



Skills for Care & Development

SECTOR QUALIFICATIONS STRATEGY

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Skills for Care and Development: Qualification and Learning Strategy

Section 1: Executive Summary

Skills for Care and Development (Sfc&D) is an Alliance of five organisations across the four countries of the UK. Alliance partners have, for an extensive amount of time, been working on the development of solutions to the learning needs for the sector. This UK Qualification and Learning Strategy acknowledges what has already been put in place and achieved through having clear frameworks of qualifications, practice standards and employer and education partnerships; and identifies the current learning and qualification issues for the sector and next stages for development. This is essential to ensure that social care has a sustainable, appropriately skilled and qualified workforce able to respond to changes in the service provision for the future.

This Strategy draws on the work and priorities for action in each of the four countries. Each Alliance partner is also producing country specific Sector Learning/Qualification Strategies (SLS/SQS) which will provide documents specific to the policy and partner context in the country of operation. Each partner will be working to country specific skills and learning strategies introduced by their governments and also to their own sector specific strategies and policies developed with government.

The qualification requirements for the sector are set by governments to promote high standards in the quality of provision and improve public protection. In all instances Skills for Care and Development's priority is to support employers to ensure the workforce meets the wide-ranging needs of those who use social care, children, early years and young people's services. It is fundamental for the social care, children, early years and young people's sector to have appropriate qualifications, knowledge and competencies to ensure that those individuals and families who use our services are provided with a high quality and appropriate service.

This UK strategy informed by our Sector Skills Agreement (SSA) provides an overview of our collective priorities across the UK for the development of qualifications and learning in the future, and clearly outlines the development and design principles the sector will require.

Our priorities for development are to ensure qualification and learning that:

- enable the sector to recruit and retain a skilled and qualified workforce
- provide for the knowledge and skills needs of workers
- are based upon clear, accessible and aligned qualification frameworks
- support the development of a responsive and innovative workforce

Final Draft Sfc&D SLQS

- are easy to access and of high quality.

To support the development of these priorities, we have identified a number of development and design principles, which should provide clarity on qualification requirements both now and in the future.

Sfc&D intend to take the lead role via the SSA and SQS processes, which have been informed by government policies and employers, to determine the learning and qualification needs of the sector. Qualifications and learning should be based on the clear design and development principles laid out in the table below:

Priority	Principle for Design and Development
Recruitment and retention of a skilled and qualified workforce	<i>Qualifications and learning which support flexible pathways/ progression routes</i>
	<p>Qualifications and learning should be current, accessible, clearly focussed, and should reflect sector requirements. They should meet the training needs of people both entering and progressing or transferring within the sector and ensure a sustainable workforce in which continuous professional development frameworks are enhanced to meet the needs of registration and regulation, service users and carers, employers and workers.</p> <p>In Scotland the emphasis is on a continuous learning framework from pre-employability learning, through induction and qualifications for registrations, to post registration learning and continuous professional development.</p>
Qualifications and learning, which provide for the knowledge and skills needs of workers	<i>Qualifications and learning informed and underpinned by relevant National Occupational Standards (NOS) and Codes of Practice, and clearly mapped to NOS to ensure transferability</i>
	<p>Wherever possible, qualifications and learning for our sector should be based on relevant National Occupational Standards (NOS) and informed by the Codes of Practice for social care workforce.</p> <p>NOS developed by Skills for Care and Development cover both specific functions undertaken by staff and a wider range of functions, which can be applied to different service users' needs and different contexts. Mapping qualifications to NOS enables qualifications to be more easily aligned to knowledge and skills, providing clarity for workers and employers, and supporting workforce flexibility.</p>

Priority	Principle for Design and Development
	<p data-bbox="638 354 1541 379"><i>Qualifications and learning that provide relevant underpinning knowledge</i></p> <p data-bbox="638 421 1771 504">Alliance partners have a long history of working in partnership with awarding bodies and training providers to ensure that the qualifications developed and learning offered meet the ongoing learning needs of the workforce.</p> <p data-bbox="638 539 1512 564"><i>Qualifications and learning which recognise country-specific standards</i></p> <p data-bbox="638 600 1753 683">Alliance partners are responsible for ensuring relevant country legislation and policies are implemented within qualifications and learning, and that these support workforce development and enable workers to operate to service standard requirements.</p>
<p data-bbox="163 721 577 858">Qualifications and learning which are based upon clear, accessible and aligned qualification frameworks</p>	<p data-bbox="638 721 1727 775"><i>Qualifications and learning that provide a structure that ensures inclusion on appropriate country and European frameworks</i></p>
	<p data-bbox="638 900 1783 1043">Qualification frameworks need to meet the requirements for the sector and service users in each country of the UK, as well as enabling transferability across UK frameworks and ensuring that qualifications can be located on the European Qualification Framework (EQF). Qualification frameworks should be easy to understand, enable accreditation of prior experiential learning, provide simplified career pathways and support continuous professional development.</p> <p data-bbox="638 1078 1789 1278">In Scotland and Wales there are clear and established frameworks; the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), and Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW).) In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) has the potential to address proliferation of qualifications and allow more flexibility for learners. The Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF) is being developed to build upon the QCF for the children’s workforce in England. Similar work has been scoped in Wales and development of an IQF Northern Ireland is under consideration by the Department of Education NI (DENI).</p>

Priority	Principle for Design and Development
<p>Qualifications and learning which support the development of a responsive and innovative workforce</p>	<p><i>Qualifications and learning which are responsive to the changing skills needs of the workforce and informed by service users, carers and children</i></p>
	<p>Reviewing our NOS on a regular basis will ensure they are up to date and meet the changing skills needs of the workforce. We actively involve service users, children and young people in the development of our NOS to ensure their needs are fully reflected. Qualifications based on these NOS then need to be developed to meet country registration and regulation requirements.</p>
<p>Qualifications and learning which are easy to access and of high quality</p>	<p><i>Quality assured assessment of qualifications and learning</i></p>
	<p>Qualifications and learning need to be of a consistently high quality in content, currency, diversity, delivery and assessment, with transparent and consistent quality control mechanisms to ensure a high quality of learning and ultimately of service provision.</p> <p><i>Recognise different types of learning through flexible methods of delivery</i></p> <p>The sector requires flexible learning opportunities in terms of time, location and duration and to meet the needs of employers and employees and the changing ways of working.</p> <p>In Scotland and Wales there is an increased focus on work settings being learning organisations to ensure an ongoing culture of learning and development in the sector.</p>

Section 2: Scope of the Sector Qualification and Learning Strategy

2.1 UK Wide Scope of the Sector Qualification and Learning Strategy

2.1.1 Context and Sector Coverage

Skills for Care and Development is the Sector Skills Council for the social care, children, early years and young people's workforce. This Strategy, and those strategies that sit within it, (as outlined below) aim to articulate to key stakeholders (including, employers, funding bodies, awarding bodies, training providers and government in the four countries) the standards, learning and qualification issues and actions required for the sector. This is to ensure there is a coherent link between employer demand, learning supply availability, funding, and registration and regulation requirements.

It is fundamental for the social care, children, early years and young people's sector to have appropriate qualifications, knowledge and competencies to ensure that those individuals and families who use our services are provided with a high quality and appropriate service. Not only will our services at some point touch every individual or their family in the UK, they are also a growing part of the economy and deliver many hidden economic benefits by enabling a larger proportion of the workforce to be in employment. This includes both direct employment to user services and also through childcare support to ensure parents and families can be economically productive.

Skills for Care and Development is an Alliance of five organisations across four countries. It should be noted at the outset that partners of the Alliance operate within a variety of legislative and policy contexts to reflect different devolved administrations' and governments' agendas which have differing legislative bases, policies and remits for operation. The qualification requirements for the sector in each country are set by the administrations and governments in the four countries to promote high standards in the quality of provision and improve public protection. In all instances Skills for Care and Development's priority is to ensure the workforce meets the wide-ranging needs of those who use social care, children, early years and young people's services. It is important to recognise that an extensive amount of work has already been undertaken to develop the standards and qualifications currently in use. This and partner strategies build upon these developments, and should therefore be considered as a next step for improving learning and qualifications within the sector.

All partners see the importance of qualifications within a wider framework of learning and skills, however for some countries (such as England and Northern Ireland), there is a priority to ensure a greater coherence and rationalisation in the qualifications provided for the sector, to ensure they meet employer needs. Wales has in place a longstanding framework of qualifications for social care agreed with the sector and

with government, and the focus now is building on the benchmark qualifications to support career pathways and continued professional development. In Scotland, the priorities operate within a context for ongoing learning, as the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework is already in place.

This UK Strategy draws on the work and priorities for action in place in each of the four countries, but in addition, Alliance partners will also produce country specific Sector Learning/Qualification Strategies. The production of individual reports will enable a detailed report, specific to the policy and partner context in the country of operation. The Strategy acknowledges what has already been put in place and achieved through having clear frameworks of qualifications, practice standards and employer and education partnerships. It identifies the next stages for development necessary to make sure that Social Care has a sustainable, appropriately skilled and qualified workforce able to respond to changes in the service provision for the future. Each partner will be working to country specific skills and learning strategies introduced by their governments and also to their own sector-specific strategies and policies developed with government. Our Strategy is therefore entitled a 'Qualification and Learning Strategy', but we recognise that the qualification element of this is a priority for England, Wales and Northern Ireland rather than Scotland. The five Alliance partners are using this work and their own qualification and learning strategies to build upon a long history of work for the sector that supports the sector's needs within different policy contexts.

Skills for Care and Development's five Alliance partners¹ and their roles and responsibilities are detailed below:

- **Care Council for Wales** is an Assembly Government Sponsored Body with the legislative remit for registration and regulation of individuals working within social care services (children and adults services) and for the development and regulation of education and training for this workforce to ensure fitness to practice on the part of all workers. The Assembly Government has given the Care Council the lead role for producing the Workforce Action Plan to support the delivery of the Assembly Government's 10-year strategy for social care services in Wales. The Care Council for Wales also has the remit for the Children's Workforce Development Network for Wales and is developing a cross sector workforce development strategy with the Assembly and other SSCs covering staff working with children. As a partner in the Sector Skills Council, the Care Council represents the social care, early years and child care workforce, as well as wider workforce development issues and carries the SSC remit in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government's Employment and Skills

¹ From April 2008 the General Social Care Council will join the Skills for Care and Development Alliance.

Strategy – Skills that Work for Wales, issued for consultation in January 2008, will inform the delivery of this strategy in Wales.

- **Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC)** will, from April 2008, be an executive non-departmental sponsored body, sponsored by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The full Children’s Workforce in England includes sectors covered by other Sector Skills Councils, for example, children’s nurses (Skills for Health) and play workers (SkillsActive). CWDC has the remit for reform and development of the children and young people’s workforce in England, working with the Children’s Workforce Network (CWN) for delivery of our SSC remit in England for children and young people. The Department for Children, Schools and Families has tasked CWDC to lead the development by the CWN of an integrated qualifications framework for the children’s workforce in England.

- **Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)** is a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Social Services Office of the Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety Northern Ireland (DHSSPSNI), which is responsible for registration and regulation of individuals working within personal social services, and for the development and regulation of education and training for the Social Services workforce to ensure fitness to practice on the part of all workers. Work in Northern Ireland will sit alongside the Skills for Success strategy, driven by the Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI), which is an economic development strategy which recognises the need for upskilling the workforce, in order to build long term capacity and support community stability in Northern Ireland. NISCC is, with England and Wales, a partner in the Sector Qualification Reform Programme (SQRP) process and supports actions towards rationalisation and streamlining of qualifications. As a partner in the Sector Skills Council, NISCC carries the SSC remit in Northern Ireland for the Early Years and Child Care workforce, as well as wider workforce development issues.

- **Scottish Social Services Council** is a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Scottish Government and is responsible for registration and regulation of social services including the early years and child care workforce, as well as delivery of workforce development and our SSC remit in Scotland. The SSSC has a well-established qualifications-based register for the social services and early years’ workforce in Scotland. The focus of work is to use the developed Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework and the Continuous Learning Framework to support on-going workforce development.

- **Skills for Care** is a private company and charity funded primarily by the Department of Health. Skills for Care is responsible for the strategic development of the adult social care workforce in England and delivery of our

SSC remit in England for adult social care. They are responsible for improving standards of care provision through training and development, workforce planning and workforce intelligence. Working in consultation with employers, people who use services, carers and other key stakeholders, Skills for Care's mission is to modernise adult social care in England by ensuring standards, learning and qualifications continually adapt to meet the changing needs of the sector.

To ensure full coverage, which meets the needs of the sector across the UK, this UK Qualification and Learning Strategy is built upon a number of documents developed by our Alliance partners – the content within which has been subject to extensive debate and consultation in numerous forums in each of the four countries through the auspices of all five partner organisations. This UK Strategy intends to pull together the key themes of these strategies to provide a comprehensive UK overview for review by the Strand One Board, and also to inform the business planning process for Skills for Care and Development. A UK Action Plan will be developed in addition to country-specific detailed action plans led by the Alliance partners.

More information on the individual strategies/documents can be found at:

- Care Council for Wales (2007) Sector Learning Strategy available at: www.ccwales.org.uk
- Children's Workforce Development Council (2007) Sector Learning Strategy, available at: www.cwdcouncil.org.uk
- Northern Ireland Social Care Council (2007) Sector Learning Strategy for Early Years and Child Care and Personal Social Services (PSS) available at: www.niscc.info
- Scottish Social Services Council (2007) Sector Learning Strategy available at: www.sssc.uk.com
- Skills for Care (2007) Sector Qualification Strategy for adult social care in England available at: www.skillsforcare.org.uk

(NB: Supporting strategies will be included as an Annex to this SQLS when published in April 2008)

2.1.2 Occupations Covered

In the broadest terms, Skills for Care and Development covers the social care, children, early years and young people's workforce. All of these services are devolved; the workforce is developing in different ways to meet the differing needs and policy direction of each nation. This has resulted in a number of terminology differences in the occupations covered. A summary of the job roles covered is shown in the table below and a full breakdown of our footprint is shown in Appendix A as defined by each partner and by SIC code.

	Social Work	Managers	Care workers	Children's care, schools, family	Other workers
Care Council for Wales	Social workers adults and children's services; Social work students	Adult day care service managers; Children's day care service managers; Nursing home managers; Adult residential care service managers; Residential children's home managers; Residential family centre managers All social services managers	Adult day care workers; Children's day care staff; Domiciliary care workers; Nursing home care workers; Adult residential care workers; Residential children's home staff; family centre staff, Integrated children's centre workers; early years workers	Childminders; Open access playscheme and crèche staff; Residential special school and boarding school staff; Day nursery staff; Out of school care workers; Adoption service staff; Foster carers	Adult placement scheme staff; Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service staff; Youth justice staff,
Children's Workforce Development Council (England)	Children and families social workers	Children's day centre managers; Family centre managers; Residential child care managers; Early years service managers	Children's day centre workers; Family centre workers; Residential child care workers; early years workers	Registered childminders; Nannies; Day nursery staff; nursery schools; nursery staff in primary schools; Family support workers; Foster carers	Learning, development & support services workers including children and family court advisory and support service family court advisers; Connexions personal advisers; Learning mentors; educational psychologists
Northern Ireland Social Care Council	Social workers; Social work assistants	Day care service managers; Children's home managers; Residential care home managers; Nursing home	Day care workers; Residential child care workers; Adult residential care workers; Nursing home staff; Residential family	Early education and childcare workers	

	Social Work	Managers	Care workers	Children's care, schools, family	Other workers
		managers; Residential family centre managers	centre staff; Domiciliary care workers		
Scottish Social Services Council	Social workers; Students on social work courses; Social work assistants;	Adult residential care service managers; Child residential care service managers; Adult day care service managers; Child day care service managers	Residential child care staff; Adult residential care workers; Day care workers; Care at home staff	Early education and childcare workers; Staff in school care accommodation services	Housing support staff
Skills for Care (England)	Social Workers	Adult day care managers; Adult residential care managers	Adult day care workers; Adult residential care workers; Domiciliary care workers		Housing support; Local authority fieldwork

2.1.3 Population of Learners

Skills for Care and Development represents the interests of some 60,000 employers and 1.87 million workers. These workers are employed by a range of organisations - in the statutory, private and Third Sectors - often commissioned by the statutory sector to deliver services, but increasingly purchased directly by people who receive the services. This Sector Qualification and Learning Strategy is intended to support learning for those working towards entry into the sector, and for those already working in the sector - updating their skills and supporting development for career progression.

2.1.4 Range of Learning Provision

Comment [s1]: Partners to check learning provision table is correct

Provision	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
NVQs and SVQs (based on National Occupational Standards owned by Skills for Care and Development*)	•	•	•	•
Apprenticeships (young, adult, advanced, foundation and modern) in Children’s Care Learning and Development and Health and Social Care. ²	•	•	•	•
14 – 19 pathways/Diploma in Society, Health and Development	•			• ³
Foundation Degrees	•	• ⁴		•
Higher National Certificates/Diplomas			•	
Social work Degree	•	•	•	•
Post Qualifying CPD awards in social work	•	•		•
Professional Development Awards			•	
Non accredited mandatory training e.g. basic food hygiene,	•	•	•	•

² Note Apprenticeships have different names and purposes across the UK including Young, Adult and Advanced in England, Foundation and Modern in Wales and Modern in Scotland. Specific detail is available in partner’s country strategies, but for this document the generic phrase is retained.

³ Under consideration for use within the Welsh Baccaalaureate Framework

⁴ In Northern Ireland, available for Early Years and Childcare only

manual handling, first aid				
Vocationally Related Qualifications	•	•		•
Non accredited, non mandatory training e.g. employer based training	•	•	•	•

*National Occupational Standards owned by Skills for Care and Development include:

- Health and Social Care (owned jointly with Skills for Health)
- Children’s Care Learning and Development
- Leadership and Management for Care Services
- Commissioning, Procurement and Contracting for Care Services (to be published in 2008)
- Learning Development and Support Services (for the England Children’s Workforce only)
- Sensory Services (to be available in 2008)
- Social Work

2.2 Priorities within the Overall Scope

2.2.1 Government Policy

All Skills for Care and Development Alliance partners work closely with the relevant governments across the UK to ensure legislation and policies are appropriately implemented and support relevant workforce development as needed. There are a significant number of key policies impacting upon our sector, which are grounded within government departments across the UK and have been subject to extensive consultation within the sector in all four countries. A list of the policies with a summary of their content is outlined in Appendix B.

We have identified five priorities for the social care, children, early years and young people’s Sector Qualification and Learning Strategy that Skills for Care and Development Alliance partners will implement (in partnership with learning provision and governments). There are a number of principles that apply to all our work, and are fundamental to all priority areas:

- Our work is to support the needs of those individuals and families who use social care, children, early years and young people’s services.
- Equal opportunities are integral to both the development and delivery of the work of Skills for Care and Development.
- A commitment to working in partnership with stakeholders, government, employers and employees.

- The involvement of services users and carers in shaping the workforce that they need.

2.2.2 Priorities for Development

Each of the partners of the Alliance has well-established arrangements for working with services users, employers and stakeholders within their individual countries. Knowledge gained from these dialogues and research undertaken for our Sector Skills Agreements have outlined five priorities for development, which clearly support all governments' devolved policy agendas.

Our priorities for development are to ensure qualifications and learning that:

- enable the sector to recruit and retain a skilled and qualified workforce
- provide for the knowledge and skills needs of workers
- place people who use services, carers and families at the heart of the work
- are based upon clear, accessible and aligned qualification frameworks
- support the development of a responsive and innovative workforce
- are easy to access and of high quality

The priorities that form the basis of this strategy are described in more detail below, alongside the government policies that this action supports. It should be noted that more detailed and specific work has been prepared for each nation by the five Alliance Partners, split by sector where appropriate, as outlined in 2.1.1 above.

- **Learning opportunities that enable the sector to recruit and retain a qualified workforce**

The need for the sector to be able to recruit and retain a qualified workforce is essential to delivering the future long-term vision for social care, children, early years and young people's services. This is envisaged by governments and outlined in policy documents across the UK, and is particularly essential to: *National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce (Scottish Executive 2006); Changing Lives; the Children's Workforce Strategy: Building a world-class workforce for children, young people and families (DFES 2005, updated 2007); The Children's Plan (England; Children's Workforce Strategy Action plan, Feb 2008); Options for Excellence (DCSF and DH 2006); Care Matters Our Health, Our care, Our say (DH and HM Government 2002); HPSSNI Training and Development strategy for social services (Health, Social Services and Public Safety Northern Ireland 2006); Childcare that works (Report from the Office of Northern Ireland First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2006); Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities (Welsh Assembly Government 2007), Childcare is for Children (Welsh Assembly Government 2005) and Rights to Action (Welsh*

Assembly Government 2004). *The Children's Workforce Action Plan will be launched in England in Spring 2008, to support delivery of the Children's Plan (DCFS 2008).*

- **Learning which provides for the skills needs of workers**

The provision of qualifications, standards and learning need to clearly meet the skills needs of workers – these needs are outlined in our Stage 1 SSA, and also in a number of policy documents such as *Childcare that Works (Report from the Office of Northern Ireland First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2006)*; *Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities (Welsh Assembly Government 2007)*; and *Skills for Scotland – a Lifelong Skills Strategy (Scottish Executive 2007)*.

- **Qualifications which are located within clear, accessible and aligned qualification frameworks**

Work has been undertaken by governments, agencies of government and other relevant bodies to develop registration, regulation and conduct criteria, minimum standards and workforce requirements, to ensure the workforce is suitably trained and qualified in line with the requirements of each country and partners⁵ qualifications/fitness to practice frameworks.

- **Learning opportunities which support the development of a responsive and innovative workforce**

Governments across the UK have set a challenging vision of the future workforce of our sector as outlined in *Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities, Options for Excellence, A Healthier Future, Children's Workforce Strategy and Changing Lives – the Review of 21st Century Social Work, Putting People First: A shared commitment and vision to the transformation to Adult Social Care, the ministerial Concordat (England) December 2007*. Learning opportunities for management and leadership development need to be put in place to support capacity building and manage transitions arising from changing service models. These include integrated service delivery, multi agency initiatives and personalised care. There is a need to respond to technological developments that ensure service user needs are supported through practice such as ICT training and assistive technologies.

- **Qualification and learning provision is easy to access and of high quality**

⁵ In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales Alliance partners also undertake this workforce regulation role and have the statutory responsibility to regulate social work and post qualifying social work training. In England this is undertaken by another organisation General Social care Council who will become a formal partner of the Alliance in April 2008.

In support of all of the above, qualification and learning provision needs to be both accessible (in terms of location, funding and time) of high quality, and meet the needs of regulators, users of services, employers and learners to work in the sector. The need for this has been demonstrated in the *Leitch Review of Skills*; *Skills for Scotland – a Lifelong Skills Strategy*, *Skills for Success Strategy* in Northern Ireland, and *Skills that Work for Wales 2008*. In particular, there is a need to work in partnership with the supply side to address the current shortfall of suitably skilled assessors and verifiers and develop a suitable pool of trainers including people who use services and carers. We need to ensure capacity and capability to deliver consistently at the required level of quality of provision to meet the needs of employers, workers and service users. As training needs to be flexible, accessible and affordable, we need to ensure adequate funding support to realise the changes required to meet employer, employee and service user's needs.

Section 3: Sector Working Environment

3.1 Special features or characteristics of the work environment

There are a number of features of the social care, children, early years and young people's sector which impact upon qualifications and learning. This section explores those features and how they relate to our priorities for action. This is not a comprehensive overview, and only identifies those issues, which impact upon qualifications and learning. For a more general discussion about the sector's working environment, reference should be made to our Stage 1 Sector Skills Agreement.⁶

3.1.1 Recruitment and Retention Issues

As a sector, we are in a competitive employment climate. The social care, children, early years and young people's sector has to ensure that it takes proper action to deal with some of the recruitment and retention challenges it faces, which include pay and conditions, management and support over career pathways and ensuring that social care services are places where people want to work, and that staff are supported and their work valued.

Recruitment and retention remains a major challenge for the social care, children, early years and young people's workforce across the private, statutory, voluntary and independent providers of care across the UK - with some occupations facing more significant difficulties than others. For example, in 2005 social care agencies in Wales reported 23% posts vacant, and in Northern Ireland 25% within personal social services⁷. The causes of this are wide-ranging, but include poor salary levels, lack of appropriate qualifications and skills, the negative profile and perception of the workforce, and the isolated nature of some roles, including lone workers and working in remote locations/work environments. Development of qualifications appropriate to roles is essential for both recruiting and retaining staff. Those who have undertaken training prior to entry in the sector need to have had learning opportunities which develop their fitness to practice in services for children and/or vulnerable adults as, given the inherent vulnerability of service users, both employers and individual workers are responsible for delivering safe practice. For those in employment there is an increasing need for modular training and small qualifications that are appropriate to support the development of flexible routes of learning and improve the mobility of the workforce and transferability of qualifications.

Social care has been a vanguard area in work based learning and assessment. It is important to build on this to improve learning opportunities before entry into work,

⁶ Available at www.ssda.org.uk

⁷ Future Skills Wales 2005 and Northern Ireland Skills Monitoring Survey 2005.

and ensure continued professional learning for all staff and career pathways so that they can continue to develop and progress within the sector and across to other relevant professions.

Our Stage 1 SSA identified that the sector is increasingly reliant on a migrant workforce and according to Batty, between 1990 and 2001 the number of social workers eligible to practice in the UK quintupled. Employers express the need for these workers to have training in respect of linguistics, cultural contact and language skills (English and Welsh). A report conducted by Experian for Skills for Care and Development estimated that around 12% of UK employees in the care sector were born outside the UK, and this is increasing, see SQW Report.⁸

In an environment where recruitment and retention is a real difficulty for employers, qualifications and learning need to support employers to secure a workforce for the future. Considerable advances have been made towards achieving a qualified workforce, but further work is required to offer CPD to staff and to assist organisations to move to a lifelong learning culture. This drives our priority to consider the creation of qualifications and learning which support both recruitment and retention. As well as meeting fitness to practice and registration requirements it includes the use of accredited bite-sized learning which can be transferred across different occupations in the sector and which will support the development of clear career pathways and the retention of the workforce.

3.1 3 Skills Needs

The social care, children, early years and young people's sector provides career opportunities for a wide range of people with varying skills. There are, however, identified gaps in the workforce, as detailed below;

A significant number of people employed within the sector have support needs in relation to basic skills, including Skills for Life and employability skills. Of the one million workers in England, 20% in the sector have literacy and numeracy skills below level 2, and 20% have training needs in English for speakers of a second language. The additional emphasis given to this within the SSA and the support available through learning support strategies across the UK provides an impetus to make this a priority for action.

Each country is considering the implications of policies on personalised care and the shift to service users becoming budget holders. Employers will increasingly take on the role of service providers, and requirements will continue to increase for person-centred delivery. Social care services are now a mixed economy with greater incidences of service commissioning. There is full emphasis on interprofessional

⁸ Productivity in the Social Care, Children, Early Years and Young People's Sector, 2007.

working, multi-agency, and integrated services with, for example, health provision. This has implications in terms of the skills mix across professions and on the management and leadership skills required in a multi-profession environment. The changes in patterns of services has implications for how training and learning is identified and delivered and in particular how service users, in their role as employers, will access the learning and be supported in their new roles.

Services within our sector are offered by statutory, private and Third Sector service providers. This mixed economy of care means that services for adults and for children are less likely to be provided directly by the local authorities, as was historically the case. Increasingly, services are being commissioned by local authorities within the voluntary and the private sector. This has meant that each country has been working across the whole sector so that the workforce development strategies and service strategies are properly integrated. Each partner has identified with their stakeholders in each country the specific priorities and actions for their sector in line with their policy priorities, changing patterns of service provision and regulatory requirements. The Third Sector and the volunteers working within the children's sector have specific learning needs, with learning currently characterised by a plethora of non-accredited, locally developed learning programmes. This sector will need to access training and resources for workforce development that is more accessible and affordable with a need for funding and training to be at learner and employer pace.

The workforce will have ongoing knowledge and skills needs based on governments' priorities and the changing needs of people who use services, carers and organisations. For example, across the UK there are needs for specialist knowledge and skills, such as those working with people who have dementia.

3.1.4 Registration Systems and Qualifications Frameworks

There are extensive registration systems and qualification frameworks already established across the UK.

The Care Council for Wales developed a Qualification Framework in 2001. It was developed in partnership with the sector and the Welsh Assembly Government. It is well used by employers, regulators, learning providers and career companies.⁹ This framework sets out the benchmark qualifications, which are reflected in service standards issued by government and in the Care Council registration requirements agreed by government and the sector. The framework is updated to reflect changes. It is now a statutory requirement for social workers and residential child care workers to register with the Care Council. To do this they must hold the required qualification(s) listed in the framework and agreed with government. Social work

⁹ <http://www.ccwales.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=160>

students are also required to register with the Care Council. Welsh Assembly Government is currently considering the next steps for the roll out of mandatory registration (and thus qualification attainment) to other groups of workers within the sector. The Care Council for Wales produced an Induction Framework in 2002 that has been widely adopted across the sector and recently updated and re-issued to reflect changes in the sector. Meeting the requirement of the Induction Framework is a registration requirement for identified groups of care workers. The expectation is that registering staff will have attained the required qualification at the point of registration renewal. The focus now is career and pathways and progression. A similar model is being proposed for early years workers. The Care Council has been commissioned by the Assembly to consider in partnership with other SSCs and regulatory bodies' actions, which would improve career progression or transferability between professions working with children.

In Scotland, the Scottish Social Services Council is responsible for establishing and maintaining a register of people who work in social work (including criminal justice social work services), social care, early education and childcare, and housing support services. This register is qualification-based and therefore identifies the acceptable qualifications to practice, with the criteria for registration widely consulted upon within the sector. Beginning in 2002, this register is being introduced in phases determined by the Scottish Government to cover an increasing number of occupations in the footprint in the future. If applicants do not hold the required qualifications but they meet all the other criteria, they can be granted registration subject to the condition that they achieve the required qualifications within a specified period. Work in Scotland is being undertaken in a context of ongoing learning, to ensure workforce development is considered as a package, and builds upon a continuous learning framework that supports individual and organisational development. Work has been undertaken to credit rate SVQs against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and work is also underway to enable individuals to gain recognition for informal learning on the SCQF.

In Northern Ireland, Induction Standards for the sector were introduced in 2007. Qualification requirements have also been set for both professional social workers and separately for social care workers. Social workers are required to register in order to practice, as are student social workers, and there is also a social care section of the register for all workers who are not professionally qualified. Once registered all workers must meet requirements for continuous training. Registration extends to Probation Officers and Education Welfare Officers who are also required to have a professional qualification in social work. The registration programme is well advanced for non-professional staff and anticipates being completed by 2010. In Northern Ireland, the Personal Social Services are integrated within the NHS and as such are subject to Agenda for Change reform. Although only currently operational in the statutory sector the Knowledge and Skills Framework provides a rationale for the link between accredited training, job roles and qualifications to support regulation and

registration. A Fitness to Practice Framework for workers in all parts of the sector in Northern Ireland will define requirements for registration and is currently in development. A major strategy development exercise is currently being undertaken by DELNI in respect of Early Years and Children's services. Both the SSA and SQLS in NI for this workforce will articulate with and support this strategy and have already identified the need for an Integrated Qualification Framework [IQFNI] to be developed.

The Integrated Qualifications Framework for the early years, children and young people's workforce in England will facilitate mobility within and across the different occupational groups of the whole children's workforce including the CWDC footprint. This framework is being developed as a result of the *Children's Workforce Strategy: Building a world-class workforce for children, young people and families* (DFES 2005, updated 2007) and it is intended to help employers and individuals work within a demand led system, with qualifications ensuring all members of the workforce are competent in an agreed set of essential skills. It utilises the unit- and credit-based QCF for vocational qualifications, currently in development, to ensure increased mobility across the whole workforce and improved career pathways for learners as well as appropriate qualifications for the workforce.

For adult social care in England, Skills for Care are working with the General Social Care Council (GSCC) to develop arrangements for the registration and regulation of the social care workforce. The GSCC have completed registration of social workers in England (approximately 80,000 people) and plans and consultations for registration of the wider social care workforce are underway. Initial registration of social care staff will require that they have been successfully inducted into their jobs using the Skills for Care Common Induction Standards.

3.1.5 Cultural Changes

Across the UK individuals are now supported to live longer in their own homes and the service user is placed at the centre of the service development and delivery process. The growth of the 'personalisation agenda' entails consultation and involvement of service users, both adults and children, and their carers regarding decisions affecting them, and empowers people to negotiate for the services they need – such as through the provision of direct payments schemes where individuals are given funds to purchase the services they require following an assessment of need. Qualifications and in-service training must therefore reflect change within the sector, such as an increase in lone workers and micro employers who work with minimal or no close supervision, or those directly employed by service users. Workers must be supported to have the learning and qualifications, which support roles with increasing responsibility and complexity.

The changes highlighted above will also require an increased incidence of partnership working, multi-agency/disciplinary work, interprofessional work and fully integrated approaches. Integrated working will continue to expand as these multi-agency settings develop and this is inherent in much of the recent change in all four countries. There is a real need for the workforce to have appropriate skills for working together with colleagues from other occupational groups. Working in partnership will be key to delivering to meet identified needs and is being responded to by governments - for instance the Social Care Workforce Development Programme in Wales during 2007-2008 provided an additional £9.05 million to support partnership working in the sector (health, education and social care, parents, volunteers, holistic and integrative services, complex needs of individuals), and provided a total uplift of investment in the workforce of £12.9 million following employers' contributions in each country.

3.1.6 Improving Learning Provision

The provision of an effective and efficient learning supply for the sector is fundamental to the success of qualification or learning strategies. Each partner's SSA has outlined a number of issues that need to be addressed across the UK.

There is currently a shortage of mentors, NVQ/SVQ assessors and internal verifiers that have the relevant experience of the sector. This was identified in the NVQ/SVQ take up survey in 2006 where 14.9% of centres identified assessor issues (made up of 6.9% supply of assessors and 7.3% motivation of assessors as a barrier to delivering NVQs/SVQs in the sector). This difficulty is not restricted to our sector, and is also an issue in the delivery of foundation degrees in England; where often it is difficult to secure tutors with appropriate experience of the sector. It can be especially difficult to gain appropriate learning provision and assessment through the medium of Welsh. The lack of assessors and the ability to find high quality learning experience directly limits the number of students who can embark on training for the sector, and ensure underpinning knowledge is assessed in an appropriate and consistent manner.

There is also a need for flexible routes to learning provision and assessment. This needs to include different types of workplace learning, flexible timings and regularity of learning and assessment to enable accessibility to provision. The sector is large and complex in terms of design, delivery and new types of provision. The location and timing of training provision is a major barrier to access because of the working practices of the much of the workforce. A large proportion of the workforce, such as domiciliary care workers, childminders, and social workers, work in isolated

environments and some can be self-employed or running small businesses. These workers have specific learning needs and require flexible methods of learning¹⁰.

Similarly, the Third Sector also need to access training and resources for workforce development and flexible provision of learning that meets employers' and learners' needs and will make training more accessible and affordable.

The quality of learning must be high; not only for the learner's experience, but to ensure that quality services are provided to service users. It is vital that those delivering the learning are suitably qualified and have sufficient knowledge that is current and relevant to the needs of the learners.

Learning provision needs to meet the skills needs, qualification, and 'fitness to practise' requirements that employers need in order to meet registration and service delivery standards (as aforementioned). In some areas there is a lack of learning provision, for instance for dementia or nutrition, yet learning opportunities are available which do not aid employers to meet registration or other training requirements.

¹⁰ Learning needs and access to learning for isolated workers - Skills for Care and Development June 2007

3.2 Workforce trends for the future

A number of trends were identified as part of or SSA process. These are summarised here, but most are covered more extensively in section 3.1 since the sector is not static, and due to the fact that Alliance partners have been developing work with governments to meet anticipated trends for the future.

We want to ensure a sustainable sector for the future, which will entail working on attracting and retaining younger workers, via clear entry routes for younger people and for people changing career. There is a need to make sure there are no unnecessary barriers and that we have clear pathways, flexibility and support. We also need to ensure that the image of the sector and its workers gets positive recognition.

There is a requirement to ensure that professional leadership and management are grounded in professional practice – which could be developed through joint work with other professions. Workforce skills and learning will need to keep pace with the changes in the needs of people who use services, and changes in how services are delivered.

There are demands on the workforce to enhance their knowledge and skills and modify how they work - for example in relation to the personalisation agenda - and a need to work more flexibly in multi disciplinary teams in single- or multi-agency settings.

Management and leadership skills will also be paramount to ensure effective delivery. There is demand for effective leaders and managers to support and take forward the sector and develop the workforce through change processes. In England there is a requirement by (the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) for future services for children, young people and families to be delivered by a graduate–led workforce with third level qualifications as a minimum.

The sector already uses a mixed economy of provision. This is likely to continue to increase into the future as outlined in policy provisions for the sector. As such, commissioning skills, especially within local authorities, will gain even higher significance to ensure the effectiveness of commissioned services.

The increasing requirement for staff to be registered, hold qualifications and continue to develop professionally necessitates a growth in continuous professional development. This change in the learning and training culture of the sector means that needs for learning provision may quickly outstrip demand. This needs to be addressed in order to meet policy imperatives.

Section 4: Summary of current qualifications and other learning provision

4.1 Main qualification types and other learning provision

4.1.1 Social Work degree

The regulation of social worker training and qualifications are the remit of the regulatory Councils in each of the four countries who are also Skills for Care and Development's Alliance partners, (the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, Scottish Social Services Council and Care Council for Wales) and the General Social Care Council (GSCC) for England. Social Work training is developed and delivered in partnership between the employers and the Higher Education Institutions in each of the countries. The Social Work degree (or specified predecessor qualification) is a requirement to qualify, register and practice as a social worker¹¹. The Social Work degree is informed by the NOS for Social Work and by the QAA Standards in Social Work Education. The degree has replaced previous qualifications, including the Diploma in Social Work (DipSW).

4.1.2 Degrees/Foundation Degrees

A wide variety of degrees is available in England, Wales and Northern Ireland with a growing number of Foundation Degrees in England and a small number in Wales. In England, Foundation Degrees are available related to working with children, young people and their families, and social care. In Northern Ireland, Foundation Degrees are available in early years and children's care only. However, many are not supported by Skills for Care and Development's Alliance partners (or included on partners' qualification frameworks) because they do not link to NOS, codes of practice or assessment of competence.

In England, Foundation Degrees for the early years, children and young people's workforce include the 'Early Years Sector Endorsed Foundation Degree' (EYSEFD), which is assessed and endorsed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, and CWDC. This is an important progression route to Early Years Professional Status. CWDC are currently developing a new model for the sector endorsement of early years Foundation Degrees.

A research project led by the Children's Workforce Network in England is reviewing Foundation Degree provision across the entire Children's Workforce in England, to consider how far the degrees already under way meet the needs of the workforce. Information from this research will be used in the development of a Foundation Degree Framework for the CWDC footprint.

¹¹ The rules are more complex for migrant workers and can be found on each of regulators' websites.

Foundation Degrees are also available in England in a wide range of subject areas appropriate to social care and social work; these include 'Health and Social Care', 'Care Management' and 'Social Care'. The development of a Skills for Care Foundation Degree framework is progressing, with results of this work available in summer 2008. These Foundation Degrees do not currently provide access to professional registration.

In Northern Ireland, the introduction of Foundation Degrees for early years and children's care is in its first year, and the role of the Foundation Degree in workforce development has not yet been fully explored. Foundation Degrees have been identified as a progression route from the apprenticeship programme and if flexibly delivered, could provide a progression route to higher level qualifications for those in work, but only if they were offered on a flexible, part-time basis and with more open access for mature learners. Evidence from the SSA found that employers had concern over the introduction of Foundation Degrees, since they felt that they were well served by existing degree programmes, that Foundation Degrees could create another layer of qualifications which were already well catered for, and could drain funding resources from other qualifications.

In Wales, Foundation Degrees are not currently recommended or required qualifications on Care Council for Wales' Qualifications Framework. Wales is awaiting the outcomes of the Webb Review *The Report of the Independent Review of the Mission and Purpose of Further Education in Wales: Promise and Performance* (Dec 2007) and the consultation on the Government's *Employment and Skills Strategy* (Jan 2008).

4.1.3 Higher National Certificates

In Scotland, Higher National Certificates (HNC) in Social Care and Early Education and Child Care are recognised as meeting the Qualifications Criteria for Registration for the Scottish Social Services Council.

The HNC Social Care contains four units from the SVQ Level 3 Health and Social Care (three of which are in the mandatory set of units for the HNC), thus ensuring direct credit transfer between these two awards.

4.1.4 S/NVQs

Social Care	
Registered Managers' award (replaced by Leadership and Management for Care Services, available from summer 2008)	S/NVQ Level 4
Health and Social Care (owned jointly with Skills)	S/NVQ Level 2, 3, 4

for Health)	
Children's services	
Children's Care Learning and Development	S/NVQ Level 2, 3, 4
Learning Development and Support Services (for the England Children's Workforce only)	NVQ Levels 3 and 4
Manager of Residential Child Care (replaced by Leadership and Management for Care Services, available from summer 2008)	SVQ/NVQ Level 4

Skills for Care and Development are developing NOS for: Commissioning, Procurement and Contracting for Care Services (to be published in 2008) and Sensory Services (to be available in 2008).

4.1.5 Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are available across the four countries of the UK in Children's Care Learning and Development and in Health and Social Care. They have not always met the needs of the sector and work is in hand to consider what further action needs to be taken so that the traineeships or apprenticeships work well for the sector.

The CCLD Apprenticeship Framework is owned by Skills for Care and Development and the Health and Social Care Apprenticeship Framework is jointly owned by Skills for Care and Development and Skills for Health. The latter is administered by Skills for Health on behalf of the partnership.

Skills for Care and Development has responsibility for administration of the Children's Care, Learning and Development (CCLD) Apprenticeship Frameworks in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, including certification. The CCLD framework was introduced in November 2005 and replaced the Early Years, Care and Education framework at Levels 2 and 3.

A review of the CCLD Apprenticeship Framework is under way, to be completed in July 2008.

4.1.6 Pre- entry/ 14 – 19 Pathways

Across the UK there are differences between the qualifications/pathways available. Skills for Care and Development's Alliance partners are keen to develop effective 14-19 pathways to attract young people into the workforce.

In England, the new Diploma qualifications will provide an occupationally linked alternative to GCSEs and A Levels. The 14-19 Diploma in Society, Health and

Development, will be piloted from 2008, aimed at young people between the ages of 14-19 in full time education. The Diploma will be available at Levels 1, 2 and 3, with the Level 3 being equivalent to 3 A levels and providing access to relevant higher education and professional learning programmes.

In Wales, there needs to be development of effective 14 – 19 pathways which fit with the Welsh Baccalaureate, and pre-entry requirement to the workforce to attract, recruit and retain a younger workforce.

In Northern Ireland, the Department of Education (DENI) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) are working together to develop a Northern Ireland strategy for 14-19 year olds and the Training for Success strategy addresses the employment and training requirements of 16-24 year olds. NISCC want to see development of training closely linked to supported practice-based experiential learning opportunities, which meet the requirements of the new Fitness to Practice framework.

Scotland has Skills for Work qualifications at Intermediate 1 and 2 and Higher (SCQF levels 4 and 5); Early Education and Childcare is available at Intermediate 1 and 2, and Health and Social Care is offered at Higher level (SCQF level 6).

4.1.7 Vocationally Related Qualifications

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, there is a wide range of VRQs available across early years, social care, children and young people's services, often with very similar curricula. There is ongoing advice provided to employers who are not always clear about the relationship between VRQ and the agreed recommended qualifications.

The National Qualifications Framework lists over 250 qualifications on the QCA database as accredited qualifications for the social care sector and 81 qualifications listed as accredited qualifications in the area of Child Development and Well-being. (See 4.2 for details). On the qualifications list for the Early Years register in England 200 qualifications are presently listed, offered by a variety of awarding bodies. These qualifications are currently under review. This number increases significantly when predecessor qualifications are added and this makes recruitment of suitably qualified staff a real concern for employers. It also creates challenges for service inspectors who find the array of qualifications difficult for regulation purposes.

In Scotland and in Wales (for Social Care) there is more clarity since there is a qualifications-based registration system for the regulation of the workforce, although the approach in both countries is quite different. Wales has proposed a way forward to government in developing a qualification framework that will set out required and recommended qualifications for early years and childcare workers.

In Scotland, a number of Professional Development Awards (PDAs) will be available that are relevant to the sector. PDAs are designed to extend or broaden the skills base for people who are normally already in a career or vocation. However, in some cases they will be designed for those wishing to enter employment. They will assess and certificate progression in a defined set of specialist occupational skills.

4.1.8 Accredited mandatory training/learning/ Non accredited learning

There is a range of accredited mandatory training/ learning e.g. basic food hygiene, manual handling, first aid and non-accredited mandatory training/learning. In addition there is also a wide range and significant activity in employer based non-accredited training, e.g. in child and vulnerable adult protection used within the sector.

One concern has been the difficulty of the transferability of much of this learning between employers, as it may not be recognised by other employers and there can be difficulties in ensuring its consistency and uniformity of quality. A range of 'passports' have been developed across the UK to enable this to happen in activities such as Moving and Handling and Dealing with Behaviours that Challenge Services.

4.1.9 Post-qualifying (PQ)/ Postgraduate awards in social work/ Continuing Professional Development

Different arrangements are in place for Post-qualifying (PQ)/Postgraduate awards in social work/ Continuing Professional Development across the four countries of the UK.

England

The General Social Care Council launched the revised post-qualifying (PQ) framework for social work education and training in February 2005. The framework builds on the new social work degree and takes into account all the changes that have taken place in social work practice in recent years. People who use services and carers will be central to post-qualifying education and training. The framework allows social workers to continue their education and training in a flexible and modular way.

There are three 'levels' of awards in the new framework, each corresponding to a particular stage of professional and career development, with specialist strands, one of which relates specifically to children and young people, their families and carers:

New award	Specialist strands
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Post-Qualifying Award in Specialist Social Work	Children and young people, their families and carers	Mental health	Adult social care	Practice education	Leadership and management
Post-Qualifying Award in Higher Specialist Social Work					
Post-Qualifying Award in Advanced Social Work.					

Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Post-Qualifying Education and Training Framework in Social Work (NI PQ Framework) was launched jointly in December 2006 by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Health and NISCC following the reform of post qualifying training. The NI PQ Framework provides an opportunity for registered social workers to develop their skills, gaining both further academic qualifications and advanced professional awards in a comprehensive but flexible way. The NI PQ Framework is offered at postgraduate M level and offers a range of advanced professional opportunities which can be achieved in a modular way, leading to three professional awards:

- * NI Specific Award in Social Work - for those wishing to develop in-depth knowledge and skills in a specific area of work
- * NI Specialist Award in Social Work - for those involved in complex decision-making requiring high levels of professional responsibility and accountability
- * NI Leadership and Strategic Award in Social Work - for those who are pushing the boundaries of and influencing developments of thinking in their field of work. Achievement of PQ Requirements within the Specialist Award can be used towards the Leadership and Strategic Award and vice versa.

Wales

Following the introduction of the Degree in Social Work as the initial required qualification for professional social work, the Care Council for Wales developed a new post-qualification (PQ) framework for professional social workers in 2007. The PQ framework aims to support the development of career pathways in social work and provides courses at graduate, postgraduate and masters levels.

The framework provides a flexible, modular approach that means social workers can develop new skills relevant to their work and that also carry credit towards an academic qualification accredited by a university. The principle of the framework is that social workers need to develop new skills at different times, and that career progression is not just about promotion. The framework will contribute to a career structure for social workers that enables skilled practitioners to remain in practice whilst giving a route for the development of managers for the future.

The social work qualification, the guidance on social workers' first year in practice and the revised PQ framework provide part of this structure and should complement the employers' development of new roles such as consultant social worker. This work is part of the Workforce Action Plan currently with the Assembly for approval.

The PQ framework provides one way of meeting the Post Registration Training and Learning requirements placed upon all registered workers and can strengthen the investment in ongoing learning and development of staff across the sector. This involves also working with Estyn, Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) to ensure the quality of the learning provision so that it meets the learning needs of the sector.

A partnership between employers, universities, government and the Care Council for Wales has been established and is central to improving workforce planning in relation to social work. The Care Council promotes this through a national strategic partnership that brings together employers, universities, government and the Care Council to take a strategic view of the issues and priorities in demand for, development of and delivery of training for social workers at qualifying and post qualifying levels.

Scotland

In Scotland, there is no longer a PQ framework but awards are available for social workers as part of their continuing professional development. The Continuous Learning Framework under development will be for all the workforce.

4.2 Analysis of Qualifications

4.2.1 Social Work Degree

This degree is underpinned by the NOS for social work, and is delivered in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Analyses of the current provision and take-up are given below.

England

The new Social Work Degree has been in place in England since September 2003 and replaced the Diploma in Social Work (DipSW). Social work training and qualifications are regulated by the General Social Care Council (GSCC). Since September 2004 obtaining the new Social Work degree¹² is necessary to qualify as a

¹² From September 2003 in England the new social work degree was offered as a three year undergraduate degree or a two-year postgraduate one. It replaced the Diploma in Social Work (DipSW), a two-year programme for graduates and non-graduates. Some new social

social worker in England. A total of 5,382¹³ students starting courses leading to a social worker qualification registered with the GSCC during the 12 months to 31 March 2004. This was a 13% increase on the 4,771 of the previous 12-month period. Just over half were starting the last wave of Diploma in Social Work (DipSW) courses and the rest were starting the new social work degree

There is great variety in take-up of the degree across the English regions. It is notable that the South West and North East have low levels of participation in Social Work degrees and other related programmes. Lack of part-time flexible provision may well be a barrier to participation, particularly given the age profile of the majority of students. (The majority of course participants are aged 30 to 44. However there are over 600 students across England under 20 years of age.)

Northern Ireland

In order to remedy the current shortfall in the supply of social workers, a Discretionary Incentive Scheme was announced in 2003 and has been offered since 2004 by the DHSSPSNI to NI domiciled students studying for the social work degree in Northern Ireland. The Scheme was introduced as evidence of student outcomes, produced by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and DEL illustrated that more than 70% of students funded to study outside NI did not return there to work. Accordingly, as part of the reform of social work education, and based on a social services workforce study to inform workforce planning, the number of Social Work Degree places was increased to 300 annually from the previous DipSW level of approximately 270. This increase, coupled with the Discretionary Incentive Scheme, was designed to address the recruitment shortfall over time.

The Regional Social Work Degree Trainee Scheme (RSWDTS) in Northern Ireland is an employer managed scheme to facilitate suitably experienced men and women (including those from the existing social care workforce) to enter the social work profession. These Trainees are employed by a Health and Social Services Trust or voluntary organisation and are paid a salary while they complete their Degree in Social Work. These Trainees are salaried employees whose fees are paid in full and, as such, are not entitled to access either the discretionary social work student incentive scheme or the normal student support arrangements.

Scotland

For a worker in Scotland to be able to practice and use the title "social worker", they must be registered with the SSSC on the social work part of the Register. To register as a social worker one must have a recognised social work qualification, including programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Degrees in Childhood Studies

work degree courses started in September 2003. All courses starting in September 2004 were degree courses and DipSW programmes ceases for September 2004 entry

¹³ Source: GSCC, 15/12/06 (Analysed in: Skills for Care, 2007; *Baselining Workbased Learning*)

are also recognised for the purposes of other parts of the register for staff working in the early years and childcare services.

It is important to note that in addition to the above social work qualifying awards there are also undergraduate and postgraduate post-qualifying awards for social workers that are delivered by a number of Scottish universities.

Social Work qualifying courses are delivered by eight universities in Scotland¹⁴ (although two, Glasgow and Strathclyde, do so jointly through the shared Glasgow School of Social Work) as well as by the Open University. Both undergraduate and postgraduate qualifying courses must provide 160-200 days of practice learning opportunities for students and the universities work closely with local service providers to do this. The number of students registering on social work courses has risen in recent years, which is primarily related to initiatives funded by the Scottish Executive to improve the supply of qualified social workers.

Wales

The Rules and Requirements for the degree in social work¹⁵ (level 6 qualification) in Wales, require Higher Education (HE) providers to have formal partnership arrangements with local employers to ensure that the selection of students matches the needs of local employers; the curriculum matches the needs of actual contemporary practice; and that practice learning opportunities are available for students. Without clear evidence of these partnerships, social work degree programmes are not approved by Care Council for Wales and cannot therefore offer a qualification that leads to registration or enables graduates to practice as social workers in the UK. There are currently eight Social Work Degree Programme Partnerships offering the degree with 292 students enrolling for the degree in 2005/2006 and 331 enrolling in 2006/2007 in Wales. Only West Wales does not have a local HE provider delivering social work education.

4.2.2. Foundation Degrees

Foundation degrees are delivered in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales.

England

Foundation Degrees (FDs) were introduced by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in 2001 in England. They are defined by a requirement to have employer involvement in design and content. Workbased learning is also a key component of FDs. In England, FDs had some 47,000 learners engaged in full- or part-time study in 2005-06 across all subjects (compared with about 850,000 across

¹⁴ The Universities are: Dundee; Edinburgh; Glasgow Caledonian; Glasgow/Strathclyde; Open; Paisley; Stirling; and Robert Gordon.

¹⁵ Set by Care Council for Wales under care Standards Act, and regulated and monitored by Care Council for Wales

the whole of higher education) on the 1,600 degrees on offer. Another 800 FDs are in development.

Foundation Degrees are available in a wide range of subject areas appropriate to social care, social work, childcare and early years; these include 'Health and Social Care'¹⁶, 'Care Management' and 'Social Care'. Titles of established and planned FDs include:

Title	No. of courses
Health and Social Care ¹⁷	63
Care Management	5
Social Care	4
Community Health and Social Care	3
Care Practice	2
Health and Community Care/Studies	2
Health and Illness	2
Health and Social Care Management	2
Health and Social Care Practice	2
Health, Community and Social Care	2
Mental Health	2
Social & Community Care/Vulnerable Adults	2
Social Care with Health	2
Applied Health and Social Care	1
Care	1
Care Home Management	1
Community Pharmacy Practice	1
Health and Care Management	1
Health and Social Care with Counselling	1
Health and Social Care with Learning Disability Studies	1
Health and Social Welfare	1
Management (Health and Social Care)	1
Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Practice	1
Supporting Health and Social Care Services	1
Addressing Additional Needs from Children to Young Adults	1
Applied Psychology	2
Child and Adolescent Mental Health	1
Child and Adolescent Studies (including similar titles)	3
Counselling (including similar titles)	18
Every Child Matters	1

¹⁶ Includes similar titles or specific pathways

¹⁷ Includes similar titles or specific pathways.

Families, Parenting and Communities	7
Integrated Practice (EYS Child and Young People)	6
Integrative Counselling	2
Learning Disabilities	1
Professional Learning in Children's & Young People's Services	1
Psychology (including similar titles)	2
Substance Misuse	3
Voluntary and Community Development (including similar titles)	6
Working with Children and Young People (including similar titles)	16
Youth and Community (including similar titles)	7

A current list of Foundation Degrees relevant to social care can be obtained from: http://www.foundationdegree.org.uk/employers/page_28.shtml.

A current list of Foundation Degrees relevant to people working (or interested in working) with children, young people and their families can be obtained from: www.fdf.ac.uk/courses/index.php

Since their introduction in 2001, the number of learners enrolled on Foundation Degrees in health and social care has increased considerably. Between 2002-03 and 2003-04 there was a 58% increase in the numbers involved. Numbers of full-time courses on offer for 2007 has increased from 2006; however there has been a steady decline in student numbers on part-time courses.¹⁸

Northern Ireland

There are no Foundation Degrees in social care in NI, as they have no formal standing for role occupations within the sector. However, NISCC did seek the views of employers in the PSS Sector and in general there was a view that FDs did not have a role for the employed workforce given their limitations to deliver comprehensive assessed competence in the workplace. Foundation degrees in childcare and early years have recently been introduced in Northern Ireland.¹⁹

DEL will be consulting on the implementation of FDs and this will afford further opportunity for DHSSPS, NISCC and employers to explore further the impact of FDs for the social care sector. Examination of the implications for learners in the workforce and for those young people and adults who see social care as a future career choice will be part of that debate.

¹⁸ Sheffield Hallam University (for Skills for Care), 2007; Development of a foundation degree framework for social care

¹⁹ No figures are available as take-up of these degrees had just begun at the time of writing this report.

Wales

Foundation Degree courses are higher education qualifications at level 5, or equivalent to the first year of a degree programme. The Minister for Life Long Learning in Wales has not yet announced a formal position on Foundation Degrees in Wales. Within social care, no Foundation Degrees currently exist within the regulatory framework, and they therefore have no formal standing or role occupations within the sector. Foundation Degrees in Social Care (driven by HEIs) are in existence and development in Wales but few are yet available. There is currently no place for Foundation Degrees on the Qualification Framework, however some possible developments emanating from *Fulfilled Lives Supportive Communities* could generate a place for FDs in the new role of assistant professional.

A number of training providers in Wales are delivering Foundation Degrees in Early Years (unaccredited), known as Early Years Sector-Endorsed Foundation Degree (EYSEFD) in England. The Foundation Degree courses are higher education qualifications at level 5 that are designed to lead to a new level of professional practice for 'Senior Practitioners'. Further work is required to quantify the numbers of courses and learners currently completing these courses in Wales.

4.2.3 HNCs in Scotland

Data available from SQA shows that in 2004/05 28 of Scotland's 47 Further Education (FE) Colleges delivered the HNC Social Care, while 27 of them offered the HNC Childcare (see appendix 1). Of the 7 colleges in the HIE area²⁰ none delivered either HNC in 2004/05, although Inverness, Moray, North Highland, and Orkney, now offer both, while Lews Castle offers the HNC Childcare. It is not currently known to Sfc&D what the reasons behind this change in provision have been, but it is welcomed.

Data obtained from the Scottish Funding Council's 'Infact' database shows that in 2004/05 the HNC in Social Care had 2,584 candidates, while the HNC in Childcare had 1,775. These two HNCs were the top two in terms of candidate numbers across Scotland's FE colleges. Between them they made up 21% of all HNC candidates in Scotland that year.

One of the differences between Higher National (HN) awards and the Vocational Awards discussed above is that for the latter, candidates need in most cases to be working in the sector. We can therefore be reasonably confident that the majority of people undertaking the awards are part of the sector's workforce. The extent to which this will be the case for HN students is unclear; therefore while high numbers are

²⁰ Namely, Inverness, Lews Castle, Moray, North Highland, Orkney, Sabhal Oar Ostaig, Shetland

undertaking relevant HN awards the impact on the sector's workforce is uncertain. Further work to explore the destinations of HN students may assist this analysis.

HN awards in Scotland appear to be well regarded by employers although there are sometimes concerns about the extent to which they test practice competence. An unpublished piece of research commissioned by SSSC in 2006 to look at the attitudes of managers in children's day care services towards the HNC Childcare found that 75% of those managers who responded said that they thought it was helpful to childcare workers. The HNC Early Education and Childcare and the HNC Social Care can provide much of the underpinning knowledge for their related SVQs at level 3. In addition much of the evidence gathered for HN assessment can contribute to evidence for SVQ units.

4.2.4 S/NVQ in Health and Social Care

The S/NVQ in Health and Social Care has been available in various forms since the early 1990s. It was last reviewed and accredited in 2004/2005 when it went through significant changes. An incremental review will commence in 2007/2008.

Figures shown are taken from between January 2006 and December 2006

	Registrations	Certifications
Level 2 NVQ (England)	56,811	38,780
Level 2 NVQ (Northern Ireland)	519	680
Level 2 NVQ (Wales)	5,264	2,428
Level 2 SVQ (Scotland)	3,638	1,955
Level 3 NVQ (England)	32,319	15,146
Level 3 NVQ (Northern Ireland)	143	282
Level 3 NVQ (Wales)	3,128	1,047
Level 3 SVQ (Scotland)	4,801	2,249
Level 4 NVQ (England)	4,335	1,951
Level 4 NVQ (Northern Ireland)	11	1
Level 4 NVQ (Wales)	439	154
Level 4 SVQ (Scotland)	567	205

4.2.5 S/NVQ in Children's Care, Learning and Development

The S/NVQ in Children's Care, Learning and Development was last reviewed and accredited in 2005.

Figures shown are taken from between January 2006 and December 2006

	Registrations	Certifications
Level 2 NVQ (England)	12,432	2,259
Level 2 NVQ (Northern Ireland)	601	83
Level 2 NVQ (Wales)	659	100
Level 2 SVQ (Scotland)	850	46
Level 3 NVQ (England)	12,723	955
Level 3 NVQ (Northern Ireland)	711	54
Level 3 NVQ (Wales)	998	33
Level 3 SVQ (Scotland)	1,067	41
Level 4 NVQ (England)	983	35
Level 4 NVQ (Northern Ireland)	4	0
Level 4 NVQ (Wales)	616	24
Level 4 SVQ (Scotland)	118	3

4.2.6 S/NVQ in Early Years

The S/NVQ in Early Years preceded the Children's Care, Learning and Development S/NVQs which were available from 2005.

Figures shown are taken from between January 2006 and December 2006

	Registrations	Certifications
Level 2 NVQ (England)	122	10,562
Level 2 NVQ (Northern Ireland)	3	543
Level 2 NVQ (Wales)	8	525
Level 2 SVQ (Scotland)	110	651
Level 3 NVQ (England)	255	11,145
Level 3 NVQ (Northern Ireland)	14	774
Level 3 NVQ (Wales)	8	838
Level 3 SVQ (Scotland)	174	1,135
Level 4 NVQ (England)	3	77
Level 4 NVQ (Northern Ireland)	11	1
Level 4 NVQ (Wales)	0	12
Level 4 SVQ (Scotland)	31	102

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(Care Sector Survey of NVQ and SVQ Assessment Centres 2006 Main Report –
LGAR 2006 - <http://lgar.local.gov.uk/lgv/aio/20291>)

4.2.7 Apprenticeships

Certificates Issued	Wales						England										TOTALS
	FMA Health	FMA Both	FMA Social Care	MA Health	MA Both	MA Social Care	App Health	App Both	App Social Care	Adult App Health	Adult App soc. Care	Adv App Health	Adv App Both	Adv App Social Care	Ad Adult Health	Adv Adult Sc	
2007	160	40	826	80	29	292	659	54	2037	33	17	269	18	581	20	1	
Total for Year	1026			401			2750			50		868			21		5116

4.2.8 Pre-entry/ 14-19 Pathways

Section 4.1.6 outlines the different pre-entry/ 14-19 Pathways across the UK that are currently in development. The 14-19 Diplomas in England will be piloted from 2008, therefore no figures are provided.

4.2.9 Summary of provision of Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The National Database of Accredited Qualifications (for England, Wales and Northern Ireland) lists qualifications for our sector under the categories Health and Social Care; and Child Development and Well-Being. In December 2007 there were 333 qualification listed in total for Health and Social Care and 84 listed for Child Development and Well-Being. A number of these qualifications are owned by other Sector Skills Councils, such as Skills for Health (including over 50 that are jointly owned with Sfc&D), AssetSkills and SkillsActive.

Working in partnership with other SSCs is an important aspect of our strategy – we already work very closely with Skills for Health and have an agreed Memorandum of Understanding, which we are now looking to replicate with some other neighbouring SSCs.

A breakdown of the Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) relevant to our sector is listed in the tables below, which shows the awarding body and level of qualification. Qualifications cover a range of areas including the more generic such as certificates/ diplomas in health and social care and care practice to specialist areas such as supporting people with learning disabilities, mental health, manual handling, first-aid.

VRQ in Health and Social Care

Awarding Body	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
EdExcel	2	11	10
OCNW	1	1	2
VTCT	0	0	9
CIEH	0	4	2
City and Guilds	0	8	17
OCR	3	3	3
NCFE	0	13	2
NOCN	2	3	4
RIPH	1	3	0
ABC	1	3	4
FAQ	0	7	0

RSPH	1	1	1
ASET	1	7	1
BSC Awards	1	5	1
AQA	0	1	2
EDI	0	1	1
OU	0	0	1
CCEA	1	2	0
Total	14	73	60

[National Database of Accredited Qualifications:

<http://www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/index.aspx>]

VRQs in Child Development and Well Being

The following table indicates which awarding bodies offer VRQs in Child Development and Well-Being on the National Database of Accredited Qualifications, including the levels of qualifications available.

Qualifications cover a range of topics including generic areas such as certificates/ diplomas in children’s care, learning and development, child care and education to specialist areas such as safeguarding children, first aid.

Awarding Body	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
NCFE	0	3	0
CACHE	2	7	11
City and Guilds	0	1	6
EdExcel	0	3	4
EDI	0	1	1
ASET	0	1	0
Total	2	16	22

[National Database of Accredited Qualifications:

<http://www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/index.aspx>]

In addition to the qualifications listed for our sector on the NDAQ, evidence from our SSA suggests there are significantly more qualifications available. It is clear that there is a plethora of qualifications which are being described as “social care” and children’s care/ child development, and this has created a difficulty for the sector in ensuring that the learning provision and funding is targeted to meet the needs of the sector.

4.3 The value of current qualification and learning provision

4.3.1

The above framework is well approved and utilised by government, embedded in the sector and informs the regulation and inspection of service agenda.

Skills for Care and Development Alliance partners have a depth and breadth of employer engagement and consultation with the sector.

Evidence from our SSA and SQLS development and consultations indicates:

- learning provision and qualifications should be mapped to the relevant National Occupational Standards and for social care staff the Codes of Practice.
- S/NVQs, and the National Occupational Standards which underpin them, are well established in our sector and generally widely recognised and valued by employers but the quality of provision needs to be of a consistently high quality. (NVQs/ SVQs are a regulatory requirement agreed with government in three countries.)
- an increasing need for modular training / bite sized/ small qualifications that support vocational learning at all stages, including CPD in England, Northern Ireland and Wales
- funding is required for small qualifications
- a need for Skills for Care and Development to continue to take a leading role in learning and qualifications development.
- a need for qualifications that are externally verified and assessed in the workplace to ensure quality and public protection
- a need to rationalise the number of qualifications available to the sector
- provision of more flexible learning opportunities and processes to develop additional skills to meet changing needs is required
- qualifications and learning need to be consistent and coherent, and understood by employers, workers, training providers and funding agencies
- prior learning, knowledge and competency should be considered when developing qualifications
- migrant labour is becoming an increasingly important part of the workforce. There is a need, for example, for English for speakers of other languages, (ESOL) and adaptation training, as offered in medicine and nursing prepractice, and cultural knowledge requirements.
- effective leadership and management
- competence in effective Commissioning and Procurement of services
- support for specialists in practice

Skills for Care and Development's Alliance partners intend to work with awarding bodies and training providers to ensure learning and qualifications support

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recruitment and promote the ability to learn as well as provide underpinning knowledge towards the standards and qualifications requirements of the workforce.

Section 5: Other Sector Uses of Qualifications

5.1 Qualification use in regulation

Qualifications within our sector are used to register and regulate the workforce as outlined in Section 3.1.4, which introduced the use of qualifications in regulation.

Regulation of the workforce encapsulates all elements to assure the competence of the professional, including education, registration, training, continued professional development and revalidation as well as disciplinary matters. In areas of the sector where there is no statutory registration of practitioners, there are strategies designed to promote the quality of the workforce through qualifications, leading to future customer confidence.

All professional qualifications within the sector are required to have a practice-learning element to ensure competence and knowledge, to ensure all individuals are safe to practice. Protection of vulnerable adults and children and young people is a statutory requirement and is of paramount importance for the sector. Qualifications and learning opportunities (both accredited and unaccredited) are utilised to support this knowledge in practice settings.

Qualifications for registration are country specific and agreed with the government in each country. The arrangements for each country are summarised below and further information for each country can be found on the relevant website.

Social work in England

Registration and regulation is the responsibility of the General Social Care Council. The register is currently open to qualified social workers (both UK-qualified and international social workers) and student social workers. In the near future the register will be opened up to other groups of care workers. Protection of title and registration will ensure that those working in social care meet rigorous registration requirements and will hold them to account for their conduct by codes of practice. Further details can be found at:

<http://www.gsccl.org.uk/The+Social+Care+Register/>

Social work and social care in Northern Ireland

The introduction of the Social Care Register is one of the most important changes in the social care sector for over a generation. All social workers and student social workers (in NI this includes Probation Officers and Education Welfare Officers) have been registered on the social work section of the register and there is a programme underway for registration of all non-professional social care workers on the social care section of the register. It will be expected that everyone working in social care in Northern Ireland will be registered with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council; each giving their personal

commitment to adhere to the standards set out in the Codes of Practice for Social Care Workers. Further details can be found at:

<http://www.niscc.info/registration/default.htm>

Social Services in Scotland

Registration and regulation is the responsibility of the Scottish Social Services Council. The Register of Social Service Workers in Scotland opened on 1 April 2003. Registration is a major part of the drive for higher standards in social services and will bring this workforce in line with other professional colleagues. To register, a worker must satisfy the criteria for registration. This includes holding the appropriate qualifications for the job they do and being able to evidence good character. Further details can be found at:

<http://www.sssc.uk.com/Registration/About+registration.htm>

Social work and social care in Wales

Registration and regulation is the responsibility of the Care Council for Wales. The Register of Social Care Workers opened in June 2003 with the registration of individuals with a social work qualification, followed by social work students from September 2004. Since 2007, the Register is open to all social care managers and workers for voluntary registration, as described in the Care Standards Act 2000. To register with the Care Council, individuals have to satisfy registration requirements including holding specified qualifications or learning and being able to evidence good character. The Register puts social care workers on a similar footing to other public service professions, such as medicine and teaching.

The Care Council has produced a framework of standards that are now in place to support the service improvement agenda and strengthen public confidence. This includes: framework of qualifications; Induction Framework; Code of Practice for social care workers, Code of Practice for employers; Rules and Regulations – Social Work training; Registration and Conduct Standards; Service User Participation Standards.

The Care Council for Wales has the remit to set the rules and criteria for the approval of courses in social work, as part of its duty as the regulator of social work qualifying and post qualifying training. The rules and criteria allow for the Care Council to approve Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to deliver social work training that leads to professional registration requirements. This together with the statute providing 'Protection of Title' status (and its qualification requirements), which requires anyone using the title social worker to be registered with Care Council for Wales, is designed to ensure public confidence in the activities undertaken by professional social workers in Wales.

The voluntary registration of staff across the sector, which includes a minimum training requirement and Post Registration Training and Learning (PRTL), also

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contributes to public confidence. The number of people choosing to register, and thus meet the qualification and training requirements is increasing.

Further details can be found at:

<http://www.ccwales.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=132>

Early Years and Childcare in England

From September 2008 it will be mandatory for all schools and OfSTED-registered early years settings in England to deliver the learning and development and welfare requirements in the Statutory Framework for the new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The Statutory Framework for the EYFS will replace the National Standards and the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. The qualification and ratio requirements for staff working in settings with children under the age of 5 years can be found at: <http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/eyfs/resources/downloads/statutory-framework.pdf>

Minimum level qualification requirements are:

- at least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification
- at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification

In Early Years and Children's Services in NI, there is a radical review and strategic development exercise taking place under the auspices of DENI. Within this process of evaluation there is not yet absolute clarity as to the types and levels of qualification which will be required, although it seems likely at the time of writing that a robust multilevel approach to qualification development will be needed, possibly within the context of development of an IQFNI.

5.2 Use of qualifications to promote customer confidence and to protect the public

The regulation of social care workers is a key element in government's drive to ensure public confidence and protection in relation to services for adults and children and is covered in 5.1.

Alliance partners who do not have responsibility for registration and regulation of the social care workforce are also involved in the development of qualifications and learning that promote customer confidence and protect the public

Children's Workforce Development Council

The Integrated Qualification Framework (IQF) for the Children's Workforce in England is being developed as a brand that will enable members of the public to have confidence in the qualifications undertaken by members of the workforce. The use of the Common

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Core of Skills and Knowledge within the IQF will ensure that the public can be confident that all children's workers are suitably competent in working with children.

Skills for Care

Standards, learning and qualifications are used within the adult social care sector in England to aid registration and regulation, and as a guide to competency:

- as part of the process to regulate services
- as part of the process to register workers with the GSCC and for re-registration purposes
- to underpin induction arrangements
- to underpin other specific frameworks such as Health and Safety and protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA).

Section 6: How Skills for Care and Development Alliance will help realise the future

6.1 Future for qualifications and learning provision

Our priorities for development are to ensure qualifications and learning that:

- enable the sector to recruit and retain a skilled and qualified workforce
- provide for the knowledge and skills needs of workers
- are based upon clear, accessible and aligned qualification frameworks
- support the development of a responsive and innovative workforce
- are easy to access and of high quality.

To do this, Sfc&D intend to take the lead role via the SSA and SQLS processes which have been informed by government policies and employers, to determine the learning and qualification needs of the sector. Qualifications and learning should be based on the following clear development and design principles:

- informed and underpinned by relevant NOS and Codes of Practice
- mapped to NOS to ensure transferability
- recognise country-specific standards
- provide relevant underpinning knowledge and skills
- provide a structure that ensures inclusion on appropriate country and European frameworks
- quality-assured assessment of learning
- recognises different types of learning
- flexible structure and pathways that support progression routes horizontally, vertically and diagonally
- are accessible through flexible methods of delivery
- responsive to the changing skills needs of the workforce and informed by service users, carers and children

An adherence to common development and design principles will ensure achievement of outcomes for the sector. Principles supporting our priorities are presented below:

Priority	Principle for Design and Development
<p>Recruitment and retention of a skilled and qualified workforce</p>	<p><i>Qualifications and learning which support flexible pathways/ progression routes</i></p>
	<p>In order to achieve this, a wide range of actions will need to be taken, including: learning opportunities, which support accessible entry routes; clear flexible career pathways that support progression and mobility; clear routes of transferability. This will enable easier entry into the sector, especially when all qualifications and learning reflect sector requirements. Those in the sector will then be able to progress vertically, horizontally and diagonally, and the skills of the workforce can be utilised in different contexts as appropriate. This (in conjunction with other principles) should enable employers to recruit and develop qualified and skilled workers required for service provision. This will ensure a sustainable workforce where, for example, the needs of the increasing migrant workforce are also considered, and continuous professional development frameworks are enhanced to meet the needs of registration and regulation, service users and carers, employers and workers.</p> <p>The qualifications to be developed and funded should be those that are identified within Alliance partners' Action Plans and qualifications frameworks. In addition, there is a need to ensure that people can access qualifications that support succession planning and initial entry into the sector. There needs to be a rationalisation of qualifications to ensure qualifications are more focussed, current and easily understood by employers so that workers undertake the training required in the workplace.</p> <p>In Scotland the emphasis is on a continuous learning framework from pre-employability learning, through induction and qualifications for registrations, to post registration learning and continuous professional development.</p>

Priority	Principle for Design and Development
<p>Qualifications and learning, which provide for the knowledge and skills needs of workers</p>	<p><i>Qualifications and learning informed and underpinned by relevant National Occupational Standards (NOS) and Codes of Practice and clearly mapped to NOS to ensure transferability</i></p>
	<p>Wherever possible, qualifications and learning for our sector should be based on relevant National Occupational Standards (NOS) and for the social care workforce informed by the Codes of Practice for social care workers.</p> <p>NOS developed by Skills for Care and Development are designed to cover a wide range of functions, which can be applied to different service users' needs and different contexts. This makes them widely applicable for most workers. In addition each suite of National Occupational Standards does contain a number of more specific functions undertaken by staff that may relate to activities, age ranges or service users' needs e.g. Drugs and Alcohol. As service design develops, the skill level of the workforce should build on these initial skills and respond to new needs and gaps such as supporting predicted integrated service models, skills for foster carers and childminders, specialist expertise, basic skills needs, requirements for management and leadership and commissioning skills. Mapping qualifications to NOS enables qualifications to be more easily aligned to knowledge and skills. This supports workforce flexibility and will also provide clarity for workers and employers who understand excising registration and qualification frameworks.</p> <p>NOS will be reviewed incrementally on a bi-annual basis to ensure they remain fit for use in the sector.</p>

Priority	Principle for Design and Development
	<p data-bbox="573 354 1796 391"><i>Qualifications and learning that provide relevant underpinning knowledge</i></p> <p data-bbox="573 422 1796 630">Alliance partners have a long history of working in partnership with awarding bodies and training providers wishing to offer learning and qualifications. They have done this to develop suitable programmes that provide underpinning knowledge towards the qualifications and learning requirements of the workforce in each of the four countries and at UK level. We are committed to building on this work so that we ensure that the qualifications developed and learning offered now and in the future meet the ongoing learning needs of the workforce. It is important that learning undertaken will support individuals in their work in the sector and this will need to remain up-to-date and current.</p> <p data-bbox="573 662 1796 699"><i>Qualifications and Learning which recognise country-specific standards</i></p> <p data-bbox="573 730 1796 869">Alliance partners are responsible for ensuring relevant country legislation and policies are implemented and support workforce development. Qualifications and learning for the sector therefore need to reflect these different country policies, legislation and country-specific standards for the country in which they will be delivered, to enable workers to operate to service standard requirements.</p>
<p data-bbox="163 912 555 1050">Qualifications and learning which are based upon clear, accessible and aligned qualification frameworks</p>	<p data-bbox="573 912 1796 970"><i>Qualifications and learning that provide a structure that ensures inclusion on appropriate country and European frameworks</i></p>
	<p data-bbox="573 1093 1796 1236">There are currently many qualifications provided which may raise the knowledge levels and aspirations of the future workforce but do not provide them with the skills required to work in the sector. Employers and practitioners find this confusing, and in some areas such as social care, and childcare and early years qualifications in Northern Ireland, Wales and England there is a proliferation of qualifications, as described in 4.2.9. Our aim is to rationalise the myriad qualifications through our Action Plans.</p>

Priority	Principle for Design and Development
	<p>We need to ensure qualification frameworks are straightforward so employers and employees understand the currency of qualifications undertaken to meet the requirements for the sector and service users. Particular attention needs to be placed on enabling the achievement of gateway qualifications to meet regulatory frameworks.</p> <p>Qualification frameworks need to enable accreditation of prior experiential learning, provide simplified career pathways and support continuous professional development. There will also need to be work undertaken to ensure that the sector's qualifications can be located on the European Qualification Framework (EQF) as the sector relies on an increasing migrant labour pool. The detail of the work will differ across the UK to meet needs, but has partners' commitment to working together to ensure coherence across the UK. In achieving a fully rationalised and coherent system across the sector we need to ensure transferability across the UK frameworks.</p> <p>As mentioned earlier, proliferation of qualifications and complexity of qualification types is an issue for Alliance partners in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. (In Scotland and Wales there are clear and established frameworks; the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), and Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW).) In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) could allow more flexibility for learners across the workforce – the QCF format and clear categorisation of qualifications into awards, certificates and diplomas could support the improved transparency, mobility and transferability that employers have indicated is needed. The Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF) for the children's workforce in England will build upon the QCF and aims to ensure qualifications are appropriate, support the development of flexible routes of learning, and improve the mobility of the workforce and transferability of qualifications across the sector. Similar work has been scoped in Wales. In Scotland, the social care sector has also been working with the SCQF to develop the recognition of prior learning.</p> <p>Development of an IQF Northern Ireland (IQFNI) centring on Early Years and Children's Services is currently under consideration by DENI and could potentially offer opportunities for streamlining of learning in children's work across a number of professions.</p>

Priority	Principle for Design and Development
<p>Qualifications and learning which support the development of a responsive and innovative workforce</p>	<p><i>Qualifications and learning which are responsive to the changing skills needs of the workforce and informed by service users, carers and children</i></p>
	<p>Reviewing our NOS on a regular basis will ensure they are up to date and meet the changing skills needs of the workforce. There is a need to develop qualifications based on these NOS that meet country registration and regulation requirements. Currently we are exploring potential qualification development for our newly developed NOS for Commissioning, Contracting and Procurement; NOS for Sensory Services; and NOS for Leadership and Management.</p> <p>The fast changing pace of developments in the sector will require us to work in close partnership with awarding bodies so we can respond to further emerging skills needs in an appropriate and timely way, as outlined in 3.1.3.</p> <p>The increasing emphasis across the UK on the 'personalisation' of provision for the users of services means there is a need to ensure learning and qualifications are reflective of service users needs. We actively involve service users, children and young people in the development of our NOS to ensure their needs are fully reflected.</p>

Priority	Principle for Design and Development
<p>Qualifications and learning which are easy to access and of high quality</p>	<p><i>Quality assured assessment of qualifications and learning</i></p>
	<p>Qualifications and learning need to be of a consistently high quality in content, currency, diversity, delivery and assessment, with transparent and consistent quality control mechanisms.</p> <p>The quality of learning must be high; not only for the learner’s experience, but to ensure that quality services are provided to service users. It is vital that those delivering the learning are suitably qualified and have sufficient knowledge that is current and relevant to the needs of the learners.</p> <p>It is important that public funding is available to support the needs of the sector, to ensure learning and qualifications gained are fit for purpose and meet changing sector requirements.</p> <p><i>Recognises different types of learning through flexible methods of delivery</i></p> <p>Qualification and learning frameworks need to meet the changing ways of working and to ensure that learners can undertake appropriate learning that meets their needs in the workplace. The sector also requires flexible learning opportunities in terms of time, location and duration, meeting the needs of employers and employees. For example, opportunities for childminders need to be available across the UK at a time when individuals can attend.</p> <p>In Scotland and Wales there is an increased focus on work settings being learning organisations to ensure an ongoing culture of learning and development in the sector.</p>

6.2 How we work with others

Skills for Care and Development currently have a UK Awarding Body Forum where they meet with awarding bodies and qualification regulators. The frequency of these meetings will be increased as we start to develop our UK SQLS Action Plan and we are committed to working with awarding bodies in an open and transparent way.

SfC&D's Alliance partners also each work with a range of stakeholders.

The Children's Workforce Development Council tested findings of the SSA, and agreed their priority areas during regional consultations with over 300 employers, learning suppliers, practitioners and unions and through an online survey with over 1000 respondents. The development of the learning and qualification strategy is overseen by a committee of the CWDC Board (primarily employers with a wider sub-group to comment on document and materials). CWDC engages with awarding bodies through regular forums and with other SSCs through the Children's Workforce Network. A QCA representative sits on the IQF project board, and CWDC is taking part in the Test and Trial of the QCF. A new strategic forum for engagement with awarding bodies on IQF issues will meet for the first time in March 2008.

Skills for Care will work with their employers, people who use services, carers, awarding bodies, regulatory bodies, training providers, the Learning and Skills Council, the Department of Health, the Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) and the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI – and successor body) to develop action plans arising from the evidence within their Sector Qualifications Strategy.

The Care Council for Wales has been working closely with the Assembly Government on the framework of qualifications which already exists, the development of the Children's Workforce Strategy, the Early Years Workforce Strategy and the Workforce Action Plan. They have also worked with DCELLS on the SSA action plan. The Sector Learning Strategy is being overseen by the Care Council's Workforce Development Committee and Care Standards Liaison group. It falls from the other work mentioned, including the SSA stage 3 activities which involved 5 workshops of over 300 attendees at consultation events. Work is also being undertaken with the Children's Workforce Network in Wales, the next steps will be dependant on policy steer from the Assembly.

In Scotland, work has been developed with four regional learning networks. Work with the SSSC Workforce Development Council and was consulted upon as part of the SSA consultations. SSSC also has a long-standing and positive relationship with the Scottish Qualifications Authority, and a direct relationship with the Scottish Government due to its Non- Departmental Public Body status.

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In NI, NISCC work closely with all of their stakeholders, including detailed consultations with service users and carers, so as to understand the learning needs of workers and develop training at both local level and in the UK with partners.

Further details can be found in partner's sector qualification/learning strategies.

6.3 Practical Help

Skills for Care and Development is committed to developing NOS for the sector. We recognise that we need to ensure our NOS are developed and designed to meet the needs of our workforce. Our priority is for our wide range of NOS and qualifications to meet changing service need. Our NOS and Qualifications Structures are designed to be:

- generic and support workforce mobility
- support integrated working
- cover the workforce (as outlined in our footprint)
- support the development of an appropriately skilled and competent workforce
- support the development of clear and accessible yet aligned qualification frameworks

Over the next year, S/NVQs at level 4 in Leadership and Management for Care Services will be developed based on our recently approved new NOS. We are also developing NOS in Sensory Services and in Commissioning, Procurement and Contracting. Once completed, we will be working in partnership with awarding bodies to develop units/ qualifications from these standards.

Skills for Care and Development's Alliance partners will be developing country Action Plans and we also intend to publish a UK Action Plan by July 2008. We intend to develop Action Plans annually in partnership with key stakeholders, such as awarding bodies, to ensure that qualifications and learning meet the needs of the sector and remain fit for purpose.

We have developed a clear policy and process for qualifications endorsement for the NQF but we will be developing a new approvals process for the QCF informed by our SCLS.

To ensure we can support the changes to qualifications reform we have increased staffing capacity within the UK team, which will enable us to work more closely with awarding bodies on the development and trailing of QCF units.

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Each partner will work with the relevant funding bodies to ensure as far as possible that funding is provided for the needs of the sector as indicated in this strategy and the supporting country Actions Plans.

6.4 Monitoring and evaluation of this strategy

Within Skills for Care and Development's Business Plan 2008/9, the Sector Qualifications and Learning Strategy and action planning process will be a key theme of work and we intend to develop UK Action Plans and country Action Plans by July 2008.

As part of our business planning process we intend to review our Sector Qualifications and Learning Strategy annually to ensure that qualifications and learning meet the needs of the sector and remain fit for purpose.

In addition, Skills for Care and Development's Alliance partners have established networks and committees that ensure the ongoing development and implementation of standards, learning and qualifications for the sector.

Appendix A: Skills for Care and Development Footprint Definition

Skills for Care & Development

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Skills for Care and Development Footprint Statement

Skills for Care and Development is the Sector Skills Council for the social care, children, early years, and young people's workforce across the UK. As an Alliance of five organisations working across the UK in a devolved policy agenda, the remits of the partner organisations differs. This leads to a varying footprint definition across the UK.

In **Scotland**, for the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) the definition of a Social Service Worker is set out in legislation (the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001). This definition would include staff working in social care, early education and child care, and criminal justice, social workers, students on social work courses, care commission officers and managers of adult and child care residential services and managers of adult day care services, residential child care staff, staff in school care accommodation services, early education and child care workers, adult residential care workers, housing support staff, (all these staff are regulated by the SSSC). There are also day care workers, care at home staff, social work assistants and those in posts that support or assist social workers and occupational therapists.

In **Northern Ireland** the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) definition of a social care worker is defined in legislation as a person who engages in social work and employed or managing a children's home, a residential care home, a nursing home, a day care setting or a residential family centre or home. By 2010 NISCC will be registering social workers or those working in a designated social work post, care workers/ team leaders working in residential child care, heads of residential homes and heads of day care centres (not registered with another Regulatory body), social care staff working in adult residential care, adult residential care, day care, social work assistants, domiciliary care and those working under Direct Payments Schemes.

In the **England** the Children's Workforce Development Council footprint covers approximately 500,000 workers and 250,000 volunteers and the following roles in delivering services for children, young people and families: residential child care workers; family centre workers, day centre workers; early years provision (and managers in all these position) in playgroups; children's centres; day nurseries; nursery schools; nursery classes in primary schools. The footprint also includes registered childminders, nannies, portage workers, foster carers, children and

families social workers; outreach/family support workers; learning mentors; behaviour and education support teams; education welfare officers; educational psychologists ; other therapists working with children; connexions personal advisers; children and family court advisory and support service family court advisers; lead inspectors of registered children's services within the footprint and support workers in all setting and volunteers not covered above

In **England**, Skills for Care cover adult social care and are sponsored by the Department for Health. Although the footprint is not set in legislation the adult social care workforce falls into the following main categories: adult day care; adult residential care; domiciliary care; housing support and local authority fieldwork.²¹ The footprint also includes support workers and volunteers working in all these settings.

In **Wales** the definition of a social care worker is set out in legislation and forms the Care Council for Wales footprint. This includes residential care or nursing homes; domiciliary care; day care; adult placement schemes, social work services; nursing agencies; residential children's homes, children's day care services (including childminders, full and sessional day care, out of school care, open access playschemes and crèches); fostering services; adoption services; residential special schools and boarding schools; residential family centres; social work services of child protection and child and family. In the remit letter provided by government in 2005-06 Care Council for Wales were also given responsibility for the workforce in the early years and childcare sector.

SSC Footprint

The footprint of Skills for Care and Development is based on the workforce remit for each Alliance partner. The SSDA insist on two definitions, a verbal definition which is included in our contract and takes precedence. We define this simply as:

“The Skills for Care and Development footprint covers social care, children, early years and young people”

The detail of each partner footprint can then be provided on request. The SSDA also uses a standard industrial classification in order to define SSC footprints. SIC Codes are dated and do not easily translate to our sector but the SIC codes we have responsibility for under our contract are:

²¹ This sub-sector covers all local authority social work services not registered with the Commission for Social Care Commission (CSCI) the social care sector's inspection and regulatory body in England.

SIC CODE	DESCRIPTION
85.3	Social Work Activities
85.31	Social Work Activities with accommodation
85.31/1	Charitable social work activities with accommodation
85.31/2	Non-Charitable social work activities with accommodation
85.32	Social work activities without accommodation
85.32/1	Charitable social work activities without accommodation
85.32/2	Non-charitable social work activities without accommodation

We have also agreed with Skills for Health that 85.11/3 'Nursing Home Activities' is included within our footprint.

There are a number of other areas where categories are owned by another SSC, but where it is recognised we have an impact/interest, these are termed 'periphery codes' and are shown below.

SIC CODE	DESCRIPTION
74.5	Labour Recruitment and the provision of personnel (Nurse Agencies)
75.12	Regulation of the activities of agencies that provide health care, education, cultural services and other social services excluding social security
80.10	Primary Education (Nursery Schools)
95	Child minding as activity of household as employers of domestic staff

Appendix B: Government Policy impacting upon this Sector Qualification and Learning Strategy

Policy	Summary of Content
<p>National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce (Scottish Executive 2006)</p>	<p>The SSSC took a lead role in this review initiated by the Scottish Executive. The key resulting actions include:</p> <p>Develop a new qualification structure for the sector whose main attributes will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one framework for the whole sector • services to be led by SCQF Level 9 qualified professionals • entry and exit points at each level • college, university and work based routes • recognition and accreditation of prior learning • supports progression and continuing professional development • supports identification of shared skills/knowledge base across children’s services <p>Develop effective career pathways which feature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transparency, flexibility and choice • qualifications which support – rather than hinder – a diverse range of career pathways • rewarding workers for increasing responsibility and skills, and are attractive to a wide range of the community
<p>Changing Lives (outcomes of the 21st Century Review of Social Work) (Scottish Executive 2006)</p>	<p>This stated that services must develop a learning culture that commits all individuals and organisations to lifelong learning and developments. Everyone in the social service workforce needs the skills and knowledge to practice effectively in a challenging and sometimes dangerous environment with some very vulnerable people. To develop a strong learning culture the following were identified:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to fully implement the National Strategy for the Development of the Social Services Workforce in Scotland • national and local investment in lifelong learning • all workers to maintain a personal portfolio as an up-to-date record of their skills and competence • all workers to have access to regular professional support, challenge and consultation • newly qualified professionals to have a period of more intensive initial support, promoting professional autonomy and accountability • stronger links between employers and higher education ensuring high quality
<p>National Strategy for the Development of the Social Services Workforce in Scotland – A plan for Action 2005 – 2010 (Scottish Executive 2005)</p>	<p>Focuses on the development of the social services workforce and to support all those involved in delivering social services to give their best. It outlines positive solutions to the challenges facing the whole workforce including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information and advice about the SCQF to be made available by the SSSC to employers to help them understand how SCQF can be used to increase learning opportunities. • SSSC to work with universities, colleges, SQA and training providers to maximise use of SCQF across the sector • SSSC to develop and implement Recognition of Prior Learning pilot projects and disseminate findings to the sector • employers to have in place plans to support Practice Learning with evidence of the number of learning opportunities to be offered to meet specific demands, in line with the confidence in Practice Learning Paper • social service employers to have in place plans to address targets for workforce registration for workers and which take account of other regulators recognised for employment in this sector • employers to identify and develop internal systems and structures required to support

	employee development for all staff (including the requirements for post registrations training and learning)
Skills for Scotland – a Lifelong Learning Strategy	<i>Skills for Scotland: a Lifelong Learning Strategy</i> was published in 2007, inviting organisations and individuals in Scotland to help the then Scottish Office develop a skills strategy. The paper took account of issues surrounding labour market demand and supply, recognised the complexities involved, and highlighted the problems and consequences of market failure. It also focused on the roles of employers and government and its various agencies in improving labour market information, skill levels and skill matching with a view to identifying the policy interventions required. <i>Skills for Scotland</i> also provided a Skills Action Plan which set out key measures required to improve the overall level of skills within Scotland.
Children’s Workforce Strategy (Department for Education and Skills, 2006)	<p>This articulates a vision of a world class workforce that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strives to achieve best possible outcomes for all children and young people, and reduce inequalities between the most disadvantaged and the rest • is competent, confident and safe to work with children and young people • people aspire to be part of and want to remain in – where they can develop their skills and build satisfying and rewarding careers: and • parents, children and young people trust and respect <p>The significant principles of this strategy are integration, joined-up working and strengthening the skills and knowledge of workers themselves.</p>
Children’s Workforce Strategy Action Plan (Department of Children, Families and Schools 2007)	<p>This will outline the activities to achieve the aims in the Children’s Workforce Strategy and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of a common core of skills and knowledge which sets out the common transferable skills and knowledge needed by those whose work brings them into regular contact with children, young people and families

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the development of an Integrated Qualification Framework developed jointly by the Children’s Workforce Network partners to ensure qualifications for the children’s workforce are appropriate, fit for purpose and transferable. <p>Early Years Professional Status has been identified and the Government aims to have an Early Years Professional in all children’s settings offering early years provision by 2010 and in every full day care setting by 2015.</p>
<p>Childcare Choice for Parents the best start for children a 10 Year Strategy (Department for Children, Families and School)</p>	<p>This policy established a single coherent development and learning framework for all young children from birth to five. The Childcare Act 2006 converted that commitment into law and from September 2008 established a new Early Years Foundation Stage – a single framework for care, learning and development. This will apply to all setting offering provision for children including nurseries, childminders, pre-schools, playgroups, and maintained and independent schools.</p>
<p>Options for Excellence – Building the Social Care Workforce of the Future (Department for Education and Skills)</p>	<p>This sets out the actions that the government, with partners across the children’s and adult social care workforce, will take forward to build a social care workforce of the future. The vision intends to create</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a positive perception of a well recognised social care workforce a workforce promoting participation from users and carers a professional workforce where all workers are trained, skilled, appropriately qualified, held accountable for their actions, and committed to delivering an excellent standard of care
<p>Youth Matters – Green Paper July 2005</p>	<p>Youth Matters will work to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> build on the work already done to improve leadership and management skills develop multi-agency working, supported by CWDC’s toolkits and publication of examples of good practice and emerging practice

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the skills and deployment of the Lead Professional
Care Matters – Time for Change (White Paper 2007)	<p>This paper proposed changes to the care of children that will involve workforce change and development, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remodelling the social care workforce, to enable social workers to spend more time with the child • improving the skills and training of social workers to ensure that they have sufficient expertise in child development and to set their role in the context of children’s services • introducing a “Newly Qualified Social Worker” status which would give guarantee of support, training and induction to child and family social workers • a change in the legislative and regulatory framework, including bringing statutory guidance and relevant National Minimum Standards into line with the changes in the White Paper • extending the entitlement to the support of a personal advisor up to the age of 25 for all care leavers who are either in education or wish to return to education.
Our health, our care, our say – a new direction for community services (Department of Health 2006)	<p>This sets out a new direction for health and social care. The workforce and its management needs to provide imaginative and innovative services, supporting and developing individuals in their personal, family and community context to promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved health and emotional well-being • improved quality of life • the exercise of choice and control • ways of making a positive contribution to society • economic well being • personal dignity and freedom from discrimination or harassment
The Leitch Review of Skills (December 2006)	<p>The Government commissioned Sandy Leitch in 2004 to undertake an independent review of the UK’s long term skills needs. The Review published its interim report "Skills in the UK: the long term challenge" in December 2005. It committed the Review, in its final report, to identify the UK’s</p>

	<p>optimal skills mix for 2020 to maximise economic growth, productivity and social justice, set out the balance of responsibility for achieving that skills profile, and consider the policy framework required to support it.</p> <p>The final report of the Leitch Review of Skills, “Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills”, was published on 5th December 2006.</p> <p>The Review sets out a compelling vision for the UK. It shows that the UK must urgently raise achievements at all levels of skills and recommends that it commit to becoming a world leader in skills by 2020, benchmarked against the upper quartile of the OECD. This means doubling attainment at most levels of skill. Responsibility for achieving ambitions must be shared between Government, employers and individuals.</p>
Success Through Skills Northern Ireland (DEL 2006)	This strategy identifies a need for an overarching framework for the development of skills of the workforce in general. This includes raising the skills of the current workforce, enhancing the knowledge base of those entering employment and addressing employability skills
Our Children and Young People, Our Pledge (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2006)	This strategy focuses on the need for multi disciplinary teams to work within early years settings to provide specialist support and expansion of SureStart with new projects and satellite services targeting the most disadvantaged. This strategy has significant implications for training and qualifying the workforce. The range of skills required is expanded to include more in-depth skills in supporting facilities including those who are socially excluded, working with very young children, multi-agency and interdisciplinary working, including information sharing
Children First – The Northern Ireland Childcare Strategy	This strategy sets out the Government’s proposals to increase the quantity and improve the quality of affordable childcare for children up to the age of 14 in Northern Ireland. The Childcare strategy placed a responsibility on the Childcare Partnerships to identify the current range of childcare provision in their areas and to increase the supply of childcare places to meet the needs of the child population. The strategy also recognised the requirement for workforce development to meet new challenges.
Childcare that Works’ (Report from the Office of Northern Ireland First Minister	<p>The main recommendations directly affecting the workforce training and qualifications are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registration requirements for childminders should be changed to include introductory

<p>and Deputy First Minister Concordia 2006)</p>	<p>training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a £5m transformation fund should be set up together with a strategy for the integration of qualifications in the childcare sector. The fund should also be used to improve more practically based qualifications among the childcare workforce • there should be a graduate leader in every full day-care setting by 2015 • specialist diversity awareness training tailored to the specific post-conflict situation in Northern Ireland should be sufficiently funded • the extended school offer should be developed with opportunities for children and families to access a range of activities and services This will lead to extra demands on the childcare workforce in terms of their skills and knowledge.
<p>HPSSNI Training and Development Strategy for the Social Services Workforce 2006 - 2016 (2006)</p>	<p>This outlined that all employers must support learners to obtain an initial minimum of Level 2 NVQ in Health and Social care within a specified timeframe, for workers directly involved in care of children this minimum is Level 3.</p>
<p>A Healthier Future DHSSPS</p>	<p>Overarching regional strategy of the DHSSPS, it includes measures to promote the health and well being, facilitate the delivery of services and protect and care for the most vulnerable of individuals. This strategy also outlines new and emerging roles.</p>
<p>Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities 2007, Welsh Assembly Government</p>	<p>This is a 10-year strategy for social services which will inform the developments required for the social care workforce in Wales to deliver high quality, responsive and citizen led social care services in Wales. The main objectives of the report are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining people at home or in as homely an environment as possible and supporting children to live with their families • doing everything possible to ensure that service users are safe • increasing availability of preventative services which can reduce the need for more intensive and costly services at a later date • supporting the integration of service users in the community and providing support for them

	<p>to achieve their potential and enable them to live as full and independent life as possible.</p> <p>The following main areas where change needs to be driven were identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leadership and accountability • commissioning • performance management • partnerships • the workforce • the Care Council for Wales was a key partner in forming the strategy and has the lead role for developing the Workforce Action Plan (submitted to the Assembly for approval in December 2007)
<p>The Learning Country 2001 and The Learning Country 2 2006 (Welsh Assembly Government)</p>	<p>This policy sets the education and learning agenda in Wales which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transforming provision for 14 – 19 year olds (through the 14 – 19 learning pathways initiatives and networks established in each of the 22 local authorities) • strengthening careers advice, information and guidance • improving access to post 16 learning • tackling skills deficits and modernising the collaborative efforts of higher education in Wales
<p>Children and Young People - Rights to Action (2004)</p>	<p>This describes the commitment of the Welsh Assembly Government to improving Children and Young People’s services through a partnership approach. This also underpins the local workforce strategies which will be part of the Children and Young People’s Plans due to be available by 2008.</p>
<p>Skills that work for Wales: A Skills and Employment Strategy (Draft in consultation until April 2008)</p>	<p>This strategy aims to raise skills levels and increase the economic activity rate in Wales. The strategy will supersede the Skills and Employment Action Plan 2005 and provides both a response to the Leitch Review of Skills in the UK and a preliminary response to the independent review on</p>

	mission and purpose of further education (Promise and Performance).
Putting People First: A shared commitment and vision to the transformation to Adult Social Care, the ministerial Concordat (England) December 2007	The framework for cross sector reform is set out in “Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care”, the Ministerial Concordat launched on 10 December 2007.

UK Action Plan – Qualification and Learning Strategy

Non-qualification outcomes

Qualification	Country(ies) and framework(s) to which qualification applies	Level (if relevant)	Action (e.g. newly developed / revision to existing qualifications).	With whom (named partners indicating confirmation of their agreement to specific actions)	By when	NOS (Confirmation NOS will be in place and up to date to underpin qualification)	Current status (in development / planned)



The UK Commission aims to raise UK prosperity and opportunity by improving employment and skills. Our ambition is to benefit employers, individuals and government by advising how improved employment and skills systems can help the UK become a worldclass leader in productivity, in employment and in having a fair and inclusive society: all this in the context of a fast-changing global economy.

Because employers, whether in private business or the public sector, have prime responsibility for the achievement of greater productivity, the UK Commission will strengthen the employer voice and provide greater employer influence over the employment and skills systems.

Having developed a view of what's needed, the UK Commission will provide independent advice to the highest levels in government to help achieve those improvements through strategic policy development, evidence-based analysis and the exchange of good practice.

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