THAT APPLIES

- (1) A higher degree (including PGCE)
- (2) A first degree
- (3) A foundation degree
- (4) A graduate member of a professional institution

- (5) Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)?
- (6) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A= 1 & Q8 =1

Q9. **Was your higher degree . . . ?**
CODE THE FIRST THAT APPLIES

- (1) A Doctorate
- (2) A Masters
- (3) A Postgraduate Certification in Education
- (4) Some other postgraduate degree or professional qualification?
- (5) DON'T KNOW

Q10. *THERE IS NO QUESTION 10*

Q11. *THERE IS NO QUESTION 11*

IF Q2A= 7(TEACHING QUAL) OR Q9=3 (PGCE), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q13

Q12. **Was your teaching qualification for . . .** READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...Further education?
- (2) ...Key stage 4?
- (3) ...Key stage 3?
- (4) ...Key stage 2?
- (5) ...Key stage 1?
- (6) ...Foundation stage?
- (7) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2a= 10(A'LEVEL), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q14

Q13. **Do you have . . .** READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (1) ...One A level or equivalent
- (2) ...More than one?
- (3) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A= 11 (VOCATIONAL 'A' LEVEL/ VCE), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q15

Q14. **Do you have . . .** READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...One vocational A level (6 units)
- (2) ...More than one vocational A level
- (3) ...One or more Double Award vocational A-levels (12 units)?
- (4) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A= 12 (HIGHER), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q16

Q15. **Do you have . . .** READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (1) ...One or Two Highers
- (2) ...Three or more Highers?
- (3) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A= 17 (AS'LEVEL), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q17

Q16. **Do you have . . .** READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (1) ...One A/S level
- (2) ...2 or 3 A/S levels

- (3) ...4 or more A/S levels?
- (4) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A= 18 (VOCATIONAL 'AS' LEVEL/ VCE), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q18

Q17. **Do you have . . .** READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (1) ...One vocational A/S level (3 units)
- (2) ...2 or 3 vocational A/S levels
- (3) ...4 or more vocational A/S levels?
- (4) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A= 26 (NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS - SCOTLAND), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q21

Q18. **What levels of National Qualifications do you have . . .** MULTICODE OK
READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...Access level
- (2) ...Intermediate 1
- (3) ...Intermediate 2
- (4) ...Higher
- (5) ...Advanced Higher
- (6) DON'T KNOW

IF Q18= 5 (ADV), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q21

Q19. **Do you have . . .** READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (1) One Advanced Higher
- (2) More than one

IF Q18= 5(ADV) & Q19 =2, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q21

Q20. **Do you have . . .** READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (1) Three or more Highers
- (2) Fewer than three

IF (Q2A=22,23,24,25) OR IF (Q18 = 2 OR 3), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q22

Q21. **Do you have any of the following qualifications?** READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| (1) GCSEs in vocational subjects at Grade C or above | ONLY SHOW | IF Q2a=24 |
| (2) GCSEs Grade C or above | | IF Q2a=23 |
| (3) CSEs Grade 1 | | IF Q2a=25 |
| (4) Standards grades 3/O Grades C or above | | IF Q2a=22 |
| (5) Scottish NQs Intermediate 1 grade A or above | | IF Q18=2 |
| (6) Scottish NQs Intermediate 2 grade D or above | | IF Q18=3 |
| (7) None of these | | |

IF Q21=1-6 OR Q2A=21, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q25

Q22. **You mentioned that you have passes at CATI NOTE: TEXT SUB FROM Q2a/Q21: {GCSEs Grade C or higher, O-levels, CSE Grade 1, Standard Grade 3 or above/O Grade C or above, Scottish NQs Intermediate 1 Grade A or above, Scottish NQs Intermediate 2 Grade D or above}**
How many passes do you have at this level? READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- (1) Less than five OR
- (2) Five or more
- (3) DON'T KNOW

IF CODE 1 (LESS THAN 5) AT Q22, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q24

Q23. **You mentioned that you have less than 5 passes. Do you have...?**
READ OUT, SINGLE CODE ONLY.

- (1) 1 or 2 passes OR
- (2) 3 or 4 passes?
- (3) DON'T KNOW

IF CODE 2 (5 OR MORE) AT Q22, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q25

Q24. **You mentioned that you have 5 or more passes. Do you have...?** READ
OUT, SINGLE CODE ONLY.

- (1) Between 5 and 7 passes
- (2) 8 or more passes?
- (3) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A=5, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q27

Q25. **What level BTEC have you obtained?**

READ

- (1) ...Higher level (Level 4)
- (2) ...National Certificate or National Diploma level (Level 3)
- (3) ...First diploma or general diploma (Level 2)
- (4) ...First certificate or general certificate (below Level 2)?
- (5) DON'T KNOW

IF DON'T KNOW AT Q25, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q27

Q26. **What is the title of your BTEC qualification?** WRITE IN

- (1) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A=6, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q29

Q27. **What level SCOTVEC have you obtained?**
READ OUT & MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...Higher level (Level 4)
- (2) ...Full National Certificate (Level 3)
- (3) ...A first diploma or general diploma (Level 2)
- (4) ...A first certificate or general certificate (Below Level 2)
- (5) ...Modules towards a National Certificate?
- (6) DON'T KNOW

IF DON'T KNOW AT Q27, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q29

Q28. **What is the title of your SCOTVEC qualification?** WRITE IN

- (1) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A=27, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q31

Q29. **What level RSA/OCR have you obtained?**
READ OUT & MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...Higher diploma
- (2) ...An advanced diploma or advanced certificate
- (3) ...A diploma

- (4) ...Some other RSA (including Stage I, II & III)?
- (5) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A=28, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q31

Q30. **What is the title of your RSA/OCR qualification?** WRITE IN

- (1) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A=28, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q33

Q31. **What level City & Guilds have you obtained?** READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...Advanced craft/Part 3
- (2) ...Craft/Part 2
- (3) ...Foundation/Part 1?
- (4) DON'T KNOW

IF DON'T KNOW AT Q31, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q33

Q32. **What is the title of your City and Guilds qualification?** WRITE IN

- (1) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A=16, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q35

Q33. **What level GNVQ or GSVQ have you obtained?** READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...Advanced level
- (2) ...Full intermediate level
- (3) ...Part one intermediate level
- (4) ...Full foundation level
- (5) ...Part one foundation level
- (6) DON'T KNOW

IF DON'T KNOW AT Q33, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q35

Q34. **What is the title of your GNVQ or GSVQ qualification?** WRITE IN

- (1) DON'T KNOW

IF Q2A=15, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q37

Q35. **What level NVQ/SVQ have you obtained?** READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- (1) ...Level 5
- (2) ...Level 4
- (3) ...Level 3
- (4) ...Level 2
- (5) ...Level 1
- (6) DON'T KNOW

IF DON'T KNOW AT Q35, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q37

Q36. What is the title your NVQ or SVQ qualification? WRITE IN

(1) DON'T KNOW

SECTION B: NO QUALIFICATIONS

ASK IF (Q1a=4) AND (Q1b=4) AND (Q1c=3) (NO QUALIFICATIONS), OTHERS GO TO Q50 (SECTION C)

Now I would like to ask you about any taught courses and periods of learning or training you might have had.

Q37. At what age did you first leave continuous full-time education? If you left and later returned to full-time education, please tell me how old you were when you first left.

ENTER EXACT AGE IN YEARS.
MIN AGE =14

CATI NOTE:

- (1) Not left full-time continuous education yet – still studying
- (2) Don't know
- (3) Refused

Q38. Can I just check, you said that you had no qualifications from school. Is that correct?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

ALL NO (CODE 2) AT Q38 SHOULD BE RE-DIRECTED BACK TO Q2a

ASK ALL WITH NO QUALIFICATIONS

Q39. Could I also just check whether you have ever completed a taught course since leaving school? By taught course we mean a course at which you were taught by a teacher, tutor, lecturer or equivalent. Please think about any course that you have ever completed at college, university, work, through any Apprenticeships or government schemes, or from studying at home or in your own time.

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

IF Q39= CODE 1, OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q41

Q40. Please can you describe this course (these courses)?

INTERVIEWER PROBE FULLY & ENTER DESCRIPTION FOR UP TO THREE COURSES

IF Q39= CODE 2, OTHERS GO TO Q43

Q41. Have you ever completed any modules or units that were part of a course or qualification? Please include any units or modules that you have ever done connected with college, university, work, any Apprenticeships or government schemes, or from studying at home or in your own time.

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

IF Q41 = CODE 1, OTHERS GO TO Q43

Q42. Please can you describe this module/unit (these modules/units)?

INTERVIEWER PROBE FULLY & ENTER DESCRIPTON(S)

ASK ALL WITH NO QUALIFICATIONS

Q43. Have you ever completed any self taught learning, working on your own from a package of materials provided by an employer, college, commercial organisation, learning resource centre or other training provider?

(IF PROMPTED: Materials include Books or written materials, audio-tapes/cassettes/CDs, Videos/TV programmes, Computer software packages/CD-ROMs, Internet)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

IF Q43 =CODE 1, OTHERS GO TO Q45

Q44. Please can you describe the learning that you did?

INTERVIEWER PROBE FULLY & ENTER DESCRIPTON(S)

ASK ALL WITH NO QUALS

Q45. Since leaving school, have you ever started a course or any learning or training which you did not complete? Please include any learning or training connected with college, university, work, any Apprenticeships or government schemes, or from studying at home or in your own time.

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

ASK IF EVER STARTED A COURSE THEY DID NOT COMPLETE (CODE 1 AT Q45), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q50 (SECTION C)

Q46. What was the title of the course or learning/ training have you started since you left school? If you have started more than one, please tell me about the most recent. INTERVIEWER WRITE IN COURSE

Q47. What was the subject of the course, learning or training you started?
ENTER DESCRIPTION

Q48. And was that based mainly ... READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

- (1) In a college such as a further education or specialist college
- (2) In a local community learning centre such as a library, LearnDirect centre
- (3) In a university
- (4) At your place of work
- (5) At home (e.g. following a correspondence course)
- (6) Or somewhere else? (SPECIFY)
- (7) Don't know (DO NOT READ OUT)

Q49. What were the main reasons why you did not complete that course?
MULTICODE OK.

- (1) I didn't have enough time to spend on it
- (2) I had difficulties with childcare/ family commitments
- (3) Personal reasons
- (4) Health reasons
- (5) I found the course too difficult
- (6) I lost interest in doing the course
- (7) The course was cancelled/ stopped
- (8) I only wanted to do part of it
- (9) I couldn't afford to pay for all of it
- (10) Other (SPECIFY)
- (11) Don't know/ can't remember

SECTION C: LEARNING HISTORY & ATTITUDES

ASK ALL WITH ANY QUALIFICATIONS AT Q1A (CODES 1-3), Q1B (CODES 1-3), OR Q1C (CODES 1-2), OTHERS GO TO FILTER AT Q51

Q50. At what age did you first leave continuous full-time education? If you left and later returned to full-time education, please tell me how old you were when you first left.

ENTER EXACT AGE IN YEARS.

- (1) Not left full-time continuous education yet – still studying
- (2) Don't know
- (3) Refused

ASK ALL

Q51. I would now like you to think about all forms of learning, training or courses that you have done in the past twelve months. Please can you tell me which of the following you have done...

READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

ASK IF ANY MENTIONED AT Q51, OTHERS GO TO Q54

Q52. And which of these, if any, are you CURRENTLY doing? NOTE TO CATI: ALLOW THOSE MENTIONED AT Q51 ONLY. MULTICODE OK.

- (1) attending taught courses which can lead to qualifications
- (2) attending taught courses designed to help you develop skills that you might use in a job
- (3) attending another type of taught course, instruction or tuition
- (4) receiving supervised training whilst you were doing a job
- (5) spending time keeping up to date with developments in the type of work you do, e.g. reading books, manuals or attending seminars
- (6) spending time learning about personal interests or hobbies without attending a taught course
- (7) NONE OF THESE (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

IF ANY CODES 1-8 AT Q51, OTHERS GO TO Q54

Q53. Which of the following, if any, would you say happened as a result of you taking part in this learning or training?

READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- (1) Got a new job
- (2) Changed to a different type of work
- (3) Learned new skills for the job I was doing at the time
- (4) Felt able to do my job better
- (5) Gained a pay rise or promotion in the organisation
- (6) Got more satisfaction out of work
- (7) Able to set-up own/family business
- (8) Helped to overcome work problems relating to health/disability
- (9) Helped achieve/maintain better work-life balance
- (10) Other job-related outcome
- (11) I developed personal interests unrelated to work
- (12) I gained confidence in my own abilities?
- (13) OTHER (SPECIFY)
- (14) Nothing YET – still involved in learning/ training

- (15)NOTHING
- (16)DON'T KNOW

ASK ALL

Q54. **Please can you tell me whether you plan to be involved in any of the following forms of learning or training in the next year...**
READ OUT, MULTICODE OK

- (1) attending taught courses which can lead to qualifications
- (2) attending taught courses designed to help you develop skills that you might use in a job
- (3) attending another type of taught course, instruction or tuition
- (4) receiving supervised training whilst you are doing a job
- (5) spending time keeping up to date with developments in the type of work you do, e.g. reading books, manuals or attending seminars
- (6) spending time learning about personal interests or hobbies without attending a taught course
- (7) NONE OF THESE (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

ASK IF ANY CODES 1-8 AT Q54, OTHERS GO TO Q56

Q55. **What are the main reasons why you plan to be involved in learning or training during the next year?** DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK

- (1) My employer makes it compulsory
- (2) Professional body makes it compulsory
- (3) Trade Union/ Staff Association makes it compulsory
- (4) Compulsory according to legislation
- (5) To get a new job
- (6) To develop my career
- (7) To change to a different type of work
- (8) To give me new skills for the job I am doing now
- (9) To stay in my job, that I might lose without doing this course
- (10)To get a pay rise in the job I am doing now
- (11)To get a promotion
- (12)To get more satisfaction out of my work
- (13)To help me set up my own/ family business
- (14)To develop personal interests unrelated to work
- (15)To build confidence in my abilities
- (16)OTHER (SPECIFY)
- (17)DON'T KNOW

ASK ALL

Q56. **What, if anything, is preventing you from learning or studying new things in the next year? What else?** PROBE FULLY BUT DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK

(1) NOTHING PREVENTS ME (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

Practical/Financial

- (2) Too expensive/can't afford it
- (3) Not enough time
- (4) Work pressures/hours of work
- (5) Family/Childcare commitments
- (6) Lack of transport
- (7) Too far to travel

Courses available

- (8) No suitable courses available
- (9) Don't know what is available
- (10) No courses that interest me in my local area
- (11) Bad memories of school
- (12) Fear of exams

Personal

- (13) Lack of confidence
- (14) Don't like being in groups of people I don't know
- (15) I feel I am too old
- (16) Health reasons

Lack motivation

- (17) Haven't got around to doing it
- (18) Can't see the point
- (19) Don't want to learn new things
- (20) Have just completed a course

(21) Am already learning/studying

(22) OTHER (SPECIFY)

(23) DON'T KNOW (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

Q56a **To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

- A) Learning is something you should do throughout your life
- B) Learning is only worthwhile if there is a qualification at the end of it

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know (DO NOT READ OUT)

SECTION D: DEMOGRAPHICS

I just want to finish by asking a few questions about you. The information we get from these questions will help us to analyse the results of the survey.

ASK ALL

Q57. **Which country were you born in?** DO NOT PROMPT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

- (1) United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales)
- (2) Elsewhere in Europe (SPECIFY)
- (3) India
- (4) Pakistan
- (5) Bangladesh
- (6) Africa (SPECIFY)
- (7) Other Asia (SPECIFY)
- (8) Other (SPECIFY)
- (9) Refused

ASK IF CODES 2-7 AT Q57

Q58. **Which year did you first come to live in this country?** INTERVIEWER: IF THE RESPONDENT HAS LIVED HERE INTERMITTENTLY, PLEASE RECORD THE DATE OF THE FIRST TIME THEY CAME TO THIS COUNTRY TO LIVE.

RANGE CHECK: 1905 TO 2005

Refused

ASK ALL

Q59. **Can I just check, is English your first language?**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

ASK IF NO (CODE 2 AT Q59), OTHERS GO TO Q61

Q60. **What is your first language?** MULTICODE OK

- (1) Arabic
- (2) Bengali
- (3) Cantonese
- (4) French
- (5) German
- (6) Greek
- (7) Gujarati
- (8) Hakka
- (9) Hausa
- (10) Hindi
- (11) Ibo
- (12) Italian
- (13) Mandarin
- (14) Polish
- (15) Punjabi
- (16) Pushtoo
- (17) Somali
- (18) Spanish

- (19)Swahili
- (20)Sylhethi
- (21)Tamil
- (22)Turkish
- (23)Urdu
- (24)Vietnamese
- (25)Yoruba
- (26)Other (SPECIFY)
- (27)Don't know
- (28)Refused

ASK ALL NOT CURRENTLY WORKING (All except codes 1, 2, 3 and 5 at QS4a), OTHERS GO TO Q63

Q61. **Have you ever in your life had paid work, apart from casual or holiday work? Please include self-employment or Government schemes if they involved paid work. SINGLE CODE ONLY**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Q62. **What year did you leave your last paid job?**

RECORD YEAR 1905 – 2005

- (1) Don't know/ can't remember

ASK ALL CURRENTLY WORKING OR EVER WORKED (SQ4a codes 1, 2, 3 and 5 or code 1 at Q61), OTHERS GO TO Q66

CATI NOTE: USE PRESENT TENSE IN Q WORDING AT Qs63-65 IF SQ4a CODES 1, 2, 3 OR 5 AND PAST TENSE IF Q61 CODE 1

Q63. **What does/ did the firm or organisation you work(ed) for mainly make or do at the place where you work(ed)? IF NOT CURRENTLY WORKING ASK ABOUT MOST RECENT JOB**

DESCRIBE FULLY – MANUFACTURING, PROCESSING, CUSTOMER SERVICE ETC AND MAIN GOODS PRODUCED, MATERIALS USED, WHETHER WHOLESALE OR RETAIL, ETC

Q64. **What is/ was your (main) job title? IF NOT CURRENTLY WORKING ASK ABOUT MOST RECENT JOB**

WRITE IN FULL FOR CODING BROAD SOC

Q65. **What do/ did you mainly do in your job? IF NOT CURRENTLY WORKING ASK ABOUT MOST RECENT JOB**

WRITE IN FULL FOR CODING BROAD SOC

ASK ALL

Q66. **Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? By long-standing I mean anything that has troubled you for more than a year or that is likely to affect you for more than a year? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Refused

IF YES AT Q66, OTHERS THANK AND CLOSE

Q67. **Does this health problem affect the KIND of paid work that you might do or AMOUNT of paid work that you might do?**

- (1) Yes- It affects the kind of work that I might do MULTICODE OK
- (2) Yes – It affects the amount of work that I might do MULTICODE OK
- (3) No SINGLE CODE ONLY
- (4) Don't know SINGLE CODE ONLY
- (5) Refused SINGLE CODE ONLY

THANK RESPONDENT AND CLOSE INTERVIEW

Topic Guide (Phase Two)

Core Aims and Objectives:

- To **cognitively test** proposed amendments to the existing Labour Force Survey highest qualifications question to determine how people understand the question and what decisions people make when they are answering the question.
- To get a handle on the **language that people employ** when they talk and think about qualifications.
- To **map the life histories** of individuals to determine when and where they have gained qualifications and skills – this establishes the context for how they have answered the qualifications question.

Interview Areas	Timing/ Notes
1. Welcome and Introduction	2-3 mins
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank interviewee for taking part • Introduce self, MORI, client • Explain the aim of the interview – will help to develop questions that are used to collect information about qualifications in Britain • Explain format of the session (cognitive testing) & length of interview (45-60 minutes) • Explain that this is not a test, we are just asking for their help to test and develop questions that are clearly understood by all sorts of people. They are the expert! • Explain confidentiality & get permission to record 	<p>Orientates the interviewee and outlines the 'rules' of the interview</p> <p>Role of MORI – researcher, gather opinions, independent</p>
2. Interviewee introduction	2-3 mins
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where do you live? Who with? How long have you lived there? • Check economic (and occupational) status & whether they have ever had a job • Review information from recruitment questionnaire 	<p>Easing respondents into the interview. Provides important contextual background information about each interviewee</p>
3. Cognitive testing the revised LFS question	15-20 mins
EXPLAIN THAT YOU WOULD LIKE THE RESPONDENT TO THINK ALOUD AND EXPLAIN WHAT THEY ARE THINKING.	Examining the spontaneous

THINK ALOUD AND EXPLAIN WHAT THEY ARE THINKING ABOUT WHEN THEY ARE ANSWERING THE QUESTION: :

Give e.g. of how you would go about answering the question – ‘how many windows do you have in your home?’

“I would now like to ask you about education and work-related training.

Please think about ALL the qualifications you have ever gained, even if it was a long time ago, or they are not relevant to you now.

Do you have any qualifications...”

from school

from college or university

connected with work

from government schemes

from a Trade/ Modern Apprenticeship

from having been educated at home, when you were of school age

no qualifications

don’t know.

IF HAS QUALIFICATIONS

“What qualifications do you have?” Please tell us about ALL the qualifications you have ever gained from school, college, university, work, any Apprenticeships or government schemes, or from studying at home.

SPLIT SAMPLE (50:50) WITH:

“What qualifications do you have?” Please tell us about ALL the qualifications you have ever gained from studying at home, any Apprenticeships or government schemes, work, or from school, college, or university.

Explore the decisions that they made:

- How did you decide upon those answers?
- What qualifications did you think about when they were answering the question?
- What do you ‘count’ as a qualification? What do you discount as a qualification?
(are respondent’s discounting vocational and leisure qualifications particularly because this is a Government survey?).
- What do they understand by and associate with the terminology used:
‘qualifications’
‘learning’
Can you describe/ define each term in your own words?
What is the difference between qualifications and learning?

answers and reactions to the revised LFS highest qualification question and exploring the cognitive processes and calculations associated with the question

Mapping participants’ unprompted definitions of how they define qualification ‘boundaries’

Explore the decisions that the respondents makes about what to include and what to exclude as qualifications in general and about their qualifications in particular

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which of these do you think of as your highest qualification? • How does the respondent calculate their highest qualification? For example – do they... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) think of all the qualifications they have and then rank them (building a qualification spectrum from the lowest qualification to the highest)? b) start with the highest qualification that they think they have and compare it against any other qualifications that they may have? c) take a central or well known qualification (such as GCSEs or NVQs) and position their own qualification against that qualification? d) Calculate it some other way? 	
<p>4. Life mapping: charting past and current learning experience</p>	<p>15-20 mins</p>
<p>EXPLAIN THAT WE WANT TO PRODUCE A LIFELINE OF THEIR LEARNING EXPERIENCE. PROBE ON LEARNING EVENTS (ACQUIRING SKILLS/QUALS):</p> <p>THIS IS A BLANK PIECE OF PAPER THAT WE WRITE IMPORTANT EVENTS ONTO IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER. THIS WILL ENABLE US TO SEE WHEN PEOPLE GAINED SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS THROUGHOUT THEIR LIFE.</p> <p>WHAT THEY LEARNED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of skills and qualifications have they learned over time? What was the learning outcome? PROBE: Did you think you would complete the qualification? Did you achieve what you wanted to? Why/Why not? • Did you receive a certificate for your qualification? Can you remember the name of the awarding body or who the certificate was awarded by? <p>WHEN THEY LEARNED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you currently involved in any learning? • When did you leave school/other education/finish your last course? <p>PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you find school, what were the people like there (other pupils, teachers?) Did you enjoy/dislike school? What was your favourite subject? Why? Have you pursued that subject since? Did you feel school had the right balance between practical and academic learning? Why/Why not? <p>ADULT EDUCATION, WORK BASED LEARNING/TRAINING /OTHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is it? What sort of courses/learning opportunities does it provide for people? What sort of people went there/were on your course? What did you expect to get out of the course? Did it meet your expectations? Who runs it? How did you find out about it? 	<p>The first section taps into the respondents' <i>experience</i> of learning and qualifications. What they have and what they think they have will be charted through the production of a chronological life map. This will also focus on whether they simply recall qualifications that relate to skills they use currently in their everyday lives or whether they are provided a full picture of the qualifications that they have gained over their life course. It also explores motivations behind learning experiences and source of support?</p>

<p>WHERE THEY ACQUIRED THE SKILL OR QUALIFICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-, School-, Work-, Leisure- based learning? Formal/Informal? Taught/Self taught • What kinds of skill do you/did you use in their job/everyday lives? <p>MOTIVATIONS FOR LEARNING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you feel about learning when you were at school? How about now? What were you interested in? Did you pursue that interest? Why? Why did you think it would be useful? • Who encouraged you to do this? Did you take any advice about this? Who from? Why? • Was it planned as a one-off or as part of a larger aim? What was the outcome? What was positive/negative about the experience? Did your aims/expectations change as you were learning? How did you maintain your motivation? • What were the most important factors in making you decide to learn? Why? <p>FUTURE/UNREALISED LEARNING GOALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What other learning opportunities would you would like to pursue? Why? Are there any obstacles or barriers? What are they (finance/access/pace or demands of the course/other personal concerns etc)? And what would you like to do with your time in an ideal world? <p>HOBBIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you like to do in your spare time? What do you like to do to relax/for leisure? Why? 	
<p>5. Perceptions and understandings of ‘qualifications’</p>	<p>10 mins</p>
<p>EXPLAIN THAT WE ARE GONG TO TALK NOW ABOUT PARTICULAR QUALFICATIONS THAT ARE AVAILABLE NOW OR HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST</p> <p>What do you think is meant by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘vocational qualifications’ • ‘academic qualifications’ • ‘professional qualifications’ • ‘trade apprenticeships’ <p>PROBE FOR EACH IN TURN: Can you describe the term in your own words? What sorts of things does this term include?</p> <p>THE QUALIFICATIONS SPECTRUM – THIS ASKS THE RESPONDENT TO MARK THE QUALIFICATION THAT THEY HAVE ON A SPECTRUM, THEY WILL ALSO BE ASKED TO MARK ON OTHER QUALIFICATIONS SUCH AS NVQS, GCSES, NURSING QUALIFICATIONS AND A’LEVELS</p> <p>How does the respondent decide where to place each of their qualifications? PROBE Why have you put the qualifications in certain positions? For ‘No</p>	<p>The third section will focus upon the respondents’ <i>perceptions</i> about qualifications more generally. This section will develop the <i>understandings and definitions</i> provided by the respondent in the first section.</p> <p>It will also look at which qualifications are familiar/unfamiliar to the respondent. This will tap into awareness levels and also into the language that people use when they are thinking and talking about qualifications.</p> <p>This section will</p>

<p>qualifications' group we could ask them to map skills on the spectrum.</p> <p>For each of the following in turn (maybe make into explicit examples):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BTEC national diploma City and Guild Advanced Craft GNVQ or GSVQ Foundation or Intermediate O'Level, GCSE A' Level, AS Level or equivalent NVQ level 1 CLAIT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me whether they are familiar or unfamiliar to you? • Can you give me a brief description of what this means to you? • What sort of person has this kind of qualification? What sorts of occupations are people with this type of qualification involved in? What sort of thing would you need this qualification for? • Can you tell me how you think the qualification 'part GNVQ' would be different from a 'full GNVQ'? • How would you describe a 'full' qualification- what is it like? What would you need to do? What about units – what do you think this means? What is it like? What would you need to do? <p>EXPLAIN: WE DO NOT EXPECT THEM TO HAVE HEARD OF ALL OF THE QUALS</p> <p>ASK TO MARK SOME OF THESE ON THE QUALIFICATIONS SPECTRUM WITH THEIR OWN</p> <p>If you had a certificate for a job that required a particular skill (Caring, Catering, Carpentry and Joinery, Health and Safety, Secretarial) which qualification do you think you would have?</p>	<p>also look at the <i>relationships between the qualifications</i> that they hold and a choice selection of well-known qualifications. The 'qualifications spectrum' will help to determine the value that they place on their own qualifications in comparison to other existing qualifications.</p>
<p>6. Final message, wrap-up and thanks</p>	<p>5 mins</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of things do you think would encourage and support people to learn throughout their life? • Which of these things do you think are the most important? Why? • Is there anything else you would like to add? <p>THANK INTERVIEWEE</p> <p>HAND OUT INCENTIVES</p>	<p>Conclude the interview</p>

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