SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

National Review of the
Early Years and Childcare
Workforce: Analysis of
Consultation and
Workshop Responses

Education

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NATIONAL REVIEW OF THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE WORKFORCE: ANALYSIS OF CONSULTATION AND WORKSHOP RESPONSES

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CONTENTS   **PAGE NO.**

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

CONTENTS   PAGE NO.

TABLES

ANNEXES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Scottish Executive Education Department consultation "National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce" was launched on 10 August 2006. Two consultation papers were issued and a series of five workshops held. One hundred and fifteen consultees responded to the main written consultation paper. The second consultation paper was shorter and aimed specifically at individual childcare workers and childminders. In total, two hundred and one childcare workers and fifty-eight childminders responded to questions posed for them. Two hundred and ten stakeholders took part in the workshops, including early years and childcare managers, childcare providers, childcare workers and local authority representatives. This report presents an analysis of the responses to both written consultations and the workshop discussions.

The National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce was announced by the Minister for Education and Young People in June 2004. The Review's remit was to improve employment opportunities for early years and childcare staff and raise the status of the sector. The Review focused on five main workstreams: roles and responsibilities; qualifications and training; career pathways; recruitment and retention; and workforce planning.

The National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce consultation is intended to inform the implementation of *Investing in Children's Futures*, the Scottish Executive's response to the work of the Review. The consultation documents were structured around the main topics addressed by the Review and invited views from a range of perspectives including employers, employees, regulatory bodies, representative organisations, local authorities and training providers.

The response level from consultees to each of the questions tabled in the written consultations was relatively high compared with other Scottish Executive written consultations of this nature. The exercise was also encouraging in terms of the participation of a wide range of respondents from many different perspectives. The consultation topics touched upon issues of which many respondents had first-hand experience, in addition to more strategic topics and issues for the future. One-quarter of respondents to the main consultation were representative bodies, with one-fifth constituting local authorities.

SUMMARY OF VIEWS EXPRESSED

Many consultees welcomed the Review of the early years and childcare workforce as timely and appropriate, although the decision not to include the teaching workforce within the Review, and the lack of a specific remit to address issues of pay and conditions, were criticised by some respondents.

Roles and Responsibilities (Chapter 4)

Respondents to the main written consultation identified the key barriers to developing a coherent workforce as lack of parity in pay and conditions across the sector; the wide

variety of different settings and service provision; and the wide range of qualifications and qualification routes available. Around one-third of those consultees who provided a view called for multi-agency training, with just under one-third advocating increased and sustained funding as ways to promote greater coherence across the sector as a whole.

The proposed roles and responsibilities framework was given much support with many respondents considering that it reflected what workers will be doing over coming years. Its main benefits were seen as clarifying individual roles, and enabling workers to know what is expected of them. Several respondents considered that key omissions to the framework were the roles and responsibilities of teachers and childminders.

Whilst the vast majority (83%) of respondents agreed that the framework provided a useful basis for developing professional qualifications in the sector, a common concern was that the framework may not be entirely appropriate for rural and smaller establishments.

Career Pathways (Chapter 5)

Most respondents (68% of those who commented) considered that the consultation document presented a good or reasonably accurate picture of current career pathways in the early years and childcare sector. In particular, consultees agreed that the existence of wide differences in pay and conditions between parts of the sector stood in the way of promoting career pathways. Amongst the many suggestions made to increase the effectiveness of the proposals for career pathways were better resourcing of training and secondments; recompensing those who achieve higher qualifications and take on increased responsibilities; ensuring that those guiding and advising on careers portray an accurate and educated picture of the profession; and establishing a formal communications strategy which incorporates targeted advertising and positive images of the workforce.

Qualifications, Training and Development: Views from the Written Consultations (Chapter 6)

Almost all of those who provided a view supported the proposed single qualifications framework set out in the main consultation. Respondents welcomed in particular the notion of core units with the availability of additional, more specialist modules, to plug gaps and add to knowledge. The recognition of prior learning within the framework was also widely appreciated.

The majority of childminders (62%) who responded to the childminders' consultation questions considered it important to have qualifications on par with the rest of the early years and childcare workforce. Around three-quarters of childminders who provided a view stated that they would undertake training and learning if it was recognised within a single qualifications and professional development framework. However, the most common barrier (mentioned by 71% of respondents) preventing them from undertaking training and learning was not having time to pursue this. Childminders considered that

more flexible training delivery patterns such as evening and weekend courses might help them to take-up learning opportunities, as would financial help to cover their attendance at courses.

Most (60%) of the respondents to the main consultation considered that services should be led by Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 9. Some consultees argued for increasing this to level 10 to be in line with teachers and other related professionals. However, many complained that pay for those attaining such levels would not rise accordingly. Others cautioned that the introduction of level 9 may be particularly challenging for the voluntary and private sector workforce in that the logistics of facilitating training and financially rewarding qualified staff could create problems.

There were mixed views amongst individual childcare workers regarding the proposal to raise the qualification level. Whilst many supported the proposal in order to increase the professionalism and status of the workforce, others considered that experience should count for more than paper qualifications and that the proposal would impact disproportionately on smaller settings and voluntary/private establishments, possibly leading to an exodus of staff from these.

The vast majority (95%) of individual workers felt supported by their employer in their continuing professional development (CPD). Respondents to the main consultation identified varied delivery of training and learning, to accommodate a range of needs and styles, as key to an effective CPD framework.

Individual workers were relatively evenly split between those who considered their training to be comprehensive (53%), and those who could identify gaps in their training (46%). Where gaps were identified, those most commonly mentioned were: dealing with parents; report writing, writing assessments and making observations; managerial skills; administration; and dealing with children with special needs.

Qualifications, Training and Development: Views from the Workshops (Chapter 7)

Participants at the five workshops envisaged flexibility of delivery of level 9 to involve catering for many different learning styles and offering a mix of delivery modes. One key concern was that practitioners in rural areas should not be disadvantaged by restricted delivery opportunities.

Both advantages and disadvantages to a variety of delivery modes were discussed at the workshops. Workplace delivery of level 9 was viewed as a practical and cost-effective option which combined study with day-to-day work in a convenient way. Centre-based learning was welcomed if combined with other types of delivery. The value of peer support which this offered was welcomed although disadvantages of practical and cost implications were raised. There was much support for e-learning as part of a package of flexible delivery with this form of learning seen as providing a learner-centred approach. However, drawbacks were envisaged too. In particular, e-learning was viewed as potentially isolating, daunting and de-motivating for some.

Participants considered that Higher Education Institution (HEI) and Further Education (FE) bodies should work together, possibly with the help of childcare partnerships, to provide a flexible course which suited the needs of the workforce. They also stipulated that employers had a role in supporting employees through their training.

There was much agreement that a robust credit transfer system should be established to enable the transfer from existing awards to the new award. Although participants agreed on the principle of recognising prior learning, there was less agreement on how such a system could operate in practice. Many argued that to be credible, such a system would need to be consistent, simple, clear, open and readily understandable with guidance given on what type of learning will be recognised. Much support was given to the idea of employees developing portfolios of learning and experience.

Calls were made for external assessors working to high and consistent standards to assess work-based learning, a system which many thought was currently lacking.

Recruitment and Retention (Chapter 8)

The vast majority (83%) of respondents considered that the main consultation document represented well the issues affecting the status of the workforce. Many consultees (80%) considered that pay and conditions were other key factors which affected the recruitment and retention of staff. Other factors raised included work patterns (particularly the lack of full-time posts) (raised by 38% of respondents), limited job and career progression opportunities within the workforce (raised by 30%), and poor careers advice (raised by 28%).

Twenty-five per cent of individual childcare workers who expressed a view reported that providing opportunities for training and promotion, and a good reputation, were key factors which attracted them to their current employer. Most childcare workers (83%) considered that better pay and terms of service would help employers attract new recruits and/or keep workers in the sector.

A role was seen for childcare partnerships in facilitating the sharing of good practice on recruitment and retention. Some consultees recommended that existing national and local forums and networks could also be used for this function.

Three out of four of those who commented argued that increasing wages in the workforce was a way of attracting men into the sector. Other common suggestions to attract men were to address society's attitudes towards men working in the sector; to run targeted recruitment and advertising campaigns; to raise the status of childcare as a profession; and to change the messages delivered by careers guidance professionals.

Workforce Planning (Chapter 9)

Most respondents (60%) thought the main consultation document covered broadly the

key challenges facing the early years and childcare sector regarding workforce planning. A few calls were made for the sector's workforce planning to be more clearly linked to that of other related organisations such as Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), the Care Commission and the SCQF.

A substantial minority of respondents (around one-quarter) considered that workforce planning tended to be more reactive than strategic and was not well developed. Where examples of workforce planning were provided these were, in the main, evident at local authority level. A recurring comment was that childcare partnerships could play a key role in promoting workforce planning.

Recommendations for action at local level to enable workforce planning to take place included the implementation of national strategies by local bodies and more strategic and joined up work across local authority departments. At national level, respondents called for the provision of clear guidance and vision, and realistic and sustained funding to underpin workforce planning.

A Developing Profession (Chapter 10)

Apart from the proposals set out in the Review, many respondents recommended that a review of pay and conditions could also contribute to the development of a single, coherent profession. It was felt that there should be more effort within the sector to join up and work together. Many respondents also considered that it was essential that teachers and childminders be included within the proposals for a single, coherent profession.

There were mixed views on the notion of using the title "pedagogue" within a Scottish context. Whilst one-quarter of those who expressed a view clearly supported its use, many others argued that it was an unfamiliar term and not appropriate for use in Scotland. Respondents provided a vast range of ideas for an appropriate name for the early years and childcare workforce, with many of their proposals including the term "early years" and/or the word "childhood". The most common six were: Early Years and Childcare Professionals, Early Years Workforce, Early Years Professionals, Early Years Educators, Early Years Managers and Early Years Practitioners.

A recurring recommendation was for continuing consultation with the early years and childcare staff on issues affecting them.

OVERARCHING THEMES TO EMERGE

A small number of themes emerged repeatedly across several different topics in both the written consultations and the workshops. These are addressed briefly below and in more detail in the main body of the report.

Issues of Pay and Conditions Across the Sector

Many respondents were disappointed that the consultation did not include a review of pay and conditions as part of its remit. A prevalent view was that an in-depth consideration of key topics such as the proposal for a single, shared framework for roles and responsibilities, higher qualification levels, career pathways and recruitment and retention, was hampered by the omission of proposals for future pay and conditions.

Associated with this was a concern that disparities in pay across the different parts of the sector created barriers to integration and the establishment of a coherent workforce with a professional image and status.

Another overarching concern was that discussions on promoting and facilitating training and learning with a view to updating skills and achieving higher qualifications, were taking place independently from a consideration of how achievement would be rewarded financially, especially by smaller voluntary and private establishments.

Such sentiments emerged across much of the consultation and indeed, dominated the responses to some questions.

Applicability of Proposals to All Settings

Whilst there was much support for many of the proposals set out in the consultation, it was also common to find respondents tempering this with caution that the proposals may not be entirely appropriate in smaller, independent establishments and rural settings. A recurring comment was that a "one size fits all" approach may not work in this context.

It was felt that to a large extent, market forces determined pay in the private and voluntary sectors, therefore restricting the flexibility of employers to attract and retain workers with higher pay deals. Opportunities for vertical and horizontal career pathways were seen as limited in these environments, with other difficulties foreseen in releasing staff for training and learning.

Many respondents raised concerns that even if staff could be released, accessing training in remote and rural areas could prove to be difficult without some innovatory thinking around sharing facilities, flexible delivery including remote learning, and peripatetic working by trainers and assessors. In a profession without a tradition of sharing and joined-up working this was seen as problematic.

Importance of Experience

Many of the consultation questions sparked a robust defence of the value of experience amongst the workforce, perhaps highlighting that any future development of an integrated qualifications and development framework must, where possible, build on experience as well as offering professional development and achievement of formal qualifications.

There were concerns that the quest for qualifications would take precedence over valuing long-standing experience, and perhaps precipitate an exodus of valuable staff who did not wish to pursue the qualifications ladder. Many considered that gaining on-the-job experience could contribute to increasing standards of care in a way which no amount of paper qualifications could guarantee.

Teachers and Childminders

Although the consultation stated clearly that teachers working in early years settings were not part of this Review as they had only recently been subject to a major review, this did not prevent many requests from respondents to change this decision in order to address issues on a comprehensive basis. Not including teachers and the perceived exclusion of childminders[1] were highlighted repeatedly by respondents from across different sectors as barriers to in-depth consideration of many topics such as career pathways, roles and responsibilities, training and qualifications, and creating a single, coherent profession.

Portraying an Appropriate Image

The importance of portraying an appropriate image of the workforce was a dimension running through many of the topics raised in the consultation, for example, in relation to recruitment, status, abilities of new recruits, and so on. This was also an issue which tended to unite respondents in agreement that the current portrayal of the sector appeared to be inaccurate, misleading and unhelpful. Those working in the sector shared a common understanding of the qualities and skills required to do their work well, with many complaining that the public image of the workforce, and particularly the way they thought that it was being marketed in schools and job centres, did not match the reality and demands of the job.

Many ideas were provided by respondents on ways to improve the image of the sector with better marketing approaches and a major drive to address what was seen as current inadequate careers guidance in schools and colleges.

All of these themes are discussed in more detail at appropriate sections of this analysis report.

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[1] The Review did in fact include childminders who are registered with the Care Commission.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE CONSULTATION

THE CONSULTATION

The consultation "National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce" was launched by the Minister for Education and Young People on 10 August 2006. The consultation comprised two written consultation papers and a series of five workshops. The main consultation paper posed a series of twenty-one questions. Four questions aimed specifically at childminders and five targeted at individual childcare workers were issued in a separate consultation paper.[2]

Copies of the two written consultation papers were distributed to a wide range of organisations and individuals with an interest in the early years and childcare workforce. Around three thousand five hundred hard copies of the consultation papers were sent out largely to representative bodies to distribute further to their members. All employers registered with the Care Commission received the consultation documents for their staff. The consultation was further publicised on the Scottish Executive website and also on the websites of a range of other organisations such as Learning Teaching Scotland, Scottish Childminding Association and the Care Commission.

The written consultation period ran from 10 August 2006 until 22 December 2006, although this closing date was subsequently extended to 5 January 2007 to allow for late responses during the Christmas holiday period.

The five workshops took place between 6 November and 4 December 2006. Participants at the workshops included early years and childcare managers, training providers, individual workers and local authority representatives. Four of the workshops took place in Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee. The remaining workshop was conducted via video-link to enable participants in remote island areas to participate more readily.

A press release helped publicise the consultation papers. In announcing the consultation the Minister for Education and Young People said:

> *"Nursery and childcare workers are key professionals who make a difference to thousands of children's lives every day. Their skills, professionalism and dedication must be recognised, so that our children continue to benefit from even higher quality pre-school and childcare services. I have set out a plan today to ensure that families have access to the high-quality, flexible services they need.*

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[2] The main consultation paper can be viewed at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/07/10140823/0
The consultation paper for individual workers and childminders can be viewed at
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/08/09081744/0

I did not create this plan on my own. I asked the experts - the profession itself - to tell me what needed to happen to improve their services and careers. Their report has helped me to understand the challenges and opportunities in pre-school and childcare professions, and has directly informed my response. Now I want to continue this dialogue with the profession as we work out the detail of how we implement these changes.

We have set out concrete steps to help improve our already high quality childcare and early years' provision. The status, recognition and professional development of nursery and childcare staff across the country will improve, giving them the opportunity to develop their expertise and build long, satisfying and rewarding careers which will deliver consistently higher quality services the length and breadth of Scotland."

The consultation papers sought comments on the key proposal to develop a single, shared framework to encompass the diverse roles and responsibilities of the early years and childcare workforce. Other main proposals were to introduce new qualifications for managers, develop a career structure for all early years and childcare workers and provide ongoing training and development. The workshops focused on two central questions. Firstly, they asked for views on what would make a SCQF level 9 qualification flexible; and secondly, for views on how to ensure there are clear pathways between existing qualifications and a new SCQF level 9 qualification.

By the final cut-off date for receipt of responses, three hundred and seventy four responses had been made to the written consultations and have been included in this analysis.[3] (A further two responses were received after the extended cut-off point, and have not been included in this analysis.) In addition, the consultation workshops attracted two hundred and ten participants.

CONTEXT

The National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce was announced by the Minister for Education and Young People in June 2004. The Review group was chaired by the Scottish Executive and involved representatives of the main stakeholders extending from key representative bodies, training bodies and service providers to parents. Its overall task was to improve employment opportunities for early years and childcare staff and raise the status of the sector, including:

- Examining and defining the role and responsibilities of staff in the early years, childcare and play workforce;
- Determining an approach to national workforce planning;
- Rationalising and modernising early years/childcare qualifications, ensuring that they are appropriate for the different sectors of the workforce;

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[3] Annex 1 contains a list of the organisations which responded to the main written consultation.

> - Developing vertical and lateral career pathways which provide for progression within a chosen area and lateral movement between different sectors of the workforce;
> - Consider the implications of these considerations for pay and conditions.

For the purposes of the Review, the workforce under consideration was defined as those groups of workers who are required to be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council and who work in:

- Early years care and learning;
- Out of school care and in playwork

As well as:

- Childminders who are registered with the Care Commission

A decision was taken that the Review should not include teachers working in early years settings as the teaching workforce had only recently been subject to a major review. However the Review group recognised that there was not a clear boundary round the workforce.

The Review focused on five main workstreams with working groups set up to examine each in detail:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Qualifications and training
- Career pathways
- Recruitment and retention
- Workforce planning

The National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce consultation is intended to inform the implementation of *Investing in Children's Futures*, the Scottish Executive's response to the work of the Review. Published in August 2006, it seeks the views of a wide range of early years and childcare staff and organisations on the key topics which formed the Review team's remit. The responses to the written consultation have been made publicly available in the Scottish Executive library unless the respondent has specifically requested otherwise.

The remainder of the report presents the "story" of the consultation, - the consultation process (Chapter 2), respondents' views on that process (Chapter 3), and the findings of the analysis (Chapters 4-10).

CHAPTER 2: THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

TIMING OF CONSULTATION

The written consultation became "live" on 10 August 2006 with a formal closing date of 22 December 2006 although responses received up to 5 January 2007 have been included in the analysis. The scale of the consultation was wide in terms of distribution to stakeholders and relatively large in terms of the volume of responses received. Staff in the Early Education and Childcare Division of the Scottish Executive's Education Department supported the exercise.

NATURE OF CONSULTATION

The main consultation document comprised fifty four pages along with several Annexes. Twenty-one consultation questions were raised throughout the report and were grouped under the five main themes to emerge from the Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce: Roles and Responsibilities; Qualifications and Training; Career Pathways; Recruitment and Retention; and Workforce Planning.

A further six page consultation document was issued and aimed at childminders and childcare workers. The document contained response forms which posed four questions for childminders and five questions for individual childcare workers.

Around three thousand five hundred hard copies of the consultation papers were distributed largely to representative bodies to distribute to their members.

As described in Chapter One, four face-to-face workshops and one video-linked workshop were also undertaken and attracted two hundred and ten participants. The workshops aimed to contribute to a body of expert knowledge on some of the issues emerging from the national Review of the early years and childcare workforce. They focused on the practical and day-to-day realities that workers face when trying to access qualifications. Their format was consistent and commenced with two presentations made by the SSSC and by the Scottish Executive respectively. Smaller groups were formed and their facilitators followed a set structure posing two key questions with supporting prompt topics and questions. The key questions are shown in Annex 2.

NATURE OF RESPONSES

The structure of the consultation documents provided a steer in promoting some consistency in form of response. Most respondents used the consultation question framework to structure their response either electronically or in hard copy. Most provided some response on every topic raised by the questions in their respective consultation document. Annex 3 contains a summary of the volume of responses received to each question in the main written consultation.

THE RESPONDENTS

The list of organisations and individuals that responded is documented at Annex 1. Overall, one hundred and fifteen responses were received to the main consultation. Respondents could be grouped into broad categories as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondents to the Main Consultation by Category

Respondent Category	No.	% of total
Representative Organisations	29	25
Local Authorities	23	20
Childcare Providers	19	17
Childcare Partnerships	17	15
Individuals	15	13
Training Providers	12	10
Total	**115**	**100**

No one particular respondent category dominated the responses. Representative organisations comprised the largest group of respondents accounting for one quarter of responses. This category covered diverse interests including a wide range of voluntary, public and private sector associations, forums, institutes and networks.

Most local authorities took up the opportunity to respond to the consultation. In addition, childcare partnerships submitted around one in six of all responses to the main document. Overall, nineteen childcare providers took part in the main written consultation. Many of the respondents who submitted responses on an individual basis appeared to have experience of working in the sector. Training providers constituted the smallest category of respondent submitting 10% of all responses to the main consultation.

The consultation questions aimed at childcare workers attracted the highest number of respondents. Overall, two hundred and one workers submitted responses to these questions. In addition, fifty-eight childminders responded to the questions posed for them in the shorter consultation document. Six respondents addressed both the questions for childcare workers and those for childminders.[4]

Table 2 summarises the total number of respondents to the written and non-written consultations which took place.

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[4] Presumably because they had worked in both capacities.

Table 2: Summary of Numbers of Respondents to the Written and Non-Written Consultations

Consultation Type	No. of Respondents
Main Written	115
Childcare Workers	201
Childminders	58
Events	210

It should be noted that the analysis of responses which follows does not attempt any *weighting* of responses to reflect, say, numbers of respondents from different sectors, or type of respondent. Any quantification of views is for indicative purposes only and is based on the population of respondents as set out in Tables 1 and 2 and not the Scottish population as a whole.

Naming Respondents

The convention adopted for this consultation has been to preserve anonymity of individual respondents and organisations, by attributing their comments and quotes to the grouped respondent category to which they fit. In this way, individual requests for anonymity are met, but a further depth is added to the analysis by providing some contextual information about the respondent type. The terms used to describe the different category of respondent are as follows:

Rep   (Representative Organisation)
LA   (Local Authority)
CP   (Childcare Partnership)
CProv   (Childcare Provider)
Indiv   (Individual)
TP   (Training Provider)

Gaps in Respondent Type

No specific gaps in respondent were identified. The consultation attracted responses from a wide spectrum of respondents representing a variety of perspectives. Remote, rural and urban locations were also represented amongst respondents. Key equality bodies were amongst the respondents, ensuring that significant equality issues were highlighted as appropriate.

APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

Three electronic frameworks for identifying and recording relevant comments from respondents to the main consultation, to the childcare workers' consultation questions, and to the childminders' consultation questions respectively were developed, and a number of ground-rules established to ensure responses were prepared for analysis in a consistent and sensible fashion.

Analytical Framework

Electronic Excel databases were used to store and assist analysis of the written consultation responses. These databases enabled the storage of both free text and numerical data in a systematic manner whilst providing the flexibility for framework amendments as the work progressed.

The fields used to record the material were based on the questions set out in the consultation documents. Once responses had been examined, a small number of additional fields were added to accommodate sub-themes in questions. The result was a comprehensive list of fields which formed the headings for the consultation databases of responses.

Ground-Rules

Separate Responses from the Same Individual/Organisation

On occasions, one respondent may send in more than one response. This can occur, for example, when they have further thoughts on the issue and wish to make more comment. In other instances, the respondent may have simply forgotten to enclose some evidence in their first reply and they contact the consultation team again with more information. On occasions, a respondent may send the same response in both electronic and hard forms.

Both the Scottish Executive consultation team and the research team were alert to the possibilities of such double entries. Any identical responses were picked up by hand searching or electronic screening and removed from the exercise.

Quantitative Material

Although much of the analysis was based on descriptive free text, some scope existed for quantitative analysis and this was exploited. Such data usually involved approximate counts of the numbers of respondents who commented on particular topics and, within these groups, the numbers of respondents holding particular views. However, because of the open nature of the consultation, which did not require people to provide a response on <u>every</u> issue, the approach of many consultees in providing more general comments rather than responding specifically to each question posed, and the way that respondents could "opt in" to their chosen response topics, **quantification of responses was not appropriate in all instances and should be treated as simply indicative and illustrative rather than absolute.** In addition, it should be noted that **any statistics quoted here cannot be extrapolated to a wider population outwith the consultation population**.

Analysis of the Workshop Discussions

Each workshop was supported by facilitators and scribes, who all recorded details of the key issues and discussions which took place. Their notes from each event were submitted to the researchers who subjected each script to content analysis. An electronic database was used to store the results of the content analysis. Findings from the content analysis are presented as appropriate in this consultation report.

FACTUAL ACCURACY

The views presented in this analysis have not been vetted in any way for factual accuracy. **The opinions and comments submitted to the consultation may be based on fact or may, indeed, be based on what respondents perceive to be accurate from their perspective, but which others may interpret differently**. It is important for the analysis to represent views from all perspectives. The report may, therefore, contain analysis of responses which may be factually inaccurate, but are objective in terms of their reflection of strongly held perceptions.

CHAPTER 3: RESPONDENTS' VIEWS ON THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Several respondents from a range of different respondent categories commented on the consultation document itself and/or the consultation process. Many respondents welcomed the Review with typical comments including:

> "*We welcome the review's aspiration to spark clear and purposeful action that will strengthen this workforce*" (Rep)

> "*…welcome the review as a much needed examination of the issues facing the early childhood and childcare sector workforce in the twenty-first century*" (LA)

> "*The review commendably supports integrated working with other professions and the establishment of partnerships*" (TP)

Where criticism of the consultation arose, this tended to focus on the decision by the Scottish Executive not to include the teaching workforce in the Review. Teachers working in early years settings were not part of the Review as the teaching workforce had only recently been subject to a major review. Teachers and teachers' representative bodies were, of course, free to respond to the consultation should they wish to do so. Whilst many respondents acknowledged the rationale for the decision to not to include teachers in the Review, some did not agree with it. Comments included:

> "*From the outset, we must make clear our concern that the teaching profession, which is an integral part of the early years' sector, has been marginalised*" (Rep)

> "*We feel that the decision not to include teachers working in early years settings was a mistake, and will, in future negotiations, hinder, not help to take the review's vision forward*" (Rep)

Two respondents suggested that not including teachers in the Review may give out the wrong message that teachers are not part of the vision for early years (CP, LA).

Another common view was that the Review should have included a consideration of pay and conditions as part of its remit. As will emerge in later chapters, many respondents felt that a consideration of roles, responsibilities and increased qualifications could not be complete without also considering issues of pay and conditions. Connected to this were questions raised by several consultees over the future funding arrangements needed to support the plans. For example, it was argued that the vision was ambitious and lack of adequate funding could act as a barrier to development and growth.

One consultee suggested that a detailed appraisal of related best practice across European countries should have accompanied the Review (LA).

A very small minority of respondents commented that in their view, the Review's steering and working groups had not been representative of the early years and childcare workforce. Two consultees considered that the groups had been "*top heavy*" with management and union representatives (TP, LA). Another complained that playgroups were not represented on any group involved in the compilation of the Review report (CProv).

Three of the fifty-eight childminders who responded to the consultation expressed their concern that they had come across the consultation by chance rather than having been sent a copy directly. One commented that not all childminders are registered with the SCMA which had publicised the consultation to its members. (Although legally, all childminders should be registered with the Care Commission which publicised the consultation on its website.)

Very few critical remarks emerged from participants at the workshop events. Amongst the two hundred and ten participants, one participant considered that the discussion questions tabled had been too narrow in focus. Another was concerned that there were no representatives from voluntary management committees as their workshop. Finally, one view was that the timescale for the consultation (August 2006 – December 2006) might be too short to enable views to be sought from across the sector (although the consultation did adhere to the standard period of four months for Scottish Executive consultations).

The following seven chapters document the substance of the analysis, presenting the main issues, arguments and recommendations contained in the responses. The chapters follow the ordering of issues raised in the consultation documents.

CHAPTER 4: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The main consultation stated:

The main proposal within the review is to develop a single, shared framework to encompass the diverse roles and responsibilities of the early years and childcare workforce, which links explicitly to the vision for children.

The roles and responsibilities framework is the cornerstone of this review. It sets out broadly what every worker in the early years and childcare sector should be doing to realise the vision for children and young people. It is structured around 3 sets of organising principles:

- One is the vision with its seven outcomes – "Safe", "Healthy", "Nurtured", "Achieving", "Active", "Included" and "Respected and Responsible".
- The second component which we have called "Organisational" covers a range of functions necessary for the delivery of effective services.
- The third organising principle is the set of three registration categories identified by the Scottish Social Services Council in relation to early years and childcare workers – "Lead Practitioners/Managers", "Practitioners" and "Support Workers".

4.1 The main consultation asked:

Q1: WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO DEVELOPING A COHERENT EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE WORKFORCE WITH A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES? HOW CAN THEY BE OVERCOME?

This question attracted a high response rate with one hundred and two respondents (89%) to the main consultation suggesting barriers to the development of a coherent workforce.

4.1.1 Barriers Identified

Whilst many respondents welcomed the notion of a single shared framework, most identified potential barriers to the development of a coherent workforce. Two respondents, however, emphasised that the identification of barriers should be viewed in a positive light as a focus for change to help to move forward (TP, Rep).

Overall, three main barriers dominated the responses:

- Differences in pay and conditions between the public, private and voluntary sectors workforces
- The wide variety of different settings and provision of service
- The wide range of qualifications and qualification routes available

It was argued that the different terminologies used, and expectations of purpose of provision in different settings, hindered coherency in the early years and childcare workforce. Others considered that many workers and managers were confused by the current qualifications' structures with differences in routes hampering movement across settings.

Other barriers were identified by consultees. Several proposed that **networking between professionals in different sectors was currently limited**, leading to a lack of shared understanding of respective roles and responsibilities. Although a few of the individual respondents considered that there were too few opportunities to network with colleagues working in other settings, one consultee (TP) reported what they interpreted as signs of internal resistance to integrate with others. Likewise, a few consultees (Rep, TP) suggested that rivalries and professional jealousies between different sectors lay behind the current lack of cohesion. Others noted what they saw as an artificial **"hierarchy" between workforces in different sectors** which tended to hinder integration.

Several respondents from a variety of sectors considered that one barrier to developing a coherent early years and childcare workforce was the **different funding amounts and streams** associated with different provision. For example, a recurring theme was that not all childcare establishments could afford to put their staff through relevant courses. Another factor identified with hindering **access to training** was rurality, with local authorities and training providers in particular highlighting geography as a potential barrier to accessing courses and qualifications.

Another common theme was that **childcare and education lacked clear definitions** which clouded conceptual understandings of what they constituted and promoted the view of them as separate entities. Several consultees remarked that the **diverse roles of the early years and childcare workforce** did not help in creating a coherent workforce especially as different parts of the workforce appeared to adhere to different philosophies and beliefs.

The prominence of **local solutions to local issues** was raised as potentially problematic with several consultees commenting on what they saw as significant variation in the way early years and childcare provision is structured across different local authorities. Others suggested that **differences in the quality of the physical infrastructure** of premises could be seen as a barrier to coherency across the workforce.

A few more barriers were identified by a smaller minority of respondents:

- Not including teachers/childminders in the Review
- Differences in the quality of provision
- Lack of self-perception of the sector being a profession
- Lack of a shared vision
- Lack of career opportunities for the early years and childcare workforce
- Separate inspection bodies (Care Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE))
- Gender imbalance across the workforce

Table 3 gives a broad indication of the frequency with which these barriers were raised by respondents.

Table 3: Respondents' Views on Barriers to Developing a Coherent Workforce

Barrier Identified	No. of Respondents Identifying this as a Barrier
Differences in pay and conditions	36
Variation in settings and provision	27
Differences in qualifications and routes	25
Lack of networking between sectors	12
Differences in access to training	11
Differences in funding streams	11
Lack of clarity around "care" and "education"	10
Diverse roles	9
Perceived hierarchy of services between sectors	9
Differences in physical infrastructure	9
Local level solutions and management structures	8
Teachers/childminders[5] not included in Review	7
Differences in quality of provision	6
Lack of self perception as a profession	5
Lack of a shared vision	4
Lack of career opportunities	3
Separate inspection bodies	2
Gender imbalance in staffing	2

4.1.2 Views on How Barriers can be Overcome

Of the one hundred and two respondents who addressed the issue of developing a coherent early years and childcare workforce, sixty nine (68%) contributed ideas as to how to promote greater coherence and shared understandings of roles and responsibilities.

Two ideas dominated the responses of consultees. Around one-third of those who provided suggestions recommended the provision of **joint training** involving staff working in different sectors. It was considered that the capacity of training providers should be addressed in order to meet needs and that prior learning and experience should be taken into consideration.

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[5] Please refer to footnote 1 regarding the inclusion of childminders.

Another recurring recommendation (from just under one-third of those who commented) was for **increased and sustained funding** across all parts of the workforce. One respondent remarked:

> "*Attempting to implement it* (the Roles and Responsibilities Framework) *without adequate resources could in itself create barriers*" (TP)

However, another cautioned that safeguards should be attached to any additional funding to make sure that the resources are used to raise staff salaries and/or improve opportunities to attend training (CP).

Other recommendations for overcoming the barriers to a coherent workforce were made by a smaller minority of nine respondents or fewer:

- Greater focus on integrated planning and delivery
- Promotion of a shared vision and core values
- Parity of pay and conditions across sectors
- Greater sharing of terminology and a common name for the profession
- Promotion of the profession's status and profile
- Greater opportunities for networking
- Greater use of secondments and placements across sectors to promote more mutual respect
- Promotion of the single roles and responsibilities framework
- Documenting and sharing good practice across sectors
- Promoting easier access to training and CPD
- Encouraging careers and guidance professionals and educational establishments to promote the coherence of the sector
- Setting minimum entry standards
- Promoting minimum care standards
- Creating a shared career pathway

4.2 The main consultation asked:

Q2: TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FRAMEWORK PROVIDE A USEFUL BASIS FOR DEVELOPING A SHARED PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY ACROSS THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE WORKFORCE, AND FOR DRIVING FORWARD THE INTEGRATED WORKING AGENDA?

The majority (85%) of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question. The overriding message to emerge was of support for the framework albeit with some provisos and constructive criticism.

Many respondents expressed support in general terms, by stating that in their view the framework was "*useful*" or "*helpful*", a "*good starting point*" and "*welcome*". Others went further with their approval:

"An excellent, important and necessary basis for sharing professional identity" (Rep)

"We commend the Steering and Working Groups for identifying the key aspirations of a professional workforce" (Rep)

"Excellent, straightforward and helpful proposal....which would be instrumental in forming the basis for the promotion of...common understanding" (TP, Rep)

For a few local authority consultees, the framework represented more of an aspirational picture, with one comment:

"...for many it may appear highly aspirational given the lack of resources for childcare"

Others agreed that to make the framework a working reality other changes had to be put in place. A recurring view emerging from consultees from a variety of categories was that the workforce needed to be committed to work collaboratively and to strive to excellence. One respondent recommended that collaborative working at a strategic level was required (LA). It was argued that negative perceptions of colleagues in other parts of the workforce needed to be addressed (CP). A few respondents emphasised that multi-agency training (LA, CP) and more staff development opportunities (CProv) would help to make the framework effective in practice. Several consultees representing different categories recommended that careful thought be given to the implementation of the framework, including its resourcing. Finally, one respondent advised that much work would be needed to disseminate the framework across the sector in order to increase its value (CProv).

4.2.1 Merits of the Framework

Many consultees stipulated what they identified as the particular merits of the framework. The most frequently made comment was that it clarified roles and enabled workers to know what was expected of them. A typical comment was:

".....helps to bring clarity to the professional expectation of the sector's workforce" (Rep)

Another recurring comment was that the framework appeared to be consistent with the Integrated Children's Services planning arrangements.

Several local authority respondents welcomed the framework as encouraging shared thinking, promoting a common understanding and being sufficiently generic as to apply to all areas of the profession. Caution was expressed by a few consultees that the framework should not be too generic (Rep) or too diluted as to lose its relevance to specialist development (LA). Other respondents commended the framework for

underlining the key issue of children's rights (TP); tying in with the vision for the sector (CP); reflecting the care standards (LA, CP); promoting a common goal (CProv); and facilitating both vertical and horizontal progression (Rep). It was remarked that the framework successfully emphasised similarities (LA) and commonalities (CP) in the workforce rather than focusing on differences.

4.2.2 Future Benefits of Framework

Several respondents, largely local authority consultees, saw future benefits emerging from implementation of the framework. A common theme was that the framework would help with future recruitment and the construction of job descriptions. Others suggested that the structure would enable a common language to develop over time, with all settings able to use it as a benchmark against which to measure themselves. It was envisaged that the framework would ensure a greater consistency in quality of provision. One consultee summed up their view thus:

> "*That all levels of early years and childcare services would be singing from the same song sheet would greatly help parents choose the service that best suits their needs. They would not have to worry about sacrificing quality for convenience*" (CProv)

4.2.3 Recommendations for Changes to the Framework

Other respondents expressed caution about aspects of it and/or recommended amendments to the proposals.

A common concern was that the framework appeared not to include key workers such as those who did not have to register with the SSSC, those working with agencies that provide care in a child's home, and teachers. Several consultees requested that the role of education be made more explicit in the framework. A further recurring concern was that the structure appeared to be less relevant to committee-led establishments or very small settings compared with public sector settings.

Two respondents presented their view that playwork and the play ethos had been overlooked in the framework (Rep, Indiv). Another argued that the framework lacked an understanding and confidence in what was already in place, with the framework's promotion of a shared identity compromising individuality amongst establishments and the ability to cater for individual client group needs (CProv). This consultee stressed that in their view the framework "*is too definitive and does not allow for flexible working*".

A general comment was that the framework should be kept under constant review (LA).

4.2.4 Specific Amendments Requested

A few respondents suggested specific amendments to the framework be considered:

- In the organisational factors section there should be more coverage of managers enabling workers to gain experience of working in the wider workforce (Rep)
- At section 2.6: "respected and responsible" should be changed to "respected, respectful and responsible" (CP, LA)
- The emphasis on safety principles appeared too limited – good childcare involves more than this and overemphasis on safety could inhibit a child's development (CP, LA)
- There should be more emphasis on dealing with parents, budgets and keeping up with relevant legislation (LA, LA)
- The purpose of the framework should be made more explicit, eg how it relates to performance indicators, self evaluation documents for school improvement, HMIE inspections and child protection (CProv)
- The roles of managers and team leaders should be defined more clearly (CP)
- The concept of integrated working needs further exploration (TP)
- More overt reference needs to be made to the development of children's speaking and listening skills (TP)

4.3 The main consultation asked:

Q3: DOES THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FRAMEWORK REFLECT WHAT WORKERS IN ALL SECTORS OF THE WORKFORCE ARE LIKELY TO BE DOING AS SERVICES DEVELOP OVER THE COMING YEARS?

Eighty-three per cent of respondents addressed this question. The following summary of views was derived from their submissions.

Table 4: Summary of Views on Whether the Framework reflects what Workers will be Doing over Coming Years

Summary of Response	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Yes/Mainly reflects	40	42
Commentary only/Cannot predict	39	41
Reflects some but not all	11	12
No does not reflect	5	5
Total	**95**	**100%**

A few respondents suggested that the framework should also reflect current roles and responsibilities (CP, LA). In contrast, another considered that the framework placed too much emphasis on the current situation at the expense of looking to the future (CProv).

4.3.1 General Favourable Comments

Several favourable comments were made by respondents. One consultee praised what they saw as the way the framework captured the complexity of roles and the range of skills they demanded (TP). Another was encouraged by the framework's identification of shared tasks across the sector (Rep). The illustrative examples were considered helpful (LA). One respondent welcomed the enhanced awareness of the community context which they considered was reflected in the framework (TP). One local authority respondent appreciated the way the framework took account of aspirations and concerns, focused on individual needs, and addressed the incoherent nature of current services.

4.3.2 Views on Omissions

Many respondents identified what they considered were omissions in the framework or areas which, in their view, should be given more attention. Key amongst the suggested omissions were:

- Roles and responsibilities of teachers/classroom assistants (many consultees from different categories)
- Roles and responsibilities of childminders (many consultees from different categories)
- Roles and responsibilities of employers (CP)
- Roles and responsibilities of youthworkers (CP)
- Roles and responsibilities of senior playworkers (Indiv)
- Roles and responsibilities of committees (Indiv)
- Roles and responsibilities of proactive leaders who will be needed to lead innovation (eg should include being analytical, enquiring, reflective, able to challenge and so on) (TP)
- Staff not registered with SSSC (LA)

One respondent commented that developing the framework constituted such a big aim that it would be unlikely if it covered all roles and responsibilities (Rep).

In addition to these suggested omissions, some consultees highlighted more specific topics which they considered should be given more focus. These included:

- Dealing with parents/public (LA, LA)
- Play work (CP)
- Private sector dealings (Rep)
- Community links (Rep)
- Relationships with other professions (CProv)
- Learning and delivery of the curriculum (Rep)
- Education and multi-agency working (LA)
- Adults challenging children and providing opportunities for risks (TP, Rep)
- Encouraging a more reflective, analytical workforce (TP, Rep)
- Communication as a category in its own right (TP, Rep)

One respondent requested that the framework provide more detail on the specifics of service delivery rather than address this in too broad a fashion (CProv).

4.3.3 Other Concerns

Other respondents outlined their concerns regarding the roles and responsibilities model presented. A few remarked that the framework would be effective only if adequately resourced (LA, CProv, Indiv). One view was that with the election looming it was difficult to predict future spend (LA).

One consultee commented that what they saw as a "one size fits all" model was not appropriate (LA). Another considered that the framework ran the risk of defining roles too narrowly, thus having the potential to divide rather than unite the workforce (Rep). A plea was made that training should fit with the roles outlined (TP). Concern was raised that the "goal posts" should not move again (CP). Finally, ten respondents (largely individuals) requested that the word "worker" be amended in the framework as it appeared to them not to reflect the professional status of the profession.

4.3.4 Other Comments

A number of other general comments were made by consultees. One recurring theme (originating from representative organisations and childcare partnerships) was that the framework should retain an element of flexibility in order to accommodate emerging roles. It was argued that by focusing on the job function rather than job title, the framework provided a more flexible structure (LA, Rep). A few respondents considered that the framework should be regarded as, "*a working and evolving document*" subject to continual review (TP, Rep).

Finally two consultees stressed that time would be needed (and perhaps training) to let workers familiarise themselves with the framework and their place within it (CProv, TP).

4.4 The main consultation asked:

Q4: IS THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FRAMEWORK A USEFUL BASIS FOR DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS IN THE SECTOR?

Overall 87% of respondents addressed this question. Of these, the vast majority (83%) agreed (albeit with some provisos) that the roles and responsibilities framework provided a useful basis for developing professional qualifications in the sector. Of the others, 5% either did not think it was useful or were reserving judgement, and the remaining 12% of respondents simply passed relevant comment without indicating whether they considered the framework to be useful or not.

4.4.1 Views on the Merits of the Framework

Several respondents highlighted specific aspects of the framework which they considered of benefit. The model was seen as demonstrating where knowledge could be shared across the sector (CP) and where common understandings prevailed (CP). One respondent commented:

> "*there are obviously shared basic knowledge and skills that all staff need, with the potential to specialise, yet avoid isolation*" (CP)

It was considered that the framework allowed for flexibility (CP), underpinned a set of core competencies (LA) and facilitated the establishment of regulatory mechanisms to ensure the standards set out are achieved (LA). Overall the model was viewed as matching the needs of the sector well (CP). Although others provided contrasting comments (see below), some consultees saw the framework as linking well with the Care Commission Standards and the SSSC regulatory scheme (TP) in addition to the National Occupational Standards (Rep).

Looking ahead, a few respondents foresaw added benefits to accrue from use of the framework. They considered that its use would promote the standardisation of quality across all levels and sectors (CP, CP). Its potential use within an appraisal system in which gaps and training needs are identified was predicted (LA). One consultee envisaged that the framework would create more confidence in employers, employees, parents and other professionals associated with the sector (CP). The potential as an aid for training providers was also identified:

> "*an extremely helpful, useful and logical tool for those developing and delivering training programmes and qualifications*" (TP, Rep)

4.4.2 Concerns Relating to the Framework

Although most respondents expressed varying degrees of welcome to use of the framework, many consultees raised certain concerns about its future operation. Two key concerns dominated:

- The framework may not be appropriate across all settings and in particular, in rural areas and smaller establishments, and it needs to reflect more flexible ways of working in these settings
- The framework should link more explicitly to other related frameworks such as the National Occupational Standards, SSSC registration requirements, Care Commission Standards

It was also suggested that the framework should link with key national documents such as the Curriculum for Excellence and Schools Out (LA, Rep). Some respondents recommended that as several qualifications structures were already in place, there should be some rationalisation of these to produce a simpler, composite structure (CP, Rep, LA).

One view was that the framework may have only limited application to some specialist disciplines (TP). Another was that it may not cater for higher levels of qualification (TP). One consultee argued that the framework would not allow for movement of workers out of childcare to working with adults or in social work (CP).

Other concerns raised were that the ten year timescale for taking the framework forward seemed to be too long (Rep); that the implementation of the framework would need adequate resourcing (LA); and that pay would need to reflect increased levels of qualifications of staff (CProv). One consultee pointed out that as around 51% of the workforce worked part-time, the framework should be tailored to cater more specifically for their needs (Rep).

Two respondents urged that the framework be reviewed in the light of any future associated developments (LA, LA).

4.4.3 General Comments Regarding Developing Professional Qualifications

Several respondents documented general comments regarding the nature of the professional qualifications which they thought should be developed from the framework. A recurring theme was qualifications should incorporate an emphasis on education. A few consultees urged that the qualifications portfolio should allow for staff to reflect on experience and practice in the light of more formal theoretical learning (Rep, CProv, LA). A plea was made for modular, unit based qualifications to be developed (TP). Others argued for specialist areas to be reflected in the framework (Rep), and for existing qualifications such as the BA in Early Childhood Studies to be taken into account when developing professional qualifications (LA).

4.5 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Three main barriers to developing a coherent workforce were identified: lack of parity in pay and conditions across the sector (mentioned by thirty six respondents); the wide variety of different settings and service provision (mentioned by twenty seven respondents); and the wide range of qualifications and qualification routes available (mentioned by twenty five respondents).
- The two most common ideas for promoting greater workforce coherence were joint training across the sector (raised by one-third of those who provided suggestions), and increased and sustained funding (raised by just under one-third of those who commented).
- An overriding message was of support for the proposed roles and responsibilities framework.
- A recurring comment was that the roles and responsibilities framework clarified individual roles and enabled workers to know what was expected of them.
- A common concern was that the framework appeared not to include key workers such as those who did not have to register with the SSSC.
- Forty-two per cent of those who responded considered that the proposed framework reflected, in the main, what workers will be doing over coming years.

- Many others suggested key omissions included the roles and responsibilities of teachers and childminders.
- The vast majority (83%) of those who responded agreed that the framework provided a useful basis for developing professional qualifications in the sector.
- A concern was raised that the framework may not be appropriate across rural areas and smaller establishments. Respondents also recommended that the framework should link more explicitly to other related frameworks.

CHAPTER 5: CAREER PATHWAYS

The main consultation stated:

"Career pathways" is the term used to describe the routes available to staff to move within the sector and between related sectors. Building clearer pathways which support lateral (between and across sectors) and vertical (where workers increase their levels of responsibility) career progression can attract new recruits into the sector and help to retain experienced staff.

The early years and childcare workforce faces particular challenges in developing better career pathways. Workers have identified the lack of career development opportunities as a key concern. Currently there is little evidence of early years and childcare staff moving across the local authority, private and voluntary sectors and there continues to be significant barriers to this arising largely from pay and conditions differentials across the sectors. In addition, the current predominantly female workforce depends on relatively high numbers of part time and sessional workers who face particular difficulties in progressing their careers, for example difficulties in accessing training and development opportunities.

This section (Chapter 3 of the main consultation document) has highlighted some of the current barriers to career pathways in early years and childcare, e.g. qualification structures, cultural differences or misconceptions across the different parts of the workforce, wide differences in pay and conditions between parts of the sector, and a lack of advice about career development opportunities.

5.1 The main consultation asked:

Q5: HOW ACCURATELY DOES THIS REFLECT CAREER PATHWAYS IN THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SECTOR AT THE MOMENT?

In total, ninety two respondents (80%) addressed this question. Of these, around two-thirds (68%) stated that they considered that Chapter Three of the main consultation document presented a reasonably accurate or good picture of current career pathways in the early years and childcare sector. A further 4% of respondents thought that current career pathways were only partially reflected, with a very small minority of 3% of consultees disagreeing that the picture presented was accurate. The remaining quarter (24%) of respondents did not give a clear response to the question but provided relevant commentary only.[6]

A few consultees complimented the drafting of this section of the consultation document, reporting that they found it to be a very clear section (TP, Rep) with which many practitioners would be able to identify (TP).

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[6] Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100% exactly.

5.1.2 Views on the Barriers to Career Pathways

Many respondents focused on particular barriers identified in the consultation document and expressed their agreement that these appeared to be problematic. The most common focus for consultees from a variety of categories was the wide differences in pay and conditions between parts of the sector. One consultee remarked that this problem affected both vertical and lateral career movement (LA). Others focused on what they perceived to be the barrier of complex and inconsistent qualification structures. Several consultees commented that they found that at present, *"bizarre and unconnected qualifications"* seemed acceptable for SSSC registration.

Other respondents considered current career pathways to be disjointed (CP, Rep), complex (LA), with limited opportunities for career progression (CProv) and restricted movement between sectors (CProv).

A few consultees identified further barriers which they considered played a part in limiting career pathways:

- Private and voluntary sector employees not as well supported by their employers as those in the public sector (LA)
- Lack of mutual understanding between sectors (Rep, Rep)
- Lack of men as employees in the sector (LA)
- Posts seen as part time and not part of a career path (CProv)
- Lack of capacity of some training provides to deliver qualifications in flexible way (CP)

A few other general comments were made by respondents. It was pointed out that some staff simply do not want to move vertically, and lateral movement should be promoted more as a strength of the sector (Rep, Rep). Another view was that some employees do not want to move across sectors (TP).

5.2.3 Views on the Limitations of the Picture Presented

Of the relatively few criticisms of this section, one was repeated by several respondents. This was that in their view the section did not take enough cognisance of the particularly challenging circumstances of rural areas with regard to this sector. Other respondents commented that the picture painted appeared to lack an understanding of the differences in roles of workers in different sectors within the workforce (Rep); that it failed to recognise adequately the different routes to achieving qualifications (Rep); that it lacked a full understanding of the lateral pathways available (Rep); and that the position of childminders had been overlooked (Indiv). The latter consultee expressed their view thus:

> *"The review seems to be a missed opportunity to demonstrate the value of childminders by including them in the professionalisation of the workforce"*

5.2 The consultation asked:

Q6: HOW EFFECTIVE WILL THESE PROPOSALS BE IN PROMOTING CAREER PATHWAYS ACROSS THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SECTOR, AND MORE WIDELY?

This question, along with question nine attracted the largest volume of response to the main consultation document, with 97% of respondents providing a direct response or some commentary of relevance to the issues raised by the question.

5.2.1 General Comments and Concerns

Because many of the responses tended to contain more general commentary than a specific response to the question it was not possible to quantify the degree to which consultees considered the proposals to be effective.   However, there were many comments along the lines of:

> "*very encouraging…..would provide the profession with a flexible career path allowing practitioners to move between services*" (CProv)

One respondent considered that the proposals would be effective as they provided a generic range of qualifications across the sector, would reach the right audiences, and established the right conditions for the promotion of career pathways (LA).   Another view was that the proposals would ensure that staff were more informed, which would help them to make better career choices (LA).   Several consultees provided their support for the proposals in theory, but raised concerns about their implementation.

A few respondents commented that the consultation document did not, in their view, address some of the entrenched barriers to progress (Rep, Rep).

An overwhelming concern, expressed repeatedly by respondents from every category, was that without addressing what they saw as the fundamental problem of differences in pay and conditions across the sector, the effectiveness of the proposals would always be compromised.

Other barriers which many respondents raised as inhibiting the effectiveness of the proposals were worries about job security in the independent sector, and the difficulties associated with working in rural locations.

A few consultees cautioned against inadvertently excluding those workers who were not interested in vertical progression and may wish to work only part-time (CP, TP).   One questioned whether the outcomes would be acceptable across Great Britain (Indiv).

Some respondents were concerned that the experience and qualifications which people brought to the sector should not become lost (Rep, Rep, Rep) or diluted (Rep, Rep, Rep, LA).

It was recommended that examples of instances where such barriers have been overcome should be identified and shared (Rep, TP).

5.2.2 Suggestions for Ways to Increase Effectiveness of the Proposals

Many respondents agreed that the proposals would go some way to promoting career pathways across the different parts of the sector but other factors would help to ensure the effectiveness of the plans.

Most commonly raised was the **need to resource what were envisaged as the higher costs associated with training and secondments**. Some consultees suggested that ring-fenced monies would be required. A few respondents questioned where this money would come from (LA, CP, CPr). Another related common theme was that those who achieved **higher qualifications and increased responsibilities would need to be recompensed** accordingly.

Many respondents argued that in order for the proposal to be effective, there **needed to be changes in the mindset** of those within and those outwith the profession. Consultees stressed that the workforce needed to be valued and recognised by professionals working in related areas (LA, Indiv, CP), whilst the existing and potential workforce itself had to be ready to take up new opportunities on offer (TP, CP, Indiv, LA).

The **importance of partnership working** was stressed (LA, TP) with one suggestion that the support of CoSLA be sought along with lead bodies for social work, teaching, community learning and development, health, the FE and HE sectors and Careers Scotland to help ensure national coherence and consistency (LA).

It was argued that the effectiveness of the proposals would **benefit from having employers and voluntary committees on board** (Rep, Rep, CP) with a consistent approach to promoting the sector from various agencies including schools, colleges and universities (CP, CP, Rep). A few respondents considered that **individual establishments would require to be much more flexible** in order to effect the changes proposed (CP, CP, TP). Others recommended that more **emphasis should be placed in creating posts to allow for both vertical and horizontal progression** (LA, LA, CP, Rep), with potential **career routes signposted** clearly (Rep, Rep, TP). Likewise, one consultee argued for **more opportunities for work placements** with suitably qualified workplace tutors (TP).

Two respondents stressed that a **period of stability** was needed to facilitate the proposals' effectiveness (CP, Rep). Others agreed that the plans would need **time to bed in** (CProv, LA).

5.3 The main consultation asked:

Q7: ARE THERE OTHER WAYS TO PROMOTE CAREER PATHWAYS?

Overall, 90% of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question with a wide variety of suggestions made of other ways to promote career pathways. Whilst there was some overlap with ideas previously given, some fresh suggestions were also made.

The most common suggestion was that there needed to be a much **more educated and accurate promotion of the profession** by those involved in guiding and advising on careers. Respondents from all categories agreed that there was a responsibility amongst career promoters to steer people away from the view that anyone can work in childcare, towards informing them of the skills and professionalism required to work within the sector. One consultee argued for a clear statement and marketing approach to the promotion of the sector (Rep). Others recommended that a formal **communications strategy** be developed which incorporated targeted advertising and positive images of the workforce (CP, TP, Rep, Rep).

Another common theme was that of **greater resourcing of the sector** in order to address differentials in pay and condition across the workforce and enable qualifications and increased responsibilities to be rewarded.

Many consultees made recommendations to **promote the gaining of inter-sectoral experience**. A recurring comment was that there should be more opportunity for secondments, work shadowing or even exchanging posts in order for the workforce to gain a broader experience across the sector. A few respondents proposed childcare apprenticeships (CP, LA, CProv). Others considered that training placements in a variety of settings would contribute to the promotion of longer-term career pathways across the sector (Rep, LA, CProv, CProv, CP). This idea fitted with the encouragement from a few respondents for more innovation in training, for example subjecting trainees to a variety of settings, ages of children and diverse approaches to the curriculum (LA, CProv, Rep). One suggestion was for the introduction of a probation period for employees during which they had a chance to find out the type of roles that suited them (Rep, LA).

Another commonly expressed comment was that career pathways can be promoted by **valuing and crediting prior learning and experience** and **recognising continued professional development**. One respondent recommended that people should be made much **more aware of the different routes** which could lead to qualifications (Rep). Others argued for greater flexibility in ways of delivering training (LA, LA, CProv). It was considered that employees should be encouraged to follow their own particular interests when choosing training and career paths (LA, CP, CProv).

Some consultees expressed concern that the workers in rural areas should not be left behind regarding career pathways and urged that special attention is paid to ensuring that **career pathway opportunities are created in rural locations (**Rep, CP, LA).

A few respondents considered that greater efforts towards **collaboration amongst stakeholders** across the sector (e.g. Colleges, Job Centres, Scottish Enterprise, Careers Scotland, training providers) would contribute to the promotion of career pathways (Rep, Rep, CP).

Finally, it was recommended that **lessons might be learned from other models** in other disciplines (TP). One consultee suggested that there might be merit in looking at the way banks promote their life-long career pathways (Indiv). Another suggestion was to learn from the model of standards established by Ministers and the GTCS for teachers (Rep). Other consultees recommended using the integrated services model as a base from which to drive forward changes (LA, LA, Rep).

Amongst the many responses to this consultation question was one dissenting voice from a respondent who argued that career pathways are already fairly obvious without the need to promote them even more (CProv).

5.4 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Around two-thirds (68%) of those who provided a view considered that the consultation document presented a reasonably accurate or good picture of current career pathways in the early years and childcare sector.
- Many respondents expressed their agreement that wide differences in pay and conditions between parts of the sector stood in the way of promoting career pathways.
- Many ways to increase the effectiveness of the proposals for career pathways were suggested including:

  o better resourcing of training and secondments;
  o recompensing those who achieve higher qualifications and take on increased responsibilities;
  o ensuring that those guiding and advising on careers portray a much more accurate and educated picture of the profession; and
  o establishing a formal communications strategy which incorporates targeted advertising and positive images of the workforce.

CHAPTER 6: QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT – VIEWS FROM THE WRITTEN CONSULTATIONS

The main consultation stated:

Our starting point for qualifications, training and development was the roles and responsibilities framework. We wanted to ensure that qualifications and training supported the principle that all workers in the sector have broadly common roles and responsibilities, although there will be differences in the emphasis on certain areas and responsibilities carried out.

Our model proposes that there should be a single qualifications framework for all workers in the sector. There should be a common, shared content to all qualifications for the sector. The levels of qualifications should be explicitly linked to SSSC registration categories and the level of qualification appropriate for each category of worker, determined by the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) descriptors. The qualifications framework would be benchmarked against a professional base that sets out the knowledge, skills and values that would allow workers to practise in any early years and childcare setting. There would still be scope for students and workers to specialise in particular areas (e.g. pre-school education or playwork) as part of the qualification, and through continuing professional development (CPD).

We are clear that there should be college, university and work-based routes to gaining qualifications at all levels. We are clear, too, that the routes should have equal status.

We need a flexible but robust system of recognition and accreditation of prior learning that allows staff to gain credit for learning and experience that might have been gained in a variety of ways, including experience of working in the sector, to allow them to continue to build up that expertise, without unnecessary repetition of learning.

Views were sought on the proposals for a single qualifications framework in both the main consultation document and in the separate consultation questions for childminders. This chapter presents the analysis of responses to both of these approaches, starting with the question in the main consultation.

6.1 The main consultation asked:

Q8: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON A SINGLE QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK WITH A SHARED BASE (OR "COMMON CORE") FOR THE WHOLE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SECTOR? (THIS INCLUDES EARLY YEARS WORKERS, OUT OF SCHOOL CARE WORKERS, PLAYWORKERS, CHILDMINDERS AND OTHERS)

A very high proportion (96%) of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question with almost all expressing some degree of support.

6.1.1 General Views in Favour of the Single Qualifications Framework

Many respondents stated that they "*welcomed*" or "*supported*" the proposals. Other typical comments included:

> "*We would feel very comfortable with this*" (CP)

> "*The framework can easily reflect common values of all those who work with children*" (LA)

> "*The existing plethora of qualifications is confusing and counter-productive and often acts as a disincentive for able and mature candidates to enter the profession*" (TP)

> "*An excellent idea to allow for the fluidity of the workforce within the sector*" (CProv)

Some consultees welcomed in particular the notion of core units with additional more specialist modules to plug gaps and add to knowledge (CP, TP, Rep, LA). Others emphasised the importance of recognising prior learning in a consistent way (CP, CP, CP, LA, Rep); or welcomed the flexibility which the proposals offered to those progressing with qualifications (Rep, Rep, LA). Specific advantages to the single qualifications framework were identified:

- Easier for staff to transfer within and outwith the sector – free flow of workers
- Will promote more integrated working across the sector
- Will help staff to specialise and diversify
- Should help to retain staff within the sector
- Will promote a shared vision and mutual understanding across the sector
- Will enhance a professional identity
- More responsive to changing individual or community needs
- Will help childminders develop their careers at a pace appropriate to them
- Will help voluntary groups compete for qualified staff
- Will enable parents to have a better understanding of the profession
- Will promote better career progression and pathways

Illustrative comments included:

> "*...will encourage the clear, transparent, easy, free flowing of professionals throughout the career pathways*" (Rep)

> "*This would be a positive step and a worthwhile development which would promote shared knowledge and understanding across the sectors*" (LA)

A few respondents urged that more discussion should take place on what should constitute the "common core" (CProv, Indiv), with one consultee listing what they saw as

priority elements: core standards, social and policy context, child protection, and child development (LA). Another stipulated that speaking, listening and communication skills should be included (TP). A recurring comment was that practical skills should not be under-valued (LA, LA, CP, CP, Indiv). One further comment was that the core should contain elements relating to playworkers skills (TP).

Others offered a more cautious welcome to what one consultee saw as a "*significant challenge*" (Rep). It was suggested that too high a training requirement or entry standard might put some potentially capable people off entering the profession (Rep, TP). Others argued that to be successful, the framework would need to be simple to use, with clear mapping between the framework and qualifications, and have currency at both national and international levels (Rep, Rep, Rep). These consultees recommended much publicity to support its implementation. Another view was that its effectiveness would be enhanced if all parts of the sector signed up to it (CP).

Some respondents considered that the success of the model would depend largely on the quality of the course content, delivery methods and the attitudes of the workforce (LA, LA, CP, Rep). Two consultees urged that rigorous monitoring and quality assurance systems would need to be in place (LA, LA) with one view that some level of external assessment would be needed for in-house qualification attainment (LA).

Views from participants at the workshops supported many of those emerging from the written consultation. A common theme was that a targeted communications exercise is required to explain the qualification structure to the workforce and relieve anxieties people may have. Participants recommended that a key message should be that the award is achievable by everyone. Another message advocated was that the new structure was not about adding to people's jobs, but rather integrating their experience and learning into the new framework.

6.1.2 Views on the Potential Drawbacks of the Single Qualifications Framework

Around eleven respondents to the main consultation appeared not to favour the proposal to introduce a single qualifications framework. Two provided the same view:

> "*We believe it may be difficult to make this workable*". If the framework is too broad and embracing, "*it will tend to be at the level of the lowest common denominator*" (CP, LA).

Another consultee agreed that although the vision appeared to be a good one, it was doubtful whether what they perceived to be the "one size fits all" approach would work in practice (LA).

One respondent argued that in their view, a national, single pay structure had to be in place prior to the introduction of any qualifications framework (LA).

The crux of other criticism of the proposals centred on what respondents considered to be the framework's inappropriateness for certain settings and contexts. For example, one view was that the single framework would seriously threaten the future of playgroups (CProv). Another opinion was that the private and voluntary sectors would suffer with an exodus of staff if people had to take stipulated qualifications (CProv). The framework was seen as not really appropriate for play and recreational settings (CProv). A few consultees were concerned that the framework may not work as well in rural settings where issues such as the cost of staff training would need to be addressed (CProv, CProv, LA). This concern was also raised by participants at most of the workshops who cautioned that practitioners in rural areas should not be disadvantages by restricted delivery opportunities.

A few other respondents expressed concern that too much emphasis on core elements might detract from the development of specialisms amongst the workforce (Rep, Rep). One of these consultees argued that although the common core could be valuable it should not lead to failure to recognise the specific demands of different types of working environment or roles.

6.1.3 Other Comments

The view of one consultee was that as it stands, the framework needed to be expanded to reflect a wider range of roles and responsibilities (Indiv). This theme was taken up by many respondents in relation to specific roles. Most commonly expressed was the view that teachers should fit somewhere within the framework. Others argued for the inclusion of childminders, health professionals, social workers, participation and family workers, and nannies. A few consultees considered that the roles of playworkers, out of school care workers (Rep) and sessional staff (Rep, LA) were not well catered for in the qualifications framework at present.

6.2 VIEWS OF CHILDMINDERS ON QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As described in the introductory chapters above, separate sets of consultation questions were directed at childminders and at childcare workers respectively. The questions posed for childminders are directly relevant to a discussion on qualifications, training and development, therefore the responses of the fifty-eight childminders who responded are analysed here.

The consultation for childminders stated:

Childminders deliver essential services and are an integral part of this (early years and childcare) workforce. Working in quite different circumstances to most other early years and childcare workers – usually as the sole provider and manager of a service. Childminders are registered with the Care Commission and there is not currently a requirement for childminders to hold qualifications. Ministers do not have any plans to

introduce a requirement, but we do want to see childminders undertake qualifications and professional development.

6.2.1 The childminders' consultation asked:

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT THAT CHILDMINDERS HAVE QUALIFICATIONS THAT ARE ON PAR WITH THE REST OF THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE WORKFORCE? IS THIS VERY IMPORTANT, IMPORTANT OR NOT IMPORTANT?

All fifty-eight childminders responded to this question. A summary of their responses is in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Summary of Childminders' Responses on the Importance of Childminders having Qualifications on Par with the Rest of the Workforce

View	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Very Important	14	24
Important	22	38
Not Important	22	38
Total	**58**	**100**

Overall, the majority (62%) of childminders considered it very important or important to have qualifications that are on par with the rest of the early years and childcare workforce.

Many reasons were given in support of the view that qualifications are important for childminders. These are listed below in order of the frequency with which they were identified, from the most common, to those reasons provided by only one respondent.

- Would result in a better standard of care across the board
- Would ensure a greater respect for and professional recognition of childminders
- Would give childminders more confidence
- Would provide a better knowledge of child development
- Would keep childminders up-to-date with developments
- Would create a more level playing field with workers in other parts of the sector
- Would emphasise that childminders are part of the wider early years and childcare sector
- Would provide childminders with the choice of building a career in the profession
- Very important as childminders work alone with all of the responsibilities associated with sole working
- Would provide personal gain

One consultee illustrated this final point thus:

"Having recently completed the Scottish Childminders Association qualification "Scheme of Excellence" I believe I personally gained from completing this course due to the fact that a great deal of the work was based on self evaluation. As a result I was able to put into practice further improvements to my service"

Others made relevant comments:

"By everyone having equal training it gives a better understanding of children's and childcare issues, leading to a better continuity of care right across the board"

"If childminding is to be seen as a worthwhile profession, then qualifications must be the way forward"

It was remarked that although gaining qualifications was a good idea in theory, in practice childminders had very little time available to do so. One concern was that people may be put off if qualifications were set at too high a level. Another respondent argued that what was needed was a qualification on par with, but not the same as, those available for others in the workforce, as childminders worked in different circumstances.

Five childminders remarked that any qualifications for childminders should not be made compulsory. Another respondent considered that qualifications should be compulsory only where a childminder has no prior childcare experience.

Seven key **reasons were provided by the minority of respondents who did not consider it important** that childminders should have qualifications on par with the rest of the workforce. Again, these are listed below in order of frequency of mention from most to least:

- Experience counts for more than qualifications
- The standard of service would not be changed by having qualifications
- The annual inspection from the Care Commission should suffice
- A better qualified childminder workforce would lead to an exodus to better paid jobs
- It is possible to keep up-to-date in other ways such as via the local authority or the Scottish Childminding Association
- Qualifications would not lead to more pay
- The role of the childminder is to care for children not to educate them

Several childminders expanded on their rationale that experience counts for more than qualifications:

"Having qualifications does not make you a better childminder. Experience counts for a lot!"

"*A good childminder is a good childminder*"…irrespective of qualifications

"*A loving, caring and affectionate nature are far more important, along with a good working relationship with parents*"

"*Practical skills are more important than theory*"

6.2.2 The consultation for childminders stated:

A qualifications and professional development framework will be designed to accommodate the specific circumstances of sole workers such as childminders, to encourage their training and learning.

The childminders' consultation asked:

WOULD YOU ACTIVELY UNDERTAKE TRAINING AND LEARNING IF IT WAS RECOGNISED WITHIN A SINGLE QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE WHOLE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SECTOR?

All but one of the fifty-eight childminder respondents addressed this question. A summary of their responses is in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Summary of Childminders' Responses on Whether they would Actively Undertake Training and Learning if it was Recognised within a Single Qualifications and Professional Development Framework

View	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Yes	41	72
No	13	23
Depends/Possibly	3	5
Total	**57**	**100**

Overall, almost three-quarters (72%) of the childminders who responded considered that they would actively undertake training and learning if it was recognised within a single qualifications and professional development framework.

Those childminders who were undecided considered that they would only undertake training and learning if it added to current qualifications, if time permitted or arrangements were suitable (e.g. evening workshops).

6.2.3 The childminders' consultation asked:

AS A SOLE WORKER WHAT PREVENTS YOU FROM UNDERTAKING TRAINING AND LEARNING?

Fifty-two (90%) childminders addressed this question.

By far the most common factor identified as preventing respondents from undertaking training and learning was to do with **not having the time** needed to pursue this. Thirty-seven (71%) of those who responded raised this as an issue. It was pointed out that as childminders work through the day with no relief staff to cover for them, this restricts opportunities to train and learn to evenings or weekends when they may well have their own family childcare responsibilities to attend to. Typical comments were:

> "*most of us do childminding as a way of working around our own family time*"

> "*when all the children are away at night, by the time I have attended to my own family and tidies up it is bedtime*"

> "*business and domestic commitments leave little time for anything else*"

The views of participants at the workshops concurred with those presented above in that a common theme was that timing of learning opportunities is very important, with flexibility around training times crucial. This meant offering both daytime and evening learning possibilities to meet the needs of workers with family and other commitments.

A further eight childminders remarked specifically that they had their own **caring responsibilities** that prevented them from taking up training and learning opportunities.

Nine respondents considered that undertaking training and learning was simply **not worthwhile**. For example, some consultees were in their fifties and sixties and argued that they would rather younger childminders took up the places for training. One older consultee considered that their memory was not good enough to retain information. Another consultee who had gained a qualification stated that achieving this had not translated into providing any higher standard of service. Another view was that it was not necessary for childminders to excel in their daily work.

The **cost of training** was a disincentive to six childminders. One commented:

> "*I could not afford the loss of earnings and the money required to pay for my own childcare resulting from giving a day or two days to learning/training*"

Another remarked:

> "*The cost is so expensive which tends to put me off*"

It was pointed out that even with increased qualifications, a childminder is not likely to be able to demand more pay from parents in respect of being better qualified.

A small number of respondents felt that their **previous qualifications** (e.g. teaching, nursing, and so on) were **sufficient** for the job that they were doing.

Other barriers to undertaking training and learning were raised by either one or just a few consultees and included: **course content** hold little relevance; **difficulties of being assessed** in the workplace; **accessing courses** without private transport; **fear of failing/lack of confidence**; and **lack of peer support**. One similar view to emerge from the workshops was that some practitioners had concerns about attending colleges and would much prefer to study in a familiar setting with a training provider known to them.

6.2.4 The childminders' consultation asked:

WHAT WOULD HELP YOU TO START OR CONTINUE YOUR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT?

A total of forty-eight (83%) of childminder respondents addressed this question. Over one-third of these (38%) considered that **flexible patterns of delivering training and learning** would help them to start or continue their learning and development. More evening and weekend courses were called for with some childminders requesting that training is supported with crèche facilities.

Another common response (around fourteen respondents) was for **financial help** with attendance at courses to make up for loss of earnings. Less frequently mentioned were the need for **more time to train**; **support** (from authorities or peers) in training; more **appropriate course content**; **more notice** of when courses are to be held; more **local courses**; **work-based training**; and **staff cover** during training.

A few respondents stated that nothing would help them to start or continue their learning and development. One argued, "*childminding is a way to earn money and be at home for my own family*".

Finally, seven childminders pointed out that they were already undertaking training and learning.

6.3 The main consultation asked stated:

…we have a growing body of evidence that links the quality of service to the level of qualification of staff. The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) research found that workers qualified at a degree level (e.g. in teaching or in childhood studies) working with children in settings for a substantial proportion of time, and most importantly as a "pedagogical leader" (a pedagogical leader uses their knowledge and information provided by researchers, academics and first-hand experience to work with

their staff to bridge the gap between theory and practice), had the greatest impact on quality.

We propose that the lead practitioner/manager should be qualified at SCQF level 9 or above, either through an academic "degree" route or through a work-based route. This worker needs to be a reflective practitioner – one who evaluates incidents, draws on theory and other evidence in understanding them, makes decisions about how to proceed and reviews the results. They will work with other practitioners in early years and childcare and the wider children's services to improve their ability to question and improve their practice. They are also the reflexive practitioner- adapting to changing circumstances and the needs of different children. The relationships that the practitioner has with children is a reciprocal and mutual one, it is individualised. In other words, it is not simply being a "technician" applying the same practice in every set of circumstances.

The main consultation asked:

Q9: THE REVIEW PROPOSES THAT SERVICES SHOULD BE LED BY SCQF LEVEL 9 (ORDINARY DEGREE OR WORK-BASED EQUIVALENT) QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS. SHOULD IT BE HIGHER THAN SCQF LEVEL 9? WHY?

All but three of the one hundred and fifteen respondents (97%) to the main consultation document addressed this question making it, along with question six, the most commonly addressed topic. Many respondents provided more general commentary rather than a clear indication of whether they considered that services should be led by a professional qualified higher than SCQF level 9. However, the views of those who did submit a clear response to the question are summarised in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Summary of Views on Appropriateness of Proposed Level 9 Qualification

View	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Level 9 sufficient	48	60
Level 9 too high	18	22
Level 9 not high enough	14	18
Total	**80**	**100**

The majority view (60%) was that services should be led by SCQF level 9, although sizeable minorities considered that this level was too high (22%) or not high enough (18%).

One respondent argued that the wording of the question had been misleading in that instead of asking whether services should be led by SCQF Level 9 degree, it has asked if the level should be higher (CP). A few others considered that the premise used by the consultation for proposing a level 9 qualification was erroneous. In particular, it was felt that a causal link between level of qualification of staff and quality of early years' provision was not as clear cut as had been suggested (TP, TP, CP, Rep). Other general

comments were that the focus on leadership in the qualification structure was to be welcomed (TP, CPr); that the relevance of the course material should be of equal importance to the level attained (Rep); that level 9 would bring Scotland in line with other European countries (CP); and that for the proposal to be effective, training providers would need to develop the skills and the capacity to respond to new needs (CP, TP).

A recurring theme was that emphasis should be placed on recognising the value of experience and prior learning. One consultee cautioned that "*there is a real risk that academic qualifications will override experience*" (Rep).

6.3.1 Arguments Against Introducing Level 9 for Leaders of Services

The most common argument against introducing level 9 was that pay would not be able to rise in accordance with the increased qualification levels gained. Many consultees expressed concern that people may leave the workforce rather than make the commitment to work towards level 9 with no prospect of additional remuneration at the end of their efforts. One comment was:

> "*If this proposal is taken forward the childcare workforce will be seriously depleted without a package of wages and benefits alongside it*" (CP)

Others were worried that people who did not want to take the qualification may be forced to leave the workforce altogether. One consultee remarked:

> "*There are a number of hard working and effective managers for whom this new requirement will come as a shock*" (Rep)

It was suggested that perhaps a staged approach may soften the impact of the new requirements (TP) and help to stem any exodus of staff otherwise unwilling to work towards level 9.

A common view was that the introduction of level 9 may be more of a challenge for the voluntary and private sector workforce in that facilitating training, and financially rewarding qualifications could create disproportionate difficulties. Participants in the workshops held similar views and highlighted their concern that market forces limited the funding available in the voluntary and private sectors. There were some concerns from written consultees that some smaller establishments might have to close, leading to reduced choice for parents (LA, CProv). Likewise, many respondents highlighted the difficulties which they considered smaller rural establishments may come across in obtaining level 9 staff. One suggestion to address this was for the deployment of peripatetic lead practitioners in rural areas (Rep, Rep, Rep).

Several consultees felt that although the level of qualification may be appropriate in some settings, it was not suitable for all. For example, achievement of the qualification was considered too onerous a task for people working part-time during term time only (LA).

Likewise, some respondents questioned the applicability of level 9 in an out of school care setting or for childminders. One respondent explained how many lead practitioners in smaller settings become "accidental managers" by default (TP). In their case, the consultee argued that a staged progression to level 9 should be allowed.

Others agreed that the introduction of level 9 should not take place over the shorter or medium term (Rep, Rep, Rep). A few felt that the qualifications' goal posts seemed to be continually moving (CP, CP). One consultee questioned the necessity of level 9 when "*children are here to play not to be a doctor or dentist*" (CProv). Finally, one view was that the move towards higher qualifications discriminated against the older worker who may not have enough work years left to make it worthwhile to begin to study (CProv).

6.3.2 Arguments in Favour of a Qualification Higher than Level 9

A common argument was that the early years and childcare workforce should be brought into line with teachers and other related professionals in terms of qualifications, and therefore, there was a strong case for increasing the level of qualification to level 10. One consultee remarked:

> "*We believe that working with young children is an important profession and that this should be reflected in equality of status with other professions*" (TP)

Many consultees agreed that whilst level 9 might suffice at present, in the longer-term this should be increased in order to gain parity with other professionals, and to accommodate those with ability who wished to gain an honours or masters degree. One view was that level 11 should be set for those leading in the sector such as childcare partnership managers (TP).

A recurring theme was that whatever level was agreed, the situation should be reviewed within a set number of years.

6.3.3 Arguments against Setting the Qualifications Level any Higher

A small number of respondents spelled out why they considered it not appropriate to set a qualifications level higher than level 9. One view was that this would create problems associated with funding the training and rewarding the achievement of the qualification (LA). Another comment was that any higher levels would simply put people off (LA). Finally, a call was made for sensitivity and practicality in setting the level of qualification – with level 9 considered high enough (CP).

6.3.4 Potential Content of Level 9

Participants in the workshops provided views on what they saw as important components of the level 9 qualification. Overall, a balance was envisaged between a prescription of core elements which were common to all areas of work with children, along with bespoke and flexible aspects which met the particular interests and gaps in knowledge of the

practitioner. A recurring comment was that emphasis should be placed on leadership skills in level 9. Other suggested components of level 9 included:

- Management skills
- People skills
- Dealing with parents
- Keeping up with new legislation
- Finance
- Health and safety
- Team working
- Critical thinking
- How to motivate
- Understanding child development
- Communication skills
- Additional support needs
- How to run a business

Interestingly, many of these items overlap with those identified by individual childcare workers as training gaps between the training they initially undertook and the work they now carry out in the workplace (see Section 6.6, Table 11 below).

6.4 VIEWS OF CHILDCARE WORKERS ON THE PROPOSAL FOR SCQF LEVEL 9 QUALIFICATION FOR MANAGERS AND LEAD PRACTITIONERS

As described in the introductory chapters above, separate sets of consultation questions were directed at childminders and at childcare workers respectively. One of the questions posed for childcare workers is directly relevant to a discussion on the proposal to introduce a SCQF Level 9 qualification for managers and lead practitioners, therefore the responses to that question are analysed here.

The consultation for childcare workers stated:

Research indicates that children do better in early primary school when the early years and childcare service they attend is led by a manager or lead practitioner who is qualified to degree level, for example a teacher (although this person doesn't necessarily have to be a teacher).

The Review proposes that managers and lead practitioners should be qualified to SCQF Level 9 (equivalent to an ordinary degree). This might be a new qualification which provides a mix of theory and practical experience and which would build on existing qualifications, e.g. HNCs or SVQs. The Review anticipated that any changes would take place over a number of years.

The consultation for childcare workers asked:

IS AN SCQF LEVEL 9 (ORDINARY DEGREE EQUIVALENT) QUALIFICATION FOR MANAGERS AND LEAD PRACTITIONERS HIGH ENOUGH? YES? NO?

Most (98%) of the two hundred and one childcare workers who responded to the consultation addressed this question. Their responses are summarised in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Summary of Responses of Childcare Workers on Whether SCQF Level 9 is High Enough for Managers and Lead Practitioners
(NB Please treat these figures with caution – see below)

View	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Yes	172	88
No	13	7
Neither Yes or No	9	5
DK	2	1
Total	**196**	**100**

NB Percentages may not add to 100% exactly due to rounding

Taken at face value, these results would appear to support those of the respondents to the main consultation in that a clear majority of consultees indicated that SCQF level 9 is high enough for managers and lead practitioners. However, on closer inspection, many of the comments which accompanied the workforce responses demonstrated that those who provided a "yes" response comprised a mix of respondents who agreed with introducing a level 9 requirement, and those who considered this to be too high. For the latter, the question did not provide any tick box for this option, thus contributing to the confusion. In addition, those responding with "no" included consultees who thought level 9 was too high and those who considered it to be too low.

It is suggested therefore that the quantitative findings from this question should be treated with much caution. However, the commentary which accompanied the responses provides more informative feedback on respondents' views.

6.4.1 Benefits Associated with SCQF Level 9 for Managers and Lead Practitioners

Although it was difficult to quantify the degree of support in favour of the introduction of a level 9 requirement for managers and lead practitioners, it was clear that many members of the childcare workforce welcomed this proposal for a number of reasons. These are summarised below:

- Makes the profession comparable with other professions
- Will promote the status of the profession
- Ensures that children are being cared for by qualified people
- In keeping with the demands of the job
- Best to have as wide a knowledge of child development as possible
- Ensures knowledge base kept up-to-date

- Helps to build on people's existing skills

One comment was particularly pertinent:

> "*The early years' workforce is a vital component of child development and I believe this new qualification will raise the bar*"

Another consultee remarked:

> "*I feel that it is just the same as putting your children into a school with unqualified teachers..... level of knowledge and practical skills are paramount in childcare settings*"

A view to emerge from the workshops fitted with these sentiments. It was argued that personal choice in whether or not to take such qualifications has no place in a regulated profession and gaining work-based qualifications should be relatively straightforward for those with experience.

A few respondents suggested that the level of qualification should be at honours rather than ordinary degree level in order to give the pre-school sector the status they thought it deserves and also to equip managers and lead practitioners with the expertise required. One supporter of making level 9 a *minimum* qualification argued:

> "*Managers need to be experts in child development, able to share their knowledge and experience with parents, staff and peers*"

Many consultees qualified their response with conditions. Most common amongst these was that the requirement for an academic qualification should be balanced with the need for experience amongst managers and lead practitioners. One comment summed up the views of many:

> "*Nursery life would be a shambles if the manager was only appointed if they have a degree. You need experience or training in this field to get a real feel of the job, not a degree!*"

Others cautioned that care should be taken to ensure that the level 9 qualification was robust enough not to be looked down upon as a second rate degree. Support was expressed by some on the condition that achievement of the higher qualification could be rewarded financially. Another view was that existing qualifications must be taken into account in working towards the new award.

A few consultees warned that the level of qualification required should not exceed level 9 as the funding was not likely to be forthcoming to remunerate those qualified, and also that this would be out of step with primary school heads, many of whom were not educated to honours degree level.

6.4.2   Arguments Against Introducing SCQF Level 9 for Managers and Lead Practitioners

Two main arguments dominated the responses:

- Experience should count for more than paper qualifications
- The proposal will impact disproportionately on smaller settings and voluntary/private establishments particularly in terms of higher salaries to be paid, possibly leading to an exodus of staff from these settings or the closure of some of these establishments

Examples of arguments relating to the first of these were:

Practical experience speaks more than paper skills

Being academic doesn't always go hand in hand with being a good "people person"

Experience counts or should count for a lot of qualifications

I am not convinced that the more qualifications managers have the better they are to manage

Our view is that is it too high and not necessary. Experience is much more valuable

The views of many participants who attended the workshops supported those above. Some participants felt that the proposals placed too much emphasis on paper qualifications at the expense of valuing experience. One participant described how people were feeling unnerved that despite their experience, a new person might displace them in their job because they were more qualified on paper. One participant posed the question of who should be trusted with children most – a person with years of experience, or someone new to the profession but with all the relevant certificates? Another argued that qualifications did not necessarily make a person do their job better.

In relation to the second argument, many individual workers considered that level 9 appeared too high a level for settings such as playgroups, crèches, small nurseries and out of school care establishments. One consultee argued:

"It is totally unfair and unrealistic to expect playgroup leaders, out of school club co- ordinators etc to undertake this level of qualification. These posts are part-time and poorly paid"

Another consultee summed up the views of many:

"As the manager of the organisation I think that financially we would not be able to train our staff, logistically we would never get anyone through it, and if we did, who once qualified to SCQF level 9 is going to stay in a role paying what we do for 16-25 hours per week?"

The **possible exodus of qualified staff** from the voluntary and private sectors and indeed, from the profession, was raised repeatedly as a concern by childcare workers. Others expressed concern that what they saw as the moving qualification **goal posts may change again**:

"...concerned that the continual moving of goal posts will both deter people from entering the profession and positively discourage people like myself from staying within it"

"...concerned that the extra qualifications we have taken will not be enough. The goalposts are constantly changing and new improved qualifications are brought out"

"I completed my SVQ4 as initially requested for managers just to find that you have moved the goal posts again and that 30 years experience plus a level 8 is not now good enough"

Participants at the workshops also raised as a possibility the potential movement of staff out of the profession. It was suggested that level 9 could be used as a *"stepping stone"* out of the profession and into more financially rewarding employment such as teaching. In particular, the absence of financial reward and promotion prospects on gaining level 9 were seen as de-motivating to workers who, on qualifying, would take their skills elsewhere.

It was clear that some consultees interpreted the proposal as perhaps criticising **the current quality of management** in childcare establishments. A few posed the (rhetorical) question: was the Scottish Executive suggesting that nursery settings are not being managed properly at present?

A few respondents argued that **educating children was not within the remit** of the childcare workforce, making the need for higher qualifications unnecessary:

"We are not educating but providing a safe and fun environment for the children"

Other respondents queried **who will pay** for training people to level 9, for providing staff cover whilst people trained, and for the increased salaries which they considered would be required to reward the achievement of the qualification.

6.5 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

Both the main consultation and the consultation for individual childcare workers contained questions aimed at seeking views on aspects of CPD as part of the workforce's portfolio of qualifications, training and development. An analysis of responses is below, commencing with those to the main consultation.

The main consultation stated:

Our model envisages that a worker with the potential to do so should be able to progress through a career structure that encourages increasing responsibility, and that process would be supported with qualifications. It builds on the principle established with SSSC registration, that continuous professional development (CPD) is a fundamental part of working in the sector – a sector which will continue to evolve to meet the needs of children and families in the future. So, a support worker should be able to increase their skills and knowledge through CPD and build on their existing qualifications to allow them to take on increasing responsibility and progress to being a practitioner, or beyond.

6.5.1 The main consultation asked:

Q10:   MANY WORKERS WILL DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE THROUGH CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT FEATURES OF A CPD FRAMEWORK FOR THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE WORKFORCE?

In total, 90% of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question. Their responses were categorised into a number of broad features which are summarised in Table 9 in order from most frequently to least frequently mentioned.

Table 9: Suggested Features of a CPD Framework

Feature	Approximate No. of Mentions*
Delivery of CPD to take a variety of formats to accommodate a range of learning styles	37
CPD programme to be comprehensive, have a clear structure, be clearly communicated and signposted	28
Clear accreditation structure linked to SSSC framework for registration	27
CPD to be meaningful and purposeful	25
CPD to be accessible and flexible	25
Appropriate finance to be put in place for CPD and staff cover	23

Focus to be on staff needs (perhaps with individual needs analyses and tailored options)	20
Supported by employers (perhaps written into contract)	16
Standards of training to be consistent with quality assurance built in	15
Time allocated to CPD (proposed 60 hours over 5 years seen as too little by some)	14
Recognises prior learning	8
Monitored and evaluated to assess impact on childcare	7
Up-to-date CPD content	6
Training to be integrated/shared across the workforce	5
Formal record keeping of CPD with guidance on this provided	4
Should be part of workers' contracts	3
Should include childminders	3
Transparent	2
Allows people to work at own pace	1

* As in all consultations, a degree of judgement is sometimes required by the researcher in allocating responses to selected categories. Therefore, these quantitative findings should be taken as indicative rather than absolute.

Amongst those who recommended that CPD be underpinned by adequate funding, a few consultees stressed what they saw as the importance of the Workforce Development Fund. Another argued:

> "*A single training budget which can be used to deliver training to all staff in all sectors….would make the biggest impact here*" (CP)

Of the minority of respondents who proffered views on the content of a future CPD programme, most stipulated a mix of theory and practical elements. Others recommended the opportunity to reflect on practice. Finally, some consultees suggested that there could be value in learning from other relevant frameworks such as that developed by McCrone for teachers.

6.5.2 The consultation aimed at members of the childcare workforce stated:

Whilst working in early years and childcare it is important to reflect on your practice and to continue to learn and develop your skills.

The childcare workforce consultation asked:

DOES YOUR EMPLOYER SUPPORT YOU IN YOUR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)?

The importance of employer support as an element of an effective CPD framework had been highlighted by several respondents to the main consultation (see section 6.5.1 above). The consultation aimed at members of the workforce focused on this issue and

asked for examples of where employer support had been provided, and if this had not been forthcoming in the past, what might help in the future.

Overall, 96% of respondents to the childcare workforce consultation questions addressed this question, with the vast majority (95%) reporting that their employer supported their CPD. Of the remaining ten consultees, five considered that their employer both helped and did not help them in their CPD, whilst five stated that they did not receive any help from their employers regarding their CPD.

The examples of employer support provided by respondents fell into five groups:

- General support
- Practical support
- Advice and guidance
- Empowering and facilitating
- Direct provision of CPD

Many respondents described how their employer provided general support by showing an interest in their development, offering broad encouragement to pursue a programme of CPD and encouraging dissemination and feedback from courses amongst staff. Others outlined the nature of more practical support given by their employer such as allowing time off for attendance at courses, permitting time at home to study, and providing funding for training, books, videos etc. (with some establishments having dedicated training budgets).

Some consultees valued the advice and guidance provided by their employer regarding their CPD. Some employers were pro-active in identifying suitable CPD opportunities and communicating these to staff. Many respondents described a programme of regular meetings with staff in their establishment at which their employer discussed staff training needs, appraised their progress and helped them to identify appropriate avenues for their CPD. (The importance of individualised CPD programmes and ensuring CPD is focused and meaningful were indeed identified as key elements of a CPD framework by respondents to the main consultation.)

Other members of the childcare workforce welcomed the way their employer facilitated their progress and empowered them to take responsibility for their own CPD. Some reported having libraries and up-to-date resource materials within their workplace establishment. Others described how their employer had equipped the workplace with IT systems and permitted access to the internet to enable them to undertake research and learning on-line and also to keep electronic records of their CPD portfolio. Some employers were reported as allowing staff a wide choice over which courses and learning opportunities they wished to pursue.

Finally, some employers were clearly offering in-house training, some bringing in trainers to carry this out. There were several reports of regular, sometimes weekly, after-hours staff training sessions.

Twenty-four respondents (including many who considered that their employer supported their CPD) identified factors which might provide them with more support. Responses were dominated by recommendations for increased funding for training and for supply staff to cover in the absence of staff away at training. Calls were also made for study time away from work to be paid; for more e-learning opportunities to make learning more cost effective; and for committee and board members to be made more aware of the need for CPD and the support they could provide to staff.

6.6 TRAINING GAPS

The childcare workforce consultation provided more evidence to help steer future formal and informal training and learning by asking consultees about perceived training gaps.

The childcare workforce consultation stated:

Over the years the roles and responsibilities of the early years and childcare worker have steadily evolved and continue to change. The Review found that many of the tasks and jobs carried out across the sector are similar, even though there are currently a huge range of different job titles. As our understanding of the needs of children and young people expands, the workforce who cares for those children need to become more adaptable, flexible and skilled in order to deliver the best service possible.

The childcare workforce consultation asked:

IN YOUR ROLE AS AN EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE WORKER, ARE THERE ANY TRAINING GAPS BETWEEN WHAT YOU WERE INITIALLY TRAINED TO DO AND THE WORK YOU NOW CARRY OUT IN THE WORKPLACE? YES/NO? WHAT ARE THOSE GAPS?

Overall, 91% of those who responded to the childcare workforce consultation questions addressed this question. Their responses are summarised in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Summary of Views on Whether Training Gaps Exist

Views	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Yes – gaps	84	46
No gaps	97	53
Neither yes or no	1	1
Both gaps and no gaps	1	1
Total	**183**	**100**

NB Percentages may not add to 100% exactly due to rounding

Respondents were relatively evenly split between those who could identify training gaps between their initial training and the work they now carried out and those who did not perceive there to be any significant gaps in their training. However, many of the

comments provided suggest that several respondents who stated that no gaps existed had done so on account of their having addressed these gaps themselves with further targeted training over the years. Also, each respondent's length of time in service was not recorded on their submission so it is not known, for example, whether respondents reporting no gaps tend to be those who have recently trained.

Some consultees considered that it was inevitable that gaps in training would emerge as new practices emerge, legislation changes and more is expected of the workforce. One view was:

> *"There will always be gaps because learning is never static"*

Others remarked that emerging gaps can always be filled with training. One comment was:

> *"The training which we received initially differs greatly from the reality of the present job…however, the gaps have been filled by authority courses and courses in-service staff have chosen to do to develop their professionalism"*

According to a one consultee it was up to the individual worker to keep their training up-to-date, with another arguing that initial training should be seen as simply a base from which to launch a lifelong learning process. Another view was that emerging gaps could often be filled with hands on experience rather than training.

Many respondents identified specific gaps in their training. These have been quantified to provide a rough guide to prevalence amongst the responses. The results are provided in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Gaps Identified in Initial Training

Gap Identified	Approximate No. of Mentions*
Dealing with parents	16
Report writing/making assessments/observations	15
Managerial skills	14
Paperwork/Administration	12
Dealing with children with special needs	11
Multi-agency work	7
Computing	7
Planning	6
Legislation	5
Practical tasks such as nappy changing	4
Accounting/book-keeping	3
Multi-cultural issues	3
First aid	3

Experience of different settings/ages of children	3
Preparing for inspections	2
Handling equipment such as digital cameras	2
Food hygiene	2
Theory	2
Leadership	2
Dealing with HIV/Aids	1
Coaching/mentoring staff	1
Dealing with procedures associated with allergies and medication	1

* As in all consultations, a degree of judgement is sometimes required by the researcher in allocating responses to selected categories. Therefore, these quantitative findings should be taken as indicative rather than absolute.

It can be seen that a wide range of gaps in initial training were identified by respondents, with five key areas (at the top of the table) raised repeatedly by consultees. Other remarked that gaps such as dealing with multi-cultural issues and IT skills, may gain in prominence as ethnicity profiles change and technology develops.

6.7 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Almost all of those who provided a view on the proposed single qualifications framework expressed some degree of support.
- Of particular attraction to consultees was the notion of core units with additional, more specialist modules, to plug gaps and add to knowledge. Also welcomed was the recognition of prior learning and the flexibility which the proposals offered to those pursuing qualifications.
- The majority of childminders (62%) who responded to the childminders' consultation questions considered it very important or important to have qualifications that are on par with the rest of the early years and childcare workforce.
- Of the sizeable minority (38%) of childminders who did not consider parity of qualifications important, a common argument was that experience counts for more than qualifications.
- Seventy-two per cent of childminders who provided a view stated that they would undertake training and learning if it was recognised within a single qualifications and professional development framework across the whole early years and childcare sector.
- By far the most common factor identified as preventing respondents from undertaking training and learning was not having the time needed to pursue this, with 71% of those who responded raising this as an issue.
- A recurring comment from childminders and workshop participants was that flexible patterns of delivering training and learning (e.g. evening or weekend courses) would help childminders start or continue their learning and development. Another common view was that financial help with attendance at courses would be beneficial.

- Of those respondents to the main consultation who provided a clear view, most (60%) considered that services should be led by SCQF level 9, although sizeable minorities thought that this was too high a level (22%) or not high enough (18%).
- The most common argument against introducing level 9 was that pay would not be able to rise in accordance with the increased qualifications gained.
- A common view was that the introduction of level 9 may be more of a challenge for the voluntary and private sector workforce in that facilitating training, and financially rewarding qualifications, could create difficulties.
- Another recurring view was that the workforce should be brought in line with teachers and other related professionals, with a strong case for increasing the qualification to level 10.
- There were mixed views amongst individual childcare workers on the proposal to raise the qualification level. Whilst many supported the proposal in order to increase the professionalism and status of the workforce, others considered that experience should count for more than paper qualifications and that the proposal would impact disproportionately on smaller settings and voluntary/private establishments, possibly leading to an exodus of staff from these.
- The feature most commonly identified as important to a CPD framework was a varied delivery of formats to accommodate a range of learning styles.
- The vast majority (95%) of individual childcare workers who provided a view stated that their employer supported them in their CPD, usually by providing general support, advice and guidance.
- Individual childcare workers were relatively evenly split between those who did not perceive there to be any significant gaps in their training (53%), and those who could identify training gaps between their initial training and the work they now carried out (46%).
- The gaps in training most commonly identified were:

  o dealing with parents; report writing/assessments/observations;
  o managerial skills;
  o administration; and
  o dealing with children with special needs.

CHAPTER 7: QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: VIEWS FROM THE WORKSHOPS

As described in Chapter One, five workshops took place between 6 November and 4 December 2006. Participants at the workshops included early years and childcare managers, training providers, individual workers and local authority representatives. Four of the workshops took place in Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee. The remaining workshop was conducted via video-link to enable participants in remote island areas to participate more readily. In total, the workshops attracted two hundred and ten participants.

The workshops aimed to contribute to a body of expert knowledge on some of the issues emerging from the national Review of the early years and childcare workforce. They focused on the practical and day-to-day realities that workers face when trying to access qualifications. The two key questions posed for discussion at the workshops relate to issues of qualifications, training and development. The questions posed and the discussion which followed are reported below.

7.1 Q1: THE REVIEW IS SAYING WE NEED AN SCQF LEVEL 9 QUALIFICATION THAT IS DELIVERED FLEXIBLY. COMING FROM THE VIEW THAT WE SHOULD TRY TO BRING THE LEARNING TO THE LEARNER, WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD MAKE A LEVEL 9 QUALIFICATION THIS FLEXIBLE?

7.1.1 General Comments

The notion of *flexible delivery* was discussed, with many participants welcoming this approach and in particular the concept of bringing learning to the learner. One group considered that flexibility in this context meant placing the needs of learners and employers uppermost, rather than focusing on the needs of the training providers.

Others remarked that flexibility should allow for individual requirements to be addressed in terms of appropriate, tailored training. For example, one comment was that if someone needed to take a career break whilst training, this should be accommodated and not be considered to be a hindrance. Likewise, if someone was returning from a break, it was suggested that they may find it difficult at first to get to grips with the fast pace of change, and their training should be flexible enough to help them adapt.

A general theme to emerge from several workshops was that **flexibility should entail catering for many different learning styles and a mix of various delivery modes**. One group suggested it would be productive to provide a mix of on-line learning, with a centre providing further support, and mentoring going on in the workplace. Participants considered that much could be learned from the experience of local authorities in relation to flexible learning and also the practical and formal delivery of qualifications used in teaching, social work and nursing. It was suggested that childcare partnerships could provide a brokering role in facilitating arrangements for the delivery of the new award.

One overarching concern to emerge from most workshops was **that practitioners in rural areas should not be disadvantaged** by restricted delivery opportunities. The challenges resulting from relatively small numbers of providers and practitioners in remote areas were acknowledged, but participants emphasised that these needed to be addressed by innovative and flexible approaches to delivery involving combining remote learning with pooling resources (eg rural playgroups sharing a peripatetic manager at level 9).

A further common theme was that the **timing of learning opportunities is very important.** One comment was that delivery of the qualification should impact as little as possible on the daily lives of the learner. It was considered that there should be flexibility around training times. This meant offering both daytime and evening learning possibilities to meet the needs of workers with family and other commitments. A plea was made for more study time offered in term time. Despite the acknowledgement of the time input required to gain level 9, participants at one workshop argued that practitioners and employers should not push for achieving the award as quickly as possible as this would take the "joy out of learning".

7.1.2 Where Should Level 9 be Delivered?

In the Workplace

Views were sought on the delivery of the level 9 qualification in the workplace. In particular, participants were asked to consider how employers could manage time within the workplace in order to release their workers to train.

Whilst workplace routes to delivery of level 9 were broadly welcomed as bringing learning to the learner, some participants recommended a combination of workplace and other approaches such as home-based learning. One view was that level 9 delivery should be college-based rather than located in the workplace, although an argument against this was that colleges tended to be in the mould of the classroom rather than the workplace.

Many **advantages** to workplace delivery emerged from the workshops. This approach was viewed a practical option which combined study with day-to-day work in a convenient way. It was considered to have cost benefits, particularly within the private sector, with staff cover costs being minimised. A further benefit identified of training in-situ was that of consistent staff presence which made for more settled children.

Participants considered that studying on-site had the benefit of immediate access to relevant policy documents and plans, and fitted with the idea of mentoring and shadowing within the workplace.

One view was that some practitioners had concerns about attending colleges and would much prefer to study in a familiar setting with a training provider known to them.

Many of the workshop participants identified **drawbacks** to delivery within the workplace. The most common theme was that candidates had little control over the *quality* and the *breadth* of their learning experience within their particular workplace. Participants raised the question of how to ensure that work-based learning is grounded in good practice. One suggestion was that peripatetic teaching staff could make presentations to a variety of workplaces. Another was that a hub for learners (eg a "good practice centre") could provide a back-up for learners to visit and draw on good practice examples from a range of workplaces.

A recurring idea was for employees to receive short placements to other workplaces and be encouraged to learn from other organisations and management arrangements. However, one view was that this constituted "swapping staff" and was unlikely to meet with many employers' agreement. It was pointed out that people working to level 9 were largely employees and not students.

Other disadvantages to workplace delivery were identified. Some participants considered that training at work would create difficulties for the smooth running of the workplace with daily routines becoming fragmented. Others suggested that some employers would not buy in to workplace learning whilst others might not have any suitable mentors. It was considered that workplaces would need to become up-to-date with information technology to enable their employees to gain maximum benefit from workplace training.

Centre-Based Learning

Participants were asked for their views on centre-based learning as one form of remote/distance learning.

Many participants **welcomed** this form of delivery particularly if used in conjunction with other types such as workplace learning. It was suggested that day release could be used successfully, combined perhaps with a summer school.

Many people commented that in their view practitioners liked to come together to train. Some valued the peer support this provided and the opportunity for networking, whilst others enjoyed the classroom style offered by various colleges. It was argued that this style was time-efficient as a lot of information could be provided within a short time frame. Another comment was that learners' motivation and self-discipline could be boosted by attending a centre for learning.

The most common **disadvantages** associated with centre-based learning were the practical and cost implications of additional staff cover for staff in training. It was suggested that these could be so significant as to deny some potential trainees the opportunities to gain further qualifications. Both private establishments and voluntary sector organisations were cited as sometimes unprepared to allow staff to train on account of having limited funds to bring in people to cover their absences.

Ways to address staff cover were suggested. These included over-staffing with a "floating" member of staff always available to cover for others; using recently retired nursery nurses as cover; setting up "banks" of qualified relief staff; and deploying the managers of workplaces as hands-on workers when staff are attending training. However, some concern was expressed that inconsistent staffing could unsettle some children. Another worry was that although one day out of the workplace per week may seem reasonable for people working towards their level 9 qualification, stretching staff cover for them in the workplace may fall foul of the Care Commission's regulations on senior staff cover. It was also acknowledged, that any cover for staff in training would have cost implications for the employers.

Another key theme was that candidates were at the mercy of the quality of the courses offered by their college and that this could be inconsistent. There was some feeling that colleges were not as flexible in delivery as they could be and that they should be more responsive to the needs of students. For example, they could offer single units rather than whole packages of learning. However, various participants commended the flexible delivery of certain colleges with a comment made that colleges appeared to be more flexible in designing course structures than universities.

The time needed to travel to centres for training was raised as potentially problematic, particularly in remote areas. Many agreed that centre-based learning might prove to be too impractical in some locations where there may be only two to three candidates at any time. In these circumstances it was suggested that clusters of learning, bringing together learners across a wider geographical area to training delivered in community centres or schools might be helpful, although again it was acknowledged that travel time and costs would be a disadvantage for some.

One further drawback to centre-based learning was seen as the possible reluctance of some older people to train with much younger candidates.

Distance Learning

There was much support for e-learning as part of a package of flexible delivery of level 9. It was viewed as a tool to support learners rather than a solution for the problems associated with other modes of delivery.

E-learning was seen as having many **advantages** for practitioners. In particular it was perceived as being very learner-centred, with the candidate having control over the pace and time of learning. One comment was that it could complement a candidate's work patterns and address any potential travel problems. Others viewed e-learning as cost-effective, with successful precedents already set up by various universities.

The main **drawback** envisaged was possible isolation of individual learners which many participants predicted could have a negative impact on candidates' progress. Learning alone in front of a screen was seen as potentially de-motivating and too remote for some. However, there were many suggestions that individual e-learning could be successfully

counter-balanced by scheduled face-to-face meetings with a tutor or other candidates, along with the opportunity for video-conferencing as appropriate. (Although it was remarked that a previous video-link to a college from remote islands e.g. Unst, had not proved to be successful.)

Other disadvantages were foreseen. A common theme was that IT might prove to be daunting for some (particularly older) candidates, with "technofear" possibly contributing to a loss of staff should delivery be by this mode. It was pointed out that IT sometimes does not work and that some people may not have access to computers. The funding needed for up-to-date IT systems was identified as a limiting factor in the development of this option.

It was considered that e-learning removed the sense of being part of a "learning community" and possibly made the task of learning seem more of a challenge by doing so. The notion of on-line forums was discussed at a few workshops as a way to address this. However, there was some feeling that people may be reluctant to become part of these, and that to be successful these needed constant monitoring and use with lecturers allocated to specific forums.

The issue of quality of learning material was raised in relation to e-learning with the view that standardisation of material would be required to ensure all candidates were accessing a similar quality of provision.

Finally, one view was that e-learning was inappropriate in the context of work involving hands-on practical experience with children.

7.1.3 Who Delivers a Level 9 Qualification?

Workshop participants were asked who could support a level 9 delivery, what they considered to be the employer's role and what the roles of HEI and FE should be.

In relation to the **roles of HEI and FE**, participants stated that in general these bodies needed to work together to provide a flexible course which suited the needs of the workforce. It was suggested that a closer dialogue between these learning institutions and employers might be productive in realising this aim. The involvement of childcare partnerships in facilitating closer working was also advocated.

Participants emphasised that a consistently high standard of presenter was required in order to prevent variations in quality across different locations. It was argued that colleges should not be allowed to design their own courses, but instead a national course should to be developed for all to follow.

The view of some participants was that FEs were more flexible in their approach to delivery than HEIs. One comment was that FEs tended to be more local and more accessible to the workforce than were HEIs. However, a common concern was that both

FEs and HEIs might have people delivering training who have had little, if any experience of working with children aged under three years.

Participants identified many **roles for employers** in aiding the delivery of the level 9 qualification.

It was acknowledged that employees were more likely to take the level 9 qualification if they had the support of their employer. However, to support their employees through their training, it was emphasised that employers had to recognise the commitment and time demands associated with achieving level 9. In addition, employers needed to value the training and encourage their staff to work towards it (particularly in the case of older workers), providing a learning culture within their organisation.

Participants considered that, given the training requirements of level 9, there will need to be a shared commitment to achievement and a shared ownership of the training process between employer and employee. It was suggested that managers should have the continued learning of their staff as an integral part of their remit, with time for this factored into their daily job appropriately.

Other practical suggestions emerged from the workshops. A role was seen for employers in facilitating staff time off work to train, by providing relief staff and/or paying employees for their study time away from their workplace. One suggestion was that a set time should be allocated each week for private study although it was acknowledged that this would present a challenge in terms of funding staff to cover for this study time.

Other suggestions were that employers could assist with any fees associated with level 9; provide a financial incentive to staff for finishing the training; and instigate a formal mentoring scheme with regular reviews. One idea was for establishments to set up a library of relevant texts for staff to share.

7.2   Q2:   FROM THE PRESENTATIONS THIS MORNING WE HEARD HOW WORKERS ALREADY IN THE SECTOR AND HOLDING A LEVEL 8 AWARD NEED TO BE ABLE TO WORK INCREMENTALLY TO LEVEL 9.   HOW DO WE   ENSURE   THERE   ARE   CLEAR   PATHWAYS   BETWEEN   EXISTING QUALIFICATIONS AND A NEW SCQF LEVEL 9 QUALIFICATION?

7.2.1 General Comments

Many participants agreed on the **need to provide a clear picture** to employees on how they can move towards the level 9 qualification. There was a plea for an early indication of possible routes, entry and exit points, and a clarification of the value of awards currently held. A need to rationalise what was perceived to be the confusing array of existing qualifications was called for, one comment being that this confusion made it difficult for employers to compare the merits of different candidates. Participants wished to see a simpler framework of qualifications with clearer pathways which could be readily understood by employers, employees and voluntary management committees.

Members of one workshop stressed, however, that simplicity of route structure should be balanced by robustness of the qualifications system.

A recurring theme was that members of voluntary management committees sometimes find it hard to understand issues of career pathways and qualification routes. It was suggested that they may need help with this as their support would be needed in helping employees progress to level 9. It was considered that this may present a challenge as committees tended to change on an annual basis.

The idea of a **toolkit** designed to help set out the new pathways was welcomed. A role was seen for a website dedicated to enabling people to evaluate their learning to date and establish where they are on-route to further qualifications. For example, people gaining level 4 need to know how they can progress to level 9. It was recognised that under the proposals there would be many different routes to the same outcome and what was seen as this "mix and match" approach was welcomed. However, participants raised the question of whether all routes to achieving awards would hold the same kudos for employers. For example, would work-based routes be seen as on par with more traditional degree routes?

The notion of a **modular approach** to achieving level 9 was seen as helpful. Participants envisaged "bolting on" additional modules to existing qualifications, and "filling gaps" in learning in a learner-centred approach. One group described this as a "lego-build" system which ensured relevance to the job whilst ensuring the flexibility to adapt to any change required. One suggestion was that an audit should be conducted of existing early years courses in order to identify key gaps such as management and leadership, and ensure that "top ups" are available to address these.

7.2.2 Credit Transfer

Views were sought on what we need to do to make sure there is sufficient credit transfer from existing awards into the new award, eg from VQs into a level 9 award.

There was much agreement that a robust credit transfer system should be established to enable the transfer from existing awards to the new award. To be credible, participants stressed the need for a consistent approach to credit transfer with award bodies involved in agreeing credit ratings, supported, perhaps by an advisory group. The need to benchmark any credit transfers was raised.

Some participants argued that credit transfer systems could be very complicated and cumbersome, and consideration should be given to simply starting from scratch on the qualification route. Questions were raised about how the process of accreditation would operate. Would qualifications gained many years ago be recognised? What would happen about qualifications awarded in other countries? (It was pointed out that a role has recently been established at SSSC to look at this issue and develop a framework.) Would relevant qualifications gained in other sectors be accepted?

Much discussion focused on the relevance and quality of previously gained qualifications and experience and how decisions on transferring credit would be decided. Some participants questioned the quality of some SVQs. Others argued that the previous Professional Development Award should be taken into account. Concerns were expressed that staff working within local authority settings and attending in-house training will not get credits for this. Likewise, others considered that subject-specific courses that are not accredited at present should be reviewed to ensure no one loses out if their learning is relevant to the job.

One recurring comment was that a qualification on paper should not be enough to gain credit transfer. There should also be a requirement for proof of knowledge gained from the qualification – perhaps in the form of a statement of use of the knowledge in practice.

7.2.3 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Participants were asked to consider:

- How can we be sure that prior learning has taken place in or out of the workplace?
- Are there mechanisms already in place to assess this and are they widely used?
- How do we ensure they are robust and credible?

Whilst there was much support for the recognition of prior learning within the qualifications framework, there was less agreement on how such a system could operate. It was acknowledged that RPL was not well used at present and that workers had not been in the habit of recording previous training and relevant experience. However, taking RPL into account was considered to be good practice which had worked elsewhere (Edinburgh University and the Open University were examples given), it was seen as being cost effective and helped to avoid repetition of learning over time. One comment was that RPL was particularly welcome for workers in out-of-school settings.

Although supporting RPL, participants foresaw difficulties in operating the system in practice. It was argued that RPL was difficult to prove and evidence, with written work not always reflecting a good practical worker. Participants considered that previous qualifications were easier to recognise than previous experience. Again, the mechanisms for recognising learning gained overseas, or a long time ago were raised. One view was that competence has to be about the present, and not what people learned 10 years ago.

Many workshop participants agreed that for RPL to be credible, the system needed to be consistent, simple, clear, open and readily understandable with guidance given on what type of learning will be recognised.

Suggestions were made on how to promote a robust RPL system. It was considered that certificates of attendance were not sufficient proof of learning. Instead, candidates should complete an assignment following an event or perhaps undertake a reflective account of the experience in order to demonstrate learning. The idea of a toolkit for self-assessment was supported by some workshops, with others suggesting that workers

should be encouraged to start recording learning in a systematic fashion to enable it to be taken into account at a later date.

7.2.4 Work-Based Learning

Views were sought on how work-based learning would be assessed and recorded.

Discussion focused largely on how to assess work-based learning. It was generally agreed that assessment should be undertaken largely by external assessors working to high standards. There was a feeling that a robust system of work-based learning assessment was currently lacking and that any new system should be consistent across Scotland and demand high quality of work. One comment was that standards should not be compromised simply to get sufficient people through their level 9 award. Some participants were concerned that differences in standards of training given in different establishments in different parts of the country could lead to problems with overall quality assurance.

One key barrier raised across workshops was that of ensuring that employers were able to access assessors. Some participants described previous problems with this relating to geographical location of the workplace and capacity of assessors. One group queried how assessors would be funded in future. Some ideas to address these apparent shortfalls in assessor capacity were provided. For example, the notion of a rotation of assessors shared between different establishments was suggested. It was considered that the installation of assessors working in a peripatetic manner (particularly in remote areas) would help to promote consistency and standardisation in an area.

The competence of assessors was another main topic for discussion amongst workshop participants. Many people questioned the competence of assessors and stressed that in order to be credible, assessors may need to upgrade their skills to ensure that they are able to assess work-based learning associated with level 9. It was considered that some training providers do not have assessors at the required skill level and that not all assessors are in touch with what practitioners are doing. One view was that some work-based assessors can be pressurised by certain employers to approve the learning of staff members.

There were various suggestions of mechanisms which might help work-based learning assessment. The idea of developing staff portfolios was supported. Some participants considered that written evidence of learning was important although a few others questioned the importance which should be placed on this. Other suggestions were assessment involving peer review, mentoring or review by an "expert practitioner". It was considered that an in-house assessor could run a weekly meeting in which learning could be discussed. Annual professional reviews were also raised as an option, and assessment using an apprenticeship model was mooted.

In terms of recording work-place learning, it was stressed that employees and employers need to take more ownership and maintain accurate records of formal and informal

learning. It was suggested that records should be kept electronically for easy access with supporting evidence provided by, for example, digital photographs.

7.2.5 Portfolios

Participants were asked either:

Does this mean an important component of a new award is a robust portfolio based on what workers are currently doing and what they aspire to do in their workplace? What can you do to support this?
or:
During their careers workers will be doing different things, different ways at different times. How do we capture this?

The idea of employees developing portfolios of learning and experience was widely supported. Various commentators described this proposal as essential, and providing important, valuable evidence of learning. One view was that the construction of portfolios would go some way to addressing negative staff attitudes towards having to attain level 9. Another participant argued that portfolios made people think more about what they were learning, and how they were applying their knowledge. It was acknowledged, however, that a culture change would be required to promote a consistent approach to maintaining portfolios across the sector.

There were some concerns that the construction of portfolios may be a bit of a "hit or miss" affair, with some candidates finding it difficult to demonstrate evidence of learning and requiring extra time to work on their portfolio. Calls were made for national consistency in the way portfolios are to be compiled with a need to avoid requirements for huge volumes of evidence.

Participants requested that guidance on the content of portfolios is given, with training providers and SSSC involved in advising on what should be within scope.

It was considered that a system of portfolios could be supported by various means. These included the use of technology for the compilation of "electronic portfolios", with managers providing support on the development of these. The establishment of clear, consistent guidance on what to include in portfolios was also seen as important in supporting their use, along with professional mentoring.

7.3 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- A general theme to emerge from the workshops was that flexibility of delivery of level 9 should entail catering for many different learning styles and a mix of various delivery modes.
- Participants were concerned that practitioners in rural areas should not be disadvantaged by restricted delivery opportunities.

- A common theme was that the timing of learning opportunities is very important and there should be flexibility around training times.
- Workplace delivery of level 9 was viewed as a practical option which combined study with day-to-day work in a convenient way. It was seen as cost-effective and had the added benefit of ensuring a continued staff presence in the establishment.
- Centre-based learning was welcomed if combined with other types such as workplace learning. The value of peer support which this offered was welcomed although practical and cost disadvantages were raised.
- There was much support for e-learning as part of a package of flexible delivery of level 9, with this form of learning seen as very learner-centred. However, it was also envisaged as potentially isolating, daunting and de-motivating for some.
- Participants considered that HEI and FE bodies needed to work together, possibly with the help of childcare partnerships, to provide a flexible course which suited the needs of the workforce.
- Participants identified many roles for employers in aiding the delivery of the level 9 qualification. In particular, they were seen as needing to support their employees through training with a shared ownership of the training process.
- Many participants agreed on the need to provide a clear picture to employers on how they can move towards the level 9 qualification.
- There was much agreement that a robust credit transfer system should be established to enable the transfer from existing awards to the new award.
- Whilst there was much support for the recognition of prior learning within the qualifications framework, there was less agreement on how such a system could operate.
- Many workshop participants agreed that for recognition of prior learning to be credible the system needed to be consistent, simple, clear, open and readily understandable with guidance given on what type of learning will be recognised.
- It was generally agreed that assessment of work-based learning should be undertaken largely by external assessors working to high standards. However, participants felt that a robust system of work-based learning assessment was currently lacking.
- Employers' previous difficulties in accessing assessors were commonly raised. Another recurring theme was to question the competence of assessors, with many recommending that assessors refresh their skills in order to be able to assess learning associated with level 9.
- The idea of employees developing portfolios of learning and experience was widely supported.

CHAPTER 8: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The main consultation stated:

As with the other aspects of this Review, the inescapable issue that underlies recruitment and retention is the status of working in early years and childcare. The status currently afforded this workforce does not, in our view, accurately reflect the level of responsibility and importance that workers can have in child development.

The status of an occupation can be based on a number of factors. Firstly the occupation needs to be a large enough group to be noticed, and it needs to be readily identified as a distinct occupation or profession. Other factors contributing to status could include: competition to enter the occupation; high qualification requirements; a long period of occupational training; high pay; or work perceived as being of high social value.

Changing the status of this workforce cannot happen overnight. We need to approach it from several angles. Crucially, we need to present how the workforce is becoming increasingly professional. So, we need to publicise the developing professional basis of the sector. We need to make it clear that working in early years and childcare is not work that anybody could do – it involves skill and knowledge. Improving status will take time and will depend on progress being made on the proposals to improve career pathways, develop a new qualifications structure, and the consequences that these changes are likely to have on pay expectations. In the shorter term, we have set out proposals for an awareness-raising campaign about working in the early years and childcare sector. Equally importantly, all those working in the sector should share their understanding of the importance of their work with parents and with the other professionals with whom they come into contact.

8.1 The main consultation asked:

Q11: HOW ACCURATELY DOES THE REPORT REFLECT THE ISSUES THAT AFFECT THE STATUS OF WORK IN THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SECTOR AT THE MOMENT?

Overall, ninety-four respondents (82%) to the main consultation addressed this question. Of these, eighty-four provided a view on the accuracy of the report in relation to the issues that affect the status of the early years and childcare sector. The remaining consultees provided more general commentary. A summary of responses is presented in Table 12 overleaf.

Table 12: Summary of Views on the Accuracy of the Report Regarding the Issues Affecting the Status of the Sector

Views	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Very accurate	8	10
Accurate	61	73
Fairly accurate	9	11
Not accurate	6	7
Total	**84**	**100**

NB Percentages may not add to 100% exactly due to rounding

The vast majority (83%) of respondents considered that the report represented the issues affecting the status of the sector well. A few remarked that although the picture painted was accurate it was nevertheless, "*very worrying*" (TP, Rep). Several others cautioned that the report was more accurate in reflecting the position in the independent sector and the situation in rural areas than it was in reflecting public sector provision.   Only six consultees considered that the report had not done justice to the issues.

8.1.1 General Comments

Many consultees, largely representative organisations, agreed that a gender imbalance was one barrier to improving status. One commented that in their view the issue of status is complex and closely linked to the gendered nature and historic status of women who care in society (TP). Others, again largely representative organisations, welcomed the linking of pay and status which was raised in the report. However, a key criticism from several respondents mainly from local authorities and childcare partnerships was that the report appeared to play down the significant role played by pay and conditions in issues of professional status.

A few respondents (Rep, LA) welcomed the emphasis on campaigning to raise the profile of the sector, with others acknowledging the need to promote more of a professional image (LA, LA, TP). One commented:

> "*Professionalism of the workforce needs to help overturn perceptions that the work is 'babysitting'*" (LA)

One consultee considered that the Government had contributed to a poor image of the sector by promoting it as attractive to adults re-entering the workforce rather than as a professional service of great benefit to children (Indiv). Others remarked that the sector was hampered by a current focus on quantity rather than quality (Rep, Rep, Rep).

A few respondents commented that although the overall picture may be accurate, there were differences in status of the sector associated with geography and settings (TP, CP). A few consultees considered that too much emphasis on care and not enough on education contributed to a lowering of the status of the profession (LA, Indiv). One criticism was that the report did not offer much in the way of solutions for the issues

raised (LA). Another respondent considered that mixed messages were emerging. On the one hand the Review appeared to be concerned about higher qualification requirements putting people off entering the profession; on the other it appeared to be promoting higher entry standards as a way of increasing professionalism (Rep).

A recurring concern, largely from local authority respondents, was that the report ignored the position of teachers in its discussion on issues of status.

8.1.2 Reasons for Considering the Report to be Inaccurate Regarding Issues of Status

Amongst the six consultees (CProv, Rep, Rep, LA, CP, CP) who did not view the report as accurate regarding its presentation of issues of status, the common reasons were that the report had not done justice to the complexity and depth of the issues nor had it been comprehensive in its coverage.

8.2 The main consultation asked:

Q12: ARE THERE FACTORS OTHER THAN STATUS THAT AFFECT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF STAFF?

Ninety per cent of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question.

8.2.1 Frequently Raised Factors Affecting Recruitment and Retention of Staff

Four factors dominated the responses although one was very clearly the most frequently raised issue – **pay and conditions**. In total, 80% of those who provided a response to this question identified issues of pay and conditions as factors that affect recruitment and retention of staff. Typical comments were:

> "*Increased pay and rewards is the single most effective way to increase status*" (TP)

> More coherent and strategic thinking on pay and conditions is needed "*so that the commendable move to professionalisation is not overshadowed by the lack of incentives for managers and their staff to raise their skill levels*" (Rep)

> "*The most fundamental factor affecting recruitment and retention for early years work is pay*" (LA)

> "*A workforce review that does not address this issue* (pay and conditions) *will fail to make substantial changes to the make up and quality of the early childhood profession*" (Rep)

Many other respondents referred also to what they saw as the barrier of disparity in pay across the sector and the migration of staff from the independent sector to the public sector where pay and conditions could be more favourable.

The other most frequently identified factors were:

- **Work patterns** and in particular the lack of full-time posts (38% of respondents)
- **Limited job opportunities** and career progression within the workforce (30% of respondents)
- **Poor careers advice** and workforce selection procedures (28% of respondents)

Regarding work patterns, many respondents considered that part-time posts, and term-time posts could put people off entering the profession. The pattern of work in the out of school care sector was highlighted as particularly problematic. Others identified long work hours and anti-social work hours as barriers.

Many respondents bemoaned what they saw as the lack of career progression opportunities for those working in the profession. A few suggested that some workers used their training as a stepping stone to move out of the workforce and into a more financially rewarding occupation.

A general view (which also emerged from participants at the workshops) was that careers advising needed to be updated and refocused to promote a career in early years and childcare as requiring particular skills and aptitudes. Many respondents agreed that jobs in this sector were seen as easy options, with the result that many young people were entering the workforce who were clearly not suited to their posts. One typical comment reflected this view:

> Career advisors "*tend to direct youngsters that they probably consider to be under-achievers into childcare as an easy option*" (CProv)

Participants at the workshops called for better communication that childcare required as much skill as social work and primary teaching.

8.2.2 Other Factors Identified as Affecting Recruitment and Retention of Staff

One recurring theme raised by 13% of respondents who addressed this question was that the **dominance of women in the workforce** and the associated stereotypes was a key factor that affected recruitment of able staff. A few consultees remarked that this preponderance of women also resulted in disproportionate numbers of staff leaving to have their own children, which could create challenges for staffing.

Another common theme was that **poor job satisfaction and low staff morale** created problems for recruitment and retention (raised by 15% of respondents). A few consultees commented that the perception that the goal posts keep changing contributed to this lowering of morale. Others felt that this was more of a problem in smaller work settings.

Other factors were identified by only a few respondents and are summarised below:

- Difficulties especially in rural areas in accessing work using public transport
- Lack of job security especially where temporary contracts are used
- Too much emphasis on constant training and gaining qualifications puts people off
- New and emerging concerns relating to child protection, litigation, new initiatives
- Too many inspections e.g. by Care Commission
- Poor working environments
- Unskilled and changing voluntary committees
- Inflexible employers who do not have family friendly policies

8.3 INDIVIDUAL WORKERS' VIEWS ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Another perspective on recruitment and retention issues was provided by the individual workers' responses to relevant questions tabled in their consultation document.

8.3.1 Individual workers were asked:

DESCRIBE FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE, WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO WORK FOR YOUR CURRENT OR ANY PREVIOUS EARLY YEARS EMPLOYER

Overall, 95% of respondents to the consultation for individual workers responded to this question. Many consultees provided general comments regarding their wish to work with children and their enjoyment of the early years and childcare sector, rather than identifying particular features of their employer and employment arrangements which attracted them.

Others, however, were more specific about the attraction of their job and two key factors emerged as most frequently identified by respondents. Firstly, employees were attracted by the **opportunities for training and promotion** offered by their employer (25% of respondents); and secondly, a **good reputation with a respected ethos** were attractive features of an employer (25% of respondents). Some consultees described the attraction of specific methods adopted by their place of work, its philosophy, good organisation, and positive working environment.

A number of other factors were highlighted by between ten to fifteen per cent of respondents to this question:

- The work hours fitted around family commitments
- Location of the workplace was convenient (many were local)
- Pay and conditions were attractive (many mentions of public sector work here)
- Team spirit of the workplace is conducive to a happy atmosphere

Other attractions of their current or previous employer were raised by only a small number of respondents:

- Employer makes staff feel valued
- Work is satisfying and important
- Involved in setting up the establishment from the start
- Job security
- The job advert was attractive (some specified graduates required)
- Freedom of the job
- Working for a small organisation
- Accommodation is good
- Work is challenging

8.3.2 Individual workers were asked:

IF YOU COULD SUGGEST TO EMPLOYERS HOW THEY COULD HELP ATTRACT NEW RECRUITS OR KEEP WORKERS IN THE SECTOR, WHAT WOULD BE YOUR THREE MOST IMPORTANT SUGGESTIONS?

Overall, 96% of respondents to the consultation for individual workers responded to this question.

One key theme dominated the responses, with 83% of those who addressed this question recommending that **better pay and terms of service** would make jobs more attractive. One consultee commented:

> "*everyone wants a better qualified, motivated workplace but no-one seems willing to pay for it*"

Respondents called for better starting pay, clear increments linked to experience and qualifications and holiday and sickness entitlements. Some stated that pay should be competitive in comparison to related posts in other organisations. Several consultees suggested that pay bonuses and incentives should be offered. The need for adequate pension provision was identified.

Three other factors which would make employment attractive to new recruits or retain workers in the sector were highlighted repeatedly:

- Clear career structure with opportunities for training (44% of respondents)
- Respect from employers and others – recognition of skills (28% of respondents)
- Employer support/good communication/teamwork (12% of respondents)

As expected, these results tie in with the findings that many workers were attracted to their current or previous employer by the opportunities to train and progress. A clear

mis-match exists however, when comparing the overwhelming recommendation here that pay and conditions are improved in order to attract recruits, with the reality documented in the previous section that only a minority (between 10% – 15%) of respondents were attracted to their employer because of the pay and conditions package on offer.

Other recommendations for attracting new recruits or keeping workers in the sector were made (each identified by fewer than eight respondents):

- Provide workers with more autonomy/involve them in decision-making
- Reduce paperwork
- Provide more flexibility in working hours
- Offer longer working hours
- More focused and effective advertising e.g. using websites, colleges/universities
- More job security
- Good working conditions
- More honesty in job descriptions
- Good management team
- Provide equal opportunities
- Higher staff:child ratios
- Provide realistic workloads
- Give regular appraisals
- Provide challenges and a variety of work

One further perspective was provided by one respondent who argued that the *system* rather than specific employment practices should be addressed regarding recruitment and retention:

> "*It is generally not because of employers that workers are leaving the sector. Many staff are struggling with the requirements on qualifications and therefore do not want to work in the sector*"

8.4 The main consultation stated:

The review proposes a number of ways to improve the status of the workforce, e.g. increasing professionalisation of the workforce (more coherent identity to the workforce, increased qualification expectations), and awareness raising about the value of working in the sector and the skill involved.

The main consultation asked:

Q13: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK THAT THE PROPOSALS IN THE REVIEW IMPROVE THE STATUS OF THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE WORKFORCE?

In total, 88% of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question. The most common view was that the proposals would go some way to improving the status of the workforce but more work had to be done in some areas.

It was considered that clear stakeholder commitment would be needed to support the proposals (LA, LA, LA, LA, CP), with policy-makers kept on board (Rep, Rep). One view was the plans could have been much more far-reaching and ambitious (TP). Others argued that the proposals would take time to have an impact (CP, TP, Rep, Rep) and would need strong leadership to be effective (CPr). One consultee commented that an initial negative effect may be witnessed as some unqualified people left the profession (CP).

A few respondents considered that the proposals would raise the status but not the profile of the profession (LA, CP). In contrast, others thought that the profile would be raised but the status of the profession would be harder to change (LA, LA, LA, Rep). One rationale was that "*status is embedded in the culture and will take longer to change*" (LA). Likewise, another consultee argued that status might be raised but attitudes would take longer to influence (Indiv).

An overriding view was that the success of the proposals in improving the status of the sector would be determined by whether the plans were supported by increased funding and whether pay and conditions of workforce were addressed. For many consultees, no matter how good the intentions may be to improve the status of the sector, any proposals would have little impact unless the financing of the sector is improved on a sustainable basis.

Other key aspects of the proposals were commented upon. Several respondents agreed that the image of the sector needed much attention. Some advocated improving the advice given by guidance and careers professionals (Indiv, LA, LA, LA, Rep, Indiv). One consultee recommended a TV campaign based around case studies to demonstrate the skills required of the workforce (TP).

Another recurring theme was that status would not improve until the sector had gained more respect from other professionals and society in general. One comment was:

> "*As parents' understanding increases, it may be that the value placed on high quality early childhood service will increase*" (Rep)

Finally, two respondents held a view that the status of the sector would never change with early years workers always to be perceived as assistants to someone and not important in their own right (TP, LA).

8.5 The main consultation asked:

Q14: HOW DO WE ENSURE THE SHARING OF GOOD PRACTICE ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION?

Overall, 81% of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question. Amongst these, however, were eleven consultees who expressed their view that the question was based on an assumption that sharing good practice will ensure greater retention and better recruitment, when in their view the overriding factor to determine effectiveness of retention and recruitment is higher salary.

The responses of the other consultees were divided into those relating to identifying good practice and those suggesting ways of disseminating and sharing this.

8.5.1 Views on Identifying Good Practice

A few respondents recommended the establishment of new structures focused on identifying good practice. One suggestion was the instigation of formal or informal working groups, set up to research current and good practice (Rep). Another was for a standing forum (supported by the Scottish Executive) which "cleared" examples of good practice and disseminated these (Rep). The notion of "sharing good practice forums" which involved employers was mooted (TP). A call was made for a post of national development officer whose remit would include identifying good practice (CP). Others envisaged a national database of good practice (LA), an employers' website or other dedicated internet sites which could display selected good practice examples (CPr, LA, TP).

A few consultees saw the need for more research on good practice (TP, CP) or for the compilation of relevant case studies (Rep). One had a vision of a local knowledge exchange with HE researchers at its centre (TP). Two respondents argued for a national statement of good practice with accompanying recommendations and guidelines (LA, LA). It was suggested that the Good Practice Guide which was developed during the School/College Review might provide some useful comparative models (Rep, TP).

8.5.2 Views on Disseminating/Sharing Good Practice

The two most commonly identified means of disseminating or sharing good practice were:

- Via childcare partnerships
- Using existing national and local fora and networks

Amongst the national organisations most frequently highlighted were ADES, SCMA, SPPA, SOSCN and Scottish Enterprise. An example was given of a local out-of-school group in Dundee which produces a business support pack including a section on recruitment (LA).

Many other consultees (largely local authorities) recommended that regulatory bodies should play a part in sharing good practice. A recurring theme was that the Care Commission could include some form of assessment of recruitment and retention practice within their inspections and thereafter be involved in disseminating good practice. Others suggested that the SSSC might be a forum for good practice.

Several respondents from a variety of respondent categories argued that good practice could be shared during joint training sessions between staff from different parts of the workforce (CP, CP, LA, CProv, Indiv, TP).

Other ideas for sharing good practice on recruitment and retention were identified by just a few respondents or only one respondent:

- Introduction of quality assurance schemes
- Via training providers
- More visits to other settings
- Closer working with those providing careers guidance
- In management committee training
- Via CPD
- Jobs should allow for time to reflect and discuss
- Via conferences and workshops
- Closer working between agencies/employers e.g. LTS and employers
- Better communication within the sector

8.5.3 Concerns Regarding the Sharing of Good Practice

A few respondents considered that sharing good practice may not be straightforward. Two consultees commented that as the public and independent parts of the sector had very different issues to address, this might limit the usefulness of shared lessons (Indiv, LA).

Another respondent argued along similar lines that sharing would be difficult due to what they saw as the fractured nature of the sector (Rep).

Finally, one consultee queried who would facilitate any sharing arrangement in the light of centres already competing against each other for staff rather than sharing good practice on recruitment (TP).

8.6 The main consultation stated:

The most striking aspect of the current workforce is that it is almost entirely made up of women – only 2% are men. Improving the profile of the sector as a profession, and moving away from the perception that working in the sector is "just caring" or "women's work" will help address this. In addition, however, we believe that it will also be necessary to develop specific recruitment campaigns targeting men. This is an approach which has already been shown to be effective in the group Men in Childcare. Men in Childcare is a project that originated in Edinburgh in 2000 and is designed to attract and support men through childcare training with a view to them gaining employment in the sector. So far it has attracted hundreds of men into some form of training and has expanded to many other areas of Scotland. More childcare partnerships are looking at how they can mainstream this approach in their areas.

It is also important that the workforce reflects the diversity of the communities it serves. In particular, we need to ensure that black and minority ethnic workers continue to be included in the early years and childcare workforce, especially in communities with a high proportion of black and minority ethnic families.

We need to make sure that the culture of the workplace is one where all workers are comfortable. Often there might be a single man working in an otherwise female workplace. Part of the success of the Men in Childcare project is that it provides peer support for recruits and this approach could be used at a local level.

The main consultation asked:

Q15: HOW DO YOU THINK WE CAN ATTRACT MEN AND OTHER UNDER REPRESENTED GROUPS INTO THE SECTOR?

Overall, 87% of the respondents to the main consultation addressed this question. The vast majority of these focused solely on attracting more men into the workforce. Their responses are outlined first below.

8.6.1 Attracting Men into the Sector

By far the most commonly mentioned way of attracting men into the sector was to **increase wages** in the workforce with three-quarters of all respondents to this question raising this as an issue. One consultee provided a direct retort to the question posed:

> "*That's easy! Pay a wage which accurately reflects the qualifications, roles and responsibilities*" (Indiv)

Other ways of attracting men into the workforce were identified by between one-quarter and one-third of respondents:

- **Address society's attitudes** towards men working in the early years and childcare sector

One remark was that "*men feel concerned about making choices to go into childcare and early education when they are still treated with suspicion*" (CP). Another typical comment was that society appears to consider that it is "*not moral or ethical for men to be caring for children*" (CP)

- **Run targeted recruitment and advertising campaigns**

It was pointed out that as more men entered the profession this would begin to act as an advert in itself (TP, Rep). The success of the Edinburgh-launched initiative Men in Childcare project and other similar initiatives (e.g. Alan Plus in the Highlands) was welcomed by many consultees who recommended building on these and celebrating successes in this field. A few suggested identifying systematically other examples of effective practice in Scotland (Rep, Rep, Rep, TP, CP) or indeed, learning lessons from other countries (CP). Participants at the workshops agreed that adverts and campaigns could be used to help to attract more men into the profession. They also suggested involving men at career promotion events.

- **Raise the status of childcare** as a profession

Comments regarding the status of the sector have already been raised and reported in early sections of this report.

- **Change the messages delivered by careers guidance professionals**

In particular, it was considered that schools could do much to change stereotypes of the profession as one for women. One suggestion was that vocational training in childcare should be offered to boys as well as girls (Rep).

Other recurring themes were that men would be more attracted if there were more **full-time posts** available; if there were **more training opportunities**; with more **flexible qualification entry standards**; and more **favourable attitudes by employers** towards taking men onto their staff.

Suggestions for attracting men which were made by only one or a few consultees were:

- Making the content of the job appear more attractive to men, e.g. linking sport and play; linking youth work and play work; promoting the educational aspect more (TP, Rep, Rep, CProv)
- Widening the entry net to encourage older men, such as retired police officers, into the sector (Rep, TP, LA)
- Changing some job titles, e.g. men do not want to be referred to as "nursery nurses" (Rep, TP)
- Gearing training more towards men to build their confidence (CP, LA, LA)

- Getting men to deliver training to men (Rep, Rep, Rep) (Also raised by participants at the workshops.)
- Encouraging general volunteering by men in the sector, e.g. as drivers (CProv)
- Introducing positive discrimination in favour of men, e.g. guaranteeing an interview (LA)
- Allocate quotas and set targets for recruitment of men (LA)
- Promote men in the workforce using TV soaps (CProv)
- Set up a website which could feature, e.g. a "day in the life" of men in the sector (CProv)
- Attend to practicalities such as ensuring there are men's toilets at their workplace (LA)
- Consider the transferability of skills of men from other parts of the EU (CP, Rep)

A few more general comments were made regarding the issue of paucity of men in the early years and childcare workforce. It was pointed out that the forthcoming "Gender Duty" should help to address the issue to some extent (CP, LA). Others remarked that the issues went beyond this workforce and were reflected in other areas such as in teaching where higher pay already existed (LA, CProv). Finally, one respondent questioned whether it was appropriate to "*gender*" the issues rather than simply making the profession more attractive to all (Rep).

8.6.2 Attracting Other Minority Groups into the Sector

Only a small minority of respondents addressed the issue of attracting minority groups other than men into the sector. One consultee made a general comment that recruitment policies should focus on issues of race, language and ethnicity (Rep). Another argued that before any action is taken there needs to be an identification of the issues associated with attracting minority groups into the workforce (LA). It was suggested that training could include English language classes where appropriate (LA). One view was that minority groups should be included in planning and recruitment (TP). Finally, three respondents recommended the availability of flexible working patterns to accommodate people with various disabilities (Rep, Rep, Rep).

8.7 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- The vast majority (83%) of respondents considered that the report represented well the issues affecting the status of the workforce.
- Amongst the factors which were considered by respondents to affect the recruitment and retention of staff, the most frequently raised issues, other than status, were pay and conditions (identified by 80% of respondents).
- Other commonly raised issues affecting recruitment and retention of staff were work patterns (particularly the lack of full-time posts) (raised by 38% of respondents), limited job and career progression opportunities within the workforce (raised by 30% of respondents), and poor careers advice (raised by 28% of respondents).

- Twenty-five per cent of individual childcare workers who expressed a view reported that providing opportunities for training and promotion was a key factor which attracted them to their current employer. Likewise, twenty-five per cent were attracted by their employer having a good reputation with a respected ethos.
- The vast majority (83%) of the individual workers who responded considered that better pay and terms of service would help employers attract new recruits and/or keep workers in the sector.
- A common view amongst respondents to the main consultation was that the proposals in the Review would go some way to improving the status of the workforce, but more work had to be done in some areas.
- Recurring ideas on how to share good practice included utilising childcare partnerships for this function, and using existing national and local forums and networks.
- Three out of four of those who commented argued that increased wages would attract more men into the workforce. Other recurring suggestions to attract men (identified by between one-quarter and one-third of respondents) were to address society's attitudes towards men working in the sector; to run targeted recruitment and advertising campaigns; to raise the status of childcare as a profession; and to change the messages delivered by careers guidance professionals which tended to portray the profession in a stereotypical female fashion.

CHAPTER 9: WORKFORCE PLANNING

9.1 The main consultation stated:

We know that the early years and childcare sector is changing rapidly and developing to meet the needs, demands and aspirations of children and their families. Growth in the sector has brought significant changes to the numbers and range of people working in it. The people working within the sector are the essential resource to support the delivery of quality services.

There are some key challenges currently facing the sector. The move towards delivering more joined up services, which meet the individual needs of all children and families, places continuing demands on the workforce to respond to change, to be flexible and responsive and to move away from traditional roles.

Although initiatives such as the central funding for early years and childcare workforce development are steadily increasing the numbers of qualified childcare workers, a significant core of staff remain unqualified. Qualification pathways are still complex and somewhat disjointed. We continue to need to raise the status of work in early years and childcare and to improve career opportunities and movement across the sector.

In order for services to meet these challenges, local and national workforce planning is needed to ensure we can continue to provide flexible, appropriate and consistent quality, early years and childcare services not and in the future.

The main consultation asked:

Q16: HOW ACCURATELY DOES THIS ANALYSIS CAPTURE THE KEY CHALLENGES THAT FACE THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE SECTOR REGARDING WORKFORCE PLANNING?

Overall, 78% of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question.

It was difficult to quantify precisely the number of respondents who considered that the analysis captured the key challenges facing the sector as most consultees provided a general agreement with the analysis but highlighted one or two other elements which they thought should also be mentioned or emphasised more. Against this background, it could be said that around 60% of respondents indicated that they thought that the key challenges were broadly covered.

However, amongst these consultees were many who questioned where the funding would come from to put in place necessary changes to the sector. Many thought that ring-fenced monies should be allocated. Others urged that the Workforce Development Fund continue after 2008. One view was that this section of the consultation document was weak partly on account of its failure to link proposals to permanent sources of funding (TP).

Other consultees considered this section to be weak because in their view it did not link workforce planning to the SSSC, Care Commission, and Scottish Credit and Qualifications Frameworks (LA, Rep, CP). Another view was that the proposals should state how the workforce planning issues will be integrated with the Children's Service Planning Framework (Rep).

Others made further recommendations. A few called for the setting up of robust information and data sharing between agencies in order to facilitate workforce planning (LA, Rep). A call was made for organisations to undertake succession planning (LA).

A word of caution was raised by one respondent who considered that workforce planning should accommodate a possible drop-off in staffing at first as people who did not wish to take qualifications left the workforce (LA). One other cautionary note was that efforts should be made to limit the extent of duplication of effort in workforce planning (LA).

A number of more specific suggestions were made by a small number of consultees relating to elements of challenges which respondents felt were missing or underplayed by the analysis in the consultation document:

- Differences in circumstances between rural and urban settings
- Discrepancies in pay and conditions within the workforce
- Need for higher qualification levels for managers in smaller establishments
- Number of new initiatives and projects coming on-stream
- Pace of change
- Continually changing political climate
- Workforce planning amongst committee-led establishments

Three respondents called for more work to be undertaken to consider these issues further (Rep, Rep, Rep).

9.2 The main consultation stated:

Rather than develop a single workforce planning model for the sector, we have set out some high level and generic attributes of an organisation that uses a workforce planning system which all organisations, regardless of their size or sector could use. We are clear that workforce planning needs to take place at national, local and individual provider level.

Attributes of an organisation which plans its workforce:

- Obtains and retains the number of people it needs with the skills, expertise and competencies required
- Makes the best use of its employers
- Is able to anticipate the problems of surpluses or shortages of employees
- Can develop a well trained and flexible workforce

- Reduces its dependence on external recruitment when key skills are in short supply

The main consultation asked:

Q17: CONSIDERING EACH ATTRIBUTE OF WORKFORCE PLANNING DESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION, WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE YOU AWARE OF THAT CURRENTLY TAKE PLACE TO HELP ACHIEVE EACH OF THEM? DO DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES OCCUR AT AN INDIVIDUAL (BUSINESS) LEVEL, LOCAL LEVEL AND NATIONAL LEVEL?

This question attracted a relatively lower volume of responses from 65% of respondents to the main consultation.

Around one-quarter of these consultees (largely childcare providers and individuals) remarked that in general, pro-active workforce planning was not well developed and tended to be more reactive than strategic. One respondent remarked that it had been difficult for planning to keep up with the rapid expansion in services (Rep). Others commented that individual organisations were not likely to be paying much attention to workforce planning (Rep), or that such planning presented significant challenges for smaller, independent businesses (LA).

A contrasting view was that all organisations plan their workforce to some extent, for example, by planning recruitment, interviewing, advertising and so on (Rep, Rep, Rep).

Several consultees (representative organisations, childcare providers and individuals) argued that strategic planning was hampered by what they saw as the current piecemeal attitude towards funding.

A few commented that workforce planning was a national issue (Rep) with Scottish Executive policies having the biggest influence on future plans of organisations (LA).

9.2.1 Examples of Workforce Planning

Where examples of workforce planning were provided these were, in the main, evident at local authority level.

A common theme was that **childcare partnerships** were key players in promoting workforce planning. It was reported that such partnerships held promotional events (Rep, Rep); facilitated cross-sector planning (TP); encouraged planning with voluntary and private sectors (Rep); helped to provide grants, support and training (CP, CP, LA); forged links with local business development (LA); hosted strategic childcare partnership forums (CP); and undertook annual training needs analyses (Indiv). An example was given of the childcare partnership in East Ayrshire which audits areas of service and identifies specific gaps for attention (CP).

Other consultees provided examples of planning work by **local authorities.** It was remarked that local authorities were taking steps which will lead to local workforce development plans for all children's services (CP). Others commented on the relevance of the Integrated Children's Services Agenda to workforce planning (LA, Rep). Councils were described as undertaking staff audits (TP), and holding regular inter-agency discussion groups (LA). One local authority respondent outlined how they encouraged staff to work in more than one area of the sector and ran a staff "bank" to help with supply cover. Another council identified its Early Education Training Advisory Group as contributing to its workforce planning. Some respondents pointed out that many local authorities liaised closely with their respective FE colleges to try to match supply and demand (CP, Rep). Others funded development worker posts with remits covering workforce planning (CP, LA). It was reported that some authorities had dedicated staff working on research and planning which fed into early years and childcare strategy (CProv).

A specific example was given of the Aberdeen Children and Young People's Strategic Planning Group which undertakes workforce planning, including producing a careers' guidance pack for career fairs (LA, CP). Another example was of a high level working group in Edinburgh which considers how best to use existing staff to support the delivery of integrated services incorporating education, child and family support and health services for young children and their families (LA).

A few consultees reported that some degree of workforce planning went on in **individual organisations**. The regular team meetings held by some was noted (CP). Others reported annual appraisals and training needs analyses (Indiv). It was commented that centre managers were starting to give more attention to business development and staff skills after having taken the SVQ Level 4 award (TP). One consultee highlighted the annual training needs analysis undertaken by their local out-of-school-care establishment (Rep).

A small number of respondents commented that much **data required for workforce planning was already being collected** by virtue of, for example, the public sector annual census linked to pre-school provision (CP, Rep); annual statistics collected from nurseries (Rep, Rep); census and birthrate data (CP); and local databases holding information on childcare workers (LA).

9.3 The main consultation asked:

Q18: WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN AT A LOCAL LEVEL FOR EFFECTIVE WORKFORCE PLANNING TO TAKE PLACE? WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN AT A NATIONAL LEVEL? WHY?

9.3.1 Local Level Action

A total of 69% of respondents to the main consultation made comments on the action they considered should be taken at local level to facilitate effective workforce planning.

One respondent considered workforce planning to be a national issue and therefore not for local bodies (Rep). The others made the following suggestions:

- Local bodies should implement national strategies with local vision aligned to national policy (many consultees from a variety of categories)
- There should be much more strategic and joined up work across local authority departments (e.g. councils should see that quality early years and childcare provision is integrated into community planning and economic development) (mainly consultees from local authorities and childcare partnerships)
- The profile and use of Integrated Children's Services Planning should be increased (mainly local authority consultees)
- There should be closer inter-agency working between local authorities, childcare providers, training providers, the careers services, and local enterprise companies (many consultees from a variety of categories)
- Decision-makers should listen more to the views of local organisations (CProv and eight individuals)
- There should be better communication between local authorities, the voluntary and private sectors (CProv, Rep, Rep, Rep, TP)
- Systematic collection of management information is needed, such as demographic trends (CP), monitoring of workforce (CProv, CProv), identification of gaps (CP, LA, LA, LA, Rep), evidence on successful interventions (TP), and data on actual and potential users of services (LA)
- There should be more investment (Rep, CProv, CProv), for training (LA, CProv), for staff to travel in rural areas (CP), for IT (LA), and a rationalisation of funding so as to avoid duplication (Rep, Rep)
- Need strong local leadership and the development of local leadership skills (Rep, LA, CProv, TP)
- Need local training opportunities (Indiv, Indiv, CP, LA)
- More sharing of information (Rep, TP)
- More focus on the role of childcare partnerships in planning (Rep, Rep, LA)

9.3.2 National Level Action

A total of 72% of respondents to the main consultation made comments on the action they considered should be taken at national level to facilitate effective workforce planning.

The following suggestions were made:

- Clear guidance and vision (many consultees largely from local authorities and childcare partnerships)
- Realistic and sustained funding (possibly ring-fenced for training) (many consultees representing a range of categories)
- Joint working amongst national organisations such as Scottish Executive, Scottish Enterprise, SSSC, Sector Skills Councils, CoSLA, training providers,

Department of Work and Pensions (many consultees representing a range of categories)

- Robust and relevant data gathering and sharing (many consultees representing a range of categories)
- National commitment from all sectors to the consultation proposals (largely individual respondents)
- Training and recruitment materials to be commissioned nationally (Rep, Rep); to be consistent (CP); with support for training providers to increase their capacity (LA, TP), and opportunities for people to achieve the qualifications they need (LA)
- Clear communication with decision-makers listening to the views of organisations affected by the proposals (mainly individual respondents)
- Introduction of national pay and conditions (CProv, CProv, CP, TP, LA)
- Promotion of consistent standards possibly through legislation (Indiv, CP); with rigorous procedures to ensure equal opportunities across the sector (LA, CP); and prescriptive approach with FE colleges regarding accreditation of prior learning, styles of delivery, and so on (CProv)
- National profile raising campaign (CP)
- More involvement with learning networks across areas (Rep)
- Openness regarding how decisions across the sector are made (LA)

In addition, one respondent recommended some attention be given to the physical accommodation requirements of the sector (CProv).

9.4 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- The majority (60%) of respondents who provided a view indicated that they thought that the key challenges that face the early years and childcare sector regarding workforce planning were broadly covered by the analysis presented in the consultation document.
- A few consultees called for workforce planning of the sector to be more clearly linked to that of other related organisations such as SSSC, the Care Commission and the SCQF.
- A substantial minority of respondents (around one-quarter) remarked that in their view workforce planning was not well developed and tended to be more reactive than strategic.
- Where examples of workforce planning were provided these were, in the main, evident at local authority level, for example, childcare partnerships were involved in activities such as facilitating cross-sector planning and undertaking training needs analyses; local authorities were, *inter alia*, taking steps which will lead to local workforce development plans for all children's services and undertaking staff audits.
- A common theme was that childcare partnerships were key players in promoting workforce planning.
- Many recommendations were made for action at local level to enable workforce planning to take place, including the implementation of national strategies at local

level by local bodies, and more strategic and joined up work across local authority departments.

- Many recommendations were made for action at national level to enable workforce planning to take place, including the provision of clear guidance and vision, and realistic and sustained funding.

CHAPTER 10: EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE – A DEVELOPING PROFESSION

10.1 The main consultation stated:

The term "profession" is generally applied to a group of workers possessing a unique set of skills, knowledge and values. By definition, therefore, there is an element of exclusivity inherent in a profession – engagement in a task, or activities which require this specialised combination of attributes. The early years and childcare workforce encompasses a range of specialisms embedded in a unique core of knowledge, skills, values and commitments that focuses on children and young people's care, learning and development in the social contexts of their childhoods. Together with the qualification and regulation drivers mentioned above, these characteristics suggest that we are moving towards identification of a new profession, bringing together all those who work in early years and childcare. In addition, the workforce demonstrates key skills and abilities which are shared by other professions, such as communication and teamworking, evidence-based reflective practice, and working co-operatively with agencies, families and communities.

The main consultation asked:

Q19: THE REVIEW SETS OUT PROPOSALS INTENDED TO CREATE A SINGLE, COHERENT PROFESSION FOR ALL THOSE WORKING IN EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE. ARE THERE OTHER ACTIONS WHICH WOULD SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SINGLE PROFESSION?

Overall 79% of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question. Although some consultees re-iterated their support for actions already addressed in detail in the consultation document (e.g. qualification structure, better marketing, changing public perceptions and so on), others raised new ideas or provided more emphasis to topics which they felt had attracted too little attention in the document.

The action recommended most often in responses was to **review pay and conditions across the sector**. One consultee commented, "*it is disappointing that the review's remit did not extend to this*" (LA). Many respondents from different categories called for sufficient funding to underpin the sector on a sustained basis, perhaps using ring-fenced monies. There was much support, again from across different respondent sectors, for the idea of a national pay structure for the sector, with salaries on par with those of workers in related professions. Many consultees stressed that the current disparity in pay and conditions between the independent sector and the public sector needed to be addressed. One respondent stated:

> "*Unless there is some alignment of this* (pay) *between the public, private and voluntary sectors things will not change very much*" (CP)

Another common theme was that there needed to be **more effort within the sector to join up and work together**. One respondent argued that a profession that views itself as disjointed will come across to others as fragmented (Rep). To counter this, consultees recommendations included more networking opportunities across the sector (LA, CProv); sharing of good practice (CProv); clarity of common goals (LA); the development of partnership working (Rep, CProv); the introduction of job swapping opportunities and more emphasis on team working (CP, CProv); more joint training across the profession (Rep, CP); and ensuring that each worker is clear on the part they play in the overall vision (Rep, Rep).

A few consultees were concerned that the proposals for a phased approach, particularly to registration requirements, might serve to divide the sector rather than pull it together (Rep, Rep, LA).

Many respondents, from different categories, stressed that in their view it is **essential to include teachers and childminders** within the proposals for a single coherent profession. Typical comments were:

"*We believe it has been a serious omission to exclude other profession groups working in early years and childcare from this review*" (LA)

"*This section of the consultation is woolly in is thinking mainly because of the specific exclusion of teachers from the remit*" (Rep)

Another recurring recommendation was for **continuing consultation** with early years and childcare staff on issues affecting them in order to promote more ownership of the profession.

Other suggestions for actions were made by fewer consultees:

- Work on **attitude change** within the profession. Get umbrella and support organisations on board (CP); encourage mutual respect (Rep, Rep); and value and recognise all parts of the profession (Indiv)
- Ensure that the profession has a **clear vision and purpose** (LA, LA, LA, LA, Rep)
- Emphasise the **professional status** of the sector (TP, LA, LA, Rep, CProv)
- **Address the current diverse range of job titles** within the profession (LA, CProv, Indiv, Indiv)
- **Establish new bodies/structures which relate to the sector as a whole**: a professional institute, charter and an accreditation authority (LA); a joint set of ethics, values and beliefs, a self-governing organisation with a figurehead (Rep); an advisory committee made of representatives from across the profession to feed into the SSSC regulatory process (CP); and a single sector skills council for working with children and young people (CP)

Finally, a few respondents sounded a note of caution regarding the creation of a single coherent profession. One view was that although this was a goal worth achieving, it should still take account of the diverse needs and aims and objectives of different parts of sector (CProv). Others considered that aiming to include an age range of nought to sixteen years might be too broad for a single profession (Rep). Another argued that perhaps there was too broad a range of skills involved to harness within one profession (LA). One consultee considered that a new profession was not required, but rather the development of a craft that operates in a professional manner without this happening in too rigid a manner (CP).

10.2 The main consultation stated:

We believe that a key task is to develop a new language to capture the challenge and complexity of work within early years and childcare services. This needs to reflect a growing professional status across the workforce and to reveal the dynamic, two-way process with children and young people as they engage in and develop throughout their childhoods. It also needs to represent the whole sector and to articulate the common elements of the emerging profession.

In some countries where pedagogues have been around for a long time (like Sweden), they are now beginning to take even further steps to "integrate" the pedagogue with other professional groups and drop the name pedagogue altogether. The developing role of the pedagogue seems to reflect well the widening range of roles and responsibilities and the growing interconnectedness of Scotland's early years and childcare workforce with others in improving outcomes for children and their families. Whilst the concept of pedagogues is a useful example, it is an unfamiliar term. We need to find a language that works for Scotland.

The main consultation asked:

Q20: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE TITLE "PEDAGOGUE" WITHIN A SCOTTISH CONTEXT?

Overall, 86% of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question. One-quarter of these (from a range of respondent categories) indicated clearly that they supported the use of the title "pedagogue" within a Scottish context, albeit that it might take time for the term to be fully accepted. Of the others, three stated that they supported the concept but found the title difficult (TP, LA, Rep). The remaining respondents did not support the use of the title or provided more general commentary.

10.2.1 Arguments in Favour of the Title "Pedagogue" within a Scottish Context

Several consultees reported that the term was already being used within their establishment. Recurring views were that the title reflected a child-centred educationalist paradigm, which reflected the value and status of those working with young children. It

was welcomed as helping to signal the end of existing practice and a move to approaches more akin to those operating in European and Scandinavian countries (CP, LA, Rep, TP).

The concept of the "pedagogue" was seen as progressive (CP), reflective (Rep) and one which could break down professional barriers (LA) by reflecting cross-sector roles and responsibilities (LA). Others commented that it was important for Scotland to consider using a term which European colleagues had been using (TP). A further view was that using this term could help with developing career pathways across countries (TP).

General comments included:

> "*We welcome the word in its true literal sense as we use it ourselves in our existing practice!*" (Rep)

> "*A comprehensive term which encompasses all we would wish for the future of Scotland's children and young people*" (Indiv)

One consultee pointed out that other more familiar terms such as "curriculum" were not widely understood when they were first introduced (LA).

10.2.2 Arguments Against use of the Title "Pedagogue" within a Scottish Context

Around one-third of all those who responded to this question (35%) argued clearly that the term was unfamiliar in Scotland and/or was not suitable within a Scottish context. Four respondents (Rep, Rep, LA, CP) requested that more debate take place around using the term.

Many different rationales were contained in responses against using the title "pedagogue" within a Scottish context. These are summarised below:

- Could alienate service users such as parents (Rep, Rep, CP)
- Some countries are already moving away from using the term (Rep, TP)
- Associated with the Greek word "pedantic" (TP, CProv, Rep)
- Could become confused with the word paedophile (CP, CProv)
"*If people can confuse paediatrician and paedophile, the jump to pedagogue is a small one*" (CProv)
- Cumbersome/clumsy (LA, CProv, CP)
- Imported from another country and context – more suitable elsewhere (TP, TP, Rep, LA)
- Much contested term/ open to interpretation (TP, TP, TP, Rep)
- Too formal (CP)
- Would not attract men to the profession (LA)
- Not down to earth/plain English/Academic jargon (CP, LA, LA)
- Could restrict rather than assist an understanding of the profession (TP, Rep)
- Could be cost implications of restructuring the profession around this (Rep)
- Old fashioned term and not relevant to Scotland (CP, TP)

- Not sure what value it would bring (Rep)
- Support staff answering our phones would not like to use this term (TP)
- Has no tradition of use in Scotland (Rep)
- Difficult for workers to identify with (LA)

In addition, two consultees argued:

> "…would require a fundamental shift socially and politically in the way we consider children's characteristics, needs, development, care and education" (Rep, Rep).

10.3 The main consultation asked:

Q21: HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE WORKFORCE NAMED?

Around three-quarters (77%) of respondents to the main consultation addressed this question.

Some consultees argued in broad terms about what any name should capture and reflect. One suggested that as a starting point, questions should be asked such as, "*What is the purpose of the workers in the sector and what are they trying to achieve?*" (Rep). Others considered that the workforce should be consulted on a new name and perhaps allowed to vote on this (CP, LA, Rep, Rep, CProv).

It was proposed that the name should reflect the roles of workers in the sector, their value and professionalism (LA, LA, LA, CProv, Rep). Two respondents urged that the name be "*warm*" as well as "*professional*" (CP, Rep).

According to some, the status of the workforce should be captured by their title (LA, LA, CP), which should be easily recognisable (LA) and acceptable to service users and to service providers (Rep). It should reflect the diversity of the work provided (from 0 – 16 years) (CP), and, according to one consultee, preferably be a single word title (TP).

One respondent called for a name which emphasised the dual role of educating and caring (LA). Another considered that is should reflect the interconnectedness between families and staff (Rep). Some pointed out that the definitions already in use by the SSSC could provide the base for any new names (Rep, CP, CProv). One consultee suggested that the word "*professional*" be included in the title (TP). Another urged that the word "*teacher*" should not be dismissed without some thought (Rep).

Whilst one consultee (Rep) stressed that the word "*education*" should be included in the title, and another requested the inclusion of "*educator*" (LA), a contrasting view was that such terms were not appropriate as they did not reflect the image of a holistic approach (LA). Others considered that the word "*childhood*" could usefully be incorporated into the workforce title (Rep, Rep, TP, TP, CP), or "*children's learning and development*"

(TP, Rep), or "*nursery*" (LA). However, another respondent thought that the title "*nursery nurse*" was outdated (TP), with another consultee arguing that it failed to reflect the full range of roles and responsibilities carried out (TP).

Other words which various respondents disliked were "*worker*" (LA, LA) and "*care*" (TP). According to these consultees, the former word did not portray a highly professional and skilled workforce, and the latter was not helpful in raising the status of the profession. Likewise, according to two respondents, the word "*childcare*" suggests the impression of babysitting (CP, LA). One consultee argued against the use of the word "*practitioner*" as being too vague (LA).

Finally, one view was that care should be taken not to try to find too generic a term as this might dilute the diversity of roles and responsibilities across the workforce (Rep).

Most consultees who provided a view suggested specific terminology to adopt. Their numerous ideas are presented in Annex 4, with the top six most popular job titles below:

- Early Years and Childcare Professionals
- Early Years Workforce
- Early Years Professionals
- Early Years Educators
- Early Years Managers
- Early Years Practitioners

10.4 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Action (other than that proposed in the Review) recommended most often by respondents as supporting the development of a single coherent profession was a review of pay and conditions across the sector.
- Another common theme was that there needs to be more effort within the sector to join up and work together.
- Many respondents stressed their view that it is essential to include teachers and childminders within the proposals for a single coherent profession.
- A recurring recommendation was for continuing consultation with early years and childcare staff on issues affecting them.
- One-quarter of respondents who provided a view clearly supported the use of the title "pedagogue" within a Scottish context. Around one-third of respondents argued that the term was unfamiliar in Scotland and/or was not suitable within a Scottish context.
- A vast range of ideas for an appropriate name for the early years and childcare workforce was suggested, with several consultees stressing that any name should reflect the roles of the workers in the sector and their status. The most common six recommendations were: Early Years and Childcare Professionals, Early Years Workforce, Early Years Professionals, Early Years Educators, Early Years Managers and Early Years Practitioners.

- Many of the proposals for names included the term "early years" and/or the word "childhood".

ANNEX 1: LIST OF RESPONDENTS TO THE MAIN WRITTEN CONSULTATION

Copies of all non-confidential responses can be located in the Scottish Executive library and are on the Scottish Executive website.

Aberdeen City Council
Aberdeen Early Years and Childcare Partnership Workforce Development and Training Standing Action Group
Aberdeenshire Childcare Partnership
Aberdeenshire Council
ADES Early Years Education and Childcare Services Network
Allsorts After-School Club
Angus Council
Ann Marie Walls
Argyll and Bute Childcare Partnership
Association of Headteachers and Deputes in Scotland
Association of Quality Nurseries in Scotland
Association of Scotland's Colleges
Balgreen Nursery School
British Association for Early Childhood Education
British Association for Early Childhood Education (in Scotland)
Cairndow Childcare
Cardonald College
Care and Learning Alliance, Highland Council
Care Commission
Children in Scotland
City of Edinburgh Council, Children and Families
Dumfries and Galloway Childcare Partnership
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Dundee City Council
Early Years Forum
East Ayrshire Childcare Partnership
East Ayrshire Council
East Ayrshire Council Out of School Hours Care Network
East Dumbartonshire's Childcare Partnership
East Irvine Nursery and After School Care Ltd.
East Lothian Council, Department of Education and Children's Services
Educational Institute of Scotland
Equal Opportunities Commission
Fife Childcare and Early Years Strategy, Fife Council
General Teaching Council for Scotland
Glasgow City Council Education Services
Glendinning Terrace Nursery Class
Harriet House Nursery
Highland Council, Childcare and Early Education
HiMATS

Hope Cottage Nursery School
I CAN
Inverclyde Childcare Partnership
Inverclyde Council, Education Services
Jobcentre Plus
James Watt College of Further and Higher Education
James Watt College of Further and Higher Education, SCQF Early Years and Childcare Group
James Watt College Nursery
Kilmarnock College
Learning and Teaching Scotland
Lews Castle College
Mayfield Salisbury Playgroup
Midlothian Council, Education Division
Montessori Schools Association
Moray Childcare Partnership
Moray Council
Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh
Mount Florida Out of School Project
Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey Childcare and Family Resource Partnership
National Day Nurseries Association
NHS Ayrshire and Arran selection of staff views
NHS Health Scotland
North Ayrshire Council, Educational Services
North Ayrshire Council Childcare Partnership Out of School Care Sub Group
Orkney Childcare Partnership Officer
Orkney Islands Council, Department of Community Social Services
Perth and Kinross Childcare Partnership
Perth and Kinross Council, Education and Children's Services
Professional Association of Teachers incorporating Professional Association of Nursery Nurses
Quarriers
Reid Kerr College Childcare Staff
Renfrewshire Childcare Partnership Forum
Renfrewshire Council, Education and Leisure Services
Renfrewshire Independent Nurseries Forum
Sandbank Primary School
Scottish Borders Childcare Partnership
Scottish Childminding Association
Scottish Enterprise
Scottish Out of School Care Network
Scottish Pre-School Play Association
Shetland Childcare Partnership
SkillsActive
South Ayrshire Council Childcare Partnership
South Lanarkshire Council

Stevenson College
Stirling Council and Stirling Children's Partnership
Support for Play and Early Learning in Lanarkshire
The Children's House
The Hamilton School
Tobermory Playgroup
UNISON Scotland
University of Dundee, School of Education, Social Work and Community Education
University of Paisley, School of Education
University of Strathclyde, Department of Childhood and Primary Studies
Voluntary Service Aberdeen
West Dumbartonshire Council
West Dumbartonshire Childcare Partnership
West Dumbartonshire Out of School Care Network
West Lothian Council, Education Services
West Lothian Early Years and Childcare Partnership
Western Isles Council, Department of Education

Fifteen Individual Respondents

ANNEX 2: QUESTIONS POSED AT EACH OF THE WORKSHOPS

Q1: The Review is saying we need an SCQF Level 9 qualification that is delivered flexibly. Coming from the view that we should try to bring the learning to the learner, what do you think would make a Level 9 qualification this flexible?

Q2: From the presentations this morning we heard how workers already in the sector and holding a level 8 award need to be able to work incrementally to Level 9. How do we ensure there are clear pathways between existing qualifications and a new SCQF Level 9 qualification?

ANNEX 3: VOLUME OF RESPONSES RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO EACH MAIN CONSULTATION QUESTION (QUESTIONS RANKED IN ORDER OF VOLUME OF RESPONSES)

Question Number	% of All Responses (100% = 115 responses)	Topic
6	97	Career Pathways
9	97	Qualifications, Training & Development
8	96	Qualifications, Training & Development
10	90	Qualifications, Training & Development
12	90	Recruitment & Retention
7	90	Career Pathways
1	89	Roles & Responsibilities
13	88	Recruitment & Retention
15	87	Recruitment & Retention
4	87	Roles & Responsibilities
20	86	Developing Profession
2	85	Roles & Responsibilities
11	82	Recruitment & Retention
14	81	Recruitment & Retention
5	80	Career Pathways
3	80	Roles & Responsibilities
19	79	Developing Profession
16	78	Workforce Planning
21	77	Developing Profession
18 (national)	72	Workforce Planning
18 (local)	69	Workforce Planning
17	65	Workforce Planning

ANNEX 4: FULL LIST OF SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW THE EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE WORKFORCE SHOULD BE NAMED

Early Years Professionals
Early Years Workforce
Early Years and Childcare
Early Years and Childcare Workforce
Early Years and Childcare Professionals
Early Years Support Worker
Early Years Practitioners
Early Years Managers
Early Years Classroom Guide
Early Years Educarer
Early Years Educators
Early Years Child Educator
Early Years Teacher
Early Years Education and Care
Early Years and Childhood Educator
Early Years Childhood and Youth Worker
Early Years and Youth Professional
Early Years Learning and Development Worker
Early Years Educator
Early Years Child Educator

Child Development Worker
Child Development Practitioner
Child Development Manager
Child Development Carer
Child Development Officer
Child Development Professionals

Child and Youth Practitioner
Child Carers

Childhood Professionals
Childhood Specialists
Childhood Worker
Childhood Educator
Childhood Participation Practitioner
Childhood Support Workforce
Childhood and Youth Professional
Childhood Development Officer
Childhood Development Professional
Childhood Development Leader
Childhood Practitioners

Early Childhood Professional
Early Childhood Practitioner
Early Childhood Teacher
Early Childhood Educator
Early Childhood Services
Early Childhood Sector

Early Education and Childcare Officer
Early Education and Childcare
Early Education and Childcare Profession

Active Childhood Practitioner

Children and Family Professional
Children and Family Practitioner
Children's Development Sector
Children's Care: Learning and Development
Children's and Young Person's Worker
Children's Learning and Development Worker
Children's Educators

Childcare Worker
Childcare Professionals
Childcare Practitioner
Childcare Technicians
Childcare and Early Education

Practitioner, Senior Practitioner and Lead Practitioner

Early Educators
Educator
Edu-care
Edu-care Officer
Educarer

Nursery Nurses
Holistic Educarer
Holistic Child Development Officer
Learning Facilitator
Learning and Development Workers
Foundation Learning Workforce
National Early Years Education and Childcare Workforce
Young Person's Learning and Development Worker (if dealing with those aged 16 – 25)
Out of School Care Professional
Child Minding Professional

GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH

Analysis for Policy