

Sector qualification strategy for school support staff

Training and Development Agency for Schools

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Contents

Sector qualification strategy for school support staff.....	1
Training and Development Agency for Schools	1
Contents.....	2
Section 2: Scope of the sector qualification strategy	8
2.1.1 Sector coverage	8
2.1.2 Occupations covered	10
Role group.....	10
Job roles.....	10
Example job titles	10
2.1.3 Population of learners	12
2.1.4 Occupational and professional standards.....	15
2.1.5 Range of provision and types of current qualifications.....	15
2.2.1 Priority qualifications within the national qualifications framework (NQF).....	17
2.2.2. Relationship to government policy	18
Leitch Review and the Training Quality Standard	18
Qualifications and credit framework	18
Section 3: Sector working environment.....	25
3.1 Special features or characteristics of the working environment that may impact on accessibility.....	25
3.2 Analysis of sectoral workforce trends for the future and any changes forecast to the working environment.....	26
4.1 Main qualification types and other learning provision for the sector	27
Introductory training.....	27
<i>Skills for Life</i>	27
NVQs in supporting teaching and learning in schools (STL) and other NVQs	27
Apprenticeships.....	28
Support work in schools (SWiS) qualification.....	28
Certificate and diploma in school business management	29
Other nationally accredited qualifications.....	29
Professional recognition.....	30
HLTA status.....	30
Foundation degrees	30
Other higher education qualifications	31
Non-accredited qualifications and training	31
4.2 Analysis of the available information about qualifications and other learning provision..	31

4.2.1 Qualification take-up	31
4.2.2 Analysis of individual qualifications	32
Introductory training.....	32
<i>Skills for Life</i>	33
NVQs.....	33
Apprenticeships.....	33
Support work in schools qualification	34
Certificate and diploma in school business management (C/DSBM).....	34
Other nationally accredited qualifications, including specialist and knowledge-based qualifications.....	34
Professional recognition	34
HLTA status.....	34
Higher education	35
Non-accredited qualifications and training	35
4.2.3 How evidence informs recommendations	35
4.3 How employers use and view qualifications.....	36
4.3.1 Stakeholder consultation on current provision	36
4.3.2 Development of individual qualifications	39
Introductory training.....	39
<i>Skills for Life</i>	39
NVQs.....	39
Apprenticeships.....	39
Support work in schools qualification	39
Certificate and diploma in school business management	40
Other nationally accredited qualifications, including specialist and knowledge-based qualifications.....	40
Professional recognition	40
HLTA status.....	40
Foundation degrees	40
Other higher education qualifications	40
Non-accredited qualifications and training	41
Section 5: Other sector uses of qualifications	42
5.1 Use made of qualifications for the regulation of practice within the sector	42
5.2 How qualifications promote customer confidence and protect consumers and the public within the sector	42
Section 6: How the TDA will help realise the future	43
6.1.1 Proposal for a new competency-based qualifications framework for school support staff	43

6.1.2 Future plans for other qualifications within the QCF	47
6.1.3 Future plans for other development opportunities.....	48
6.2.1 Employers and support staff	49
6.2.2 Government departments, funding agencies, review authorities and learning providers	50
6.2.3 Awarding bodies.....	50
6.2.4 Other sector bodies.....	51
6.3 The preparation of information and materials	51
6.4 Monitoring and evaluation	51
Annexes	52
Annex A: Sector bodies.....	52
Annex B: Qualifications and awarding bodies	53
Table one: Awarding bodies.....	53
Notes	54
Table two: Qualifications	55
Annex C: National qualifications frameworks.....	63
Annex D: Proposed competency framework.....	64
Examples of how the new framework might work.....	66

Section 1: Executive summary

To make sure the right mix of qualifications, training and other learning experiences are available to people working in every workforce sector, sector skills councils (SSCs) and other sector bodies are required to produce a sector qualification strategy (SQS) to cover the occupational roles they are responsible for. The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) is the sector body for the school workforce in England, with responsibilities for developing both occupational and professional standards for school-based roles.

This strategy sets out the TDA's vision of future qualifications for school support staff and the ways that the TDA will refine and realise that vision. The strategy aims to ensure that people working in a support role in schools in England can contribute to pupil attainment and well-being. The strategy:

- identifies key drivers for sector development in relation to qualifications and other learning provision
- evaluates how well existing qualifications and other learning provision meet sector needs (current and future)
- makes proposals for any changes required
- brings coherence and shared direction to ongoing development work
- provides a sound basis for future development and decision making in each broad sector
- ensures that sector proposals are communicated to, and supported by, key stakeholders.

Sector qualification strategies will be used by stakeholders and partners including:

- the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) when making accreditation decisions
- the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) – or relevant successor organisation(s) – when prioritising public funding
- other sector bodies (including other members of the Children's Workforce Network) when identifying opportunities for collaborative working
- awarding bodies when developing qualifications
- higher education institutions (HEIs) when developing foundation degrees and other provision
- training providers to understand sector needs and priorities.

The number of school support staff has increased significantly in recent years, along with the complexity and range of the roles they undertake.

The Children's Plan emphasises that educational standards and children's well-being are inextricably linked. Put simply, children and young people learn best and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged.

To play their twin roles of well-being and attainment, virtually every school is undergoing a major transformation. Schools are developing a central responsibility for delivering integrated services for the child and the wider community which ensures that every child and young person achieves their full potential.

The TDA, with its partners in the Children's Workforce Network, is committed to developing an integrated qualification framework for the children's workforce that will facilitate workforce mobility and foster a multi-agency approach to meeting the needs of the child.

The teaching profession has undergone significant change over the past decade. The TDA is committed to the continued provision of highly-skilled professional teachers. To this end,

teaching professionals will soon be able to gain a masters qualification in teaching and learning. This will significantly improve the status of teaching and improve the education and life chances of children.

In addition, the TDA has developed a new framework of professional and occupational standards for classroom-based practitioners. This includes the Training and Development Agency for Schools' review of the professional standards for teachers, the occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning, and the professional standards for higher level teaching assistants. These were achieved in consultation with social partners and other key stakeholders.

The professional standards for teachers cover:

- the award of qualified teacher status (QTS)
- teachers on the main scale
- teachers on the upper pay scale (post-threshold teachers)
- excellent teachers
- advanced skills teachers (ASTs).

All this, together with the current agenda for the reform of vocational qualifications, makes it timely to look at the future qualification needs of school support staff. The strategy will bring together the views of schools and local authorities on how well current qualifications meet their needs with those national policies and initiatives that will demand new skills from the workforce. It also explores how these can be met within the new qualification and credit framework (QCF).

In Section 2, labour market information from a number of sources is used to describe the scope of the strategy, including the people and roles covered as well as the current qualifications offer. It describes how the sector is expanding rapidly in terms of support staff numbers and the new roles and responsibilities they are undertaking. It describes the main drivers for the changes as well as a number of national and sector-specific policies – including the current agenda for the reform of vocational qualifications – and how these have been considered during the formation of the qualifications strategy.

Section 3 focuses on the working environment and how this impacts on qualification and training needs. It also considers trends within the sector and how the strategy has been developed to be flexible enough to cope with future changes.

In Section 4, current qualifications are described in detail, including an analysis of where they are and are not meeting the needs of employers and other stakeholders, and any gaps in provision. It sets out areas which the TDA has identified as opportunities for improvement and how the TDA plans to address these by working with partners, including awarding bodies and HEIs, to develop a competency-based suite of qualifications and a foundation degree framework. Evidence from consultation is used to describe how employers and other stakeholders make use of qualifications and some of the problems they experience in the process.

The TDA sets out its main proposals to:

- develop a new competency-based framework of qualifications at levels 2 and 3 for school support staff which builds on the best features of existing qualifications and other learning provision
- support the development and revision of other qualifications, training opportunities and standards, including professional qualifications and recognition
- support the implementation of the integrated qualifications strategy for the children's workforce

- develop and implement a foundation degree framework for the sector
- support the introduction of the new training quality standard and encourage providers in the sector to apply for recognition as excellent providers of training for school support staff
- continue to work closely with a range of partners and stakeholders to ensure that the needs of the school workforce and the children's workforce are met
- continue to develop and update guidance and tools to help employers and support staff plan careers and identify development opportunities.

Section 5 explains how qualifications and standards can help stakeholder groups to feel confident that school support staff are working to agreed standards. It also explains how a well-qualified school workforce can contribute towards improving pupil attainment and well-being.

Section 6 begins to set out a plan showing how the TDA will work with partners to improve the current qualification and development offer, aligning it more closely with the needs of employers, support staff and the children's workforce. It describes how the proposed competency-based qualifications framework will operate and how it will address many of the problems identified with the current offer. It also describes how the TDA will develop its own national occupational standards (NOS) into qualification units and contribute to other sectors as they do the same with their NOS. The TDA will work with other sectors and with awarding bodies to ensure that rules of combination reflect the needs of schools. It will also contribute to the development of the integrated qualifications strategy to ensure flexibility and greater transparency for the whole Children's Workforce.

The TDA believes that this sector qualifications strategy will bring coherence and shared direction to ongoing development work and provide a sound basis for future development and decision making within the sector.

Section 2: Scope of the sector qualification strategy

2.1 Scope

2.1.1 Sector coverage

Sector skills councils represent the needs of their sector, its employers and its workforce in relation to standards and training. In 2004 Charles Clarke, then Secretary of State for Education and Skills, said: "I want to see the TTA (Teacher Training Agency, the predecessor of the TDA) acting as a sector skills council for schools... a school's performance these days depends not just on the teacher – it depends on the performance of the whole school team."¹

The 2005 Education Act², which established the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), defines the school workforce as persons who work in a school or those who are teachers, or who carry out work that consists of or includes teaching. The remit of the TDA gives it responsibility for the training and development of the school workforce in England³.

This strategy attempts to represent the views of employers who may be schools or local authorities, however, in order to minimise bureaucratic burdens, the TDA is prevented from directly contacting all schools. Evidence of stakeholder views came from two consultations (see Section 6.2.1). The first consultation (SQS consultation) focused on the availability and suitability of qualifications and other training provision. It included an online questionnaire, a series of regional consultation events, focus groups and the establishment of a reference group that included employers and other key stakeholders. A communications plan was developed to secure widespread engagement from employers. This included publicising the consultation in *The Guardian* and *Times Educational Supplement*, using TDA newsletters, a marketing postcard distributed at events, local authority regional adviser networks, newsletters from unions and professional associations, local government networks and newsletters. The SQS consultation, which started in autumn 2006 and concluded in spring 2007, included:

- school leaders
- local authorities
- members of the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group
- school support staff
- teaching, headteacher and support staff unions and professional associations
- sector skills councils and sector bodies with responsibilities for one or more occupational role found in schools
- the then Department for Education and Skills, and other national partners.

The second consultation followed the publication of a draft SQS and focused on the draft proposals (proposals consultation). It consisted of a series of workshops promoted through the TDA's network of regional workforce advisers. These workshops were attended by 49 delegates representing schools and local authorities.

1 www.dfes.gov.uk/speeches/media/documents/tta.doc

2 www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_1.htm

3 <https://extendedschools.tda.gov.uk/sitecore/content/Home/about/planspoliciesreports/plans/extendremit.aspx>

In addition to the workshops, a formal public consultation was held over three months, beginning in April 2008. The draft strategy and a questionnaire consisting of open and closed questions was publicised through a notice on the front page of the TDA's website, a postcard distributed at several events, and articles in various newsletters and bulletins.

Schools include local authority-maintained primary and nursery, secondary, special, pupil referral units (PRUs) and education elsewhere, as well as city training colleges (CTCs) and academies. The sector employs 441,200 teachers and 326,400 support staff (excluding catering and premises staff). The total workforce is 767,600 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff⁴. With a high number of part-time staff, the number of individuals employed within the sector is approximately half a million teachers and a similar number of support staff.

Many members of the school workforce are employed in occupational roles that are not specific to schools; examples include catering staff, administrators and technicians. Qualifications intended for these roles are developed under the aegis of other sector bodies and sector skills councils. However, the TDA has an interest in ensuring that the available qualifications and underpinning standards reflect the needs of school-based staff and that school leaders understand and utilise them.

There is no direct equivalent to the TDA in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland; however, partners in each country are represented on a sector qualifications forum and the TDA frequently shares information with the other nations in order to encourage consistency throughout the UK. The national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning in schools (STL NOS) were developed in collaboration with the other nations and reflect the views of stakeholders in all four UK countries. The TDA cannot represent the interests of school staff or their employers in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, nor can it ensure that this sector qualifications strategy relates to any laws, regulations, priorities or practices which exist outside England.

The Government's white paper, Higher Standards, Better Schools for All⁵, published in 2005, gave the TDA a key role in ensuring that the whole school workforce has the skills and support it needs to raise children's attainment and improve their well-being. This can be realised only through a highly-skilled workforce.

The TDA is part of the Children's Workforce Network (CWN) whose members are working together to secure better outcomes for children. Being a member of this group ensures that the TDA is able to position the development of school workforce skills within an integrated approach to children's services. CWN members are:

- Children's Workforce Development Council (part of Skills for Care and Development)
- Skills for Justice
- SkillsActive
- Skills for Health
- Lifelong Learning UK
- Creative and Cultural Skills
- The Training and Development Agency for Schools
- General Social Care Council
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (representing all health-related regulatory bodies)
- General Teaching Council for England

4 www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000787/index.shtml

5 www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/schoolswhitepaper/

- Improvement and Development Agency (local government).

Outside the CWN partnership, the school sector shares common interests with a number of other sectors such as catering, site and premises management, IT and administration. It is essential that the TDA effectively engages with all relevant sector bodies (see annex A).

2.1.2 Occupations covered

This qualifications strategy covers all school support staff in England. It does not cover qualifications for teachers. Anyone who wants to teach in a state-maintained school in England or Wales must gain qualified teacher status (QTS). QTS is achieved through completing initial teacher training (ITT) and demonstrating the required standards through assessment by an accredited provider. The process for determination of QTS status is covered by Statutory Instrument 2003 No 1662, The Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003. Although the qualification strategy does not cover training and development opportunities for teachers, it complements the work of the Agency in developing professional standards, qualifications and opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers.

School support staff can be difficult to categorise by distinct job titles for a number of reasons:

- Extended service provision, school remodelling and other initiatives are contributing to the development of new roles, such as cover supervisor and parent support adviser.
- Many support staff have blended or multiple roles – for example, a teaching assistant who also provides exam invigilation or a catering assistant who also works as an after-school cleaner.
- Local or historic reasons, and schools' devolved responsibilities for staffing, have led to many different job titles for broadly similar roles.

The table below categorises school support staff into role groupings with broadly similar characteristics and provides example job titles for each grouping. It is not intended to be exhaustive:

Role group	Job roles	Example job titles
Site staff	Site staff	Cleaner Caretaker Premises supervisor Site manager
Catering staff	Catering staff	Catering assistant Assistant cook Cook Catering manager
Administration	Administration	Clerical assistant Receptionist Office manager School business manager SIMS/Data manager HR manager
	Finance	Finance officer Bursar

	Examinations	Examinations officer Examination invigilator Examinations manager
	Extended services	Extended service coordinator Extended services manager
Specialist and technical	ICT	ICT technician Network manager
	Science/design and technology	Science technician Laboratory technician Design and technology technician Food technology technician Textiles technician Art and craft technician
	Librarian	Library assistant Librarian
Pupil support	Behaviour/ guidance/support	Learning mentor Behaviour mentor Home/school liaison officer Parent support advisor
	Care staff	Welfare assistant Healthcare assistant School nurse
	Midday supervisor/ playworker	Midday supervisor Lunchtime supervisor Playworker Out-of-school care worker/manager Extended school club worker/manager
Learning support	Early years	Nursery nurse Early years assistant Foundation stage assistant
	Teaching assistant/bilingual support	Teaching assistant Classroom assistant Learning support assistant Bilingual support assistant Higher level teaching assistant
	Special needs	Special needs assistant Learning support assistant Teaching assistant special needs
	Cover supervisor	Cover assistant Cover supervisor Cover manager
	Sports coach	Sports coach

2.1.3 Population of learners

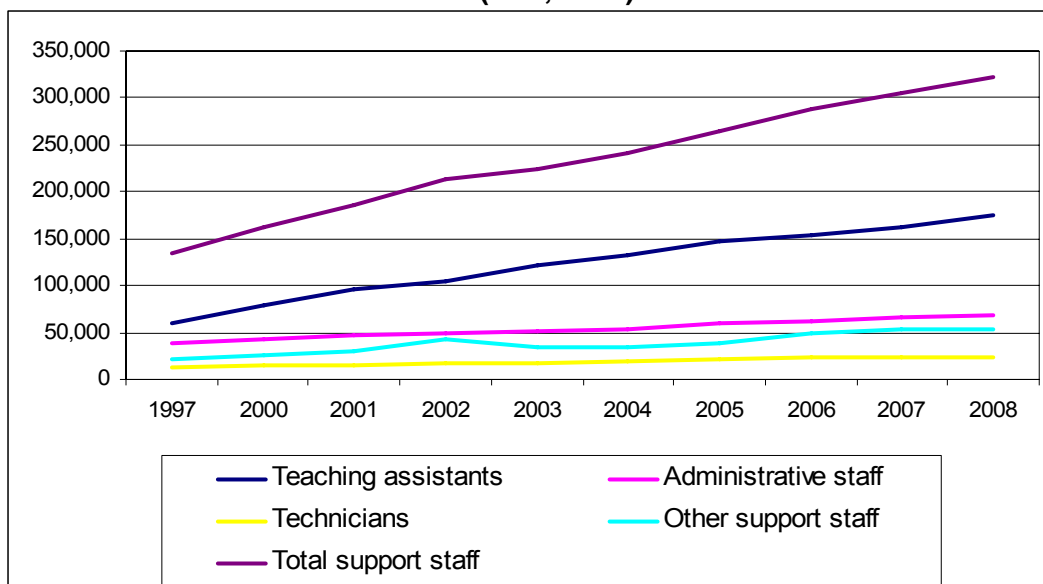
Evidence from existing research reports has been used to provide a picture of the workforce. The main reports used are:

- Deployment and Impact of Support Staff in Schools (DISS) (Strand 2, Wave 1)⁶. This longitudinal study provides data on the deployment and characteristics of support staff. Almost 9,000 schools, 9,000 support staff and 9,000 teachers in England were invited to participate in Wave 2. Response rates were 21%, 28% and 16% respectively.
- School census 2008 (provisional), an annual census conducted by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)⁷. The census includes data from all LA-maintained schools, academies and city technical colleges (CTCs) in England about support staff numbers and roles.
- National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) survey interim report⁸. This study is being conducted over three years using telephone surveys. It is investigating the training and development needs of support staff in schools by exploring their experience and perceptions of opportunities available to them. To date, 3,156 support staff have participated.

Together, these pieces of research have provided useful qualitative and quantitative data about the workforce, its deployment and current qualifications.

According to the school census, the size of the school support staff workforce has increased steadily and now numbers over 326,400 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff (excluding premises and catering staff). This is likely to equate to a head count in excess of half a million for all support staff, which is broadly equivalent to the number of teaching staff.

Characteristics of the workforce (FTE, 2008)⁹



Nb: This chart excludes some support staff roles (premises and catering staff).

Data presented are full-time equivalent numbers, so mask the true number of support staff in schools.

⁶ www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR005.pdf

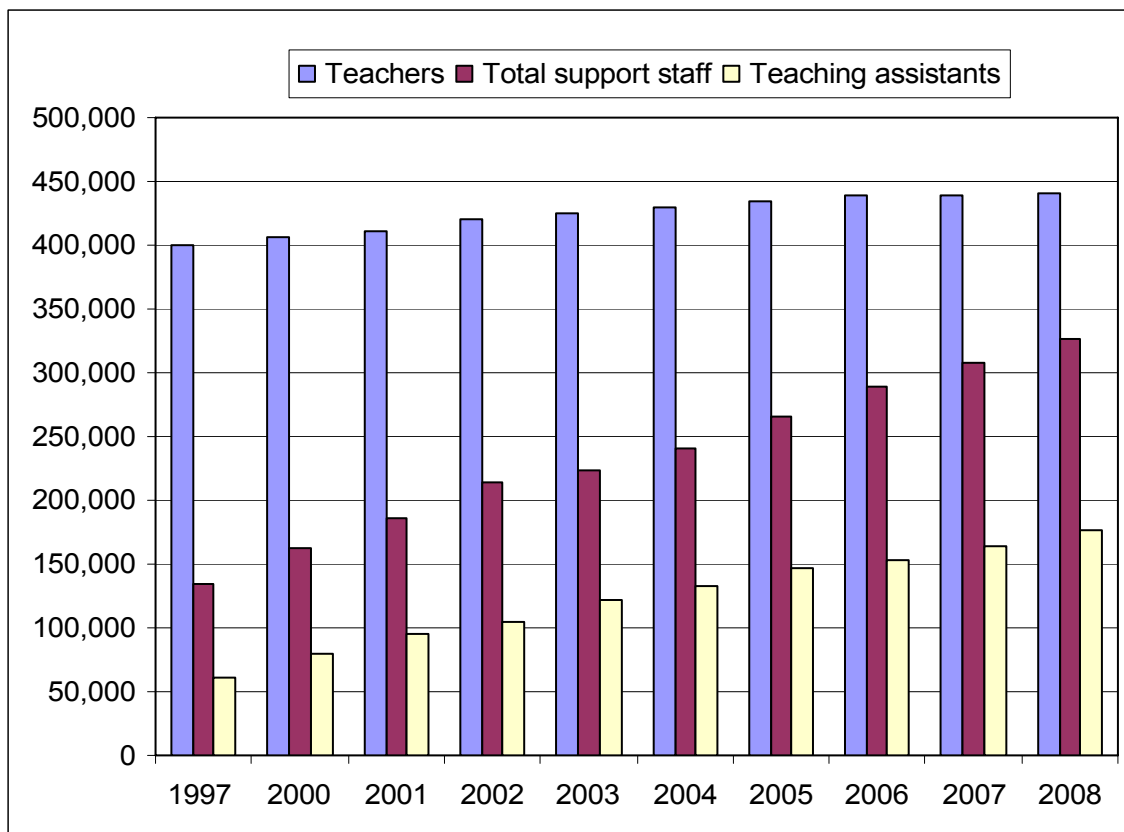
⁷ www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000787/index.shtml

⁸ www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/pims-data/outlines/research-into-support-staff-experiences-of-training-and-development.cfm

⁹ www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000813/index.shtml

Although all categories of support staff have seen a considerable growth in numbers during the last decade, the 'teaching assistants' category has experienced the sharpest increase in numbers – from 60,600 FTE in 1997, to 176,900 in 2008. In addition, the 'other support staff' category, which includes staff working to support pupils' learning in a variety of roles such as learning mentors, has also seen a considerable rise in numbers.

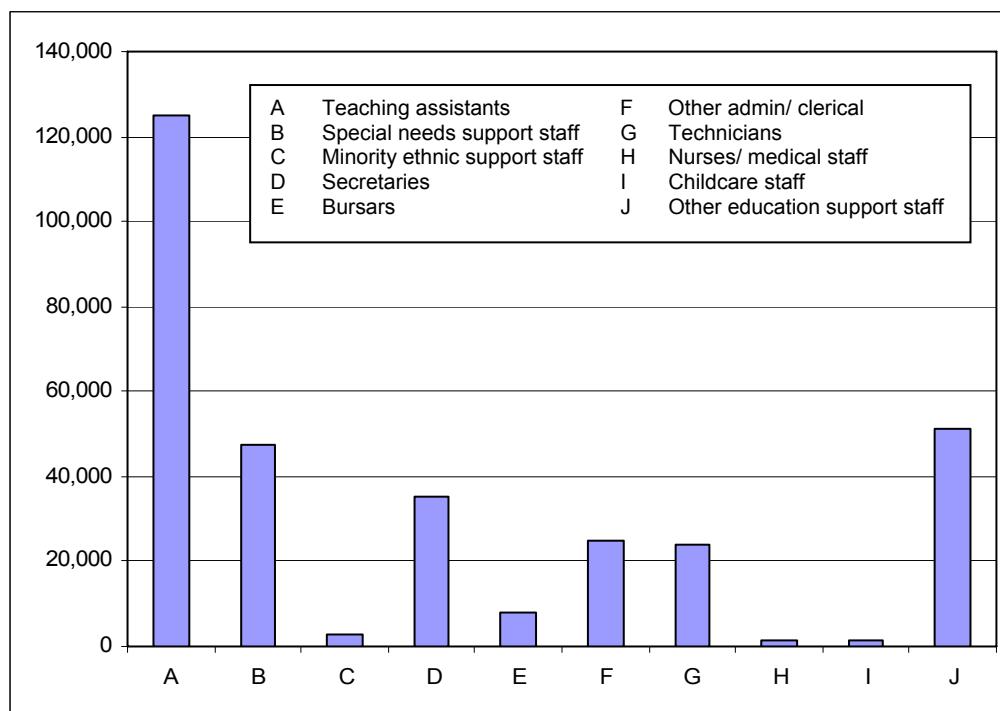
School workforce trends¹⁰



¹⁰ DCSF, School Workforce in England, January 2008 (Revised)

The distribution of support staff by occupational role (excluding catering and premises staff) can be seen in the chart below:

Number of support staff by role (FTE, 2008)¹¹



While this qualification strategy explores issues that are relevant to all school support staff, it inevitably focuses more on those roles exclusive to schools for which the TDA has the responsibility of developing occupational and professional standards and ensuring that appropriate qualifications are developed to meet their needs.

Where occupations are also followed in settings other than schools, these staff will look to other sector bodies and sector skills councils to develop the specialist training and qualification pathways that support their careers: for example, librarians, technicians and catering staff. The TDA will support the training and development of support staff in such roles through:

- working with other sector bodies and sector skills councils (see annex A) to ensure that the standards and qualifications they develop are relevant to the work of school support staff (for example, we have worked with the Council for Administration to develop an optional unit in the national occupational standards for business and administration specifically for those working in a school office)
- providing guidance to local authorities and schools on suitable qualifications and career pathways – for example, by maintaining an up-to-date career development framework for support staff
- working with providers to improve the quality, supply and relevance of training for support staff.

¹¹ DCSF, School Workforce in England, January 2008 (Revised)

2.1.4 Occupational and professional standards

The TDA has developed new and revised sets of professional and occupational standards for classroom-based practitioners. This includes a review of the professional standards for teachers, the occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning and the professional standards for higher level teaching assistants. Together, they provide a progressive framework of standards that collectively describe the complementary expectations of all those supporting pupils' learning.

The TDA has worked with partners and stakeholders to revise and broaden the scope of the national occupational standards (NOS) for teaching/classroom assistants, which were renamed NOS for supporting teaching and learning in schools (STL) in recognition of the wider range of occupational roles supported by these standards. Extensive consultation was carried out in all four home countries to ensure that the standards reflected the occupational roles of learning support staff across the UK. The occupational map developed as part of the standards' review, completed in 2007, is available on the TDA website www.tda.gov.uk/partners/supportstafftraining/NOS/Supporting.aspx.

The national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning in schools (STL NOS) apply to anyone who provides direct support for teaching and learning in any type of school. They have been developed in the light of significant changes in support staff roles following implementation of the National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload¹². They still cover the role of teaching assistant, but have been broadened in scope to include new roles and responsibilities such as cover supervision, exam invigilation and pastoral care.

The STL NOS also support the aims of Every Child Matters¹³ by reflecting the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge¹⁴ and, where appropriate, include units drawn from sets of standards originally developed by other sector bodies with responsibility for children's workforce roles. This also helps facilitate transfer and progression across the wider children's workforce.

The professional standards for higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs), originally developed in 2003, were also revised in 2007. These standards do not provide the basis for an NVQ, but demonstrating achievement of all of the standards leads to the award of HLTA status. Consultation supported the retention of HLTA status rather than development of national occupational standards to underpin an NVQ at level 4.

2.1.5 Range of provision and types of current qualifications

Since its establishment as the sector body for the whole school workforce, the TDA has taken stock of current qualifications and training provision within the sector and has produced a career development framework for school support staff. The full list of accredited qualifications and nationally recognised training provision commonly used by school support staff, divided into occupational areas, is attached as annex B. This is available as a searchable database on the TDA website¹⁵ and as a tailorable version that local authorities can adapt to reflect locally available provision.

¹² www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/na_standards_workload.pdf

¹³ www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/

¹⁴ www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/commoncore/

¹⁵ www.tda.gov.uk/supportstaff/career_development_framework.aspx

The current offer to school support staff includes:

- introductory training delivered through local authorities
- *Skills for Life*
- the small and flexible competency-based support work in schools (SWiS) qualifications
- NVQs that describe occupational competence in a range of areas, including supporting teaching and learning, catering, administration, laboratory technicians and premises management
- higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) status
- apprenticeships which combine qualifications and paid work
- the certificate and diploma in school business management
- other nationally-accredited qualifications, including specialist and knowledge-based qualifications
- recognition for some occupational roles through a range of professional associations
- foundation degrees
- other higher education qualifications
- non-accredited qualifications and training.

Of these, the TDA has particular responsibility for:

- introductory training of school support staff, supported through the development of modules for local authority trainers
- the apprenticeship frameworks for supporting teaching and learning in schools
- the support work in schools (SWiS) suite of qualifications
- national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in supporting teaching and learning in schools (formerly NVQs for teaching/classroom assistants)
- the Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) Programme
- the certificate and diploma in school business management
- the development of a foundation degree framework for school support staff.

The TDA also has a role in providing endorsement for qualifications developed for the school sector and intended for inclusion on one of the QCA frameworks.

The above opportunities are delivered in a range of different ways, including on-the-job training and assessment and taught qualifications.

2.2 Key priorities for the sector and how existing government policies have been taken into consideration

2.2.1 Priority qualifications within the national qualifications framework (NQF)

Until qualifications have been revised to meet the criteria for admission to the qualifications and credit framework (QCF), those who accredit and fund nationally recognised qualifications require guidance on which qualifications best meet the needs of the sector.

The qualifications listed at annex B, table two, have been identified by schools and local authorities as meeting the needs of at least some occupational roles within the school workforce. The TDA consulted, in 2006, local authorities that had been awarded Beacon Status for whole workforce development to discover which qualifications and training courses were being used and how well each met the needs of the workforce. The resulting list was then tested with schools during national consultation events and an online questionnaire in 2007. The large number and different levels of qualifications reflect the diversity of roles within the sector and the majority of these qualifications are used in other sectors too. However, there are too many relevant qualifications for employers to understand and use effectively. The proposals outlined in this strategy would lead to a rationalisation of the number of qualifications developed specifically for school support staff roles. The stakeholder consultation also established general views about qualifications; those who commented said that qualifications which best meet their needs are those that:

- ensure that all staff have a basic understanding of their role in school and the common core
- are sufficiently flexible to allow for the way roles have developed differently in schools, even where job titles are the same
- allow appropriate opportunities for transfer and progression across the children's workforce and beyond
- are based on national occupational standards or professional standards where they exist
- either attest to full occupational competence or – for those not yet able to achieve all of the units within a full level two or three qualification – provide opportunities for progression towards such qualifications.

Stakeholders expressed concern about the number of large qualifications that support staff seemed to be expected to take each time the focus of their role changed, which made little or no allowance for skills and knowledge gained in related roles. Qualifications based on units of occupational standards that were common to more than one role or sector were felt to have such recognition 'inbuilt' and so were favoured by stakeholders.

Although those consulted were keen to stress that there was still a place for qualifications at level two or below for some support staff roles, they argued that support staff roles were increasingly requiring skills at level three of the NQF and above, or higher education qualifications, citing the increasing number of support staff working in specialist roles and/or with line management responsibilities.

2.2.2. Relationship to government policy

Training and qualification provision for school support staff is also affected by the cross-sector programme of qualification reform and government skills policies:

Leitch Review and the Training Quality Standard

The Leitch Review of Skills, Prosperity for all in the Global Economy¹⁶ highlighted the importance of considering employers' views during the development and delivery of all training and qualifications to ensure that the nation's workforce has all the skills it needs for the future. Following recommendations from the Leitch Review, the TDA has worked closely with employers during the production of this strategy to ensure that their needs are met.

One significant outcome of the Leitch Review is The Training Quality Standard¹⁷, a way of ensuring that training providers are incorporating employer needs into any provision. The TDA has developed Training Quality Standard criteria that providers specialising in training for school support staff can be assessed against. The criteria are consistent with this strategy's proposals.

Qualifications and credit framework

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is moving towards the implementation of a new qualifications framework which is intended to replace the national qualifications framework (NQF). The new qualifications and credit framework (QCF)¹⁸ will be based on a bank of qualification units, each of which will have a level and credit value. Rules of combination will be developed to determine how units can be combined into worthwhile qualifications. The new framework is intended to be more flexible, easier to understand and more robust than the current framework.

It is likely that by 2010 all qualifications currently on the NQF will either have to be converted, so they can be on the QCF, or they will no longer be accredited. This presents us with both a challenge and a significant opportunity. The TDA sees its role as working with other sector bodies and awarding bodies to ensure that suitable units are developed or converted for all roles within the wider school workforce and also to ensure that rules of combination reflect the needs of the sector. We believe that it is essential that the TDA can influence rules of combination covering any qualifications which may be relevant for school support staff. In many cases other sector bodies lead on qualifications for roles undertaken within a school setting such as cleaning, catering and administration. The TDA is committed to forging strong relationships with other bodies to ensure that the needs of school support staff are considered whenever new units and qualifications are being developed for the QCF.

There is no expectation that support staff with relevant qualifications that formed part of the former national qualifications framework (NQF) will be expected to take newer versions of these qualifications through the QCF. However, occupational and professional standards can be used by support staff and their managers to identify areas where skills and knowledge may need updating. The TDA provides web-based guidance and tools for school leaders to support this activity. The QCF could also provide opportunities for awarding bodies to develop small awards using units that feature in one or more larger qualification that support school staff to update or enhance their existing skills and qualifications.

In 2004, the Government and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) announced the **reform of apprenticeships**. The aim is for an employer-led system where flexibly designed

¹⁶ www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/leitch_review/review_leitch_index.cfm

¹⁷ www.newstandard.co.uk/

¹⁸ www.qca.org.uk/qca_8150.aspx

apprenticeships meet the different workforce development needs of different sectors. The reformed system involves the removal of the current age limit of 25 and establishes a new 'Young Apprenticeships' programme for 14-16 year olds still at school. The TDA has the responsibility for the apprenticeship frameworks for supporting teaching and learning in schools (formerly the apprenticeships for teaching/classroom assistants) which was approved in June 2008. The TDA is working with partners and stakeholders to consider implications for the future development of apprenticeship frameworks for the sector and how schools can be supported to make effective use of them.

In addition to the broader skills agenda, the following initiatives and policies are beginning to have an effect on the employment patterns and the qualification and training needs of staff employed in the school sector:

The 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper¹⁹ (DfES 2005) is the Government's response to the issues raised by the Working Group on 14-19 Reform, chaired by Sir Mike Tomlinson, on how to fulfill the needs and aspirations of every young person.

Central to 14-19 reform is the new curriculum and qualifications entitlement for all young people. At the heart of this new entitlement is that every 14 to 19-year-old will be entitled to pursue any one of the 14 specialised diplomas at an appropriate level wherever they are in the country. The Government does not expect any single institution to deliver the full entitlement by acting alone, but to develop arrangements with other local schools and colleges so that between them they can offer the full entitlement to all young people. The diplomas play a key role in the Government's plans to improve the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) by raising attainment and participation. Qualifications for support staff will need to consider the part that they will play in supporting the delivery of diplomas.

The Schools White Paper, Higher Standards, Better Schools For All (DfES 2005), sets out the vision for the future of the education system and puts parents and the needs of their children at the heart of the school system. The white paper aims to build on the increased resources in schools, the reformed school workforce and the greater availability of ICT, to tailor lessons and support in schools to the individual needs of each pupil. This will be achieved in part through targeted support for underachieving pupils in English and mathematics, more stretching lessons and opportunities for gifted and talented pupils, widening curriculum choice in secondary education, and extended schools offering many new opportunities to learn and develop beyond the formal school day.

The proposals in the Schools White Paper are designed to lead to a step change in personalising the learning of every child, with particular attention to those pupils who have fallen behind in English and mathematics, those who have a particular gift or talent, and to groups that are at risk of under-achieving, such as some minority ethnic children, children with special educational needs (SEN and disabilities) and looked-after children.

The two white papers and the Education and Inspections Bill 2006 have implications for the training and deployment of support staff in relation to working with parents, working with other schools, colleges and providers to deliver the diploma entitlement to young people aged 14-16, and opportunities to contribute to extended services.

Raising Expectations: Staying in Education and Training Post-16²⁰ was published in 2007. In this document, the DCFS proposed to raise the minimum age at which a young person could leave education or training to 18. This will be done in two stages; to 17 from

¹⁹ www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/14-19educationandskills/pdfs/14-19WhitePaper.pdf

²⁰ www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/6965-DfES-Raising%20Expectations%20Green%20Paper.pdf

September 2013 and to 18 from September 2015. This would mean that every young person would continue to pursue a course of education or training, at least until their 18th birthday, with the aim of improving attainment which will benefit young people and develop their skills as future members of the workforce. A young person could study or train in a school or college, with a work-based learning provider or with an employer. They would be working towards an accredited qualification, including general qualifications, one of the new diplomas, or an apprenticeship. This is likely to lead to a greater number of pupils within schools, and therefore a related demand for support staff in learning support, welfare and coordination roles.

The National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload²¹, which was signed by the Government, employers and most school workforce unions in January 2003, has been the impetus for a significant increase in the number and diversity of roles for supporting teaching and learning in classrooms in England and Wales. The expansion in support staff numbers and roles in England and Wales means that there are now greater opportunities for some individuals to take on leadership responsibilities and/or specialist roles within schools. These changes informed the revised NOS for supporting teaching and learning in schools which will, as other qualifications reach the end of their accreditation period, be reflected in vocational and occupational qualifications.

Ofsted, in its reports on the impact of remodelling the school workforce²² (Ofsted 2004 and 2005), has identified a broadening of teacher assistant roles, especially in primary and special schools, to include:

- team teaching
- whole school responsibilities, eg literacy coordinator
- providing specialist support for planning and delivery of the curriculum, eg ICT, work-related curriculum and study skills
- providing dedicated support, eg for behaviour, attendance, SEN
- organising a range of extra-curricular activities.

Other research into the role of teaching assistants in England indicates that they are increasingly involved in working with pupils to support learning and achievement. They have a key role in supporting pupils with additional needs and supporting intervention programmes. While these changes have informed both the revision of the HLTA professional standards and the development of the new STL NOS, there is likely to be a growing need for small qualifications to meet the needs of previously qualified staff whose roles have been enhanced or refocused as a consequence of remodelling.

Every Child Matters (ECM) Every Child Matters: Change for Children²³ (DfES 2004) explains how the Children Act 2004 forms the basis of a long-term programme of change in England. It sets out the Government's vision for children's services and seeks to improve outcomes for all children and young people. The Government's aim is for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution, and

²¹ www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/na_standards_workload.pdf

²² www.ofsted.gov.uk/assets/3761.pdf and www.ofsted.gov.uk/assets/4115.pdf

²³ www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/F9E3F941DC8D4580539EE4C743E9371D.pdf

- achieve economic well-being.

The document sets out the national framework for local change programmes to build services around the needs of children and young people to maximise opportunity and minimise risk, including:

- encouraging schools to offer a range of extended services that help pupils engage and achieve, and build stronger relationships with parents and the wider community
- supporting closer working between universal services like schools and specialist services so that children with additional needs can be identified earlier and supported effectively.

Every Child Matters: Change for Children also included a commitment to introduce a **common core of skills and knowledge** so that everyone working with children and young people can develop a shared language and understanding of issues, and be supported in working more closely together. The Common Core Prospectus²⁴ (DfES 2005) sets out the required knowledge and skills to practise in six areas of expertise:

- effective communication and engagement with children, young people, their families and carers
- child and young person development
- safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child
- supporting transitions
- multi-agency working, and
- sharing information.

In developing qualifications for the school workforce, awarding bodies and others need to ensure that they reflect the Common Core appropriately and that they support the aims of the Every Child Matters agenda, recognising the place of school practitioners within an integrated approach to children's services.

The development of an integrated qualifications framework (IQF) for the children's workforce was a key commitment in the follow-up Government publication, Building a World-Class Workforce for Children, Young People and their Families²⁵, which was published in February 2006. It was accompanied by the document Building an Integrated Qualifications Framework²⁶, which highlighted the issues to be addressed and action required to establish the framework and identified the Children's Workforce Network (CWN) as the Government's delivery partner. A further document, Clear Progression: Towards an Integrated Qualifications Framework, published in November 2006, described the next steps in the implementation process. It set out a vision for the IQF "... to establish a qualifications framework that has acceptance and credibility across the children's workforce at all levels and that:

- helps people deliver services that improve the lives of children, young people and those that care for them
- raises the profile and status of the children's workforce
- meets the needs of employers."

²⁴ www.dfes.gov.uk/commoncore/docs/5610_COMMON_CORE.pdf

²⁵ www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/7D2DD37746721CC8E5F81323AD449DD7.pdf

²⁶ www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/750C90CC37C8E9A863E537AC63E9FA6E.pdf

Extended schools (DfES 2005) are at the heart of delivering the Every Child Matters outcomes for children and families in England. They offer a model of integrated working which will make it easier for professionals and agencies to work together.

Extended schools provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community. Extended services can include childcare, adult education, parenting support programmes, community-based health and social care services, multi-agency behaviour support teams and after-school activities. The aim is to provide a core offer of extended services available to all children accessible through schools by 2010, with half of primary schools and a third of secondary schools doing so by 2008. The latest figures show that 13,800 schools are recorded as delivering all five demands of the extended schools full core offer (63% of all schools). This is ahead of the September 2008 target of 12,300 schools. 95% of schools are recorded as delivering at least one element of the full core offer.

While many schools may choose to develop an even richer mix of services and activities, the core offer for mainstream and special schools is:

- swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialist support services such as speech therapy, child and adolescent mental health services, family support services, intensive behaviour support, and sexual health services (some may be delivered on school sites)
- parenting support, including information sessions for parents at key transition points, parenting programmes run with the support of other children's services and family learning sessions to allow children to learn with their parents
- a varied programme of activities, such as homework clubs and study support, sport (at least two hours a week beyond the school day for those who want it), music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs such as chess, visits to museums and galleries, learning a foreign language, volunteering, business and enterprise activities
- providing wider community access to ICT, sports and arts facilities, including adult learning
- high-quality childcare provided on the school site or through clusters or other local providers, with supervised transfer arrangements where appropriate, available 8am-6pm all year round.

The extended schools agenda is likely to lead to opportunities for new and enhanced roles for those support staff who wish this, as well as a greater emphasis on working with colleagues from a range of disciplines and agencies for all. Again, the differing approaches to extended provision likely to be adopted by schools demands a flexible approach to skills development for school-based staff.

The DCSF has recently been consulting on a Children's Plan²⁷ published in December 2007 which sets out how, over the next decade, the Government, parents, the voluntary sector and schools can work together to ensure that every child gets the best start in life and the support they need to fulfil their potential and be happy, healthy and safe.

Proposals from the Children's Plan that may impact on support staff training and development include proposals for personal tutors in secondary schools and the setting up of a new negotiating council for the employment arrangements of school support staff.

²⁷ www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan/downloads/The_Childrens_Plan.pdf

Removing Barriers to Achievement, The Government's Strategy for SEN²⁸ (DfES 2004) sets out the Government's vision for giving children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities the opportunity to succeed.

Personalised learning is a key component of the SEN strategy. Personalised learning embraces every aspect of school life including teaching and learning strategies, ICT, curriculum choices, organisation and timetabling, assessment arrangements and relationships with the local community – all of which may impact on the role, working practices and professional relationships of teaching assistants who work with pupils with SEN and disabilities.

A key component of developing a qualification framework for the sector will be consideration of the range of accredited specialist qualifications for those who support children and young people with special educational needs and their relationship with each other and those qualifications designed for non-specialists.

2020 Vision, Report of the Teaching and Learning in 2020 Review Group²⁹ (DfES 2007) stressed the importance of personalised learning and teaching, assessment for learning, the use of ICT to enhance collaboration and creative learning, and greater use of adults other than teachers to extend the range of skills and support for pupils. It also noted the increasing role of support staff in providing aspects of pastoral care.

Developing the school workforce must be informed by an understanding of the skills that are particularly important in personalising learning. These were identified as:

- analysing and using data, with a specific focus on assessment for learning
- understanding how children learn and develop
- working with other adults (including parents and other children's services professionals)
- engaging pupils as active participants in learning.

Turning the Tables: Transforming School Food³⁰, published by the School Meals Review Panel in October 2005, recommended the transformation of school food and food skills to improve health and education for school age children and young people. The School Food Trust was set up in 2005 to promote the education and health of children and young people by improving the quality of food supplied and consumed in schools. The Trust's aims are to:

- ensure that all schools meet the food-based and nutrient-based standards for lunch and non-lunch food
- increase the uptake of school meals
- reduce diet-related inequalities in childhood through food education and school-based initiatives
- improve food skills through food education and school and community initiatives.

The standards for school food were announced in May 2006 and came into force in September 2006. The Government has introduced new regulations that update the 2006 regulations for interim food-based standards for school lunches from September 2007; these apply to non-lunch provision from September 2007, and introduce the food and nutrient-based standards by 2008 for primary and 2009 for secondary schools. This has led to

²⁸ www.teachernet.gov.uk/_doc/5970/removing%20barriers.pdf

²⁹ <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/6856-DfES-Teaching%20and%20Learning.pdf>

³⁰ www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/UploadDocs/Library/Documents/SMRPRReportAppendices.pdf

increased demand for qualifications for school caterers that enable them to develop the craft skills needed to prepare fresh food as well as the understanding required to develop menu plans that meet the nutritional standards. There may also be implications for the qualifications designed for those who make decisions about school meal provision or who support pupils to make healthy choices.

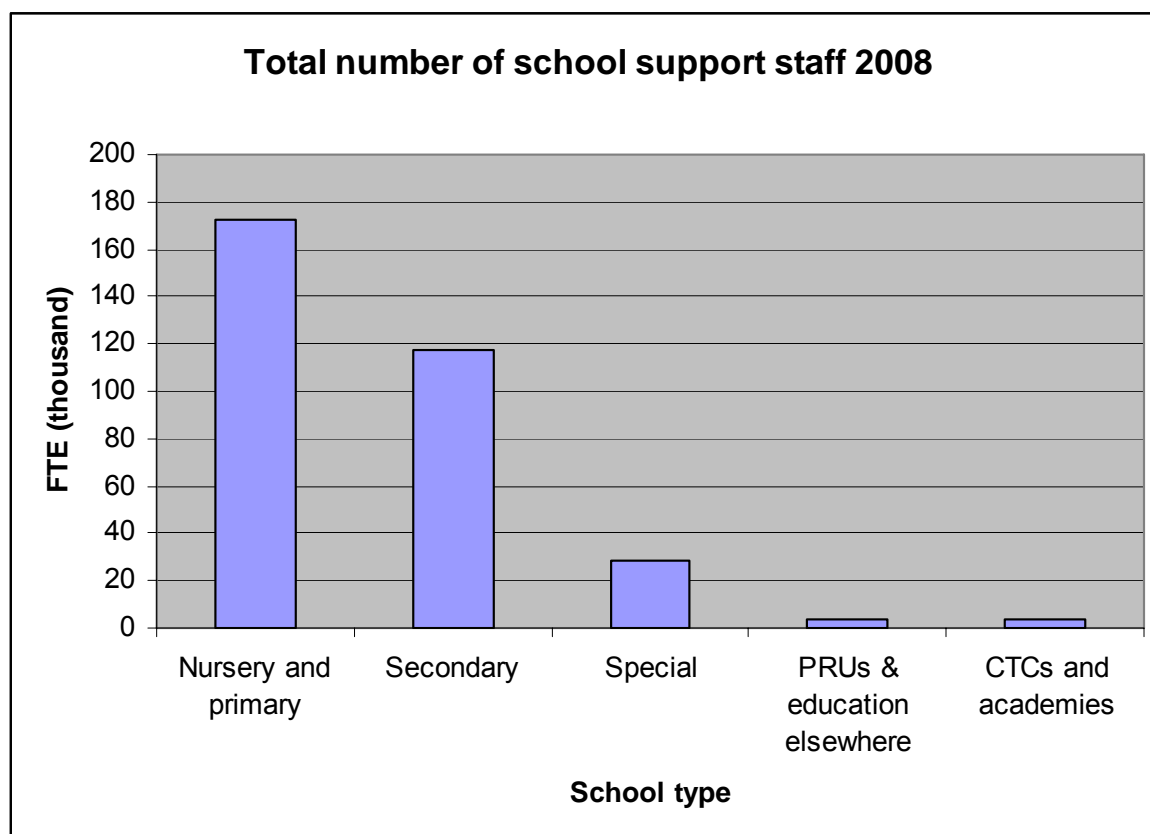
The **Independent Study into School Leadership**³¹ on behalf of the DCSF (PriceWaterhouseCoopers 2007) found that expectations of school leaders had changed significantly from those of even just a few years ago. The role has become more challenging both in the complexity and range of tasks undertaken and the need to develop a new set of skills, particularly around collaborative working within the school and beyond. The recommendations of the study include a move towards diverse models of school leadership, including the promotion of suitably qualified people from outside the school sector into school leadership roles and reviewing the ways in which senior support staff are deployed and rewarded.

³¹ www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR818A.pdf

Section 3: Sector working environment

3.1 Special features or characteristics of the working environment that may impact on accessibility

Official figures show the distribution of support staff in different types of school.³²



The distribution of roles undertaken, and thus training needs, in different types of schools will vary – for example, there is a greater proportion of support staff to teaching staff in a special school – but consultation evidence does not suggest that these differences have a significant impact on the accessibility of training and qualifications.

A more significant factor is the location of the school. Many school support staff have limited access to private or public transport which is a particular issue in rural areas or where training is delivered off-site. Labour market information shows that the flexible hours associated with working in a school make the sector attractive to those with family responsibilities; however this can limit access to qualifications or training outside contracted hours. Alternative delivery methods can help to reduce these problems.

Many schools are able to host training on-site, either by delivering it in-house by their own staff or through external training providers. Training can sometimes be delivered in breakfast, lunchtime or twilight sessions and assessment on the job is a feature of some programmes. Local authorities may be able to help schools get together to organise training in local clusters. Organising training in these ways can help make training more accessible to school support staff. Distance learning suits some school support staff, but not all school

³² www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000787/SFR10_2008.pdf

staff are confident with computers or have a PC. Where this is the case, schools may be able to provide access to a computer and help to use it if needed. Evidence from the consultations shows that other staff prefer more traditional courses, attending classes at set times off-site.

Many school support staff undertake blended or multiple roles and it is often difficult for them to find a qualification with the breadth to support the whole of their role; taking more than one qualification, however, is often impractical or repetitive. Stakeholders felt that unitised qualifications and flexible qualification structures can support such roles.

Some staff have never taken a formal qualification or have not studied for many years. These staff are likely to find large qualifications daunting. Evidence from consultations indicated that success in smaller, unitised qualifications can give learners the confidence to progress to larger or higher qualifications.

Clearly then, the diverse nature of the workforce necessitates a flexible approach to qualification design and delivery.

3.2 Analysis of sectoral workforce trends for the future and any changes forecast to the working environment

Analysis of labour market information has shown how numbers of support staff in schools have risen rapidly over the last decade. Consultation responses and new initiatives indicate that some roles are likely to expand over the next few years, and new roles are likely to emerge, particularly roles associated with multi-agency work, diploma delivery and parental engagement.

The TDA believes that its proposed competency framework is flexible enough to provide qualification and training opportunities for most new and emerging roles. The development of the integrated qualifications framework is likely to make it easier for those transferring between different parts of the children's workforce and those working across sectors within it.

There is concern about the number of members of the workforce approaching retirement age in the next ten years. The TDA hopes that initiatives such as the new apprenticeship framework and the increased availability of high-quality foundation degrees, combined with increased opportunities offered by extended schools provision and workforce modernisation, will help attract new people into the sector.

Section 4: Summary of current qualifications and other learning provision

4.1 Main qualification types and other learning provision for the sector

Introductory training

It is essential to ensure that new staff gain an understanding of the most important aspects of the Common Core and school policies and procedures. Most local authorities provide introductory training for school support staff within the first six months of employment. While no common definition exists, introductory training might reasonably be described as training that provides essential knowledge and skills that would be expected of staff within six months of starting in post.

Since 2005, the TDA has annually revised a suite of introductory training materials³³ for primary and secondary teaching assistants (TAs) and other support staff. The materials were first introduced by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) in 2000. They include generic and role-specific modules. In 2005, they were revised to incorporate the Common Core. The materials are used for staff who are new to the school and as 'top-up' training for more experienced staff.

The materials are delivered by local authorities, which often tailor and supplement the materials with other resources to meet the needs of local school staff. The training is commonly delivered over a four- to five-day period and is usually delivered off-site, which creates opportunities for TAs and support staff to network and make contacts with staff in other schools.

Currently there are no specific links between introductory training and other learning opportunities. However, some local authorities have linked the materials to NVQs or the support work in schools qualification and incorporated the training within a career progression framework that leads to qualifications outcomes.

Skills for Life

Evidence from a National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) survey³⁴ has shown that some school support staff do not have a GCSE (grade A*-C) or equivalent qualification in literacy/English or numeracy/mathematics. Adult skills training in literacy and numeracy is widely available and achieving a nationally recognised qualification can help individuals to be more confident and better able to support the goals of their school. The TDA has produced a *Skills for Life* planner to help school leaders tackle skills gaps within their workforce³⁵. *Skills for Life* training is available throughout the country and evaluation of the support work in schools qualification has proved a strong link between sound basic skills and completion rates for the SWiS qualification.

NVQs in supporting teaching and learning in schools (STL) and other NVQs

National vocational qualifications (NVQs) allow school support staff to gain and demonstrate occupational competence. NVQs for teaching/classroom assistants have been available at

³³ www.tda.gov.uk/support/qualificationsandtraining/induction_training.aspx

³⁴ www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/pims-data/outlines/research-into-support-staff-experiences-of-training-and-development.cfm

³⁵ www.tda.gov.uk/sflplanner

levels two and three of the national qualifications framework (NQF) since 2002 (see annex C).

From March 2008, NVQs have been available based on the revised national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning. The new NVQs still cover the role of teaching assistant but have been broadened in scope to include new roles and responsibilities such as cover supervision, exam invigilation, pastoral care and others. A full list of the units contained in the STL NOS and the NVQ qualification structures are available on the TDA website³⁶.

The TDA has a responsibility for the NVQs that are based on the supporting teaching and learning in schools suite of standards. NVQs that are relevant to other school support staff include those in catering, administration and premises maintenance, and are the responsibility of other sector bodies, although the TDA will work with these organisations to ensure that the needs of the school workforce are addressed through their standards and qualifications. A list of sector bodies relevant to the school workforce can be found in annex A.

Candidates are able to progress from qualifications such as SWiS to an NVQ, from a level 2 NVQ to a level 3 etc, and from NVQs to other opportunities such as HLTA status or foundation degrees. NVQs are widely available throughout England.

The TDA recently collaborated with the Council for Administration (CfA) to develop a unit within CfA's business and administration NOS specifically for administrative staff working in schools. Details of all NOS can be found on the NOS Directory³⁷. The Directory also contains information about which standards setting body is responsible for each NOS suite.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine studying for qualifications with carrying out paid work. The programmes are underpinned by national occupational standards (at levels two and three) and enable individuals to develop knowledge and skills within the sector while being paid a training wage. The LSC prioritises apprenticeship funding for learners aged 16-25 so apprenticeships present an ideal opportunity to attract younger people into the school workforce.

Apprenticeships for teaching assistants have been available in England since 2004; in 2008 these were replaced by a revised apprenticeship framework based on the new national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning in schools.

As with NVQs, other apprenticeships may be suitable for people working in schools. The apprenticeship website contains details about all apprenticeship frameworks³⁸.

Support work in schools (SWiS) qualification

The support work in schools (SWiS) qualifications were designed specifically to fill a gap in training for staff with multiple roles who are not able to demonstrate full occupational competence. They are also suitable for staff whose contractual hours or experience would make taking a larger qualification difficult. The qualifications provide learners with training and recognition of skills relevant to their role in school. The qualifications are flexible and can be tailored to meet learners' specific development needs. They are mainly delivered in schools or locally in clusters to avoid disruption to the school day.

³⁶ www.tda.gov.uk/support/NOS/supporting/nos_units.aspx

³⁷ www.ukstandards.org/

³⁸ www.apprenticeships.org.uk/

SWiS qualifications consist of mandatory and optional units from which learners can choose to build a qualification at level two or three on the national qualifications framework. Of the two mandatory units, one is drawn from the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge and the other has been developed to reflect working in a school environment, including an understanding of school policies and procedures. Optional units are drawn from existing sets of national occupational standards (NOS) which underpin a range of national vocational qualifications (NVQs). This provides increased opportunities for progression to more specialised qualifications. The qualifications can act as a stepping stone to a full NVQ or provide learners with the school-based knowledge and skills required to deliver their role in school. They are also appropriate for people new to working in schools and those who have more than one role – for example, a lunchtime assistant who also works as an after-school cleaner.

In 2007, the parent support endorsed pathway was added to the suite of SWiS qualifications. This qualification includes an additional mandatory unit on working with parents and an additional range of optional units designated for those working in this area. SWiS qualifications continue to respond to national priorities as they emerge: for example, school catering, ICT, sports coaching and personalised learning.

Certificate and diploma in school business management

In recent years, the role of the school business manager has taken on increasing importance as business functions in schools expand. Initiatives such as workforce remodelling, extended schools, the devolution of financial autonomy and accountability to schools, and the growth in headteacher workload have contributed to the development of the role. At the same time new school management structures have emerged as schools enter into federations or collaborate in other ways to deliver new services or achieve efficiencies. The PriceWaterhouseCoopers Independent Study into School Leadership³⁹ recommended a range of non-traditional leadership models and other strategies to support school leadership in this new environment.

The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) piloted the certificate of school business management (CSBM) in 2002 and, following the success of the programme, introduced the diploma of school business management (DSBM) in the following year.

The CSBM is aimed at people who have worked in school administration or have recently been appointed as school business managers (SBMs), and those entering the profession from outside education. It covers key operational areas such as the management of school facilities, finances, office systems, ICT systems, human resources, risk and sustainable development. It has broad equivalence to NQF level four and is externally accredited by the Institute of Administrative Management (IAM).

The diploma of school business management (DSBM) is aimed at experienced SBMs who are working as part of the school senior management team. It covers three key areas: strategic management, change management and school improvement. It has broad equivalence to NQF level five and is accredited by the IAM. The TDA is working with the NCSL, the National Bursars Association and others to ensure that coherent qualifications pathways are available, including accredited qualification options.

Other nationally accredited qualifications

The career development framework (annex B) highlights many other qualifications, including subject or specialist qualifications which are suitable for school support staff. The TDA works

³⁹ www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR818A.pdf

with awarding bodies to ensure that these meet the needs of those working in a school setting.

Professional recognition

A growing number of professions are practised in schools and many school support staff have achieved, or wish to achieve, professional recognition. Subject or professional associations give professional recognition to people who meet specific conditions which they set, for example achieving a particular professional qualification. Such associations also provide career advice and/or training; Examples include the Institute of Administrative Management (IAM) and the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS).

HLTA status

Teaching assistants working at a higher level can achieve HLTA status. In order to do this they are assessed against a nationally-agreed set of professional standards. People who achieve HLTA status receive a letter from the TDA – on behalf of the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families – which acts as proof of HLTA status for current and future employers.

HLTA status is not a qualification but, as with qualified teacher status, achievement is by demonstrating all of the professional standards through a nationally recognised and quality assured assessment process. Although there is no requirement to have an NVQ before progressing to HLTA status, for many TAs, HLTA status is a natural progression from the NVQ at level three.

In order to achieve the status, candidates need to provide evidence of having gained a nationally recognised qualification at level two or above in literacy/English and numeracy/mathematics. Candidates also need to demonstrate that they have sufficient knowledge and understanding in an area (or areas) of expertise which supports the learning and development of the children and young people they support. Such areas of expertise can be curriculum areas, or relate to a key stage or age phase, or be cross-curricular, eg behaviour management. Developing an area of expertise enables HLTAs to support learning in a particular area more effectively.

Some higher education institutions are able to give credit towards a relevant foundation degree for candidates who have achieved HLTA status.

Foundation degrees

Foundation degrees (FDs) are intermediate university awards that are normally completed in two years (full time) or three years (part time).

All FDs must meet several criteria. They must:

- be flexible
- be work related
- be supported by employers
- provide entry routes for people with vocational qualifications and experience, and
- offer opportunities for progression to an honours degree.

There are already many foundation degrees relevant to the school workforce. In some cases FDs have replaced previous DipHE or HND programmes. The foundation degree forward website⁴⁰ lists 385 existing or planned FDs under 'education', including over 200 with an early years/care and development focus and over 100 in teaching/learning support. One FD

⁴⁰ www.fdf.ac.uk/

is identified as school business management, eight as educational administration, two as HLTA, four as outdoor education and nine as playwork. A number are defined as 'public sector management'.

Although the foundation degree (FD) will not automatically give a candidate HLTA status, some programmes have embedded the HLTA standards within them, thereby enabling students on the foundation degree programme to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to gain HLTA status. Conversely, some FD programmes give some direct credit to candidates who have gained HLTA status through the award of CAT (Credit Accumulation and Transfer) points which can count towards a foundation degree module.

Other higher education qualifications

As well as foundation degrees and subject specialisms, some support staff may benefit from other higher education qualifications. HE qualifications can provide expertise in different areas, access to professional recognition, and may support the career aspirations of particular staff members. UCAS provides a comprehensive guide to higher education qualifications⁴¹.

Non-accredited qualifications and training

A large number of non-accredited courses are available, including through local authorities and the national strategy teams. These can provide valuable development opportunities for support staff in specific areas. Non-accredited qualifications are not usually based on national occupational standards which can limit progression opportunities.

Most local authorities offer a wide range of courses for school support staff. Desk research shows that a typical local authority offers approximately 100 non-accredited training courses for school support staff. The duration of training courses is usually between half a day and three days and they cover general skills, (for example health and safety, first aid, signing, notetaking, management skills, IT skills) as well as skills specifically related to school staff (such as safeguarding, moving and handling children, schools information management system – SIMS, supporting curriculum subjects and special educational needs).

4.2 Analysis of the available information about qualifications and other learning provision

4.2.1 Qualification take-up

Information on the take-up of qualifications comes from two main sources:

- a longitudinal study on the deployment and impact of support staff in schools by the Institute of Education (DISS study)⁴² which collects data from a sample of schools, and
- a survey⁴³ conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to determine the training and development needs of support staff in schools by exploring their experience and perceptions of training and development.

The DISS study asked support staff in the sample to report on their qualifications. The study does not differentiate between qualifications already held by staff entering the sector and those achieved while working in a school. Only 10 per cent said they had no qualifications at all, and 38 per cent said they had qualifications at level three or above. Technicians were

⁴¹ www.ucas.co.uk/

⁴² www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR005.pdf

⁴³ www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/pims-data/outlines/research-into-support-staff-experiences-of-training-and-development.cfm

the occupational group most likely to have a degree (31 per cent); facilities staff were the least qualified, with over a third having no qualifications at all.

The DISS survey reported a significant increase in the number of support staff requiring specific qualifications to be appointed to their current role between 2003/04 and 2005/06. Teaching assistants, pupil welfare support roles, technicians and site staff were increasingly likely to require vocational qualifications in order to be appointed. Conversely, other pupil support staff were less likely to require qualifications – which may reflect the newness of some of the roles in this category (for example, parenting support roles) and the consequent lack of qualifications available to support their work. Staff in special schools were much more likely to need a qualification for their post (56 per cent) than those in primary and secondary schools (36 per cent in both cases).

The NFER support staff survey found that 58 per cent of support staff surveyed had a mathematics qualification at GCSE grade C or above, and 71 per cent had an English qualification at grade C or above. Site and premises staff were less likely to have mathematics and English qualifications than other categories of support staff.

Sixty one per cent of support staff taking part in the NFER survey had a qualification that was linked to their role. Qualifications identified by support staff were in a wide range of areas, including:

- accountancy
- advice and guidance
- business administration
- business management
- catering
- childcare
- counselling
- customer service
- health and nutrition
- information and communications technology (ICT)
- librarianship
- special needs
- support work in schools
- work-related skills (eg sign language, child protection, first aid)
- youth work.

4.2.2 Analysis of individual qualifications

Introductory training

An evaluation of the TDA's induction materials for teaching assistants (TAs) and support staff conducted by the University of Luton in 2006, found that the materials were well received by most local authorities. The impact of the training on TAs was rated 'good' or 'very good' by most respondents, who felt that TAs showed greater confidence in school as a result of the training and directly employed the strategies that had been introduced during the courses. Teachers reported receiving improved support in the classroom as a result of the training, while TAs showed greater interest and commitment to their careers, for example, by progressing to other courses (like NVQs).

However, since the materials were developed, the context in which introductory training takes place has changed significantly. With the development of the STL NOS, the

introduction of the qualifications and credit framework (QCF) and the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce, schools and local authorities are in a position to plan development pathways that are more closely matched to individual needs and circumstances. The increased diversity of job roles, and of demands on support staff, also requires a fresh look at the development opportunities that are needed for staff who are new to their role.

Skills for Life

The national *Skills for Life* programme has been successful, reaching its target two years early. Support staff who have received training have reported increased confidence and many have gone on to take qualifications related to their role within the school.

However, the NFER support staff survey⁴⁴ found that 42 per cent of support staff surveyed did not have a mathematics qualification at GCSE grade C or above, and 29 per cent did not have an English qualification at grade C or above. Site and premises staff were less likely to have mathematics and English qualifications than other categories of support staff. Evidence from the survey confirms that *Skills for Life* training remains an important priority for the sector. Employer views at consultation indicated that some felt strongly that level 2 literacy and numeracy qualifications should be a prerequisite to working in a school, particularly in a learning support role. The majority felt that softer skills were as, or more important, but agreed that those without basic skills should be supported to acquire them as soon as possible.

NVQs

Between 2002 and April 2008 more than 30,000 support staff have achieved the NVQ for teaching/classroom assistants. Consultation responses show that the new NVQ in supporting teaching and learning in schools is welcomed by stakeholders as better meeting the needs of the current workforce as it supports new roles and specialisms as they have developed in schools.

The introduction of the qualifications and credit framework means that all NVQs will have to be redeveloped in order to meet QCF requirements by the end of 2010.

Apprenticeships

Although apprenticeships for teaching assistants have been available since 2004, very few training providers offered the programme in England. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the reasons for this include the level of pay available for apprenticeships during the training and the difficulties experienced finding full-time posts in school at the end of the programme. To ensure a fuller understanding, the TDA has commissioned research to investigate barriers to take-up and how apprenticeships can be promoted to the school sector.

Following consultation in 2007/08⁴⁵ revised apprenticeship frameworks based on the new national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning in schools were developed. It is possible that the new framework, supporting as it does a greater breadth of roles in schools, will provide greater opportunities for young people undertaking an apprenticeship to be employed on a full-time basis. Since the new STL apprenticeship framework was approved, apprenticeship enquiries to the TDA have increased rapidly which may be an early indication of a growth in take-up. The TDA is working with employers and

⁴⁴ www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/pims-data/outlines/research-into-support-staff-experiences-of-training-and-development.cfm

⁴⁵ www.tda.gov.uk/support/support_consultations/apprentice_consultation.aspx

stakeholders to look at the benefits that engaging in the apprenticeship programme could bring to schools and what support for this would be welcomed.

Support work in schools qualification

The SWiS qualification was launched in 2003 and is available at levels 2 and 3 of the NQF. It includes two mandatory units which cover the requirements of working in a school and the common core of skills and knowledge for the children's workforce at an appropriate level. Optional units are drawn from a range of sets of NOS with relevance for the school workforce. Last year the qualification was taken by more than 5,000 people; the majority of these have been lunchtime supervisors or teaching assistants. The TDA has commissioned independent evaluations of the SWiS⁴⁶ including a survey of support staff and their managers with experience of the qualification. Evaluation showed widespread support for the concept of a small, flexible qualification that could provide opportunities for progression to a range of qualifications as people developed in their role. Revised versions of the SWiS will be available from January 2009 that reflect updates to some of the NOS from which it draws.

Although progression to NVQs is possible, the different assessment requirements mean that generally support staff have to provide additional evidence to satisfy the requirements for NVQ units. This can be burdensome for support staff and training providers.

Certificate and diploma in school business management (C/DSBM)

Since February 2003 approximately 5,500 people have completed, or are currently enrolled in, the C/DSBM training. Demand for the programmes has continued to grow, most recently with the development of training delivered locally to cohorts of trainees facilitated by local authorities. NCSL works in partnership with the TDA and the DSCF in the ongoing improvement and development of these programmes.

Other nationally accredited qualifications, including specialist and knowledge-based qualifications

School staff who support teaching and learning are often attached to a particular department or undertake a particular role such as supporting SEN. Developing subject specialisms can help staff be more effective and can help with career progression for those staff seeking HLTA status or wishing to qualify as a teacher. A wide range of specialist qualifications is available from training providers such as colleges and higher education institutions.

Professional recognition

Professional recognition can help support staff to progress within a particular profession and can be a good way to share effective practice and ensure the currency of knowledge.

HLTA status

Since 2003, more than 23,000 people have achieved HLTA status. The TDA recently reviewed the HLTA standards⁴⁷, following a period of consultation. The consultation was available online between March and May 2007 and a communications plan encouraged anyone, particularly those with knowledge or experience of HLTA status or with an interest in wider workforce development in schools, to take part. The revised standards are aligned with the recently revised teaching standards and in this way facilitate progression to initial teacher training for those who meet the entry requirements. They also have stronger links to the new national occupational standards for supporting teaching and learning. An online

⁴⁶ www.tda.gov.uk/support/qualificationsandtraining/swis/SWiS%20research.aspx

⁴⁷ www.tda.gov.uk/support/hlta/resources_2007.aspx

public consultation on the new STL NOS was promoted in the educational press. This consultation, together with focus groups and face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders showed that the vast majority of the sector felt that HLTA status (supported by appropriate CPD opportunities and qualifications at HE level) met workforce needs more effectively than would NVQs at level 4 or above.

Higher education

The SQS consultation established that there was consensus among employers and support staff that increased demands for support staff with higher and specialist skills should be supported through suitable qualifications at HE level. Reasons given included:

- enhanced credibility with teaching staff
- increased progression opportunities, including into teaching
- the expertise of HEIs in providing initial teacher training and teacher CPD opportunities.

The TDA is working with the body set up to promote and support foundation degrees, Foundation Degree Forward (fdf), to develop a foundation degree framework (FDF) for the school workforce. The FDF will include information about the workforce and its needs, and will specify the desirable content of foundation degrees intended for the sector. The Children's Workforce Development Council has been asked to work towards establishing a framework for foundation degrees across the children's workforce.

Where HEIs offer smaller qualifications for school support staff, a preference was expressed in consultation for those that offered points through the credit accumulation and transfer system that could contribute to a foundation or other degree.

Non-accredited qualifications and training

Feedback from the SQS consultation demonstrated that, although a lot of non-accredited training is viewed as excellent, many candidates and employers struggle to see how it compares with other qualifications and training and what progression routes are available. In particular, frustration was expressed by attendees at training where it became apparent that the level of training was above or below that expected. It was agreed that linking training to particular sets or units of standards would both allow schools to match development opportunities to training needs more effectively and provide opportunities for accreditation through demonstrating newly acquired skills and knowledge in the workplace.

4.2.3 How evidence informs recommendations

Evidence from consultation episodes, reports, and completion and funding data, suggests that the sector feels that the key qualifications are those that:

- ensure that all staff have a basic understanding of their role in school and the common core
- are sufficiently flexible to allow for the way roles have developed differently in schools, even where job titles are the same
- allow appropriate opportunities for transfer and progression across the children's workforce and beyond
- are based on national occupational standards or professional standards where they exist
- either attest to full occupational competence or, for those not yet able to achieve all of the units within a full level two or three qualification, provide opportunities for progression towards such qualifications.

Using this evidence, the main proposals arising from this work are to:

- develop a new competency-based framework of qualifications at levels 2 and 3 for school support staff which builds on the best features of existing qualifications and other learning provision
- support the development and revision of other qualifications, training opportunities and standards, including professional qualifications and recognition
- support the implementation of the integrated qualifications strategy for the children's workforce
- develop and implement a foundation degree framework for the sector
- support the introduction of the new training quality standard and encourage providers in the sector to apply for recognition as excellent providers of training for school support staff
- continue to work closely with a range of partners and stakeholders to ensure that the needs of the school workforce and the children's workforce are met
- continue to develop and update guidance and tools to help employers and support staff plan careers and identify development opportunities

4.3 How employers use and view qualifications

4.3.1 Stakeholder consultation on current provision

The career development framework, a searchable database of qualifications commonly accessed by school support staff, was used as the basis for the SQS consultation on how well the current range of qualifications meet the needs of the sector, and where there were existing and anticipated skills gaps and shortages. Consultation was through an online questionnaire, a series of regional consultation events, focus groups and the establishment of a reference group that included employers and other key stakeholders. This consultation, which started in autumn 2006 and concluded in spring 2007, included:

- school leaders
- local authorities
- members of the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group
- school support staff
- teaching, headteacher and support staff unions and professional associations
- sector skills councils and sector bodies with responsibilities for one or more occupational role found in schools
- the then Department for Education and Skills, and other national partners.

Many employers raised the issue of the large number of qualifications available for teaching assistants and commented that they found it hard to see how they related to one another in terms of size and coverage. Another frequent complaint was the degree of overlap between qualifications which led to staff repeating learning when training to do a different, but related, role. Even where qualifications draw on some of the same units of national occupational standards, such as the support work in schools (SWiS) suite of qualifications and various national vocational qualifications (NVQs), direct transfer of credit is not always possible because of the differing assessment requirements.

Another difficulty was matching non-accredited training to the needs of employees. When sending staff on training, schools sometimes found that the level of training was not suitable

for the person concerned and therefore a waste of time and money. There was also concern about how staff achieved recognition for undergoing training that did not lead to qualifications, though many argued that this was best achieved through an appraisal process that clearly identified training needs. Most felt that it would be helpful if appraisal systems were linked in some way to nationally recognised standards.

A further issue was the recognition of such training through competence based qualifications such as NVQs and SWiS. Most staff and employers thought it important that there should be opportunities for support staff to achieve recognition for the skills and knowledge that they had acquired through formal and informal development and on-the-job learning. However, there was some ambivalence towards the process of demonstrating to assessors that candidates were competent, with some seeing it as a 'tick-box and paper-chase' exercise.

Employers commented that some training providers for the SWiS and NVQs insist that all candidates attend a generic training course and, as well as not recognising the different skills and knowledge that participants already have, this approach leads to candidates being directed towards a sub-set of the units available for ease of delivery purposes rather than those that are relevant to their particular role. Providers, on the other hand, expressed concerns about the expertise and capacity of their trainers and assessors to work across such a broad range of units. Most felt that a greater involvement of schools and local authorities in the delivery and assessment of training and qualifications would help. They argued that school-based assessors would be familiar with the competencies outlined in units that were relevant to candidates in their setting and that local authorities would be able to link their training programmes to appropriate units and perhaps become a centre for qualifications, offering assessment and verification expertise. Where such models currently exist, stakeholders commented that they seem to be working well.

Some local authorities argued that the introductory training should be turned into a qualification, with staff demonstrating that they could apply their learning in school. The majority felt, however, that this would lead to yet another qualification and that the SWiS already met most of the aims of an introductory qualification. Some local authorities had used the introductory materials as the basis for developing programmes that led to accreditation opportunities for SWiS/NVQ units and this was proving very successful.

Overwhelmingly, people wanted to see an incremental framework put in place that allowed school support staff to build their skills over time from initial training to full occupational competence and which offered full recognition of prior achievement.

Stakeholders demonstrated a degree of confusion over the relationship between competence-based and knowledge-based qualifications. On the one hand, some expressed concern that NVQ training and assessment did not always ensure that people had a sound knowledge base to underpin their practice; on the other, people were concerned that some qualifications were possible to achieve without any school-based assessment. All were agreed, however, that there should not be an expectation that people should collect a plethora of qualifications to be deemed 'qualified.'

Concerns were also raised about the number of specialist qualifications available, many of which related to specific aspects of special educational needs. Many of these included aspects common to all roles in supporting children's learning in order to accommodate those without previous experience or qualifications. This often led to provision consisting of being fairly sizeable qualifications and off-putting for those who had already achieved vocational qualifications but wished to supplement this with some additional skills and knowledge. Because of the differing ways in which awarding bodies had developed their qualification units, opportunities for accreditation of prior learning (APL) were restricted.

Stakeholders also expressed concern about the lack of basic skills among some support staff, particularly those with poor literacy or English language skills. Staff lacking these skills

are unable to benefit fully from training opportunities or achieve qualifications. Information technology and numeracy skills were also identified as a problem, the latter particularly among those supporting children's learning and catering staff who have to meet complex nutritional standards. Some employers expressed the view that a certain level of language, literacy and numeracy ought to be a requirement of those working in schools, although the majority felt that other attributes may be more important but agreed that employers should take steps to identify and help staff address any basic skills needs early in their career.

Stakeholders also felt that available technology (hardware and software) was often not used as effectively as it could be, because of the lack of skills in the workforce. Personalisation of teaching and learning and increased data collection and analysis also highlighted the need for enhanced ICT skills among school staff.

Remodelling, in particular, has led to the creation of new roles in the school workforce (eg cover supervisor) as well as the expansion or refocusing of existing ones, such as teaching assistant. People felt that the current range of qualifications did not adequately reflect the changes in schools over the past few years or support the training of people in new and emerging roles.

Those consulted also felt that recent and proposed changes meant that there was a much greater need for higher level skills (NQF level three and above) among support staff. These included:

- an increased need for school business managers to relieve burdens on headteachers, especially with the move to extended services
- more pastoral and welfare staff to free teachers to concentrate on teaching – for example, non-teaching heads of year, assistant SENCOs and people trained to work with families and carers
- more support staff taking on line and team management responsibilities
- more support staff able to take on coordination roles, in particular in liaising with other organisations and agencies (extended service provision and the introduction of 14–19 diplomas were particularly cited here)
- more support staff with an increasingly specialised knowledge of SEN and specific learning difficulties to support the SENCO
- more behaviour and attendance specialists among support staff
- increased subject knowledge for teaching assistants, in particular to support a more personalised approach to learning
- more staff coming into schools with vocational expertise to support the introduction of diploma lines and to provide specialist support to teachers.

The majority of these issues have now been addressed through the development of the NOS in supporting teaching and learning and the qualifications based on them. As these qualifications are revised for the QCF, the TDA will ensure that they continue to support the increasingly specialised roles occupied by support staff.

A large proportion of those consulted felt that skills gaps at specialist and management level could be addressed through in-house development activities but, where external training and accreditation was offered, they felt that much could be delivered through higher education – HE certificates or foundation degrees – rather than through the national qualification framework accredited provision. This was because they felt that HE qualifications would give support staff more credibility when negotiating with teaching staff and those in other agencies, as well as providing more opportunities for progression.

4.3.2 Development of individual qualifications

Introductory training

Some local authorities have identified ways to encourage progression from introductory training to qualifications by mapping their training programmes to relevant units within the support work in schools qualification or the NVQ in supporting teaching and learning in schools.

In response to a demand for support for progression routes, the TDA is producing guidance for local authorities on how the current induction materials map to the new STL NOS, and can be used to support achievement of the related STL NVQ at levels two and three. The guidance should be available in 2009 and will also provide clarity about the relationship between the materials and other relevant training including the support work in schools (SWiS) qualifications, and training and resources provided by organisations such as the National Strategies and the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC).

The guidance will also support local authorities in customising and supplementing the TDA induction materials with other resources to meet the specific needs of local school staff. It will be the first step in supporting schools and local authorities in the development of more flexible approaches to introductory training that are in line with the implementation of the QCF in 2010.

Skills for Life

SQS consultation feedback indicated that the *Skills for Life* planner produced by the TDA is meeting the needs of school leaders. During 2008/9, the planner will be updated to reflect the introduction of functional skills and to include more case studies.

NVQs

The TDA launched guidance in 2008 to help support staff identify appropriate units within the STL NVQ and progression opportunities. The guidance also helps school leaders to understand how the NOS and NVQs can support a range of national and local initiatives.

The QCF represents a real opportunity to rationalise units through encouraging the acceptance of shared units between different sector bodies. Consultation has shown that employers believe that this approach can be effective.

Apprenticeships

Employers within the sector currently demonstrate little awareness of apprenticeships. Those who have direct experience of apprentices are very pleased with the outcomes. School leaders who are members of the sector qualifications forum thought that employing an apprentice would be beneficial to their school and may help attract a new and more diverse range of people into the sector. The TDA is carrying out work to explore the opportunities provided by the apprenticeship reform programme.

Support work in schools qualification

The differences between assessment requirements for the SWiS and NVQs are an issue. The introduction of the QCF provides an opportunity to align assessment requirements and better support progression.

The TDA has agreed with awarding bodies and stakeholders that the optional units within the SWiS suite of qualifications will be reviewed on an annual basis. Each year the qualification will be reviewed in the light of revisions to national occupational standards and

feedback on any gaps or units with minimal take-up. Information from the version of SWiS being trialled in the QCF, and the findings of the research into the impact of the qualification that began in January 2008, will also inform development activity.

Certificate and diploma in school business management

Recently, the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families has asked the NCSL to begin work to explore the potential for two new higher-level roles in supporting school leadership: advanced school business managers (ASBMs) and school business directors (SBDs). Working in partnership with DCSF, the TDA, local authorities and many other stakeholders, the NCSL is establishing 24 demonstration projects to test the concept. The TDA will work with the NCSL and other partners to ensure consistency with other areas of the Agency's work, including school modernisation, support for extended schools, and development of standards and qualifications for the whole school workforce.

Other nationally accredited qualifications, including specialist and knowledge-based qualifications

The TDA plans to work with awarding bodies, HEIs and the bodies representing other sectors to ensure that accredited qualifications meet the needs of school support staff. The TDA has developed an endorsement process for qualifications intended for QCA accreditation that elicits the views of schools and local authority staff on the appropriateness of qualifications and includes identification of qualifications, or their components, that have applicability to the wider children's workforce.

Professional recognition

Professional bodies and subject associations are largely self-regulating, but the TDA plans to maintain or cultivate relationships with relevant organisations in order to ensure a coherent offer for school support staff.

HLTA status

Although a status rather than a qualification, HLTAs are seen as having skills and knowledge that represent a progression from the level 3 qualifications. In addition to revising the standards which underpin the award of the status and the associated guidance, the TDA has developed support for HLTAs working in particular subject areas such as secondary mathematics and science.

Foundation degrees

Work to develop the FDF should be completed by autumn 2008. This will ensure that foundation degrees can be developed or reviewed in time for them to be included in the integrated qualifications framework (IQF) for the children's workforce by 2010.

Roles within the school workforce other than those concerned with directly supporting learning may not have any suitable FDs at present and there may be a case to develop some entirely new FDs.

Other higher education qualifications

The foundation degree framework can also influence other HE provision to encourage providers to ensure qualifications meet employers' and candidates' needs. In particular, consultation showed interest in smaller HE qualifications which could be seen as valuable CPD in their own right (particularly for those support staff already working at a higher level, such as HLTAs) while also contributing towards a foundation or other degree for those who wanted it.

Non-accredited qualifications and training

Changes to national funding priorities may lead to a decline in the number of non-accredited courses available. The TDA is producing tools and supporting national initiatives such as the Training Quality Standard to help schools and local authorities select training which meets their needs and provides good value-for-money. However, consultation showed that stakeholders welcome CPD opportunities that consist of short courses (eg a single day) providing they have sufficient information to match them to the development needs of staff. Many would welcome more opportunities for combined teacher and support staff training, particularly around specific learning difficulties.

Section 5: Other sector uses of qualifications

5.1 Use made of qualifications for the regulation of practice within the sector

Most school support staff roles do not have any mandatory qualification requirements, although there are regulations which set out the qualification requirements of some school roles such as teachers and school nurses. Employers are generally free to decide entry requirements for any vacancies they have. The TDA has produced guidance to encourage school leaders to use professional and occupational standards in order to develop job descriptions, select candidates, identify training needs and assess how well those needs have been met. Qualifications achieved before entry into the sector or particular institution are often used to inform recruitment decisions.

Many local authorities base pay and grading decisions on the possession of qualifications such as a level 2 NVQ, or professional status such as HLTA status. The new national pay and grading body for support staff is considering national job descriptions and pay scales, but there has been no decision yet about whether these will have any relationship with qualifications or status.

5.2 How qualifications promote customer confidence and protect consumers and the public within the sector

Customers within the sector include all those who experience the impact of the work of school support staff; this includes children and young people, their parents and carers, school leaders, local authorities, school colleagues, line managers and others within the children's workforce. Accredited qualifications can help these groups to feel confident that school support staff are working to agreed standards.

Qualifications and other training can help headteachers be confident that their staff have the knowledge and skills they need to undertake their roles and responsibilities. Headteachers are responsible under the National Agreement for ensuring that staff carrying out cover supervision and specified work have appropriate training and experience. Qualifications such as the level 3 NVQ in supporting teaching and learning in schools, and development opportunities like HLTA status, can promote customer confidence that staff undertaking this important role have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.

Extensive consultation with employers showed that qualifications are seen as valuable, although support staff did not always feel that their employer fully understood the qualifications that they had achieved and, therefore, did not always deploy them effectively. This could, at least in part, be attributed to the diversity of support staff roles and the plethora of available qualifications (the career development framework lists more than 400 qualifications as being routinely used in schools).

The TDA is working with partners to conduct further research and develop a clearer picture of how motivated and well-trained staff are improving standards in schools as well as pupil achievement and well-being. Through this work we will identify examples of good practice and areas where further effort should be targeted.

Section 6: How the TDA will help realise the future

6.1 The future of qualifications and other learning provision within the sector

6.1.1 Proposal for a new competency-based qualifications framework for school support staff

The opportunity provided by the new qualification and credit framework to use individual units as the building blocks of qualifications is welcomed by the TDA as offering the following benefits:

- units can be developed that are relevant to more than one section of the children's workforce, supporting both transfer and progression and opportunities for multi-agency training
- units can be put together in a variety of ways that mirror the diversity of school support staff roles
- using the same units in many different qualifications allows opportunities for the direct transfer of credit if staff move to a different but related role
- qualifications for new roles can be available more quickly as existing units can be combined in new ways to meet emerging needs
- it will be easier for support staff to build incrementally towards larger qualifications as their role develops.

People working in schools undertake a huge range of tasks and need to demonstrate an ever wider range of competencies. Many school support staff have unique jobs requiring different combinations of competencies from anyone else. A competency framework for the school workforce needs to allow for progression upwards along a specialist career path, sideways along a more generalist path, or into a different role or a different sector entirely. It also needs to facilitate progression into the school workforce from other sectors. The challenge is to articulate all the competencies that could be relevant to the school workforce.

Once those competencies have been identified, rules of combination will define the mandatory and optional units that make up qualifications within the new framework. It should be clear how each qualification accredited to the new framework will improve the effectiveness of an individual and how, taken in its entirety, the framework will improve the effectiveness of the whole school team. It is also essential that employers believe that each qualification is relevant and that it tells them something useful about the person achieving it.

On a more practical note, employers' needs are not the only ones to consider. Demands should not be so onerous as to dissuade candidates from undertaking or achieving qualifications. Technical requirements are needed to ensure quality, relevance and transferability. However they should be kept to the minimum necessary to achieve this so as not to prevent awarding bodies from offering the qualifications or training providers from developing the courses needed.

Some existing qualifications will need to change in order to meet the requirements of the QCF. The support work in schools (SWiS) qualification is a small and flexible qualification which allows learners to build up their confidence. It allows staff to specialise as they develop their skills and knowledge. NVQs are more challenging qualifications which allow candidates to demonstrate full occupational competence. Both types of qualification allow candidates to work at their own pace, selecting and completing relevant units as they progress.

Currently, candidates can progress from the SWiS to an NVQ by providing additional evidence, but this progression is not automatic and the process could be made simpler by using the same assessment strategies for common units. The QCF provides an opportunity to develop a simpler qualification structure which more readily supports progression. Lessons learnt and key features from the SWiS and NVQ qualifications will be reflected in future qualification development. The proposed framework will also meet the requirements of introductory training for school support staff, currently met through the development of training modules by the TDA and its partners.

Consultation with stakeholders found little evidence of roles in the school workforce below level two. Evidence also suggests that above level three, more specialised training and development is needed. There are already a number of opportunities for development at higher levels, for example the certificate and diploma in school business management, higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) status, higher level NVQs in many areas, foundation degrees and other HE provision.

The TDA is proposing to work with the QCA, awarding bodies and other sector bodies to develop a competency-based framework for the wider school workforce at levels two and three with a review of provision within the sector both below and above these levels.

The proposed framework will offer maximum flexibility for school staff and for their employers. The framework will meet QCF requirements and will allow individuals to develop and specialise through the gaining of an award, certificate and diploma; with the diploma representing full occupational competence in a given field. Some new units may need to be developed, but the majority will be units developed for the QCF and based on NOS. Those units will often have been developed by other sector bodies and will also appear in their qualifications. The TDA will work closely with relevant awarding bodies and sector bodies to ensure that each career pathway is fit for purpose and allows for progression either within the school sector, into other areas of the children's workforce or into other relevant sectors.

The TDA will need to represent the interests of its wider workforce when other standard setting bodies are revisiting standards and qualification provision for job roles where the TDA has a vested interest. The TDA must engage with a number of SSCs to ensure that the proposed core units find a place in the rules of combination for qualifications within other frameworks devised by SSCs.

A range of units will be available on the QCF unit bank; many of these will be based on NOS. All units will be represented as blocks of credit at a particular level. Each credit represents an average of 10 hours study. A five-credit unit would take an average of 50 hours to complete. This 50 hours represents the total investment of the learner, including teaching time, self-study and assessment.

Currently the QCA is proposing a range of 10-120 hours for an award, 130-360 hours for a certificate and 370+ hours for a diploma. The TDA will work with awarding bodies to create rules of combination to support awards, certificates and diplomas at levels two and three of the qualification framework suitable for school support staff.

The award will be a small qualification containing those aspects of the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce which are deemed relevant to all school staff along with any other knowledge deemed essential for all members of the wider school workforce, and a small amount of occupational knowledge and skills. It will be similar in its structure and aims to the existing support work in school qualifications and be particularly suitable for:

- those who are occupationally qualified (eg in administration) but new to a school setting; cluster awards could be developed to support transition into the sector

- those who are not yet employed in the sector and who require a qualification that provides a basic understanding of the Common Core and some knowledge about working in a school to increase their employability
- those working in a related sector (eg children’s social care) who require a transitional qualification
- those who have not taken a qualification for some time and who may not be ready to embark on a larger qualification
- those who work part time and who may find it difficult to access a larger qualification.

The certificate will be a larger qualification suitable for staff who are starting to specialise or those who undertake multiple roles. This option will build on the award, but would include a greater number/range of optional units. Units could be selected from an occupational pathway or could be more varied. It is likely to include a wider range of units that attest to competence in the workplace and be suitable for those who already work in the sector or who have access to a work placement. For those with a multiple or diverse role, this option will be similar to larger qualifications within the support work in schools suite; others may begin to specialise within a particular role and choose a certificate that recognises this through the combination of units and the qualification title.

The diploma will be a large qualification roughly equivalent in size to an NVQ. It would allow staff to demonstrate full occupational competence in a particular occupational pathway. The TDA would specify which units were mandatory and optional for diplomas related to supporting teaching and learning in schools. Other sector bodies would decide which units are included within their diplomas. It is essential that the TDA works with other sector bodies, including those who represent other parts of the children’s workforce, to ensure transferability across sectors.

We propose two wider workforce mandatory units which cover Common Core essentials, working in a school and basic health and safety for all school staff.

Proposed model for qualifications at levels two and three within the school wider workforce:

	Award (starter or top-up qualification)	Certificate (starting to develop occupational specialism)	Diploma (occupationally competent)
Pre-employment route (technical certificate)	Wider workforce (WW) mandatory units Choice from a limited range of knowledge-based optional units		
Employment route, (SWiS→NVQ)	WW mandatory units Free choice	(endorsed pathway)	(STL) WW mandatory units

	from specialist units	WW mandatory units Choice of optional/mandatory specialist units within pathway Limited number of free-choice specialist units	Occupational mandatory units within pathway Occupational optional units within pathway Limited number of free-choice specialist units or (other sector) Additional units specified by relevant sector body as necessary to achieve occupational competence
Supporting transfer and progression (cluster awards)	Cluster of units to support the transfer into the school workforce or movement between occupational settings		

In addition to the pathways that gradually develop occupational competence, small cluster qualifications could be developed to augment knowledge and skills gained in one role or sector so that the candidate has all the skills and knowledge he or she needs to perform effectively in another, related role, without having to duplicate evidence. For example, a combination of units could be specified within the QCF that provided the additional skills and knowledge necessary for someone who had qualified in a children's social care setting to be fully competent as a teaching assistant. The rules of combination would recognise those units from their previous qualification that were relevant to their new role and only require the candidate to supplement them with those additional units relating to supporting teaching and learning. The TDA will work with awarding bodies as well as other sectors to consider demand and how to develop appropriate cluster awards.

Awards based on those units that contribute towards a specialist pathway within a diploma could also be identified for use as CPD awards for already qualified staff who change or develop specialisms. For example, those units within the current level 3 NVQ for those supporting pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) could also be available as a small qualification available to experienced teaching assistants now required to provide this support. Some examples of how the proposed framework could work in practice are given in Annex D.

The QCF offers opportunities for the direct recognition of credit gained through different awarding bodies. The diversity of roles among school support staff and the wide range of skills and knowledge needed make it difficult for awarding bodies to offer qualifications and assessment expertise across all pathways. The framework would offer opportunities for awarding bodies to offer particular endorsed pathways while agreeing to recognise the core units – and any other units that may appear in more than one pathway – that a candidate may have previously achieved, including those awarded by another awarding body.

6.1.2 Future plans for other qualifications within the QCF

Where awarding bodies wish to develop specialist qualifications (for example, for those supporting pupils with a specific learning difficulty) the TDA would expect them, in proposing qualification structures, to include existing knowledge or practice units, where appropriate, supplementing them with additional units as required, or to specify where these qualifications are designed to build on existing skills and knowledge. This approach would allow candidates to use these qualifications either as continuing professional development or as a context in which to develop a mix of generic, transferable knowledge and competence as well as specialist skills.

Opportunities for distance learning are increasing and many school staff find distance learning a convenient and appropriate route. In developing qualifications suitable for distance learning, qualification developers need to consider what kinds of qualification may be suitable – for example, those designed to supplement an already occupationally competent practitioner’s knowledge of a specific learning difficulty – so that candidates and schools can clearly understand the role of such qualifications.

In supporting the development of new qualifications as part QCF, the TDA will have regard to the following principles:

- qualifications for school support staff should reflect the Every Child Matters outcomes and the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children’s Workforce appropriately
- decisions about qualification development should recognise that the majority of school staff are part of a wider children’s workforce.
- relevant qualifications should be considered for inclusion on the integrated qualification framework (IQF) for the children’s workforce
- qualifications should reflect the needs of different working patterns within the school workforce including those who work part time or have multiple roles.
- qualifications should allow for progression and provide opportunities for direct transfer of credit for previous learning
- new qualifications should be developed only where there is a strong rationale for so doing and the content should supplement or include existing units where available
- qualifications should link to relevant occupational or professional standards
- the qualification proposal should demonstrate how it meet the needs of schools and is distinct from existing provision.

Knowledge, skills and competency can be developed over time, but they do not necessarily develop at the same rate and they are not acquired in the same way. Knowledge is gained through discovery either through reading, formal teaching or research, skills are gained through observing and doing and competency is developed over a period of time by assimilating knowledge and skills.

Staff can continue to develop skills and knowledge throughout their careers. Catering staff may want to learn about special diets (diets that take account of allergies, medical conditions, culture and religion). There will be a range of ways to acquire additional knowledge and skills such as short courses which may or may not lead to accredited qualifications. Those developing non-accredited training provision for school-based staff should consider how such courses link to occupational or professional standards and opportunities for recognition of learning through units within the framework. This will support schools to make better links between training and the particular needs of their staff.

The TDA will work collaboratively with SSCs and other sector bodies to ensure that the many people based in schools, whose roles are not part of the core children's workforce (such as premises staff), have relevant qualification pathways available to them as well as opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in working with children and young people.

6.1.3 Future plans for other development opportunities

The TDA is developing a foundation degree framework to ensure that foundation degrees are relevant to the school workforce. HEIs will be encouraged to make links to appropriate standards and to consider the award of credit for relevant learning already undertaken including the achievement of HLTA status.

A new Advanced Diploma of School Business Management is being developed by NCSL to recognise the increasing responsibilities of many school business managers. The TDA is contributing to the development work.

The TDA will engage with other relevant bodies such as professional or subject associations to encourage the use of existing standards, recognition of achievement and consistent messages for stakeholders.

The development of a new competency-based suite of qualifications provides the opportunity to make clearer links between introductory and other training, standards and accredited qualifications.

The career development framework will be updated to reflect changes to qualifications and other development opportunities for school support staff in order to ensure that employers and support staff can make well-informed choices.

6.2 Engagement with partners

The TDA relies on strong relationships with its partners to ensure that appropriate qualifications are identified, developed and delivered. It does this through informing and seeking advice from various bodies including:

- TDA's Board
- The National Advisory Group for Professional Development of the Children's Workforce in Schools, a group established to advise the TDA on the professional development of the whole school workforce. It replaces the separate stakeholder reference groups for teachers and the wider workforce, ie the National Reference Group for teachers CPD and the School Workforce Development Board. This group includes nominees from:
 - Association of Directors of Children's Services
 - Association of Professionals in Education and Children's Trusts
 - Children's Workforce Development Council
 - Critical Advisory Support Partnership for CPD
 - The Department for Children, Schools and Families

- General Teaching Council for England
- Institute for Learning
- Lifelong Learning UK
- National College for School Leadership
- National Strategies
- Office for Standards in Education
- Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
- Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, and
- Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group
- The Children’s Workforce Network, which includes other sector and regulatory bodies with an interest in the children’s workforce.
- The sector qualifications forum, which consists of representatives from major stakeholder groups.
- Awarding body forums, which include awarding bodies which offer the NVQ in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools and the support work in schools qualifications.

6.2.1 Employers and support staff

Unlike sector skills councils, the TDA is not an employer-led organisation, although it does include employer representation on its Board. In developing this strategy, the TDA’s priority has been to describe the sector accurately and to gather views from employers about qualification needs, priorities and issues to ensure that their needs would be met.

Existing research provided some information about support staff experiences of qualifications, but the information was not sufficiently detailed for the purposes of drafting a qualifications strategy. A series of consultation events were held in October/November 2006. Delegates included support staff, their employers (local authorities, school leaders and line managers) and other stakeholders such as awarding bodies and subject associations. Delegates were asked about their experiences and in particular about:

- emerging roles
- current qualifications offer
- current and future gaps in provision
- priorities for qualifications
- barriers to training.

In all 17 sessions on support staff qualifications were held in London, Manchester, Birmingham, and Newcastle, with approximately 250 people attending.

A further 159 people responded to an online public consultation hosted on the TDA’s website in October/November 2006. The responses from this questionnaire supplemented information from the consultation events. The consultation was widely publicised through a marketing campaign which included a postcard distributed at a number of events, and articles in various newsletters and bulletins.

We used all this evidence to develop a draft strategy which we then tested again with small groups of support staff and their managers and employers. An invitation was sent via the TDA’s network of regional workforce advisers. We originally offered to run events in London,

Birmingham and Newcastle, but were inundated with requests for London and eventually held four workshops in London with 49 delegates attending. Those who had expressed an interest, but were unable to secure a place at an event were sent materials and invited to comment. Events consisted of a detailed explanation about the qualifications landscape and our proposals and then checking that our understanding matched that of delegates and asking whether they agreed with suggestions and what else we could do to help users understand the strategy.

In addition to the workshops, a formal public consultation was then held over three months, beginning in April 2008. The draft strategy and a questionnaire consisting of open and closed questions were publicised through a notice on the front page of our website, a postcard distributed at a number of events, and articles in various newsletters and bulletins. Feedback from these consultations has informed this subsequent draft of the strategy.

6.2.2 Government departments, funding agencies, review authorities and learning providers

Technical and reference groups were established to advise on the development of the draft strategy. These groups consisted of representatives from training providers, HEIs, awarding bodies, subject associations, the Adult Learning Inspectorate and regulators in England and Scotland, the DCSF, DIUS, the National College of School Leadership, LSC, sector bodies, trade unions, professional associations, the Association of Colleges, local authorities, QCA and Welsh government.

The TDA used its existing sector qualifications forum to comment and advise at each stage of development. This forum consists of a large number of stakeholders, including representatives from all four UK countries. An internal advisory group helped to ensure consistency with other TDA projects and policy.

During appropriate stages of development, the draft strategy was tested with relevant stakeholders. Presentations focusing on the strategy were given to the TDA Board and the School Workforce Development Board (a body which included representation from all those organisations with an interest in the development of the school workforce and whose publication *Developing people to support learning, a skills strategy for the wider school workforce* sets out the aspirations for this qualification strategy).⁴⁸

Regular one-to-one meetings between the TDA and the LSC have secured engagement with funding issues. CWN members were kept informed through a presentation given to the integrated qualifications framework board.

6.2.3 Awarding bodies

The TDA works closely with awarding bodies who develop qualifications for school support staff. A full list of the sector's awarding bodies is included as annex B.

Communication with the awarding bodies is through regular forums with awarding bodies currently specialising in qualifications for school support staff (Cache, City and Guilds, Edexcel, NCFE and OCR) and additional meetings or dialogue where necessary. We hope to continue with this very productive relationship in the future as qualifications are prepared for the qualifications and credit framework.

⁴⁸ www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/s/swdb_3ys.pdf

6.2.4 Other sector bodies

Over the last few years the TDA has developed strong relationships with many sector bodies and hopes to work more closely with others in the future. All relevant sector skills councils and sector bodies (see annex A) were invited to a workshop to discuss the strategy and separate conversations have been held with many of those involved.

The TDA will continue to strengthen relationships with partners during the implementation of the sector qualifications strategy.

6.3 The preparation of information and materials

The TDA will review NOS related to school-specific roles and update whenever necessary to ensure their continued relevance to the sector. The TDA will develop new NOS where a need is identified. The TDA will, in collaboration with awarding bodies, lead on the conversion its own NOS units into qualification units suitable for the QCF and will work with awarding bodies and with other sector bodies to develop rules of combination for the QCF to ensure that a range of qualifications is available which meets the needs of the sector.

The TDA will use its endorsement process to ensure that assessment strategies and qualification structures are fit-for-purpose and that stakeholders have relevant, accurate and timely information about new qualifications.

The TDA will submit relevant qualifications and units to the IQF for consideration by Children's Workforce Network (CWN) members. It will review and adopt relevant qualifications or units proposed by other members.

The TDA will continue to develop and promote guidance and tools to help schools make informed choices about qualifications and training and will continue to communicate with partners in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

6.4 Monitoring and evaluation

The sector qualifications strategy will remain a focus of the TDA's strategic plans for improving and supporting qualifications and training within the sector. The strategy will be reviewed on a three-year cycle. The impact of the strategy will be monitored through the TDA Board and the professional development advisory group, as well as through longitudinal research projects.

The review process will provide the opportunity to monitor the implementation of the strategy and to take account of changes in legislation, policy or practice.

Annexes

Annex A: Sector bodies

Sector skills councils	Sector description	Relevant school occupational group
Asset Skills www.assetskills.org	Property services, housing, cleaning services and facilities management	Cleaners, groundspeople, caretakers
Creative & Cultural Skills www.ccskills.org.uk	Advertising, crafts, cultural heritage, design, The Arts and music	Teaching assistants, specialists
e-skills UK www.e-skills.com	IT and telecoms	All staff, particularly IT technicians
Lifelong Learning UK www.lifelonglearninguk.org	Employers who deliver and/or support the delivery of lifelong learning	All staff, particularly those with line management responsibilities
People 1st www.people1st.co.uk	Hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism	Cooks, catering staff
SEMTA www.semta.org.uk	Science, engineering and manufacturing technologies	Lab technicians, science specialism HTLAs
Skills for Care and Development www.skillsforcareanddevelopment.org.uk	Social care, children and young people	All staff
Skills for Health www.skillsforhealth.org.uk	The health sector	School nurses, community links
Skills for Justice www.skillsforjustice.com	Custodial care, community justice, court and prosecution services, policing and law enforcement	Pastoral roles, community links
SkillsActive www.skillsactive.com	Active leisure and learning	All staff, particularly playworkers, specialist coaches

Other sector bodies		
Council for Administration www.cfa.uk.com	Administration and management	Office staff and bursars
The Improvement and Development Agency www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk	Local government	All staff

Annex B: Qualifications and awarding bodies

Table one lists abbreviations and website addresses for the awarding bodies that offer NQF accredited qualifications included on the career development framework for school support staff. A full contact list of all awarding bodies is also available at www.dfes.gov.uk/section97/awarding_bodies.shtml

Table two shows the awarding bodies for each of the accredited further education qualifications included on the framework listed by level and in alphabetical order. For details of higher education providers, visit www.ucas.com

Table one: Awarding bodies

Abbreviation	Awarding body	Website
1st4sport	1st4sport Qualifications	www.1st4sportqualifications.com
AAT	Association of Accounting Technicians	www.aat.co.uk
ABBE	Awarding Body for the Built Environment	www.abbeqa.co.uk
ABC Awards	ABC Awards	www.abcawards.co.uk
ACCA	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants	www.accaglobal.com
AQA	Assessment and Qualifications Alliance	www.aqa.org.uk
ASDAN	Award Scheme Development Accreditation Network	www.asdan.co.uk
ASET	ASET	www.aset.ac.uk
BCS	British Computer Society	www.bcs.org/bcs
CABWI	CABWI Awarding Body	www.cabwi.co.uk
CACDP	Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People	www.cacdp.org.uk
CACHE	Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education	www.cache.org.uk
Cambridge ESOL	University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations	www.cambridgeesol.org
CIEH	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	www.cieh.org.uk
CIPD	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development	www.cipd.co.uk
City & Guilds	City & Guilds	www.city-and-guilds.co.uk
CMI	Chartered Management Institute	www.managers.org.uk
CPCAB	Counselling and Psychotherapy Central	www.cpcab.co.uk

Abbreviation	Awarding body	Website
	Awarding Body	
CYQ	Central YMCA Qualifications	www.cyq.org.uk
EAL	EMTA Awards Limited	www.eal.org.uk
Edexcel	Edexcel Limited	www.edexcel.org.uk
EDI	Education Development International plc	www.ediplc.com
ESB	English Speaking Board (International) Ltd	www.esbuk.org
FAQ	First Aid Qualifications	www.firstaidqualifications.com
HAB	Hospitality Awarding Body	www.hab.org.uk
IAB	International Association of Bookkeepers	www.iab.org.uk
ILM	Institute of Leadership and Management	www.i-l-m.com
IMI	Institute of the Motor Industry	www.motor.org.uk
JEB	Joint Examining Board	www.jeb.co.uk
MTC	Meat Training Council	www.meattraining.org.uk
NCFE	NCFE	www.ncfe.org.uk
NEBOSH	National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health	www.nebosh.org.uk
NOCN	National Open College Network	www.nocn.org.uk
OCNW	Open College of the North West	www.ocnw.com
OCR	Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Exams	www.ocr.org.uk
OU	Open University	www.open.ac.uk
PAA/VQSET	PAA/VQSET	www.paa-uk.org
QFI	Qualifications for Industry	www.ediplc.com
RIPH	Royal Institute of Public Health	www.riphh.org.uk
RSPH	Royal Society for the Promotion of Health	www.rsph.org
Sports Leaders UK	Sports Leaders UK	www.bst.org.uk
TCL	Trinity College London	www.trinitycollege.co.uk
VTCT	Vocational Training Charitable Trust	www.vtct.org.uk
WAMITAB	Waste Management Industry Training and Advisory Board	www.wamitab.org.uk
WEA	Workers' Educational Association	www.wea.org.uk

Notes

The former Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC) is now part of Edexcel, although its qualifications still use the BTEC brand name.

RSA qualifications are part of OCR.

From 1 October 2005, City & Guilds Pitman qualifications have completely migrated to City & Guilds.

The Hospitality Awarding Body business transferred to City & Guilds on 1 October 2005. Existing HAB qualifications and services will continue to operate in the normal way and contact details at HAB will remain the same until further notice.

Table two: Qualifications

Level 1 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
Award in community sports leadership	Sports Leaders UK
Award in healthy eating	Edexcel
Award in library and information skills	NOCN
Award in providing a healthier school meals service	ASET, City & Guilds, NCFE
Award/certificate/diploma in health and social care	Edexcel, OCR
Certificate for IT users (ECDL part one)	BCS
Certificate in accounting	City & Guilds
Certificate in British sign Language	CACDP
Certificate in business administration	EDI
Certificate in coaching	1st4sport
Certificate in coaching hockey	1st4sport
Certificate in coaching rugby union	1st4sport
Certificate in communication tactics with deaf people	CACDP
Certificate in deaf awareness	CACDP
Certificate in deaf community and culture	CACDP
Certificate in deaf/blind awareness	CACDP
Certificate in ESOL skills for life	Cambridge ESOL, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, ESB, OCNW, TCL
Certificate in introducing business administration	OCR
Certificate in IT systems support – PC maintenance	City & Guilds
Certificate in laboratory technical skills	PAA/VQSET
Certificate/diploma for IT users (new CLAiT)	OCR
Certificate/diploma in bookkeeping	OCR
Foundation award in caring for children	CACHE
Foundation certificate in food hygiene	CIEH, RIPH, RSPH
Foundation certificate in health and safety in the workplace	CIEH, RSPH
Literacy/English: Certificate in adult literacy	 AQA, ASDAN, CACHE, City & Guilds, EAL, Edexcel, EDI, NCFE, NOCN, OCR, VTCT

Level 1 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
Key skills in communication	Most awarding bodies
GCSE in English	AQA, Edexcel, OCR
National certificate in business and ICT	OCR
Numeracy/mathematics:	
Certificate in adult numeracy	AQA, ASDAN, CACHE, City & Guilds, EAL, Edexcel, EDI, NCFE, NOCN, OCR, VTCT
Key skills in application of number	Most awarding bodies
GCSE in mathematics	AQA, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ for IT practitioners	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ for IT users	BCS, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, OCR
NVQ in business and administration	City & Guilds, EDI, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ in cleaning and support services	City & Guilds, HAB, MTC, WAMITAB
NVQ in hospitality	City & Guilds, HAB
NVQ in laboratory and associated technical activities	City & Guilds, PAA/VQSET
NVQ in sport, recreation and allied occupations	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR

Level 2 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
Award in administration	Edexcel, OCR
Award in food safety in catering	RSPH
Award in library and information skills	NOCN
Award in nutrition awareness	Edexcel
Award in paediatric first aid	Edexcel
Award in playwork	NOCN
Award in using ICT as a tool for learning	NOCN
Award/certificate in support work in schools (pilot)	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
Certificate for IT users	ABC Awards, EDI, NCFE
Certificate for IT users (ECDL part two)	BCS
Certificate for teaching assistants	ABC Awards, CACHE, Edexcel, NCFE, OCR
Certificate in basic first aid	FAQ
Certificate in bookkeeping	AAT, City & Guilds, IAB
Certificate in British Sign Language	CACDP
Certificate in business administration	City & Guilds, EDI
Certificate in child care and education	CACHE
Certificate in cleaning science	City and Guilds
Certificate in coaching	1st4sport
Certificate in coaching football	1st4sport
Certificate in coaching hockey	1st4sport

Level 2 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
Certificate in coaching rugby union	1st4sport
Certificate in computerised bookkeeping	ABC Awards, IAB
Certificate in conflict handling and prevention	HAB
Certificate in conflict management	City & Guilds
Certificate in counselling skills	AQA, CPCAB, NCFE
Certificate in deaf/blind support work	CACDP
Certificate in early years care and education	Edexcel
Certificate in early years practice	CACHE
Certificate in electronic notetaking for deaf people	CACDP
Certificate in emergency first aid in the workplace	ASET
Certificate in ESOL skills for life	Cambridge ESOL, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, ESB, OCNW, TCL
Certificate in first aid for sport	1st4sport
Certificate in first aid for those caring for children	ASET
Certificate in health and social care	Edexcel, EDI, OCR
Certificate in introduction to counselling skills	CPCAB
Certificate in laboratory technical skills	PAA/VQSET
Certificate in lipspeaking	CACDP
Certificate in paediatric first aid	FAQ
Certificate in playwork	CACHE
Certificate in pre-school practice	CACHE
Certificate in sports coaching	NCFE
Certificate in sports first aid	FAQ
Certificate in supporting playwork practice	CACHE
Certificate in team leading	CMI, ILM
Certificate in working with people who have learning disabilities	NOCN
Certificate/diploma for IT practitioners (general)	Edexcel, NCFE
Certificate/diploma for IT practitioners (ICT systems support)	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
Certificate/diploma for IT users (CLAiT plus)	OCR
Certificate/diploma in accounting	ACCA, City & Guilds, NCFE, OCR
Certificate/diploma in administration	OCR
Diploma for IT practitioners (software development)	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
Diploma for IT users	City & Guilds
Diploma in applied science	Edexcel
Diploma in hospitality	Edexcel
First certificate/diploma in health and social care (replaces level two first diploma in caring)	Edexcel

Level 2 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
First diploma in early years	Edexcel
GCSE	AQA, Edexcel, OCR
Intermediate certificate in food safety	CIEH, RIPH, RSPH
Literacy/English:	
Certificate in adult literacy	AQA, ASDAN, CACHE, City & Guilds, EAL, Edexcel, EDI, NCFE, NOCN, OCR, VTCT
Key skills in communication	Most awarding bodies
GCSE in English	AQA, Edexcel, OCR
National certificate in information technology	OCR
Numeracy/mathematics:	
Certificate in adult numeracy	AQA, ASDAN, CACHE, City & Guilds, EAL, Edexcel, EDI, NCFE, NOCN, OCR, VTCT
Key skills in application of number	Most awarding bodies
GCSE in mathematics	AQA, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ for IT practitioners	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ for IT users	BCS, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, OCR
NVQ for teaching assistants	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ in accounting	AAT, Edexcel
NVQ in advice and guidance	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR, OU
NVQ in business and administration	City & Guilds, EAL, Edexcel, EDI, OCR, IMI
NVQ in children's care, learning and development (replaces NVQ in early years care and education)	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI
NVQ in cleaning and support services	City & Guilds, HAB, MTC, WAMITAB
NVQ in customer service	CABWI, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, HAB, IMI, OCR, QFI, VTCT
NVQ in desktop publishing	City & Guilds
NVQ in food and drink service	City & Guilds, EDI, HAB
NVQ in food processing and cooking	City & Guilds, HAB
NVQ in health and social care (replaces level two NVQ in care)	City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, OCR, OU
NVQ in information and library services	City & Guilds
NVQ in instructing exercise and fitness	CYQ, Edexcel, City & Guilds, OCR
NVQ in laboratory and associated technical activities (educational)	City & Guilds, PAA/VQSET

Level 2 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
NVQ in multi-skilled hospitality services	City & Guilds, HAB
NVQ in playwork	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel
NVQ in sport, recreation and allied occupations: activity leadership	City & Guilds, CYQ, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ in sport, recreation and allied occupations: coaching, teaching, instructing	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ in team leading	CIPD, CMI, Edexcel, EDI, ILM, OCR, OU

Level 3 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
A-level	AQA, Edexcel, OCR
Advanced certificate in food safety	CIEH, RIPH, RSPH
Advanced certificate in information, advice and guidance	NOCN
Advanced VCE in health and social care	AQA, Edexcel, OCR
Advanced VCE in hospitality and catering	AQA, Edexcel, OCR
Award in assessing candidates using a range of methods	Most awarding bodies
Award in supervising food safety in catering	RSPH
Award/certificate/diploma for IT practitioners (general)	Edexcel
Award/certificate/diploma for IT practitioners (ICT systems support)	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
Award/certificate/diploma for IT practitioners (software development)	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
Award/certificate/diploma in administration	Edexcel, OCR
Award/certificate/diploma in business	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
Award/certificate/diploma in counselling	ABC Awards, AQA, City & Guilds, CPCAB, NCFE, Edexcel
Award/certificate/diploma in support work in schools (pilot)	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
Award/diploma in applied science	Edexcel
Certificate for specialist leaders of behaviour and attendance	City & Guilds
Certificate for teaching assistants	CACHE, Edexcel, NCFE, OCR
Certificate in coaching	1st4sport
Certificate in communication and guiding skills with deaf/blind people	CACDP
Certificate in computerised accounts	City & Guilds
Certificate in ESOL subject support	City & Guilds, OCNW
Certificate in first line management	ILM
Certificate in laboratory technical skills	PAA/VQSET
Certificate in lipspeaking	CACDP

Level 3 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
Certificate in occupational health and safety	NEBOSH
Certificate in off-site safety management	OCR
Certificate in personnel practice	CIPD
Certificate in tutoring in sport	1st4sport
Certificate in working with people who have learning disabilities	NOCN
Certificate of professional development in work with children and young people	CACHE
Certificate/diploma for IT users	City & Guilds, EDI, NCFE, OCR
Certificate/diploma in accounting	ACCA, IAB, OCR
Certificate/diploma in business administration	City & Guilds, EDI
Diploma in child care and education	CACHE
Diploma in cleaning services supervision	City and Guilds
Diploma in early years practice	CACHE
Diploma in pre-school practice	CACHE
Diploma in supporting playwork practice	CACHE
Introductory certificate in first line management	ILM
National award/certificate/diploma in early years	Edexcel
National certificate/diploma in health studies	Edexcel
National certificate/diploma in hospitality supervision	Edexcel
NVQ for IT professionals	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ for IT users	BCS, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, OCR
NVQ for teaching assistants	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR
NVQ in accounting	AAT, City & Guilds, Edexcel
NVQ in advice and guidance	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR, OU
NVQ in British sign Language	CACDP
NVQ in business and administration	City & Guilds, EAL, Edexcel, EDI, IMI, OCR
NVQ in children's care, learning and development (replaces NVQ in early years care and education)	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI
NVQ in coaching (association football)	City & Guilds
NVQ in customer service	CABWI, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, HAB, IMI, OCR, QFI, VTCT
NVQ in health and social care (children and young people)	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, OCR, OU
NVQ in information and library services	City & Guilds
NVQ in instructing physical activity and exercise	City & Guilds, CYQ, OCR
NVQ in laboratory and associated technical activities	City & Guilds, PAA/VQSET

Level 3 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
NVQ in learning, development and support services for children, young people and those who care for them	Edexcel, OCR, OU
NVQ in playwork	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel
NVQ in professional cookery	City and Guilds, HAB
NVQ in property and caretaking supervision	ABBE
NVQ in sport, recreation and allied occupations: coaching, teaching, instructing	City & Guilds
Progression award in counselling skills	City & Guilds
Progression award in early years care and education	City & Guilds
Progression award in library and information services	City & Guilds
Support competence achieved in the workplace (unit certification)	CIPD, City & Guilds, EAL, Edexcel, EDI, OCR, OU, PAA/VQSET

Level 4 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
Award in conducting internal quality assurance of the assessment process	Most awarding bodies
Certificate for IT professionals	BCS, OCR
Certificate for specialist leaders of behaviour and attendance	City & Guilds
Certificate in accounting	ACCA
Certificate in early years practice	OU
Certificate in FE teaching stage one	ABC Awards, City & Guilds, Edexcel, JEB, OCNW, OCR
Certificate in supporting learning in primary schools	OU
Higher professional diploma for IT practitioners	City & Guilds
NVQ for IT professionals	City & Guilds, OCR
NVQ in accounting	AAT
NVQ in advice and guidance	City & Guilds, Edexcel, OCR, OU
NVQ in British Sign Language	CACDP
NVQ in business and administration	City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, OCR
NVQ in careers education and guidance	OCR
NVQ in children's care, learning and development (replaces NVQ in early years care and education)	CACHE, City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI
NVQ in health and social care (children and young people)	City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI, OCR, OU
NVQ in interpreting	CACDP
NVQ in laboratory and associated technical activities	City & Guilds, PAA/VQSET
NVQ in learning, development and	Edexcel, OCR, OU

Level 4 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
support services for children, young people and those who care for them	
NVQ in property management	ABBE

Level 5 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
Certificate in management studies	Edexcel
Diploma in management	CMI, ILM
Higher national certificate/diploma in advanced practice in work with children and families	Edexcel
Higher national certificate/diploma in computing (general)	Edexcel
Higher national certificate/diploma in computing (ICT systems support)	Edexcel
Higher national certificate/diploma in computing (software development)	Edexcel
Higher national certificate/diploma in hospitality	Edexcel

Level 7 qualifications	Awarding body(ies)
Executive diploma in management	CMI, ILM

Annex C: National qualifications frameworks

National qualifications framework and Framework for Higher Education Qualifications⁴⁹

National qualifications framework (NQF)	Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
Level 8 eg specialist awards	D (doctoral) Doctorates
Level 7 eg Level 7 Diploma in Translation	M (masters) Masters degrees, postgraduate certificates and diplomas
Level 6 eg Level 6 National Diploma in Professional Production Skills	H (honours) Bachelor degrees, graduate certificates and diplomas
Level 5 eg Level 5 BTEC Higher National Diploma in 3D Design	I (intermediate) Diplomas of higher education and further education, foundation degrees and higher national diplomas
Level 4 eg Level 4 Certificate in Early Years	C (certificate) Certificates of higher education
Level 3 eg Level 3 Certificate in Small Animal Care Level 3 NVQ in Aeronautical Engineering A levels	
Level 2 eg Level 2 Diploma for Beauty Specialists Level 2 NVQ in Agricultural Crop Production GCSEs Grades A*-C	
Level 1 eg Level 1 Certificate in Motor Vehicle Studies Level 1 NVQ in Bakery GCSEs Grades D-G	
Entry level eg Entry Level Certificate in Adult Literacy	

⁴⁹ www.qca.org.uk/qca_5967.aspx

Annex D: Proposed competency framework

Example of what the proposed model for qualifications at levels two and three for teaching assistants could contain:

	Award (starter or top-up qualification)	Certificate (starting to develop occupational specialism)	Diploma (occupationally competent)
Pre-employment route (similar to current technical certificate)	Wider workforce (WW) mandatory units Choice from a limited range of knowledge-based optional units		
Employment route, (similar to current SWiS and NVQ)	WW mandatory units Free choice from specialist units	(endorsed pathway) Two WW mandatory units Two mandatory TA units Three units from group A (TA group) One free choice unit	A certificate + a further two mandatory TA units One further unit from group A and one further free choice unit
Supporting transfer and progression (cluster awards)	Transfer from early years to school sector One mandatory unit (working in a school)		

Example of what the proposed model for qualifications at levels two and three for catering staff in schools could contain:

	Award (starter or top-up qualification)	Certificate (starting to develop occupational specialism)	Diploma (occupationally competent)
Pre-employment route	WW mandatory units Choice from a limited range of knowledge-based optional units		
Employment route,	WW mandatory units Free choice from specialist units	(catering endorsed pathway) Two WW mandatory units Three mandatory catering units Healthy eating unit One optional unit from group B – catering) One free choice unit	Additional mandatory and optional catering units specified by People 1st as necessary to achieve occupational competence
Supporting transfer and progression	Transfer from Catering NVQ into school sector Two WW mandatory units and healthy eating unit		

Examples of how the new framework might work

Janet gained a level two food processing and cooking diploma while employed in a hotel kitchen. She completed the three mandatory units.

- Maintain a safe, hygienic and secure working environment
- Contribute to effective teamwork
- Maintain food safety when storing, preparing and cooking.

She chose the eight optional units which were most relevant to her job in the hotel. Janet selected:

- Cook and finish basic fish dishes
- Cook and finish basic meat dishes
- Cook and finish basic poultry dishes
- Cook and finish basic vegetable dishes
- Prepare, cook and finish basic hot sauces
- Convert a room for dining
- Order stock
- Set up and close kitchen.

Having gained the diploma, Janet is fully competent in processing and cooking at level two.

Janet then applied for, and accepted, a job in a school kitchen. Following a chat with her new line manager about her continuing professional development (CPD), they agreed that she would benefit from taking additional units to support her transition to the new setting and the national drive to encourage healthy eating in schools. Fortunately, one awarding body has identified that others may be making similar transitions and has developed a cluster award called the school catering award which consists of the following three units.

- Explore and respond to the needs of pupils
- Explore school values, policies, roles and responsibilities
- Prepare, cook and finish healthier dishes.

Completing these three units gives Janet a worthwhile nationally-recognised qualification and helps her to feel a valuable part of the school team. Furthermore, the school is assured that she has all the knowledge and skills that she needs to make a positive contribution to its goals. Janet has not had to repeat any of the skills and knowledge which she has already been assessed against during her original diploma.

George completed the same diploma as Janet; the level two food processing and cooking diploma. He took his diploma while employed in a hospital kitchen preparing meals for patients. George also took the three mandatory units, but he chose different optional units which were more relevant to his job in the hospital. George selected:

- Prepare hot and cold sandwiches
- Prepare, cook and finish healthier dishes
- Prepare, cook and finish basic hot and cold desserts
- Prepare and present food for cold presentation

- Process, cook, finish and present flour dough and tray-bake products
- Provide a counter/takeaway service
- Package food for delivery
- Give customers a positive impression of yourself and your organisation.

When George starts working in the school he also wants to gain the school catering award. Because George already has the healthy eating unit, he can get prior accreditation for this unit and only needs to take two additional units (explore and respond to the needs of pupils and explore school values, policies, roles and responsibilities) to gain the school catering award.

Of course, those candidates who have no previous catering qualifications could be supported to achieve the diploma within the school setting, through choosing a suitable mix of units. A candidate working few hours or with a limited role may decide to begin with the achievement of an award or certificate, building towards a diploma as his/her role and confidence develops.

Similar models could be developed for any relevant sub-sector. Overall responsibility for units remains with the relevant sector skills council or sector body – in the example above, this is People 1st. The TDA intends to work with all relevant SSCs and sector bodies to ensure that units, rules of combination and cluster awards are revised or developed for the whole of the wider school workforce.