LIFELONG LEARNING UK

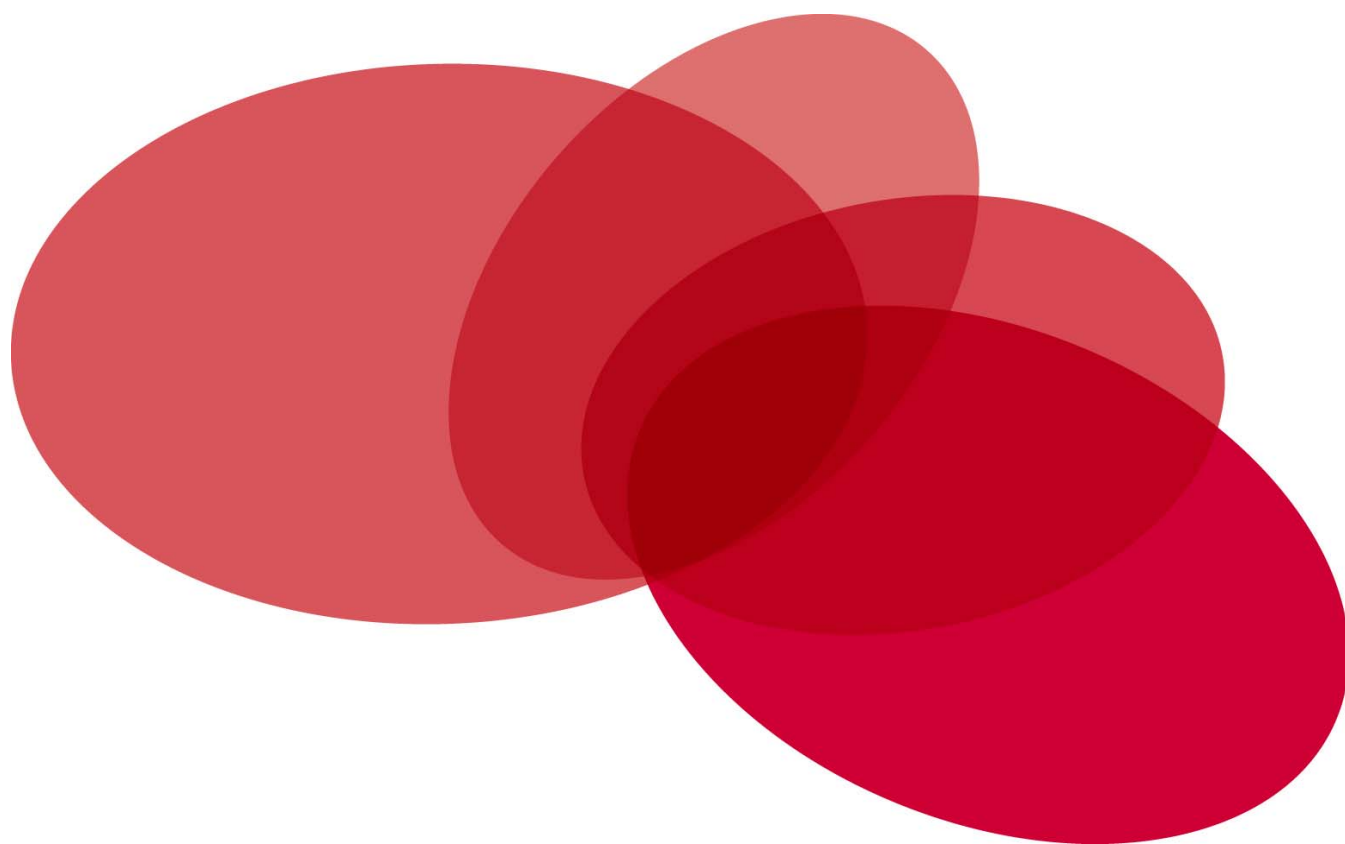**Skills for Learning Professionals**

PROFILE AND SKILLS ISSUES IN THE YOUTH SERVICE WORKFORCE IN WALES

skills
FOR BUSINESS

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2007 Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) to collect data on workforce characteristics and employer skills needs from the maintained and voluntary youth service sectors in Wales.

The aim of the data collection and subsequent analysis was to inform the Welsh Assembly Government's Workforce Development Strategy for the youth service and fulfil LLUK's core remit role of undertaking national analyses of sectoral labour market and skills needs and demands[1].

The Workforce Development Strategy was signposted as Priority 6 (pg 27) in the Welsh Assembly Government consultation document; Towards a National Youth Service Strategy for Wales (Nov 2006), and recognised LLUK as a key partner.

The Youth Service Strategy consultation document goes on to state:
'Youth work seeks to be pro-active in engaging with young people to develop a wide range of skills, attitudes and experiences which will help them in school and in their working and non-working lives".

The youth service is underpinned by a set of core values and principles, such as the youth work curriculum statement for Wales. The National Occupational Standards (which are stewarded by LLUK) and associated professional qualifications for the youth service are developed from a social pedagogy values base.

LLUK believes that parity of esteem needs to be attributed to the contributions made by both the maintained and voluntary sectors of the youth service. A young person will not differentiate between a service provided by a maintained or voluntary youth worker. Adequate support needs to be given to both services to ensure they are both able to offer the same quality of service to young people on an ongoing basis.

The maintained sector is defined as where services are provided or secured by local authorities under Section 123 of the Learning and Skills Act (2000) and delivered according to the principles of the youth work curriculum statement for Wales (Standing Conference, 2007).

The voluntary sector organisations, in this research, all are members of the Council for Wales Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS). Membership is open to all voluntary youth work organisations that share CWVYS' objective 'To educate and help young persons to develop their physical, mental, cultural and spiritual capacities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society by facilitating mutual support and co-operation among voluntary youth organisations, the Youth Service and other related agencies in Wales.' (www.cwvys.org.uk)

The report is dived into four sections. The first details the methodology and response rates; the second discusses the profile of the workforce; the third outlines the findings related to skills issues and the final section gives a summary of the main findings.

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[1] Skills that Work for Wales – An Employment and Skills Strategy 2007 (pg 18 para 2.8)

2. METHODOLOGY AND RESPONSE RATES

The data collection for the maintained and voluntary sectors was undertaken using different methodologies. Data collection for the maintained sector entailed collecting quantitative data using surveys, whereas for the voluntary sector data collection was carried out through face-to-face or telephone interviews. The main reason for this was the difference in availability of data in the two sectors, with the maintained sector having relatively better access to the required information. Further details are given in the relevant sections below.

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 Maintained sector

For the maintained sector data was collected as the second phase of the Youth Service scoping exercise, the first phase being the data collect by the Local Government Data Unit (LGDU) in August/September 2007. The first phase gathered data on staffing levels specifically looking at occupational categories and youth work qualifications; it also requested data on the buildings, projects and finances of the services.

 The maintained sector is more uniform and has comparatively better established data collection processes to the voluntary sector, due to this and its size, it was decided that the most appropriate method would be to collect quantitative data using questionnaires.

The data was collected using two separate questionnaires; one, to be completed by individuals in the workforce and another, to be completed by the Principal Youth Officer (PYO) of each service. The decision to collect data separately was taken in order to obtain as accurate as possible data on individual staff members and to also have an employer level view of the sector; the latter is particularly important to LLUK in its role as Sector Skills Council.

Both questionnaires were developed taking into account the topics that had previously been covered in Phase 1 of the scoping exercise. Phase 1 was produced on Microsoft Excel, and as well as considering its content, the format was used as a guide in the production of the PYOs' questionnaire to try to ensure some continuity between the two. Microsoft Word was used for the individuals' questionnaire as it allowed more widespread access to the workforce, for example employees who were not office based could be sent a copy of the questionnaire.

The questionnaires were forward to the Principal Youth Officers of the twenty-two maintained youth services, who were then responsible for distributing the individuals' questionnaire to their workforce. Responses from individual staff members were collated within each youth service in an Excel template and returned to LLUK for analysis. The youth services had approximately eleven weeks (19 November 2007 to 31 January 2008) to distribute the surveys, collate individuals' responses and return the final data, from both individuals and PYOs, to LLUK. This did however include the Christmas holiday period, which may have impacted on the response rate.

The scope of the questionnaires was to collect information on staff profiles and labour market issues such as skills gap[2], skills shortages[3], training, recruitment and retention.

Individuals' questionnaire

Specific profile information was requested on the following categories:

- Main occupational category
- Highest level of educational attainment
- Paid or voluntary status
- Full or part-time status
- Average hours worked per week
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Declared disability status

In addition to the above, individuals were asked to list what they felt were their five most important skills gaps and the five skills areas in which they would most like to improve their knowledge and understanding.

Principal Youth Officers' questionnaire

The PYOs' questionnaire, as well as asking for information on skills gaps across different occupational groups, also covered recruitment and retention issues and the measures taken to address related problems.

2.1.2 Voluntary sector

Collection of workforce profile and skills data from the voluntary sector posed different issues to the maintained. The sector has to deal with the difficulties of maintaining records on a workforce where there is likely to be a greater turnover due to the majority being volunteers. Additionally, in collecting workforce data it needs to consider the sensitivities and impact of asking certain types of information from volunteers. Though the sector does collect data on its workforce the information gathered does not necessarily tally with that requested by external organisations, such as LLUK. Furthermore, the sector is highly diverse with a variety of organisational structures and job roles which can be difficult to describe in a standardised format.

LLUK worked with CWVYS to decide upon an appropriate methodology taking into consideration the type and extent of data available; and due to the reasons mentioned previously, it was decided to conduct face-to-face or telephone interviews with eight organisations in an attempt to gain a better view of the sector. The organisations were recruited using a list of thirteen organisations provided by CWVYS.

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[2] Skills gaps occur where current employees are perceived to be lacking the appropriate level or types of skills to enable them to be fully proficient in their post.
[3] Skills shortages are hard-to-fill vacancies where new applicants do not have the required skills, experience or qualifications.

The organisations were initially made aware of the study by a letter sent by CWVYS; this was then followed up by email and telephone contact by LLUK in order to recruit the desired number of interviewees. The interviews were conducted either face-to-face or by telephone and the participants were provided with an interview guide prior to the interview to help them prepare. The interviews were taped, with the permission of the participants, then transcribed and input onto a spreadsheet to enable the data to be compared and summarised.

In a similar vein to the maintained sector surveys, the interviews related to the profile of the workforce and their skills issues.

2.2 Response rates

2.2.1 Maintained sector

All twenty-two youth services were sent the surveys. The Principal Youth Officer survey was returned by 18 of the 22 services and the collated data from the individual level survey was received from 18 of the 22 services, though they were not exactly the same 18 for each survey. This resulted in a high overall response rate of 81% for each survey.

For the individual level survey, examining response rates within each service, i.e. proportion of individual responses achieved from paid staff, shows that the response rates ranged from 12% to 100%. It should, however, be noted that the service with the 12% response rate had a reduced time period to complete the survey due to administrative problems. Despite a few services achieving low responses from their workforce, the majority (14 out of 18) obtained responses rates of at least 50%; resulting in a final number of 1,363 staff responding to the survey. Based on this, the results can be considered as a good representation of the workforce.

2.2.2 Voluntary sector

The stipulated eight interviews were achieved in the voluntary sector.

Organisations included the National Wales structure of six UK–wide organisations, three of which are uniformed and two are more locally based organisations affiliated to UK wide charities. Also included are a Wales-wide organisation and a local organisation that recruits its volunteers from a particular community of young people.

3. PROFILE OF THE WORKFORCE

The following section examines characteristics of the workforce using the previously mentioned profile variables. The results are shown in percentages and by the actual number of responses, which is indicated by n.

3.1 Occupation and educational attainment

3.1.1 Maintained sector

As would be expected the largest occupational groups were the youth work delivery staff[4], with 26% (n=353) of staff categorising themselves as professional youth workers[5]; 32% (n=440) as youth support workers[6] and 23% (n=310) as youth work delivery (unqualified). The next largest group is managers at 7% (n=95). The full occupational breakdown can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Occupational breakdown
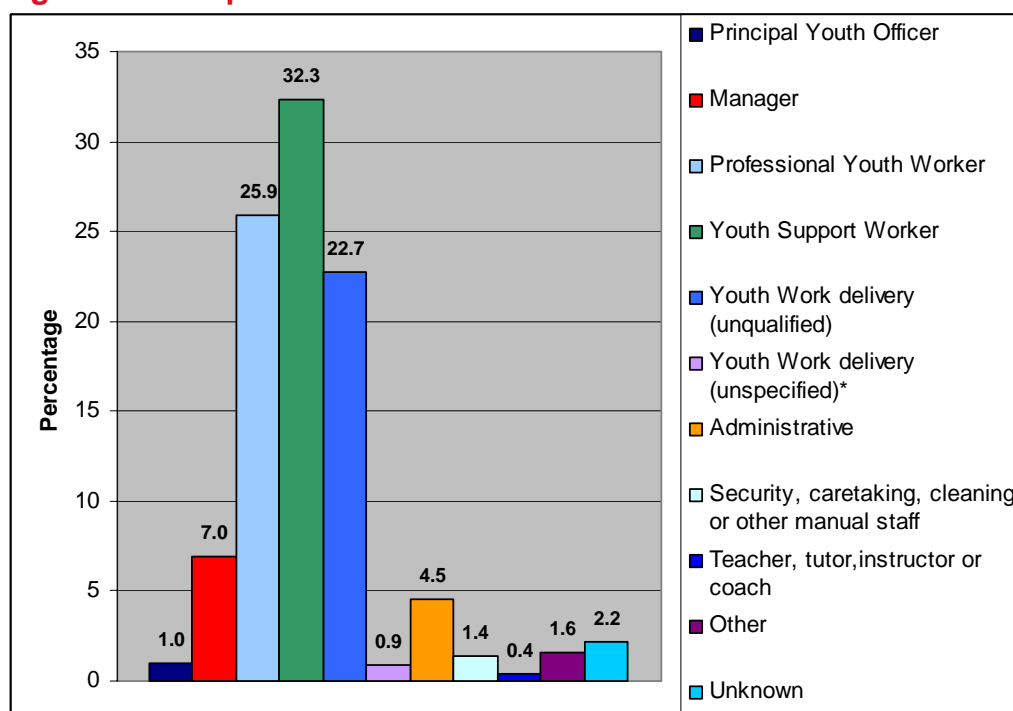
* Youth worker (unspecified) relates to staff who have not specified whether they are professional youth workers, youth support workers or youth workers (unqualified)

Further analysis, in this section, by occupation is limited to the following categories: Principal Youth Officer, professional youth worker, youth support worker and youth worker

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[4] Youth work delivery includes all delivery staff that are core funded and on short-term project funding
[5] Professional Youth Worker/Nationally qualified = BA/Post-grad/Diploma HE in Youth and Community/Teacher trained pre-1988
[6] Youth Support Worker/Locally qualified = Foundation Course/QCA4/NOCN/NVQ2/NVQ3

(unqualified). The other occupational categories have been omitted due to their low numbers[7].

As implied by the high number of professional youth workers and youth support workers, the maintained sector consists of a highly qualified workforce. Nine percent (n=128) are qualified to higher degree level, 25% (n=339) to degree level and a further 22% (n=302) to higher education qualifications below degree (c.f. Appendix 1, Figure A1).

Further indication of the high level of qualifications is shown by comparison to the overall educational attainment levels in Wales. Data from the Office of National Statistics Annual Population Survey (APS)[8] shows for the year January 2006 to December 2006, 24% of the working population of Wales are qualified to Higher National Diploma (HND) and above. In contrast, for the maintained youth service a substantially larger proportion (53%, n=719) are qualified to the equivalent level (i.e. Higher Education below degree and above).

The association between occupation and qualifications is shown in Table1 below. Unsurprisingly higher qualification levels are linked with managerial roles; a large proportion of PYOs are qualified to higher degree level (6 of 14), and the majority of managers (53 of 94) are qualified to degree level. The most common qualification level for professional youth workers is degree level, with 47% (n=153) of this occupational group falling into this category, followed by 35% (n=114) of professional youth workers within the HE below degree group. The most common qualifications level for youth support workers is HE below degree (28%, n=111), whereas for unqualified youth workers it is Level 3 qualifications (30%, n=87).

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[7] Although a low count also exists for Principal Youth Officers, there are only 22 PYOs in total therefore responses from 14 individuals gives a good representation of this group.
[8] Data was obtained using the nomis website, the site for official labour market statistics, provided by the Office for National Statistics

Table 1: Highest qualification by occupation

		Principal Youth Officer	Manager	Profession-al Youth Worker	Youth Support Worker	Youth Worker Un-qualified	Total
Higher degree	%	50.0	23.4	12.0	6.5	5.5	9.8
	n	7	22	39	26	16	110
Degree or degree level	%	28.6	56.4	47.2	15.8	14.7	28.1
	n	4	53	153	63	43	316
HE below degree	%	21.4	17.0	35.2	27.8	11.6	24.7
	n	3	16	114	111	34	278
A Level S/NVQ 3	%	0.0	2.1	2.5	27.1	29.7	18.2
	n	0	2	8	108	87	205
GCSE/O level (A-C)	%	0.0	0.0	0.9	10.5	18.8	8.9
	n	0	0	3	42	55	100
GCSE/O level (D-G)	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	5.5	2.0
	n	0	0	0	6	16	22
GCSE grade unspecified	%	0.0	0.0	0.9	2.0	8.9	3.3
	n	0	0	3	8	26	37
No formal qualifications	%	0.0	1.1	0.6	1.8	3.4	1.8
	n	0	1	2	7	10	20
Other qualifications	%	0.0	0.0	0.6	6.3	2.0	2.9
	n	0	0	2	25	6	33
Don't know	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.3
	n	0	0	0	3	0	3
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	n	14	94	324	399	293	1124

3.1.2 Voluntary sector

The 2006 consultation document *Towards a National Youth Service Strategy for Wales* states that the workforce for the voluntary youth sector in membership of CWVYS has been estimated to include 400 paid employees and 40,000 volunteers.

In this research, the voluntary sector organisations range in size from tens of staff to thousands. Some of the smaller organisations rely on very low numbers of paid staff, for example two of the organisations are dependent on one part-time and one full-time paid member of staff. A lack of money was stated as one of the reasons for this by the two organisations. However, even large national organisations that have thousands of volunteers do not have more than thirty members of paid staff, and it should be noted that many of the large voluntary organisations as part of their philosophy choose to be volunteer based, with paid staff support for certain core and development functions.

Unlike the maintained sector, voluntary sector staff are not as easy to classify into precise job roles. Due to the variations in organisational structures and the way they that have

developed historically that has often led to the use of specific terminologies within organisations to describe job roles.

However in general, the higher managerial and administrative staff tend to come from the paid workforce; though some specific managerial level occupations are usually carried out by volunteers, such as treasurer, company secretary or trustee. Depending on the size of the organisation there are also different categories of staff that deal with young people. One smaller organisation classifies all these staff as youth development workers; whereas two of the larger organisations have more layered structures and use very specific terms for their youth work delivery staff, such as Company Captains, Lieutenants and Warrant Officers in one and Chief Badger Officer, Commander of Youth, Badger Leaders, Officer-in-charge-of Cadets in another. This great variation in occupational categories does pose some problems in comparing job roles across the sector.

The voluntary sector workforce, like the maintained sector, are also highly qualified. Six of the eight organisations interviewed stated that the majority of their staff are qualified to Higher Education below degree and above.

3.2 The relationship between gender, occupation and educational attainment

3.2.1 Maintained sector

Figures 1 and 2 examine the relationship between occupation and gender and qualifications and gender respectively. Firstly before exploring these results it is important to know that the maintained youth service has a greater number of women employees with 61% (n=836) of the respondents being female and 38% male (n=518); a further 1% did not either provide a response or declined to indicate their gender (n=9). This gender split is in line with other lifelong learning sectors in England and Wales surveyed by LLUK.

Examining the relationship between occupation and gender (Figure 2) shows that managerial level occupations are male orientated, 8 of the 14 PYOs and 50% of managers (n=47) are male, whereas the average percentage of males across all occupational categories is much lower at 40% (n=477).

The average percentage of women across all the occupational categories examined is 60% (n=727); therefore only professional youth workers at 65% (n=270) show a skew towards being female orientated.

In Figure 3, which examines educational attainment by gender, particular differences from the average can be seen for Higher Degree and GCSE (A-C) level qualifications, where a greater percentage of women than men hold these qualifications. Differences can also be noted for GCSE (D-G) level qualifications and the 'no formal qualifications' category where the split is skewed towards men.

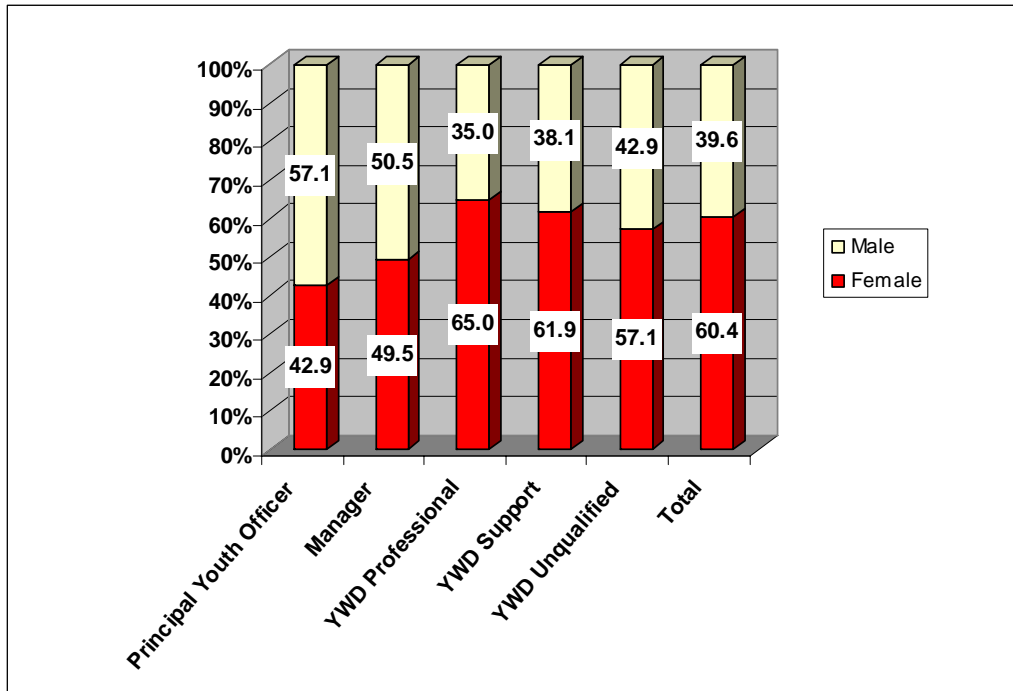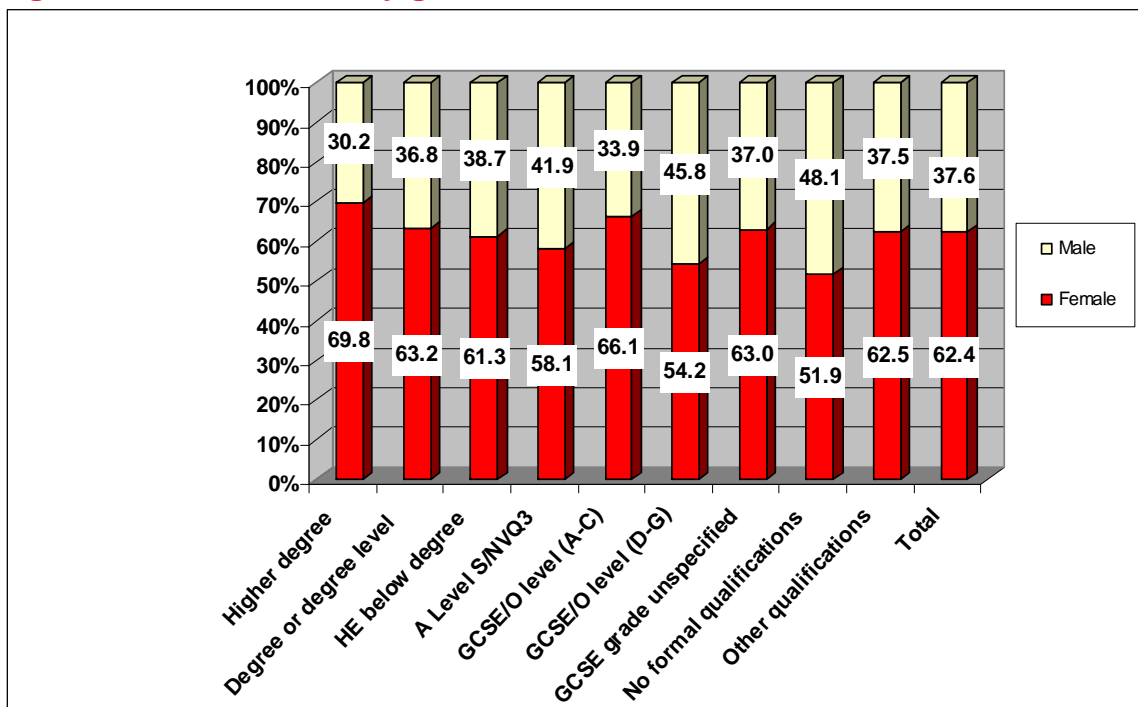## Figure 2: Occupation by gender

Figure 3: Qualifications by gender

The preceding table and two figures, gives some initial indication that the returns to higher degree level education may be greater for men than women as a larger than average proportion of women hold this type of qualification but a lower than average number are

represented in managerial positions. More in-depth analysis, which is not in the scope of this study, would be needed to confirm this.

3.2.2 Voluntary sector

In five of the eight voluntary organisations interviewed the percentages of female to male staff ranged from approximately 60% to 80% female. Only one organisation had more male to female staff (60% to 40%), however, it specifically focused on activities for boys.

Two organisations, that had a greater proportion of female to male staff, did not find any difference in the occupational roles according to the gender of the employees. However, four of the eight organisations did state that a greater proportion of managerial staff were male as opposed to female, including two organisations that estimated that they had 80% female staff.

Four organisations stated that staff who worked directly with young people were more likely to be female and one organisation said a greater proportion of its administrative staff were female.

3.3 Paid and voluntary staff

3.3.1 Maintained sector

The majority of responses were received from paid staff (97%, n=1,358), and though undoubtedly there are substantially greater numbers of paid than voluntary staff in the maintained sector this particularly high number may, to some extent, be linked to the practicalities of collecting individual level data whereby it is far easier to obtain data from paid staff.

However, looking at data from Phase 1, collected by LGDU, suggests that volunteers make up about 6% of the workforce, though this decreases to less than 1% if looked at as full-time equivalents, suggesting that a figure of 3% volunteers may be reasonable representation.

3.3.2 Voluntary sector

The number of voluntary staff greatly outnumbered paid staff in all but one of the organisations interviewed. In general, smaller organisations were dependent on very few paid staff, though the ratio of paid to voluntary staff was not necessarily higher in the larger establishments. For example one organisation stated that they had 48 paid staff to approximately 4,500 volunteers and another had 9 paid staff to 2,695 volunteers. Of the three smaller establishments, one had 1 paid member of staff to approximately 40 volunteers, a second had 1 part-time paid member of staff to approximately 180 volunteers and the third had 7 paid to 11 volunteers. This latter organisation was, however, unusual amongst the eight as it had a considerably lower number of voluntary staff.

3.4 Ethnicity

3.4.1 Maintained sector

The ethnic breakdown can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Ethnic breakdown

	Maintained Sector % (n)	Census Data (%)
White background		
Welsh	68.3 (931)	14.4
English	7.0 (95)	-
Irish	0.9 (12)	0.6
Scottish	0.7 (9)	-
British	15.0 (205)	81.6*
Any other White background	1.5 (20)	1.3
Mixed background		
White and Black Caribbean	1.0 (14)	0.2
White and Black African	0.3 (4)	0.1
White and Asian	0.1 (2)	0.2
Any other Mixed background	0.9 (12)	0.2
Asian or Asian British background		
Indian	0.5 (7)	0.3
Pakistani	0.9 (12)	0.3
Any other Asian	0.1 (1)	0.2
Black or Black British background		
Black Caribbean	0.8 (11)	0.1
Black African	0.7 (9)	0.1
Any other Black	0.6 (8)	0.0
Chinese or other ethnic background		
Chinese	0.1 (2)	0.2
Any other ethnic background	0.1 (1)	0.2
Rather not say	0.2 (3)	-
Missing	0.4 (5)	-
Total	100 (1,363)	100

*96% of individuals categorised themselves as White British in the Census data; this figure includes 14% who categorised themselves as White Welsh. In this table, the percentage of White British does not include the 14% white Welsh.

Table 2, demonstrates the ethnic breakdown of the sample. A significant number are from a white ethnic background with the largest group within this background describing themselves as white Welsh (68%).

Although initial figures suggest under-representation of non-white ethnic groups, examining the 2001 Census data for Wales shows that 96% of the population described themselves as white British of which 14% stated their ethnic background as Welsh. Additionally, the Census data shows similarly low numbers from ethnic minority groups, for example 0.3% of the population categorised themselves as Asian Indian or Asian British Indian, 0.1% as Black or Black British African and 0.2% as Chinese, to name a few. Therefore, contrasting this data and Census data shows a good representation of ethnic minority groups in the youth service.

3.4.2 Voluntary sector

Voluntary sector organisations had limited information on the ethnic background of their voluntary staff.

However, seven of the eight had some information either on their paid or both their paid and voluntary and stated that the vast majority of the staff are from a white ethnic background. Percentages ranged from 80% to 100% white. Furthermore the greater part of these staff are white Welsh.

Only one organisation was the exception to this in having with only approximately 20% of its white staff being from a Welsh background; 5-10% of its entire staff being from an Asian background; 5% being from a black background and approximately 12% from a Chinese background. This organisation did however recruit its volunteers from university students, who are likely to be more diverse than the general population as a greater number will have originated from outside Wales.

3.5 Mode of Employment

3.5.1 Maintained sector

The mode of employment refers to whether individuals work full or part-time hours, and for this sample there is a high percentage of part-time staff (67% compared to 32%).

Further examination of mode of employment by ethnicity in the maintained sector, (Figure 4) shows a greater proportion of individuals from a white ethnic background work in full-time employment than do from a non-white ethnic background. The low numbers of respondents from a non-white background (n=83) should be noted.

Figure 4: Ethnicity by mode of employment
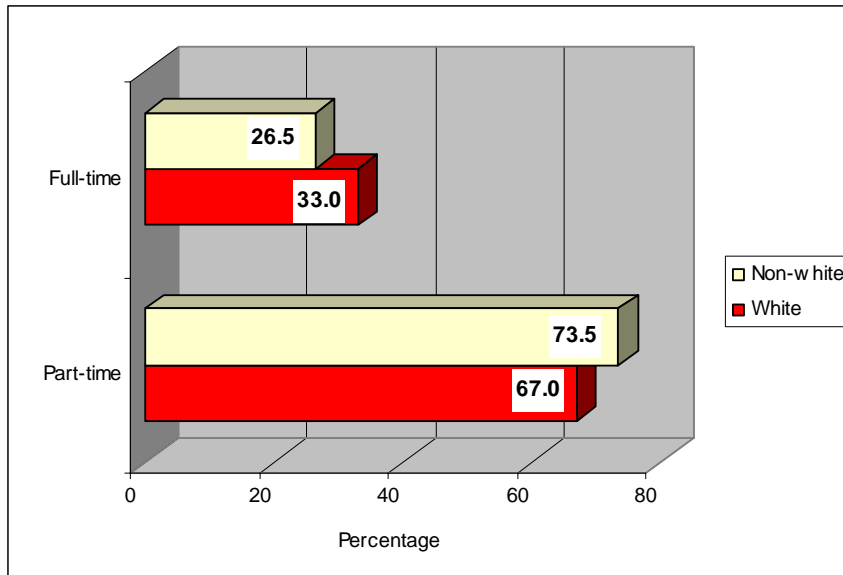
Figure 5: Qualifications by mode of employment

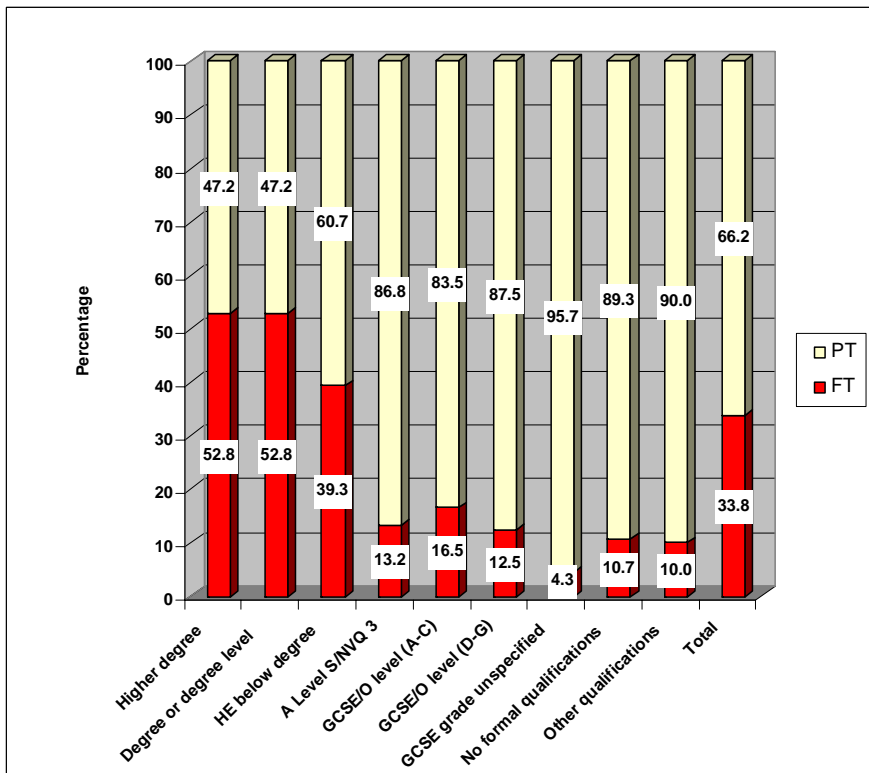Figure 5 above shows a distinct association between educational attainment and mode of employment. There is a far greater number of full-time staff within the more highly qualified categories than other groups: 53% (n=66) of individuals with a higher degree, 53% (n=177) of individuals qualified to degree level, and 39% (n=118) of respondents qualified to HE below degree.

In contrast significantly fewer numbers of less qualified individuals work in full-time roles, with the smallest proportion being in the 'GCSE grade unspecified' category with only 2 of the 46 individuals in this category working full-time.

It is often reported that a greater percentage of women than men work part-time hours (Burchell, Fagan, O'Brien and Smith, 2007; Statistics for Wales, 2007), and in terms of actual numbers of individuals this also holds for the maintained sector (563 part-time women workers in comparison to 342 male part-time workers). However, as the sector is female dominated this does not give an entirely clear view of the situation. In fact, examining the proportions of part-time and full-time work within each gender category shows relatively little differences in the way women and men are employed in terms of hours worked. This is indicated by Figure 6 below, where it can be seen that 68% of all women work part-time hours in comparison to 66% of all men.

Figure 6: Gender by mode of employment
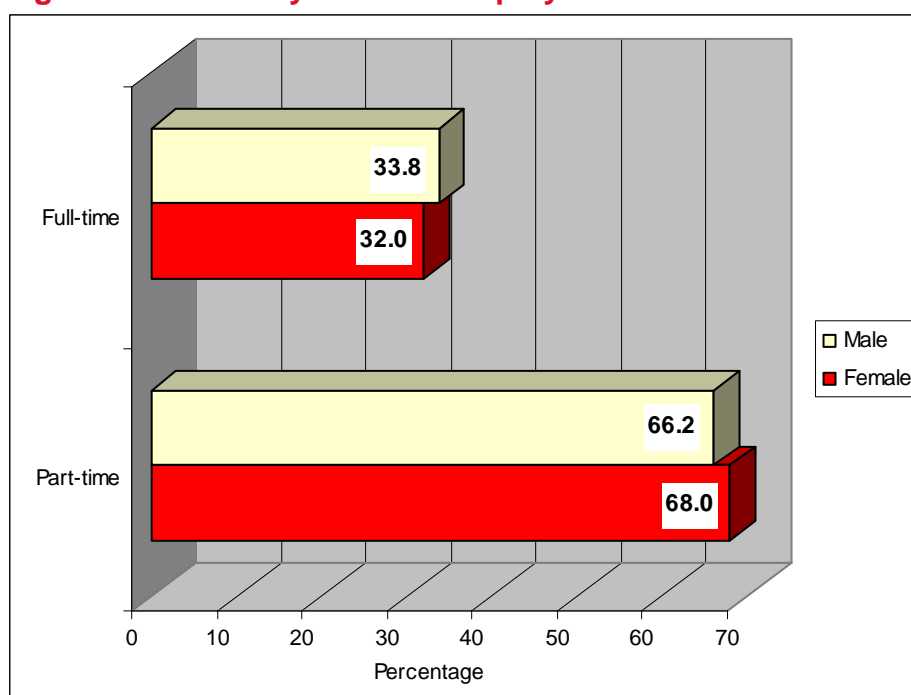
The classification of mode of employment in Figures 4-6 is taken from individuals' self-assessment of their status. Past research has also classified part-time into 'long' or 'short' part-time, where 'short' part-time hours are defined as less than 16 hours per week and 'long' as between 16 hours and 30 hours or less (Millar, Ridge and Bennett, 2006; Manning and Petrongolo, 2004). Using a very similar distinction Statistical Bulletin number 48 (2007), produced by the Office for National Statistics, states that in 2006 only 5% of all male employees worked less than 16 hours per week and only 13% less than 30 hours per week. For women the figures are 15% and 40% respectively. The figures were produced from analysis of the Annual Population Survey (APS) 2006[9].

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[9] The Annual Population Survey (APS) combines results from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the English, Welsh and Scottish Labour Force Survey boosts; this enables more robust local area labour market estimates than the main LFS.

For this dataset, analysis in relation to 'short' and 'long' part-time hours can be conducted using the variable that requested information on the average number of hours worked per week. As a direct comparison is being made with the Office for National Statistics data, this analysis has defined 'long' part-time hours as between 16 and 29 hours, as opposed to the 16 to 30 hours definition used in the research papers. The results can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Hours worked by gender

	'Short' part-time % (n)	'Long' part-time % (n)	Full-time % (n)	Total % (n)
Female	48.6 (404)	14.7 (122)	36.8 (306)	100.0 (832)
Male	54.2 (278)	7.0 (36)	38.8 (199)	100.0 (513)
Total	50.7 (682)	11.7 (158)	37.5 (505)	100.0 (1345)

In contrast to the Statistical Bulletin results, not only do a similarly large number of both men and women work part-time hours but there is also a marked skew towards 'short' part-time hours, the opposite of the results form the APS data. Moreover, a greater percentage of the male labour force work these hours than do the female workforce (54% compared to 49%).

These results demonstrate that a large fraction of the maintained youth service workforce work relatively short hours within the youth service, though clearly they may be working in other occupations. The reason for this, is to some extent, due to the historic tradition in youth work whereby the majority of people have volunteered for shorter hours outside of their main employment, with this tradition appearing to have continued as paid employment becomes available.

3.5.2 Voluntary sector

Clearly the majority of the sector's workforce work on a voluntary basis and as a consequence of this nearly all of them also work part-time in the sector. The ratio of full-time to part-time paid staff varied by organisation, for example in one the only paid member of staff also works on a part-time basis, in another 3 of the 9 paid staff work part-time, whereas in a third only 4 of the 20-25 paid staff work full-time. These numbers indicate that even for the paid staff in the voluntary sector, a fair number are working on a part-time basis.

3.6 Age

3.6.1 Maintained sector

The maintained youth service is a fairly young sector, with the majority of respondents falling into the 25-34 age group (32%, n=432) with the next largest age group being the 35-44 category at 26% (n=348).

Looking at the age distribution by gender, in Figure 7 below, shows a fairly even split between men and women, the greatest differences being in the 55-64 year olds group which shows a relatively larger proportion of men and the 18-24 and 35-44 year old categories that contain a greater number of women.

Figure 7: Age by gender
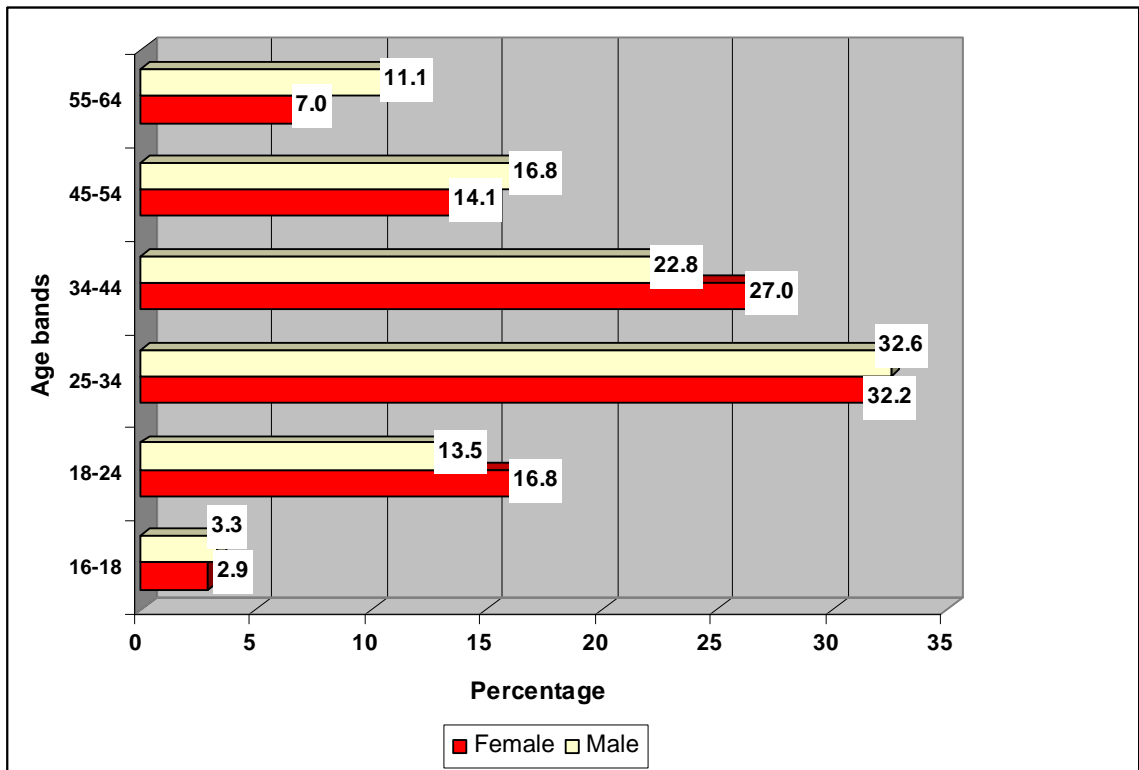
Examining occupational categories by age (Figure 8) shows relatively large numbers of Principal Youth Officers and managers in the younger age categories, for example 11 of the 14 PYOs are younger than 55 and 23 of the 93 managers are aged between 25 and 34. The majority of all youth work delivery staff fall into the 25-34 category; a large percentage of the youth work unqualified staff also fall into the 18-24 category, this association is not unexpected as at this age individuals have had less time to undertake or complete qualifications.

Figure 8: Occupation by age
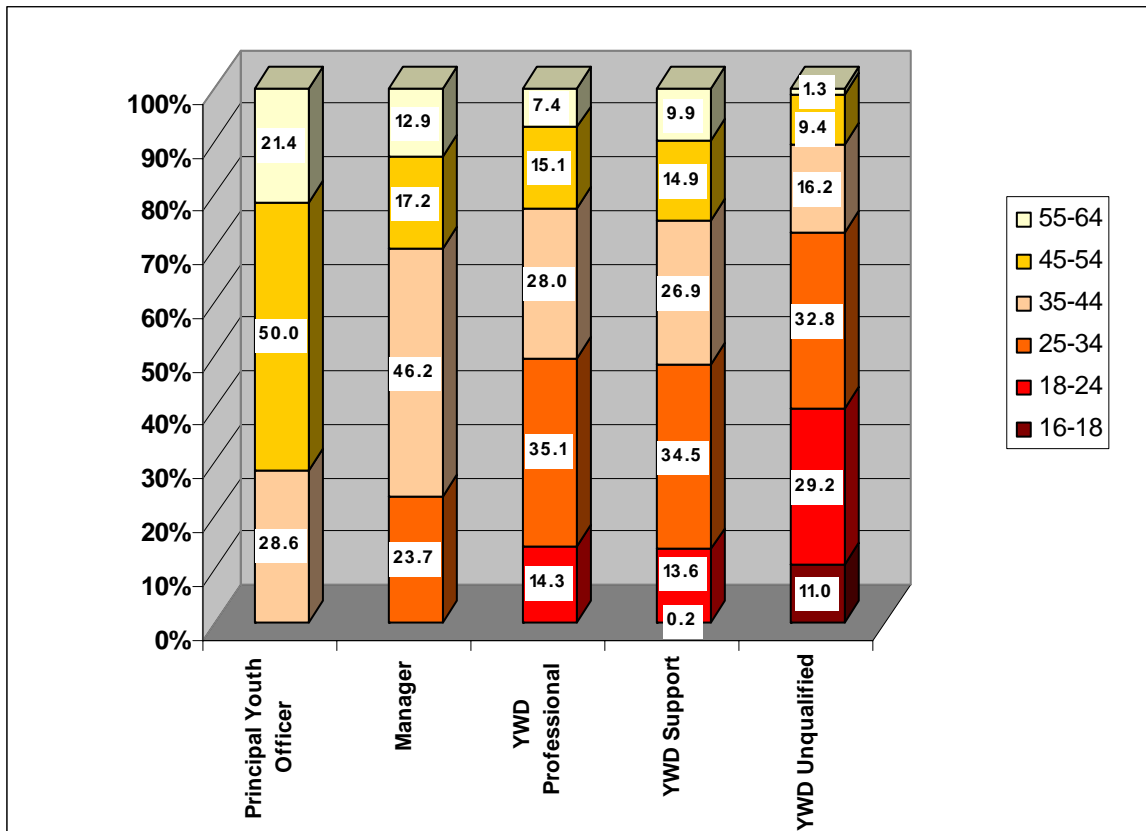
3.6.2 Voluntary sector

Four voluntary sector organisations specifically stated that the larger part of their workforce are aged between 16 and 34, though two of these organisations only had information on its paid staff. One of the four said that approximately 95% of their staff (mostly volunteers) are between 16-24 years old. Only one organisation felt that it may have problems in the future due to an aging workforce, with the majority of their staff falling into the 50+ category.

Two organisations said that managerial roles were more likely to be held by older members of the workforce. One stated that 'informal positions of responsibility' were held by older employees and another found that younger volunteers tended to perform operational duties, whereas roles which carried more responsibility were filled by volunteers aged 35 and above.

3.7 Disability

The most recent figures from the Disability Rights Commission[10] (DRC) state that 19% of the working population in the United Kingdom are long-term disabled, whilst 16% are classified as disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act (DRC, 2007) [11].

The under-reporting of disability has been stated as a considerable problem in previous research: Rooke-Mathews and Lindow (1998) assert that individuals are often unwilling to disclose information on past or present mental health issues; Dex and Purdham (2005) have demonstrated that employers find it difficult to collect information on disability as people are reluctant to provide it. The Disability Rights Commission also states trade union records and higher and further education institutes data only found declared disability rates of around 3% (Commission for Disabled Staff, 2007) considerably lower than the figure of 19% quoted by DRC for the working population of the United Kingdom. Whether this is due to under-reporting or under-representation is yet to be determined.

Furthermore, though definitions of disability may be applied to individuals it does not necessarily follow that the individuals consider themselves to be disabled; Grewal et al (2002) found in a survey which included 970 disabled people, that only 48% of these individuals defined themselves as disabled. In addition, the rates of reporting have also been found to vary according to ethnicity, age and region (DRC, 2007; Purdam, Afkhami, Olsen and Thornton. 2008)

3.7.1 Maintained sector

The individual level survey specifically requested individuals to state if they considered themselves to be disabled under the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (amended 2005). The DDA classifies disabled as 'a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. The results show that only 4% (n=50) of individuals have stated that they are disabled under the DDA definition; of which the majority stated that they had a physical impairment (n=22). The next most commonly stated disability was learning difficulties (n=19).

3.7.2 Voluntary sector

Very limited or no information was available on the disability status of the voluntary workforce. It was generally felt that an extremely small proportion of the work force would be defined as disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act.

One organisation stated that approximately 5% of their staff are disabled; they also said that these staff tended to go for management/trustee type roles.

The issue of the definition of disability also arose in one interview as a substantial number of this organisation's volunteers could be considered disabled under DDA but would not necessarily classify themselves in that way.

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[10] Since 1 October 2007 the Disability Rights Commission, Commission for Racial Equality and the Equal Opportunities Commission have been combined into the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
[11] The DRC research uses data from the Labour Force Survey April-June 2006.

Disability has been associated with a number of detrimental socio-economic consequences, for example negative experiences of mainstream education (Grewal, Joy, Lewis, Swales and Woodfield; 2002) and lower levels of employment (Emerson, Hatton, Felce and Murphy; 2001). The issues surrounding disability are numerous and complex and due to the low numbers of DDA defined disabled individuals in both the maintained and voluntary sector data, it has not been possible to examine them in greater detail.

4.   SKILLS

4.1 Welsh language

A bilingual Wales is a major policy initiative of the Welsh Assembly Government as witnessed by Iaith Pawb (2003), which states that Wales should be a 'truly bilingual country' where individuals could live in the medium of Welsh, English or both languages.

A key facilitator in driving Wales in becoming a bilingual country is the Welsh Language Board (WLB).   The Welsh Language Board is a statutory organisation funded by WAG whose main purpose is to 'promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. Between 2004 and 2006 the Welsh Language Board commissioned three surveys to update the 2001 Census results. The results show that 21.7% (n=611,000) of all those aged 3 and over, who were living in a household, could speak Welsh. Of the Welsh speakers 57% (315,000) considered themselves fluent.

4.1.1 Maintained sector

Examining the results from this data shows a high number of Welsh speakers (30%) in comparison to the WLB survey, however within this group there are a much smaller percentage of individuals with advanced Welsh language skills in comparison to the general population. It should be observed that the WLB survey has a much wider age range for its respondents.

Despite a fairly high number of individuals with Welsh language skills the majority of the workforce do not have any Welsh language skills (66%, n=895) as indicated in Table 4 below

Table 4: Welsh language ability

	%	n
Ability to deal confidently with work tasks	9.2	125
Ability to deal with a range of work tasks	3.6	49
Ability to deal with familiar work tasks	17.8	242
No Welsh language skills	65.7	895
Don't know	1.2	17
Missing	2.6	35
Total	100.0	1363

Examining differences in Welsh language ability by age (Figure 9), indicates that a fairly high proportions of individuals aged between 16-18, 18-24 and 25-34 have some Welsh language ability in comparison to the rest of their age group (15 of 37), 34% (n=70) and 36% (n=154) respectively); it should be noted that there are only 36 respondents in the whole 16-18 age group[12].

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[12] The 18-24 category contains 204 respondents in total and the 25-34 category 426 respondents in total.

Figure 9: Welsh language skills by age
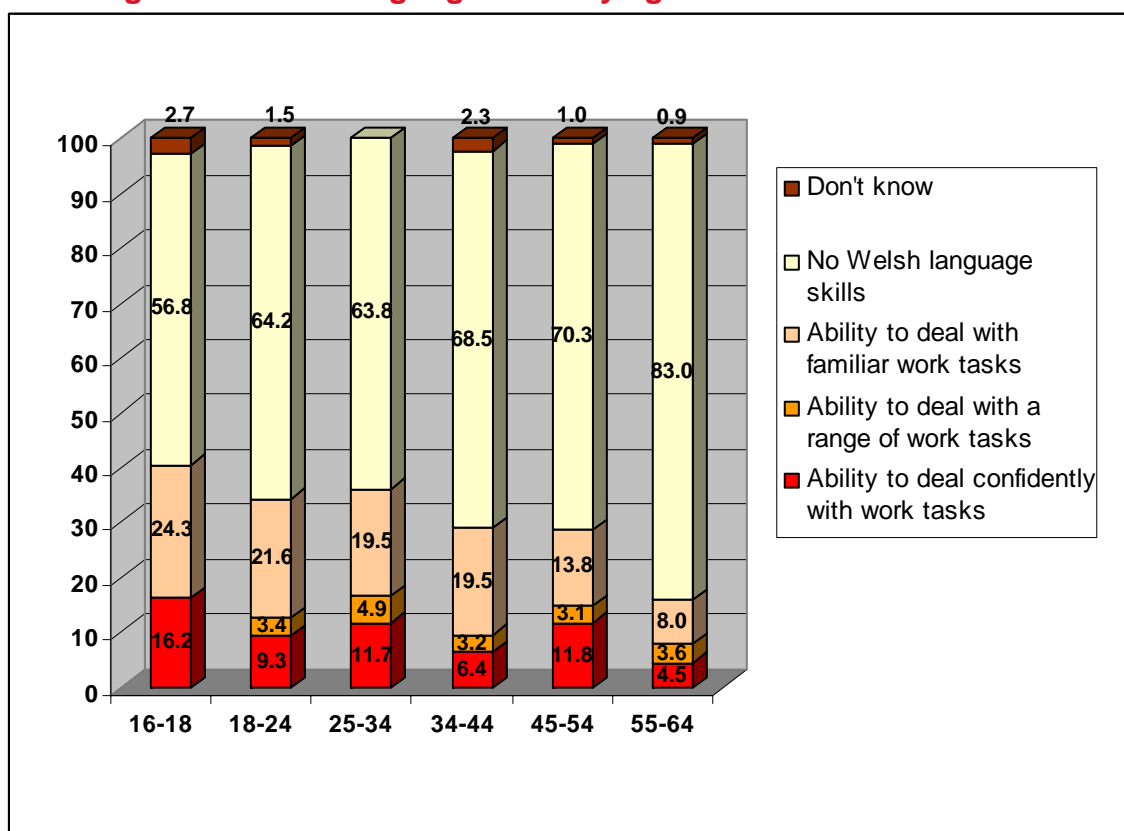
Table 5 looks at individuals who have some Welsh language skills by occupational group. Youth support workers and unqualified youth workers have fairly high proportions of individuals with advanced Welsh language skills (35%, n=47 and 40%, n=39 respectively). For professional youth workers the greatest number of individuals have lower level Welsh language skills (66 of 90).

Table 5: Welsh language skills by occupation

		Principal Youth Officer	Manager	Profession-al Youth Worker	Youth Support Worker	Youth Worker Un-qualified	Youth worker (un-specified)
Ability to deal confidently with work tasks	%	33.3	24.0	16.7	34.6	40.2	100.0
	n	2	6	15	47	39	1
Ability to deal with a range of work tasks	%	50	28	10	12.5	8.2	0
	n	3	7	9	17	8	0
Ability to deal with familiar work tasks	%	16.7	48.0	73.3	52.9	51.5	0.0
	n	1	12	66	72	50	0
Total	%	100	100	100	100	100	100
	n	6	25	90	136	97	1

4.1.2 Voluntary sector

The level of Welsh language skills in the voluntary sector varies by organisation, often depending on the areas they operate in and the service they provide.

For example, in one organisation approximately 10% of the workforce spoke basic Welsh with the remainder having no Welsh language skills. This, however, did not affect them as they currently did not operate in predominately Welsh speaking regions. In contrast to this, in another organisation all staff that operated in Welsh medium or bilingual regions had an advanced knowledge of Welsh.

In a further organisation, nearly all the staff had some knowledge of Welsh, with approximately 90% having basic Welsh skills and 10% advanced. The organisation employed a number of tutors and trainers who all needed to speak Welsh; though they found difficulties in recruiting staff who were able to teach in the medium of Welsh. A further organisation stated that it would be desirable for all their youth work delivery staff to speak Welsh, however currently only approximately 10% do.

4.2   Skills Gaps

4.2.1 Maintained sector

Individual level questionnaire

As stated previously, respondents were asked to choose the five most important areas in which they wanted to improve their skills. They were provided with a list of skills areas, which were chosen from LLUK's past research and the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for youth work[13], that were in development by LLUK at the time. They were also able to put forward other skills areas that were not included in the provided list. Although individuals did suggest other skills areas, responses were extremely varied and low for each of the separate categories. Therefore the results of these 'other' areas are shown in Appendix 1, Table A2.

Examining Figure 10 below shows that 'Promote young people's self-awareness, confidence and participation', 'Developing youth work strategy and practice' and 'Facilitate the learning and development of young people' were the most often chosen skills gaps.

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[13] The finalised NOS for youth work have been available on http://www.ukstandards.org/ since February 2008

Figure 10: Skills gaps
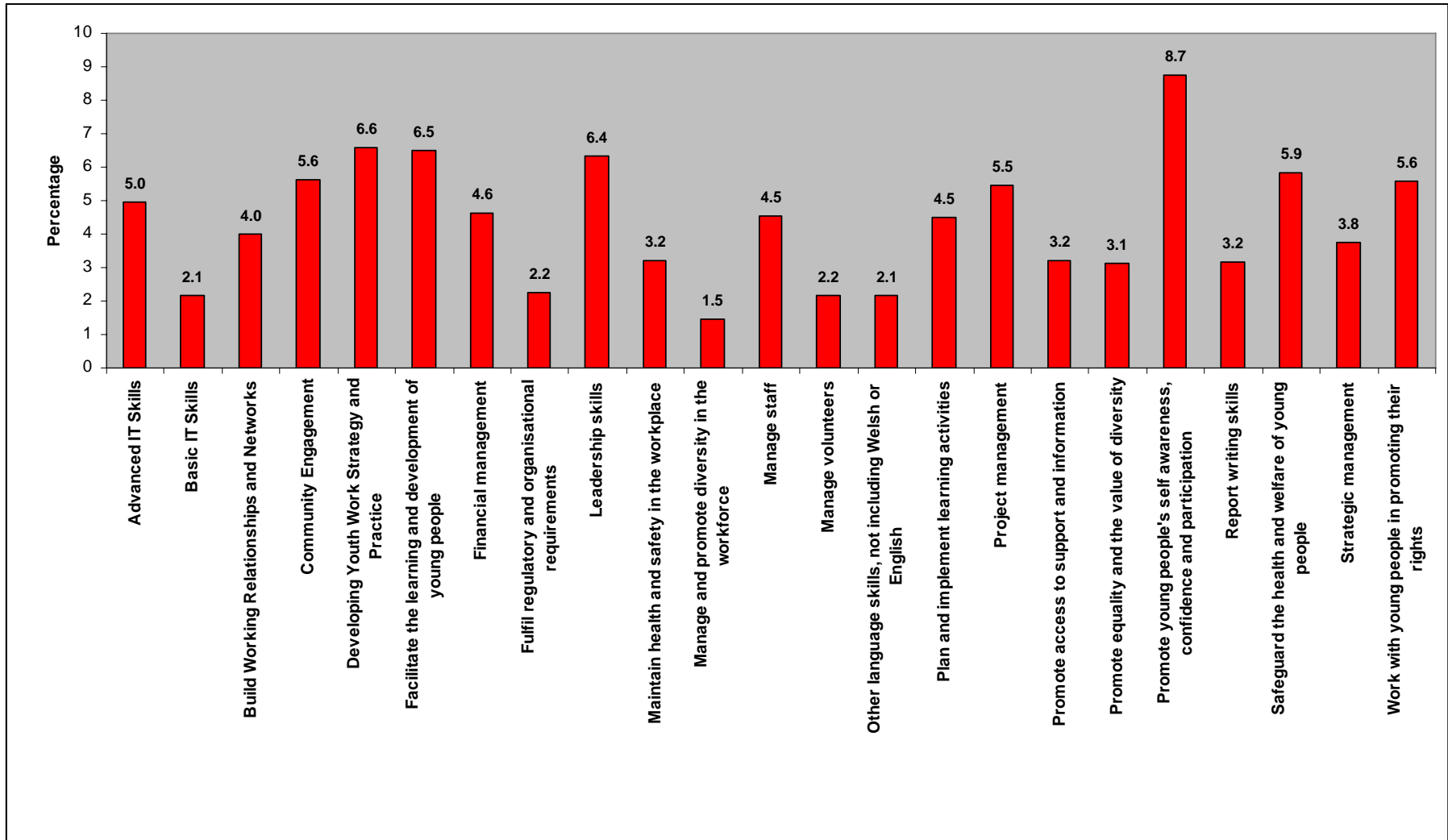
Table 6 below demonstrates skills gaps by occupation. The most commonly stated skills gap(s) within each occupation have been highlighted in bold. It should be noted that in this case the total numbers given in brackets (*n*) at the bottom of the table do not refer to the number of individual respondents but instead to the number of times that each skills gap has been nominated. As between one and five gaps have been chosen by the majority of respondents this has sometimes resulted in more responses for a specific skills gap than the actual number of participants in the survey.

Principal Youth Officers chose with equal importance 'Developing youth work strategy and practice', 'Project management' and 'Strategic management' as the top areas in which to improve their skills. Managers chose 'Strategic management' as their most important skills gap.

For youth work delivery staff, professional youth workers most wanted to improve their skills in managing staff, whilst for both youth support workers and unqualified youth workers the most nominated area was 'Promote young people's self awareness, confidence and participation'.

Administrative and caretaking, cleaning and other manual staff specified IT skills (advanced and basic respectively) above the other areas, to improve their skills in.

Table 6: Skills gaps by occupation

	Principal Youth Officer % (*n*)	Manager % (*n*)	Profession-al Youth Worker % (*n*)	Youth Support Worker % (*n*)	Youth Worker Un-qualified % (*n*)	Youth Worker (un-specified) % (*n*)	Admin-istrative % (*n*)	Caretaking Cleaning other manual % (*n*)	Teacher tutor instructor or coach % (*n*)	Other % (*n*)
Advanced IT Skills	10.5	6.8	4.5	3.8	3.6	**12.0**	**15.5**	10.4	6.7	5.5
Basic IT Skills	0.0	1.6	0.9	2.8	2.4	2.0	1.8	**14.6**	0.0	1.4
Build Working Relationships and Networks	0.0	1.9	4.0	4.2	4.2	0.0	6.1	4.2	3.3	5.5
Community Engagement	1.8	4.9	6.2	6.4	5.2	0.0	2.9	6.3	3.3	5.5
Developing Youth Work Strategy and Practice	**14.0**	10.1	6.9	6.2	6.7	10.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	8.2
Facilitate the learning and development of young people	1.8	1.4	6.4	7.6	7.6	6.0	1.8	2.1	**13.3**	8.2
Financial management	10.5	10.1	5.8	3.2	2.5	8.0	9.4	2.1	6.7	6.8
Fulfil regulatory and organisational requirements	5.3	4.5	1.8	2.0	1.5	2.0	5.4	4.2	6.7	0.0
Leadership skills	12.3	6.8	5.8	6.0	7.0	8.0	6.5	8.3	10.0	2.7
Maintain health and safety in the workplace	1.8	4.2	2.4	2.5	3.5	0.0	8.3	12.5	6.7	5.5
Manage and promote diversity in the workforce	3.5	3.8	1.6	1.2	1.1	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Manage staff	0.0	5.2	**7.4**	3.6	2.2	8.0	6.5	6.3	0.0	2.7
Manage volunteers	0.0	1.6	2.7	2.5	1.6	6.0	1.1	2.1	0.0	0.0
Other language skills, not including Welsh or English	3.5	2.1	2.4	2.1	1.6	0.0	3.2	4.2	3.3	2.7
Plan and implement learning activities	0.0	2.1	3.3	5.5	6.1	2.0	1.1	0.0	6.7	2.7
Project management	**14.0**	7.0	6.4	4.9	4.8	**12.0**	5.8	0.0	3.3	1.4
Promote access to support and information	1.8	1.9	2.8	3.5	4.2	0.0	1.8	2.1	3.3	2.7
Promote equality and the value of diversity	1.8	1.6	2.4	3.5	3.9	4.0	2.2	2.1	6.7	6.8
Promote young people's self awareness, confidence and participation	0.0	3.5	7.3	**10.4**	**11.7**	6.0	1.8	6.3	6.7	**12.3**
Report writing skills	1.8	2.3	3.2	2.7	2.6	4.0	8.7	4.2	3.3	4.1
Safeguard the health and welfare of young people	1.8	2.1	4.9	6.9	7.9	2.0	2.2	4.2	0.0	6.8
Strategic management	**14.0**	**13.4**	5.5	1.9	1.2	6.0	2.9	0.0	6.7	4.1
Work with young people in promoting their rights	0.0	0.9	5.3	6.7	7.1	2.0	2.5	4.2	3.3	4.1
Total	100 (57)	100 (426)	100 (1542)	100 (1871)	100 (1322)	100 (50)	100 (277)	100 (48)	100 (30)	100 (73)

4.2.2 Voluntary sector

The voluntary sector organisations were asked the five most important skills to improve for youth work delivery staff and for managerial staff.

The most commonly stated areas for delivery staff were 'Facilitate the learning and development of young people' and 'Promote young people's self-awareness, confidence and participation' which were both put forward by three of the eight organisations.

For managers the most common skills gaps were 'Financial management' and 'Strategic management' which were chosen by five of the eight organisations

The prevalence of skills gaps also appears to be determined, to some extent, by the size and available resources of the organisations. Two larger organisations did not feel it was a particular issue for them as they provided extensive training to ensure staff had a good level of skills. These results tally with those found from the research commissioned by the Wales Youth Agency, which found that all the twenty voluntary organisations that participated in the research invested heavily in training and felt it to be essential to achieve their aims (CWVYS, 2005). Furthermore, in this research one national organisation stated that they attracted volunteers that had held highly skilled jobs in their previous careers and who were therefore able to add to the expertise of the organisation.

However, one organisation felt that it had to make the best use of the existing skills of their volunteers. Training was not always an option due to costs or the additional time it would require of volunteers, which was not always available. It was also pointed by another organisation out that staff in smaller establishments may have to undertake a greater variety of roles and be more involved in its running and would therefore need a greater range of skills.

4.2.3 Skills gaps from organisation level questionnaire

The PYOs were asked to state the three most important skills gaps for managers, professional youth workers, youth support workers, unqualified youth workers and administrative staff. The results are shown in the tables below.

For managerial staff, PYOs most often stated 'Strategic management' (22%) and 'Developing youth work strategy and practice' (20%) as areas where skills could be improved. The former was also chosen by the managers, in the individual level survey, as the area they most needed to improve.

The most often stated area for the other occupational groups are as follows:
- 'Project management' for professional youth workers
- 'Facilitate the learning and development of young people' for youth support workers
- 'Plan and implement learning activities' for unqualified youth workers
- 'Advanced IT skills' for administrative staff

Managers' Skills Gaps	n
Advanced IT Skills	1
Build Working Relationships and Networks	1
Developing Youth Work Strategy and Practice	10
Financial management	9
Fulfil regulatory and organisational requirements	3
Leadership skills	6
Manage staff	5
Manage volunteers	1
Project management	4
Strategic management	**11**
Total	51

Professional Youth Workers' Skills Gaps	n
Build Working Relationships and Networks	1
Community Engagement	1
Developing Youth Work Strategy and Practice	5
Facilitate the learning and development of young people	2
Financial management	4
Fulfil regulatory and organisational requirements	2
Leadership skills	6
Maintain health and safety in the workplace	1
Manage and promote diversity in the workforce	1
Manage staff	5
Plan and implement learning activities	2
Project management	**7**
Promote young people's self awareness, confidence and participation	2
Report writing skills	5
Work with young people in promoting their rights	1
Total	45

Youth Support Workers' Skills Gaps	n
Build Working Relationships and Networks	3
Community Engagement	3
Developing Youth Work Strategy and Practice	2
Facilitate the learning and development of young people	**9**
Financial management	2
Fulfil regulatory and organisational requirements	3
Leadership skills	1
Manage staff	2
Plan and implement learning activities	6
Project management	3
Promote access to support and information	2
Promote equality and the value of diversity	2
Promote young people's self awareness, confidence and participation	6
Safeguard the health and welfare of young people	2
Work with young people in promoting their rights	2
Total	48

| Youth Workers' (Unqualified) Skills Gaps	n
Advanced IT Skills	2
Build Working Relationships and Networks	2
Community Engagement	1
Developing Youth Work Strategy and Practice	3
Facilitate the learning and development of young people	7
Fulfil regulatory and organisational requirements	5
Maintain health and safety in the workplace	3
Plan and implement learning activities	**10**
Promote access to support and information	2
Promote young people's self awareness, confidence and participation	7
Safeguard the health and welfare of young people	5
Work with young people in promoting their rights	3
Develop an understanding of the principles of youth working Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales	1
Total	51

Administrative Staff's Skills Gaps	n
Advanced IT Skills	**13**
Build Working Relationships and Networks	1
Financial management	10
Fulfil regulatory and organisational requirements	7
Leadership skills	1
Project management	2
Promote access to support and information	2
Report writing skills	4
Awareness of working with young people and the complexities as it is often front line who get the most enquiries	1
Internal IT systems	1
Minute taking	3
An understanding of MIS	1
Use of financial systems	1
Total	47

Measures used to tackle skills gaps

As well as being asked about their workforces' skills gaps, PYOs were also asked to choose the measures they applied to deal with these gaps. The results are shown in Figure 11, where it can be seen that the two most common methods employed are increasing training, with on-the-job being preferred to off-the-job.

Figure 11: Measures used to tackle skills gaps
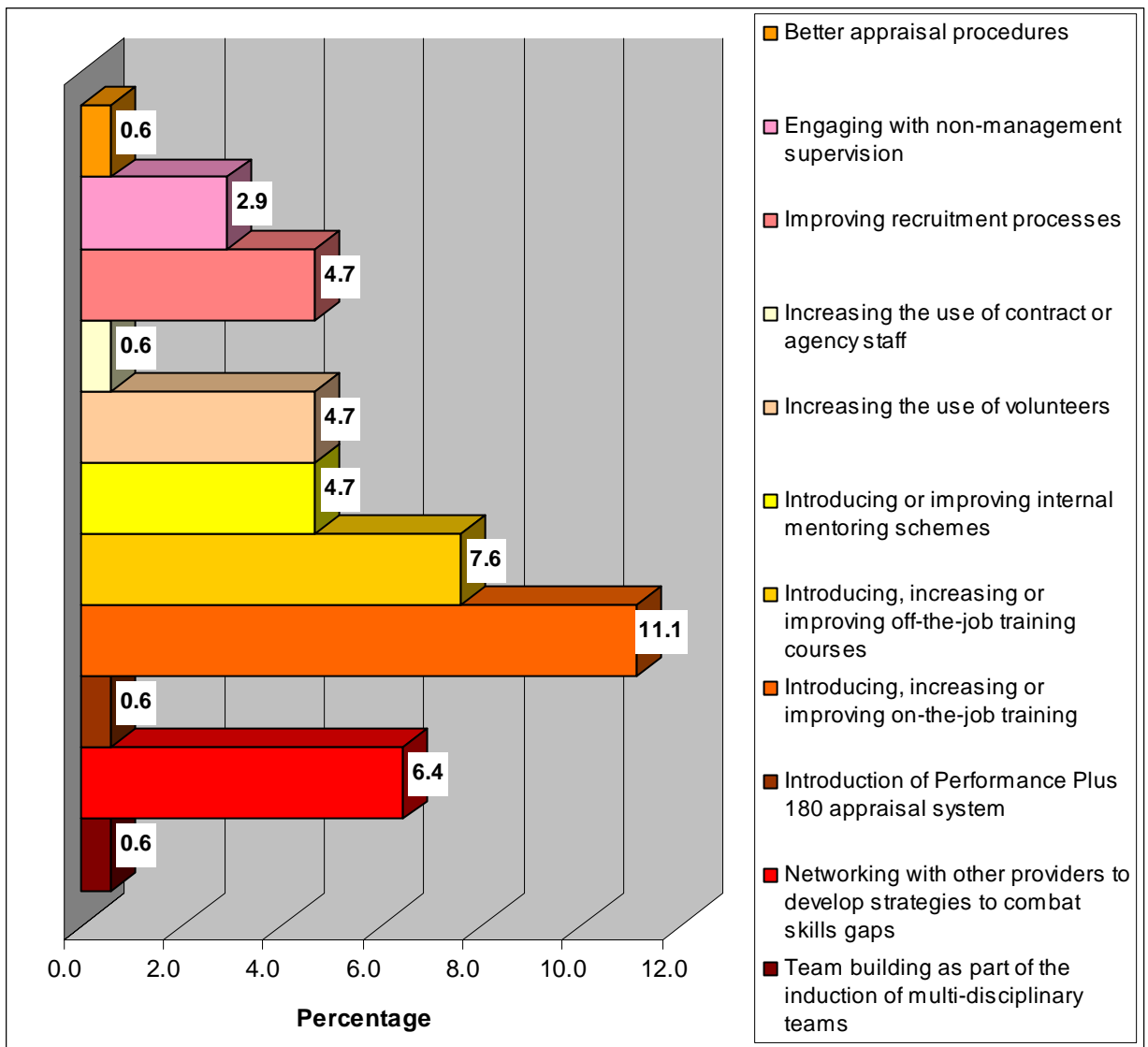
4.3 Gaps in knowledge and understanding

Similarly to skills gaps, individual respondents were asked to choose five areas, from the same list as the skills gaps, in which they wanted to improve their knowledge and understanding. Again they were able to state areas not on the provided list. Results from the additional areas also resulted in low category responses and are therefore shown in Appendix 1, Table A3.

Figure 12 shows that the two most stated areas that respondents wanted to improve their knowledge and understanding of are 'Developing youth work strategy and practice' and 'Promote young people's self-awareness, confidence and participation'; these are the same top two that were chosen for skills gaps except that the ranking is reversed.

Table 7 shows the frequencies of areas to improve knowledge and understanding by occupation. Relatively similar areas have been chosen as were chosen for skills gaps. Again *n* represents the number of times these areas were nominated rather than the number of respondents.

From Table 7 it can be seen that PYOs and managers most often stated that they would like to improve their knowledge and understanding of 'Strategic management'. Professional youth workers most often chose 'Developing youth work strategy and practice'. Both youth support and unqualified youth workers most often stated that they wanted to improve their knowledge and understanding of promoting young people's self awareness, confidence and participation.

Administrative and caretaking, cleaning and other manual staff once again chose advanced and basic IT skills respectively.

Figure 12: Gaps in Knowledge and Understanding
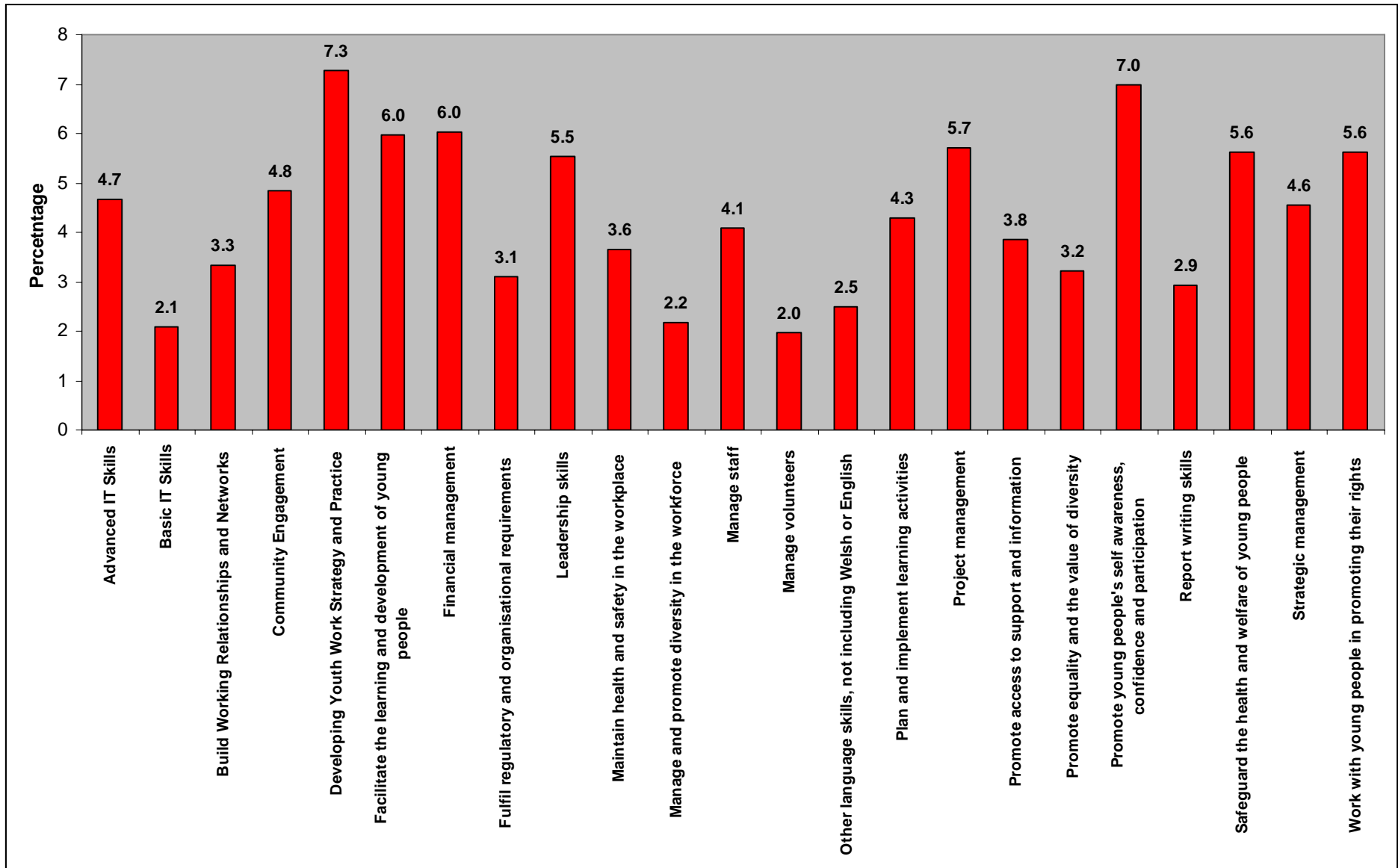
Table 7: Gaps in knowledge and understanding by occupation

	Principal Youth Officer (% (*n*))	Manager (% (*n*)))	Profession-al Youth Worker (% (*n*))	Youth Support Worker (% (*n*))	Youth Worker Unqualified (% (*n*))	Youth Worker (un-specified) (% (*n*))	Admin-istrative (% (*n*))	Caretaking Cleaning other manual (% (*n*))	Teacher tutor instructor or coach (% (*n*))	Other (% (*n*))
Advanced IT Skills	9.6	6.2	3.9	4.4	3.1	5.9	**14.2**	8.3	3.3	4.7
Basic IT Skills	0.0	0.5	0.9	2.7	2.5	2.0	1.9	**16.7**	0.0	1.6
Build Working Relationships and Networks	3.8	1.5	3.6	3.3	3.1	2.0	3.8	6.3	3.3	**9.4**
Community Engagement	0.0	5.2	4.6	4.9	5.6	2.0	1.9	6.3	0.0	7.8
Developing Youth Work Strategy and Practice	11.5	13.1	**8.5**	6.5	6.1	**9.8**	2.3	4.2	6.7	7.8
Facilitate the learning and development of young people	0.0	1.7	5.3	6.9	7.9	3.9	2.3	0.0	10.0	4.7
Financial management	9.6	10.6	7.7	5.0	3.1	9.8	11.9	4.2	3.3	3.1
Fulfil regulatory and organisational requirements	5.8	7.2	2.5	2.8	1.9	3.9	6.9	4.2	10.0	3.1
Leadership skills	9.6	5.7	4.8	5.0	7.0	5.9	5.0	6.3	3.3	1.6
Maintain health and safety in the workplace	3.8	4.7	3.2	2.9	3.7	3.9	7.3	12.5	3.3	7.8
Manage and promote diversity in the workforce	7.7	3.7	2.4	2.2	1.2	3.9	1.5	2.1	3.3	0.0
Manage staff	7.7	5.4	5.6	3.5	2.7	5.9	5.4	2.1	0.0	0.0
Manage volunteers	0.0	1.2	2.1	2.1	2.2	3.9	0.8	2.1	0.0	0.0
Other language skills, not including Welsh or English	5.8	2.0	3.3	1.8	2.2	0.0	3.8	4.2	6.7	3.1
Plan and implement learning activities	0.0	1.5	3.3	5.3	5.5	2.0	1.9	6.3	6.7	3.1
Project management	9.6	4.4	7.0	5.4	5.1	**9.8**	5.0	2.1	6.7	4.7
Promote access to support and information	0.0	1.7	3.8	4.2	4.5	0.0	3.1	0.0	3.3	6.3
Promote equality and the value of diversity	1.9	1.7	3.0	4.1	3.2	2.0	1.9	2.1	6.7	3.1
Promote young people's self awareness, confidence and participation	0.0	2.5	5.7	**8.1**	**9.5**	3.9	3.1	2.1	**13.3**	**9.4**
Report writing skills	0.0	3.0	2.6	2.9	2.5	3.9	7.7	4.2	0.0	3.1
Safeguard the health and welfare of young people	0.0	1.5	4.8	6.6	7.8	2.0	3.1	2.1	0.0	6.3
Strategic management	**13.5**	**13.6**	6.5	3.1	1.8	**9.8**	2.7	0.0	6.7	3.1
Work with young people in promoting their rights	0.0	1.5	5.2	6.3	7.6	3.9	2.3	2.1	3.3	6.3
Total	100.0 (52)	100.0 (405)	100.0 (1488)	100.0 (1832)	100.0 (1302)	100.0 (51)	100.0 (260)	100.0 (48)	100.0 (30)	100.0 (64)

4.4   Recruitment and retention

4.4.1 Maintained sector

Very few of the maintained sector youth services (3 out of the 18) stated that they had hard-to-fill vacancies. However, this may have been due to the definition used which states that a hard-to-fill vacancy is one that has not been filled in 12 months.

The definition was taken from the National Employers Skills Survey (NESS) which is the often used standard definition that allows comparison between sectors and other research and was, after consultation, chosen as the most appropriate measure. However, in hindsight, it should be considered whether it was the most apt classification for this survey taking into account youth service working practices such as short-term project funding.

Of the services that gave information on recruitment, two stated that vacancies were hard-to-fill due to the quality of the applicants and one said that they had problems with few or no applicants as well as a lack of quality applicants.

When specifically asked about the quality of applicants, two services chose the following reasons for a lack of high quality applicants:
• qualified and unqualified applicants not having sufficient knowledge and understanding of the sector
• qualified and unqualified applicants having an inadequate level of experience
• qualified applicants lacking the correct skills

One youth service gave the following reasons:
• a lack of qualified applicants
• a lack of correct skills from unqualified applicants.

The reasons given for few or no applicants were: the reluctance of individuals to work during the evenings and weekends, particularly if their contracts consisted of a low number of hours; the rurality of the location of one service and in the case of more senior positions, the reluctance of youth workers to take on the additional responsibilities.

4.4.2 Voluntary sector

The voluntary sector gave a number of reasons for the recruitment problems they encountered. These included wider social issues, such as the difficult of finding people to commit their time due changes in lifestyle such as longer working hours.

Other highlighted problems are: a lack of understanding of the issues facing young people, a lack of experience, in the case of younger volunteers a lack of confidence in their ability to take on roles with greater responsibilities and poor preparation and presentation at interviews. The pay and image of the job was also given as a reason for difficulties in recruiting paid staff.

The skills gaps found when trying to recruit individuals are: the ability to relate to young people, the ability to build a good relationship with young people, initiative and adaptability, the ability to deliver courses in the medium of Welsh, communication skills and planning skills

One organisation also stated that some individuals, despite being correctly qualified still did not have the experience or ability to relate to young people.

5.   SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings from the research are:

- Sixty percent of maintained sector staff are female and forty percent are male, this finding falls in line with other lifelong learning sectors surveyed by LLUK. However, the percentage of female staff tends to be higher in the voluntary sector, where some organisations can have as high as 80% female staff.

- The workforce have a high level of education with the majority qualified to HE below degree and above in both the maintained and voluntary sectors. From 2010, youth work will be a graduate profession; therefore, staff qualifying on a professional youth work programme that starts any time after 1 September 2010 will need to achieve a minimum of an honours degree in order to be considered professionally qualified within the JNC framework (2003). This development will thereby lead to an even greater proportion of the workforce having high levels of educational attainment.

- The large majority of the maintained workforce classified themselves as white Welsh (68%), with a further 25% classifying themselves as from a white background (either British, Scottish, Irish or other white). The voluntary sector organisations estimated that between 80 and 100% of their staff are white, with the majority being from a Welsh background. Low numbers of non-white ethnic employees were found in both the maintained and voluntary sector, however it should be noted that similarly low levels are found in the general population in Wales.

- As found in other lifelong learning sectors surveyed by LLUK, the level of declared disability at 4% falls far below that estimated by the Disability Rights Commission at 19%. Issues of under-reporting have long been a problem in gathering this type of information and further work needs to be done to determine whether this figure is due to under-representation, under-reporting or a combination of both.

- A reasonably high number of individuals in the maintained sector have some Welsh language abilities in comparison to the numbers found in the general population, from recent research carried out by the Welsh Language Board (30% in the maintained sector compared to 22% in the general population). However, the proportions with an advanced skills level fall well below the general population level. In the voluntary sector, Welsh language ability was often dependent on whether the organisation operated in a predominately Welsh speaking region and on the aims of the organisation.

- The most common skills gaps from the maintained sector individual level questionnaire are 'Promote young people's self-awareness, confidence and participation, 'Developing youth work strategy and practice' and 'Facilitate the learning and development of young people'. Looking at skills gaps by occupation shows that managers most often stated gaps in 'Strategic management'; professional youth work delivery staff stated 'Manage staff'; with both youth support and unqualified youth workers nominating 'Promote young people's self-awareness, confidence and participation.

- For the voluntary sector 'Facilitate the learning and development of young people' and 'Promote young people's self-awareness, confidence and participation' were also given

as the most important skills gaps for youth work delivery staff. In relation to managerial staff the voluntary sector felt that 'Strategic management' and 'Financial management' were the most important skills gaps.

- Certain results, such as the lower proportion of women in managerial positions and the lower numbers of non-white staff in full-time positions indicate that succession planning for these groups of staff maybe need to be looked into in further detail.

- The maintained sector contains a very high number of employees who work 'short'[14] part-time hours, in comparison to employees from other sectors in the rest of Wales. This will no doubt have implications in many areas such as staff retention, continuing professional development and recruitment, and should be an important area for consideration in workforce development plans.

Specifically, in relation to the disparity between numbers of part-time to full-time staff, LLUK has previously stated that the high numbers of part-time staff within the maintained sector brings about challenges in relation to workforce training and development. Though obviously the issue is more complex, and factors such as the flexibility offered by the current workforce structure must also be considered.

Through consultation, LLUK's employers have suggested that some support services could more readily move to a full-time model with the potential for some of these services to be shared across authorities. However, greater caution must be exercised when reviewing the roles of front line staff.

Therefore, LLUK recommend that due care is taken to enable that the youth service progress through an organisational design programme and to understand the strengths and weaknesses of this suggestion in the maintained and voluntary sectors before this recommendation is enacted.

As well as the above findings, the research brought to light some of the difficulties for both the voluntary and maintained sectors in providing data.

- The voluntary sector organisations in this study, on the whole, collected limited data on areas such as ethnicity, educational attainment levels, i.e. in terms of highest qualification held, and disability from its voluntary staff and with the possibility of having a greater turnover in its workforce may find it harder to maintain up-to-date information. Also to be considered is whether existing systems would need to be adapted or indeed replaced in order to provide the requested information. In addition to this, the capacity requirements in terms of staff time to make any required changes to systems and to collect and collate data should not be forgotten.

- Further help and direction maybe necessary to widen the range of data collected by the voluntary sector; moreover, consideration needs be given to addressing issues arising from the diversity of the sector, which may be problematic but in itself is not a problem.

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[14] 'Short' part-time hours are defined as less than 16 hours a week (c.f. section 3.5 Mode of employment for further details)

- Some of the maintained youth services had particular problems in relation to their part-time staff; one service stated the high turnover of its part-time staff as an issue and for another part-time staff records were held separately in a manual format.

- A few services stated that there was no facility to either record the requested information or if held it was not easily accessible. Specific issues were also difficult to answer, such as training, staff attrition and post-employment information.

- Only one of the maintained youth services felt they had easy access to the data, though it did find the process of collecting and providing the data to LLUK time consuming.

- For both the voluntary and maintained sectors, any future data collection would be a good opportunity to establish some sector norms, for example in the definition of 'hard-to-fill' or part-time hours as 'short', 'long' or 'substantial' that would enable easier comparison across future research.

The above indicates that an important issue for the future would be to examine how data is actually collected in both the voluntary and maintained sectors. LLUK would welcome working at a strategic level with the Welsh Assembly Government, representatives from the local authorities (Principal Youth Officers, Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW), Human Resources Managers, the Local Government Data Unit - Wales), the Council for Wales Voluntary Youth Services and Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) to review how data about the youth service can be effectively captured.

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APPENDIX 1

Table A1: Occupational categories in the maintained sector

	%	n
Principal Youth Officer	1.0	14
Manager	7.2	97
Professional Youth Worker	26.7	361
Youth Support Worker	32.1	435
Youth Work delivery (unqualified)	21.7	294
Youth Work delivery (category unspecified)	0.9	12
Administrative	4.8	65
Security, caretaking, cleaning or other manual staff	1.4	19
Teacher, tutor, instructor or coach	0.4	6
Other	1.6	22
Missing	2.1	29
Total	100.0	1354

Figure A1: Level of highest qualification for maintained sector workforce
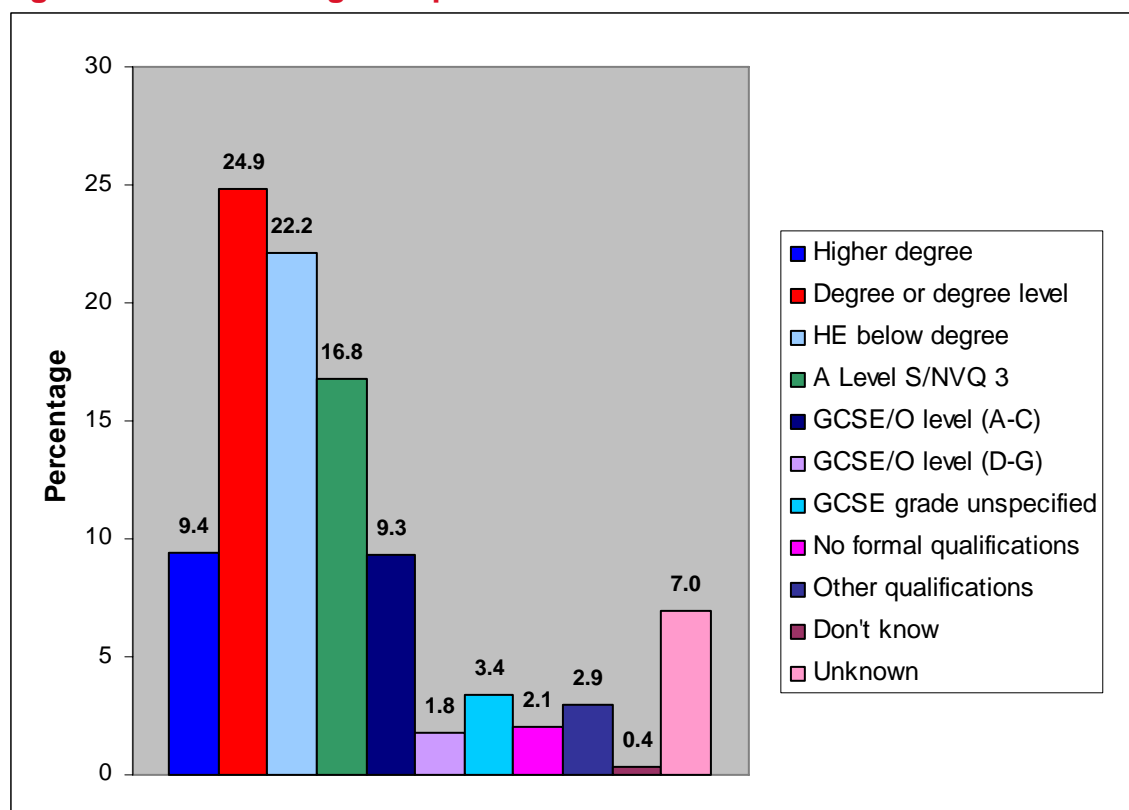
Table A2: 'Other' skills gaps nominated by individuals in the maintained sector

	n
Activity Based Skills, e.g. Photography, Art ,Adventure activities	1
Community work	1
Counselling	1
Dance	2
Disability awareness	1
Drug and alcohol misuse	1
Electronics	1
Emotional literacy	1
FEATC - Post 16 Teaching	1
First aid	1
Food hygiene	1
Funding	2
Fundraising	1
Government policies & legislation regarding young people	1
Increasing club membership	1
Increasing the number of volunteers	1
Indoor games for all sports	1
Mentoring one-to-one	1
NLP	2
Outdoor education/pursuits	2
Quality assurance	1
Research	1
Self-defence course	1
Time management	1
Training	1
Understanding the relationship with young people and problems/limitation of youth service	1
Welsh	1
Welsh language and writing skills	1
Workforce development	1
Youth Work Practice	6
Total	39

Table A3: 'Other' gaps in knowledge and understanding nominated by individuals in the maintained sector

	n
Disability awareness	1
Drug and alcohol misuse	1
Food hygiene	2
Funding	2
Government policies & legislation regarding young people	4
Help with meetings and being assertive in them	3
Increasing club membership	2
Mentoring & rewarding	1
NLP	1
Plan and implement self awareness	1
Promotion and marketing, data management, quality assurance	1
Supervision training	1
Understanding special educational needs	1
Understanding the relationship with young people and problems/limitation of youth service	2
Welsh	2
Total	25