

The professional learning of Scotland's Adult Educators

**Strategic Forum for Adult Learning
(Professional Learning Working Group)**

Final Report

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University of
Stirling



Learning Link Scotland



City of Glasgow
College



Education Scotland



Scottish Union
Learning



Scottish Credit and
Qualifications
Framework
Partnership



University of
Glasgow



Scottish Prison Service



University of
Dundee



Fife College



University of
Strathclyde

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Introduction

Following the publication of Adult Learning in Scotland: Statement of Ambition¹ in 2014, four national working groups were set up to take forward the Scottish Government's vision to establish world leading adult learning in Scotland. This document presents the findings of the Professional Learning Working Group which consulted in the period 2016-2017. The findings result from consultation initiatives planned and co-ordinated by the Working Group, aimed at identifying the professional learning opportunities and needs of adult education professionals in Scotland.

The work of the Forum's working groups was unfunded by the Scottish Government and the consultation exercise described in this report was supported by a range of adult learning organisations and professionals, taking forward the following consultation and analysis activity:

- Analysis of existing professional learning opportunities for adult education professionals, co-ordinated by the Scottish Credit and Qualification Partnership with support from the Professional Learning Working Group members.
- On-line survey of adult education professionals co-ordinated by Learning Link Scotland and the University of Stirling
- Notes recorded at a series of three consultation events co-ordinated by Learning Link Scotland and Professional Learning Working Group members, held between December 2016 and November 2017 at:
 - City of Glasgow College with support from the University of Glasgow
 - University of Dundee with support from the University of Stirling
 - HMP Low Moss, hosted by the Scottish Prison Service and Fife College with support from the Universities of Stirling, Strathclyde and Glasgow.

The findings of these initiatives are presented in this report.

Summary of recommendations

Although we have many qualifications for adult educators in Scotland not all of them are run or available for practitioners to attend. In addition, the analysis of existing qualifications suggests that is an absence of available SCQF Level 7-8 qualifications that address:

- Mental health
- Adult guidance
- Prisoner education
- Family learning
- Supporting learners with digital technologies

PDA Tutoring Adult Literacies (TAL) and PDA Supporting Adult Literacies Learning (SALL) courses address professional learning in adult literacy and numeracy, but geographical evenness in terms of delivery and uptake is uncertain and warrants further investigation. There is anecdotal evidence that these courses are run less frequently across Scotland and not at all in some areas. As many practitioners deliver learning requiring literacies support, the roll out of SALL and TAL should be to a

much wider community of adult learning practitioners going beyond those specifically engaged with adult literacies.

As adult educators come from many sectors, another recommendation is the creation of a degree qualification in adult education/adult learning that might straddle those sectors and provide an opportunity for a recognised vocational qualification in adult education.

Practitioners need more opportunities to network, collaborate and to reflect and learn from their sharing of practice. From our survey it appears that it would be useful if there were more opportunities to share practices around:

- Engaging communities
- Planning and evaluating learning with learners
- Celebrating diversity
- Developing social practice approaches to learning

Summary of identified gaps in professional learning opportunities

Formal qualifications for adult educators

The Real Competency Framework for Adult Educators sets out the professional competencies expected of adult education professionals (see Appendix 1). This document was utilised in the analysis of existing accredited qualifications, on-line professional learning survey and notes from consultations, to identify gaps in the professional learning opportunities available for adult educators in Scotland.

The orientation of adult education towards tackling inequality means that learners are more likely to represent vulnerable and marginalised groups. The Competency Framework places emphasis on responding to learner need, guidance, support and inclusion. There is also an expectation of competency in working with learners with protected characteristics, including learning disabilities and mental health difficulties. The availability of professional learning as it relates to mental health and adult guidance is therefore of central importance and the analysis of existing qualifications suggests that there is an absence of available SCQF Level 7-8 qualifications that address:

- Mental health
- Adult guidance
- Prisoner education
- Family learning
- Digital technologies to support adult learning
- Learner Voice

The necessity for courses in the above areas was corroborated via the on-line survey and at the consultation events.

TAL and SALL courses address professional learning in adult literacy and numeracy and there is indication of delivery and uptake from the on-line survey. However, geographical evenness in terms

of delivery and uptake is uncertain and warrants further investigation. The Competency Framework for Adult Educators suggests that all adult educators are responsible for the literacy, numeracy and ICT education of their learners, indicating that the roll out of SALL and TAL should be to a much wider community of adult learning practitioners, beyond those specifically engaged with literacies. Similarly, the Framework places emphasis upon adult education practitioners 'knowing the community where they work', in order to develop learning programmes that respond to the aspirations of families, workers and communities. This suggests that a tutor level (SCQF 8) qualification in Community Learning and Development (CLD) should be available to the wider community of adult learning practitioners.

There is no adult learning/adult education degree level qualification with recognition from the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS). Survey responses from managers suggested that this qualification was not sought, however, two practitioner respondents held a non-GTCS recognised qualification of this type. In addition, there are professional competencies associated with adult education which overlap with the standards set out for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges as well as the standards set out by the CLD Standards Council. Indeed, the consultation event held at HMP Low Moss identified that the practice of adult education could be understood as a hybrid between FE and Community Education approaches. This suggests the need for a degree qualification in adult education/adult learning that might straddle the two areas and that this might be recognised by the GTCS or CLD Standards Council.

Non-formal learning and the sharing of practices

There is strong indication from the on-line survey and consultation events that practitioners have few opportunities to network, collaborate and reflect upon their practice. There is indication that in some cases, lack of accredited or non-formal professional learning opportunities is not a source of concern. Rather there are resource and time restraints that prevent participation in professional learning, social reflective practices and collaborative partnership working to develop new programmes that build on learner voice and build capacity within communities.

The Competency Framework for Adult Educators requires practitioners to engage in the development of their own professional learning and pro-actively initiate projects to develop the professional learning of colleagues. There is also a requirement to develop competency in engaging with learners and communities to co-develop learning programmes that further community aspirations, and work collaboratively with external organisations to progress such initiatives. This suggests that further attention should be given to ensuring that resource restraints do not prevent adult educators from engaging with this type of activity, not least because there will be implications for the capacity and development of the adult education workforce in Scotland.

The consultation events with practitioners revealed that diverse adult learning projects continue to flourish in Scotland which in turn offers many opportunities for practitioners to extend their professional learning through the sharing and exchange of practices and experiences. Adult educators are actively engaged in overcoming the challenges of the current economic climate as it impacts communities and individuals. There are opportunities to share practices around:

- Engaging communities

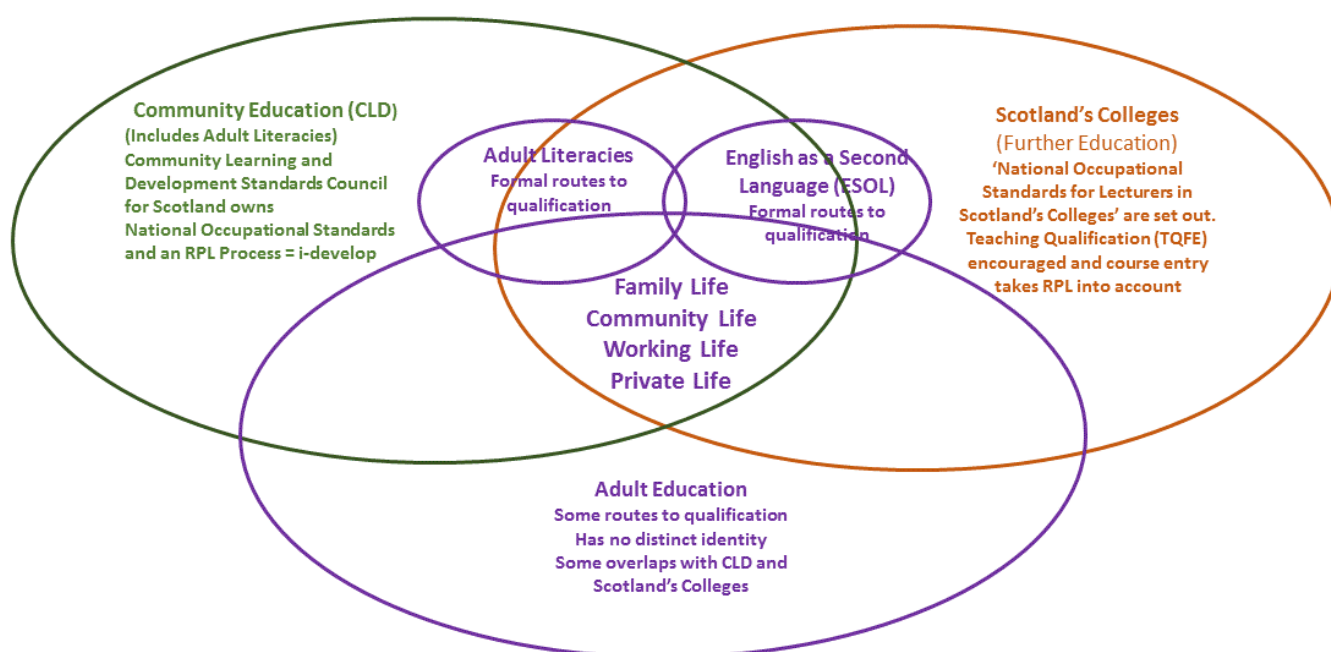
- Planning and evaluating learning with learners
- Celebrating diversity
- Developing social practice approaches to learning

Scoping the consultation

The scope of the Professional Learning Working Group was guided by professional standards for adult education professionals as well as criteria reflective of the aims of adult education as set out in Adult Learning in Scotland: Statement of Ambition (2014).

Professional Standards and competencies

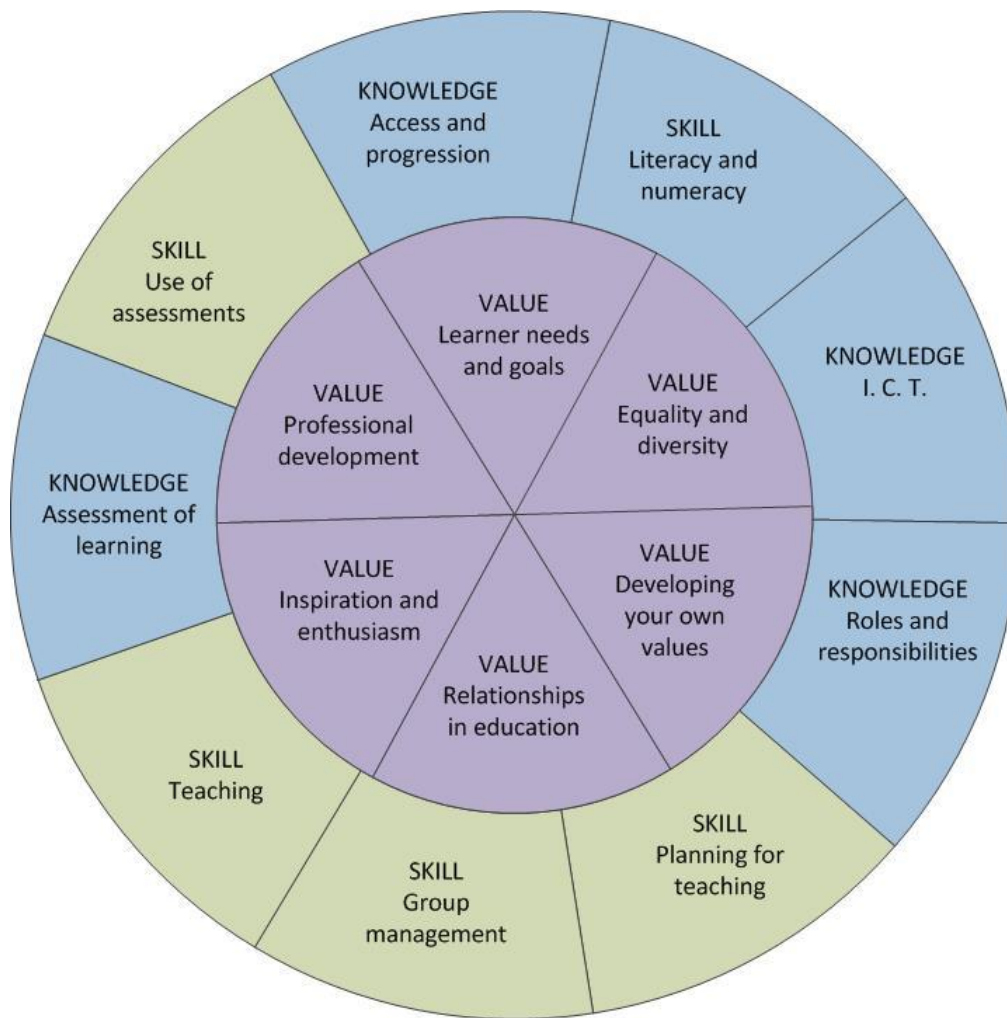
Adult Education: the context



Adult learning does not have a distinct identity in Scotland, though the work of adult educators overlaps with that of Further Education as well as professionals engaged with CLD. Teaching English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) and adult literacies straddle all three sectors, though in Scotland the latter resides under the remit of CLD.ⁱⁱ

There are six values central to the professional competencies for adult educators. These inform all the other competencies which relate to the knowledge and skills that should be demonstrated by effective practitioners. The competencies have been matched to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) at levels 6 – 10 and are available at:

<http://www.realrpl.eu/media/real-rpl/REAL%20Competencies%20Scotland.pdf>



REAL Competencies for Adult Educators

The competencies and standards for adult learning sectors in Scotland are summarised in Appendix 1. This includes the competencies or professional standards for:

- Adult educators
- Lecturers in Scotland's Collegesⁱⁱⁱ
- CLD competencies

A brief analysis of the standards and competencies listed above gives some indication about what is distinctive about the work of adult educators. The skills and knowledge competencies for adult educators broadly correspond with those for other teaching professionals in the post-compulsory education sector i.e. lecturers in Scotland's Colleges and teachers in Higher Education. However, notable differences are that adult educators' competencies place particular emphasis on individual practitioners taking ownership of the values that they hold to and how these inform their educational practices. Adult educators are also expected to take ownership of their professional learning in relation to values, skills and knowledge areas. Another central difference is that adult educators are

responsible for the literacy, numeracy and ICT education of all of their learners. The non-formal character of adult learning is also reflected in overlaps between adult education competencies and the professional standards for CLD. For example, there is an expectation to be competent in the development of educational programmes and curricula designed around learners' needs and goals, as well as principles of inclusion. This places emphasis upon competency in maintaining dialogue with learners, colleagues and wider partnership in order to maintain productive relationships that support learning programmes that impact the lives of workers, families and communities. Therefore, adult educators are also expected to be competent in knowing the community where learners work, with the aim of both developing relevant contextualised learning opportunities and effectively signposting learners so that they might progress with their goals and aspirations.

Criteria for scoping adult education

Scoping the work of the group was also informed by the following criteria, which are coherent with the vision set out in Adult Learning in Scotland - Statement of Ambition (2014):

- Adult education is voluntary and tackles inequality
- Adults are citizens, so learning is for active citizenship
- Adult education includes: trade union learning, health education and learning in prisons
- Adult education supports the family, community, working and private lives of learners
- Adult education must be ethically grounded

Illustrative examples of application of criteria

In scope

1. Fine art for learners with early stages of dementia
2. Introduction to employment law for shop stewards
3. Budgeting without a bank account
4. Mastering social media – learn to use Facebook and Skype!
5. Combatting stress through mindfulness and meditation

Out of scope

1. Fine art study tour to Venice and Verona
2. Income tax laws – how to use them to your advantage!
3. Financial planning course for stock brokers approaching retirement age
4. Firewalls for public sector organisations
5. Beginners course in contacting the spirit world

Detailed consultation activity and findings

This section presents a more detailed description of the consultation activity engaged in by the Professional Learning Working Group This includes

- Analysis of existing professional learning opportunities for adult education professionals
- On-line survey of the professional learning opportunities needs and requirements for adult education practitioners in Scotland
- Focus groups conducted with adult education practitioners and managers at a series of three consultation events

Existing professional learning opportunities for adult educators

Existing accredited professional learning opportunities for adult educators in Scotland were identified from the SCQF Partnership's database of qualifications. The database was filtered for SCQF rated qualifications orientated towards the professional learning of adult educators and additional investigations were undertaken to identify whether these were still being delivered actively. The REAL Competencies for Adult Educators (see Appendix 1) were utilised to identify gaps in provision which are summarised presented below. Unaccredited courses, or courses of study without an SCQF level were not included.

Professional learning for practitioners

Accredited professional learning for practitioners was identified as short i.e. part time courses of study, rated between SCQF levels 6 and 9 and typically with less than 20 credits attached. Twenty-eight courses were identified, though it unclear whether these are in current delivery. They include:

Adult Literacy/numeracy	4
Youth work	4
Community Learning/development	10
Trade Union learning	2
Disabilities/inclusion/support	5
TESOL	1
Teaching in Further Education	1
E-Learning	1
Coaching/Mentoring	2

Professional learning for volunteers

Volunteer training professional learning opportunities were identified as either referring to 'volunteers' in the course title, or if rated at SCQF Levels 4 – 6. Sixteen such courses were identified, including the following:

Youth work	3
Literacies	4
Tutoring/volunteering	2
Community learning/work	2
Mentoring/coaching	1

Availability of accredited professional learning for practitioners and volunteers

Courses for practitioners remain 'on the books' but more research is required to identify the extent to which these are being delivered both geographically and in terms of numbers. There is currently no accredited course orientated specifically around 'adult guidance' or learning support specific to 'mental health' at this level of study. There is also no course orientated towards teaching in prisons or family learning. There are, however, programmes that relate to inclusion more widely and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. There is just one course specifically geared towards community arts.

Half of the courses suitable for volunteers are offered via particular FE colleges or a specific local authority, i.e. they may only be available in a particular geographical area. More research is required to establish the availability of professional learning opportunities across Scotland. As with the courses for practitioners, the emphasis is on literacy and generic courses in community learning, tutoring or youth work.

Higher Education programmes

Undergraduate programmes orientated towards adult learning professionals are offered as follows:

Undergraduate

University of Glasgow	BA Ord Community Development
University of the West of Scotland	BA Ord Community Learning and Participation
City of Edinburgh Council, CLD	Leading a Project
University of Dundee	MA Hon Education (Athens Based Programme)
University of Dundee	BA Hon Community Learning and Development
University of Dundee	MA Hon Education
University of Edinburgh	BA Hon Community Education
University of Stirling	Teaching Qualification in Further Education (option in Adult Education)
University of Aberdeen	Teaching Qualification in Further Education
University of Dundee	Teaching Qualification in Further Education

More numerous are the range of post graduate programmes in education that are relevant to adult education. In all, ninety-two courses were identified and offered by eight Scottish Universities, though additional research is necessary to establish current delivery. These include:

Post graduate

General post graduate degrees in Education/Education Studies	15
Gaelic Education	1
TESOL/Languages/Translation Studies	19
Additional Support/Disabilities/Inclusion	12
Community Education/CLD	7
Professional Learning/Enquiry/Leadership/Chartered Teacher	12
Adult Literacy/Numeracy	3
Education Research	9
Adult/Continuing Education	3
Teaching Qualification Further Education	3
Adult Guidance	0

Further research would be required if the take up of students across the range of post graduate courses was to be established. Community Education/Learning programmes are recognised by the CLD Standards Council, whilst Teaching Qualifications in Further Education are aligned with the Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges and are recognised by the GTCS. There is no GTC recognised teaching qualification in adult education.

The Professional Learning Working Group used the SCQF database of accredited learning in Scotland to search out accredited professional learning available to adult educators. The following table was current in 2017, for updates to the information please contact the institutions who may be running the courses or search the [SCQF Database](#)^{iv} yourself. We discovered many more informal learning opportunities that are beyond the capacity of our report to present here but they can also be found on the SCQF Database.

THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

Professional accreditation framework for adult educators

a

scqf

scottish credit and
qualifications framework

12							
11	Postgraduate Diploma and Masters in Teaching Adults <i>University (Glasgow)</i>	MSc Adult and Continuing Education <i>University (Glasgow)</i>	International Masters in Adult Education for Social Change <i>University (Glasgow)</i>	Postgraduate Teaching Qualification in FE <i>Universities (Aberdeen, Stirling and Dundee)</i>	Professional Doctorate/ MSc Community Education <i>Universities (Dundee, Edinburgh)</i>	PgDip/MSc/MEd Community Learning and Development <i>Universities (Aberdeen, Glasgow)</i>	MSc Advanced Community Development <i>University (Glasgow)</i>
10	PDA Applied Practitioner Studies in Teaching ESOL <i>Colleges</i>	BA Hons Community Education <i>University (Edinburgh)</i>	BA Hons Community Learning and Development <i>Universities (Aberdeen, Dundee and Glasgow)</i>				
9	Undergraduate Teaching Qualification in FE <i>Universities (Aberdeen, Stirling and Dundee)</i>	PDA Teaching ESOL <i>Colleges</i>	BA Community Learning and Participation <i>University (UWS)</i>	BA Community Development <i>University (Glasgow)</i>	PDA Advancing Equality and Diversity Through Inclusiveness <i>(College Development Network)</i>		
8	PDA Tutoring Adult Literacies	PDA Teaching Practice in Scotland's Colleges <i>Colleges</i>	City and Guilds, Level 4, Licentiatehip, Professional Learning and Development Award <i>Colleges</i>				
7	HND Community Arts <i>Colleges, local authorities, voluntary organisations</i>						
6	PDA Supporting Adult Literacies Learning <i>Colleges, Local Authorities, Voluntary Organisations</i>	PDA Introduction to Teaching ESOL <i>Colleges, Local Authorities, Voluntary Organisations</i>					

On-line survey of adult educators

An on-line survey of adult educators was administered via Learning Link Scotland networks in 2016-2017. The survey was designed by the Professional Learning Working Group and the questions are available in Appendix 2. The survey was geared towards establishing professional learning opportunities and needs as experienced and identified by adult educators. 102 adult education professionals participated in the survey, of whom 90% were engaged with adult learning activity for more than half of their time at work. A third of respondents had ESOL included in their remit. The remainder worked with a range of learners with different ages and backgrounds and all recruited through partnership referrals, self-referrals, community advertising and word of mouth. As expected, the job titles and roles varied, as indicated below.

Q2 Can you briefly describe your role?



The respondents worked in the following sectors:

Local Authority	49
Voluntary or Third Sector	26
College	22
University	1
Other	4
Other (Trade Union, Glasgow Life, Independent and private prison)	

Local authority areas where the participants worked included:

Aberdeen	3	Highland	2
Aberdeen City	1	Inverclyde	5
Borders	2	North Lanarkshire	1
North Ayrshire	4	South Lanarkshire	10
South Ayrshire	3	Midlothian	1
East Ayrshire	2	Perth and Kinross	2
East Dunbartonshire	2	Renfrewshire	3
West Dunbartonshire	8	Shetland	1
Edinburgh	8	Stirling/Forth Valley	3
Falkirk	3	West Lothian	3
Glasgow/Glasgow Life	15	Across Scotland	4

The respondents worked with a range of learners identifying the following as a focus for their work context:

Asylum Seekers	7	Women	8
ESOL	29	Unemployed/employability	12
Older adults (40+)	9	Personal Development	1
Young Adults	22	Mental health and recovery	3
Parents/families/carers	13	Union members	1
Literacy	16	ICT/digital literacy	4
Disabilities/learning disability	2	Prisoners	5

Existing qualifications held by the respondents

Supporting Adult Literacies Learning (SALL) or Introduction to Tutoring in Adult Literacies Learning (ITALL) or equivalent - SCQF Level 6	23
Tutoring Adult Literacies (TAL) - SCQF Level 8	2
SCQF level 8/HND any subject	3
PDA Teaching Practice in Scotland's Colleges/Dyslexia/Literacy	5
Teaching Qualification in FE (UG or PG)	11
Postgraduate Diploma/Masters in Teaching Adults	9
PDA Introduction to Teaching ESOL	6
PDA Teaching ESOL	2
Cambridge ESOL CELTA/DELTA or Trinity Cert/Dip TESOL	18
Community Development/CLD Undergraduate/ Community Education Degree	22
CLD/ Community Education Postgraduate Degree	20
MA Literacies	1
Undergraduate degree - various subjects	5
Postgraduate degree - various subjects	6
Post Graduate Certificate in Education/Guidance	5
Teaching Qualification in Adult Learning (UG or PG)	2
No post-compulsory education qualifications declared	8

Non-formal professional learning

Participants were asked about the non-formal or non-SCQF credit rated professional learning opportunities taken in the last calendar year. Of 89 responses 17 participants (19%) had participated in no learning opportunities of this type. Learning undertaken included:

- Community Development Activate
- Corporate Parenting
- Youth Achievement Awards training
- CLD Leadership skills
- CLD principles
- Participatory Budgeting
- Measuring Impact
- PEEP Progression Pathway training,
- ESOL refresher /conference
- ASDAN related
- Various in-house non-specified training courses
- Open College Network
- The Award in Education & Training Level
- CPD Recovery from Trauma
- Safe Talk - suicide prevention

- PREVENT (via e-learning)
- Leadership and Community Activate
- Advanced Career Coaching
- Open College of the Arts courses
- Introduction to Dyslexia
- On line Future Learn courses
- Training in New Technologies
- Peer mentor training
- HMIE associate assessor training/
Moderator training/ Associate Assessor
Training
- Social Enterprise Academy's Leadership/
Supporting Enterprise and Communities
- Using art to facilitate expression
- Developing Volunteers
- Deaf awareness
- Mental health first aid/awareness
- Toastmasters International - Public
Speaking
- Nero-Linguistic Programming Master
Practice
- Dyslexia Awareness
- Digital literacy/Microsoft training
- 1st Steps ICT literacies
- Open University Open Learn Units
- Outdoor learning
- ACAS mediation programme
- Training Needs Analysis (non-certified)
- GCVS (third sector interface)

Ease of access to accredited SCQF rated qualifications

Respondents were asked to mark on a scale from 'very easy' to 'very difficult', how easy have you found it to access SCQF credit rated qualifications in adult learning?

Very easy		Easy		Not easy or difficult		Difficult		Very difficult	
13%	10	22%	17	46%	36	12%	9	8%	6

(78 participants responded)

Current professional learning needs

To help establish whether additional forms of professional learning might be required, practitioners were asked **Thinking about the challenges faced by your learners, in which areas of knowledge and skills do you feel the need for learning opportunities that would assist you in your work?**

Responses were:

Specific Learning Difficulties	31
Literacies	22
ESOL	24
Developing the curriculum	23
Assessing adults learning	27
Family learning	32
Educational guidance	25
Learner voice	28
Other (please specify as many as you like)	15

The 'other' responses were:

- Speakers of English as a second language
- Dealing with vulnerable learners
- Creating personal action plans
- Mental health (5 respondents)
- Universal credit support (2 respondents)
- Working with limited resources
- Partnership Working/Sharing of good practices
- Additional needs
- Disclosure of criminal records
- Leadership and managing change
- Planning and reviewing provision
- Community Empowerment and adult learning
- Employability

What challenges do you face in the context in which you work?

I am taking on new or different adult learning roles that I feel inadequately prepared for	8
Mental health awareness	36
The community I work in is changing	26
Knowledge of policy and how it relates to practice	20
The focus of my work has changed	32
Less time for capacity building	35
Fewer opportunities to network and exchange ideas	33
Fewer opportunities for learners to influence programme development	19
Other (please specify as many as you like)	20
Total	80

'Other' responses are listed below:

- Motivation of staff under proposed job losses due to budget cuts
- Resources including time becoming more scarce
- CLD is growing as a complex field so it is difficult to give a focus to adult learning
- Changing Job role is a constant
- Uncertainty as to what our role will look like in the short to medium term
- Funding focus drives the direction of delivery
- Sustaining the organisation's finances through external engagement
- Time restraints e.g. 'We are in class 100% with no time allocated for development or growth'
- Funding/ uncertain budgets / Funding focus drives the direction of delivery
- No CL&D staff on the ground to work with and identify learners/capacity building
- Learner numbers are low, and attendance can be sporadic
- Accommodation for courses
- Difficult to get an accredited qualification in professional adult learning if you don't either work directly with adults, or work in teaching, CLD or a more 'traditional' adult learning field.
- Being asked to 'deliver' less and 'manage' more - challenging 'partnership' working, staff shortages,

- CLD is growing as a complex field so it is difficult to give a focus to adult learning
- Need more opportunities to network and exchange ideas

Questions posed to managers only

Eight out of twenty-two respondents (36%) who had management roles had supported staff to achieve an SCQF rated qualification during the previous year.

Managers were asked which SCQF credit rated qualifications were asked for when employing an adult learning tutor, with responses as follows:

Supporting Adult Literacies Learning (SALL) or Introduction to Tutoring in Adult Literacies Learning (ITALL) - SCQF Level 6	11
Tutoring Adult Literacies - SCQF Level 8	4
PDA Teaching Practice in Scotland's Colleges	0
Teaching Qualification in FE (UG or PG)	2
Postgraduate Diploma/Masters in Teaching Adults	0
PDA Introduction to Teaching ESOL	0
PDA Teaching ESOL	3
PDA Applied Practitioner Studies in Teaching ESOL	2
Cambridge ESOL CELTA/DELTA or Trinity Cert/Dip TESOL	8
Community Learning and Development Undergraduate Degree	3
Community Development Undergraduate Degree	2
Community Learning and Development Postgraduate Degree	1
None	1
Other (please specify)	16

Additional responses included:

- CLD degree is now essential (2)
- Teaching qualification (2)
- ECDL (1)
- Depends - non-accredited as well as accredited courses are provided through our projects (2)
- Skills and experience working with specific groups of learners (2)
- More important to understand our organisation and the way we work (1)

Organisational delivery of professional learning opportunities

Managers were also asked what SCQF credit rated qualifications or non-formal professional learning for adult learning tutors their organisation had delivered in the previous year. Of 25 respondents, ten reported delivering no professional development.

Delivery included:

- PDA SALL (11)
- PDA ITESOL/CELTA/Tutor training (6)
- Pacific Institute training (1)
- Range of accredited courses offered (2)
- SQA level 4 Volunteering Award

- Assessing and verifying SQA qualifications
- Partnership delivery of professional learning/tutor learning/programme evaluation (2)
- Student rep training

Consultation events with adult educators

A series of three consultation events co-ordinated by Learning Link Scotland and Professional Learning Working Group members were held between December 2016 and November 2017 at:

- City of Glasgow College with support from the University of Glasgow
- University of Dundee with support from the University of Stirling
- HMP Low Moss, hosted by the Scottish Prison Service and Fife College with support from the Universities of Stirling, Strathclyde and Glasgow.

The consultation events were advertised through the Professional Learning Working Group members' networks and aimed at engagement from adult education practitioners. The event held at City of Glasgow College was specifically focused upon the professional learning needs of adult educators. The University of Dundee event discussed professional learning with a focus upon family learning and the event held in HMP Low Moss focused on identifying challenges and solutions in relation to project-based learning and the evaluation of learning projects with implications for professional learning needs.

Each consultation followed a similar format. The participants were grouped around round tables and brief talks from keynote speakers from practitioners and adult education researchers were designed to stimulate dialogue in relation to specific challenges and how these might be addressed. Each table was facilitated and a scribe documented the discussion.

Resourcing and Professional Learning

Concerns were raised about a lack of time, funds and focus on professional learning, with agreement that professional learning should have greater priority, given these restraints. It was highlighted that practitioners no longer get time for personal development and it is important that they can update their skills in what was felt to be a rapidly changing environment.

The view was also put forward that:

- Mistakes had been made in the past where some professional learning initiatives had been funded and subsequently had become obsolete
- Need to further ways of releasing practitioners from work to take up professional learning opportunities
- Productive professional learning opportunities were available. The issue was lack of capacity for adult educators to participate because of work commitments.
- Reliance upon goodwill of colleagues to attend professional learning and associated meetings because of resourcing issues
- Some reports of volunteers attending professional learning and then cascading to paid staff, with some concerns expressed that volunteer staff could be exploited by such arrangements and that this set an undesirable precedent.

Required professional learning

- The opinion was also expressed that professional learning is required for staff so that they understand how to work with volunteers. Standards for working with volunteers may no longer be rigorously in place and this could be a consequence of an ongoing lack of professional learning uptake.
- There was comment that less people were applying for CLD Standards Council membership and whether this was linked with lack of time resource.
- The view was expressed again that there is a need to continually refresh learning within an ever-changing workforce or accumulated experiential learning might be lost to new generations of practitioners.
- Organisations need to do more to recognise skills gaps in their staff and dedicate time and resources to helping staff fill these gaps with appropriate professional learning
- Theoretical, critical and evaluation skills are important
- The view was expressed that for CLD workers, professional learning should be built into the yearly work plan, as with schools where professional learning days are timetabled into the school year

Professional learning should make use of:

- CLD Standards Council competencies – a nationally recognised set of competencies were already developed via the CLD Standards Council – ‘Growing a Learning Community’
- Adult Literacy Professional Development Framework
- ESOL curriculum framework
- REAL Toolkit for adult educators

Perceived Professional learning needs:

- Create opportunities for educators to share and learn from practices
- The view was expressed that professional learning in Adult Guidance had been more accessible in the past and was important for practitioners in the current climate
- The view was expressed that professional learning had previously been available concerning how to develop productive tutor/learner relationships, with a view to encouraging learners to move on and progress.
- Professional learning would be helpful around learner voice i.e. encouraging learners to speak about what they had learned. This is helpful for evidencing impact and also assists learners to be more aware of their future goals and plans, encouraging self-direction and programme development
- Suggestion for a Statement of Ambition Toolkit. This would contain ‘the basics’: How to work with adults, how to create an individual learning plan etc. This is required because of the continual need to refresh the workforce, some of whom are not from a community learning background.
- ESOL practitioners would benefit from international exchange activity
- A range of learning that develops softer transferable skills such as:
 - Preparing for meetings
 - Networking, presentation, leadership and interview skills

E-learning and communities of practice

- On-line and face to face communities of practice should be developed, as should webinars, mentoring and more joint working between organisations to facilitate learning opportunities
- Strong partnership working is the way forward to developing productive on-line learning
- A range of interventions around partnership relationships including:
 - More joint networking sessions
 - More working groups to tackle specific issues and short life task groups
 - Use of Glow groups and other on-line communities
 - Other on-line media including short You Tube videos
- Digital awareness and building confidence in practitioner usage could become overwhelming if not researched and focussed on correctly.
- Greater use of social networking e.g. a sharing hub, video conferencing and i-develop.

Adult education – addressing professional learning challenges through practitioner sharing and exchanging

There was recognition that education practitioners are also lifelong learners and should be engaging with professional learning. There was also recognition that excellent practitioners are at the centre of adult education and that sharing and exchanging experiential learning should strengthen professional development. There are wide ranging adult education projects taking place across Scotland, meeting the needs of adult learners with diverse goals, needs and aspirations, with scope for practitioners to share and learn from their experiences.

Family learning – Professional learning opportunities were identified, through the sharing of practitioner experiences around:

- Engaging with families and parents around appropriate informal/non-formal learning that might assist with self-esteem and poor mental health.
- Initial engagements that might lead to 'bridges' between families towards community and family learning.
- Confidence in interfacing with families affected by the criminal justice system, including matters relating to confidentiality.
- Liaising with schools, making the case for family learning projects, as it relates to 'closing the attainment gap', including links to teacher education programmes.
- Building link-working between prisons and local council community learning, prison and family learning and third sector organisations
- Building integrated approaches where family support for learning operates in tandem with support for housing, employment and finances
- Building capacity for learners to contribute to programme development, be programme champions or visiting speakers

Prison learning – Professional learning opportunities were identified, through the sharing of practitioner experiences around:

- Embracing and celebrating the diversity of learners
- Understanding project-based learning through social practice approaches
- Making learning explicit to the learner within projects e.g. where literacies are embedded

- Setting goals that the learning community wishes to achieve
- Engaging learners in the design of projects with clear aims that can be matched against evaluation criteria
- Designing learning projects that might foster productive relationships as well as meeting learning objectives
- Incorporating learner voice and learner centred approaches to evaluation, including associated practical activity e.g. running focus groups with learners
- Maximising use of limited technology available to either staff or learners, for learning purposes
- Building productively upon prisoners' existing literate practices to develop learning programmes, e.g. handwritten letters
- Initiatives that encourage learning champions, peer learning, spotting and referring for literacies learning

Appendix 1 Adult Education in Scotland: Professional Standards

Comparing Adult Education competencies with those for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges

For further education lecturers in Scotland's colleges, learner needs and goals are taken into account for inclusive programme delivery. However, there is less emphasis on educators having the skills, knowledge and values so that learner needs and goals might inform the creation and teaching of entire programmes from inception through to post-delivery evaluation. Adult educators demonstrating a high level of competency are expected to work with learners, colleagues and external partner organisations to develop programmes strategically in this fashion.

The professional standards for lecturers in Scotland's colleges do not refer directly to literacy, numeracy and ICT. However, there are curriculum driven demands on lecturers e.g. the Curriculum for Excellence (3-18) places onus on all teachers to take responsibility for literacy and numeracy. The difference in the standards is suggestive of variance in the relationship between adult educators and learners with regard to ICT and literacy, where adult educators have greater responsibility to ensure that all learners have the literacy skills to engage fully in the programmes they are delivering, taking necessary steps to support those who require assistance either through inclusive teaching methods or pro-active signposting for support.

There are similarities in the expectation that adult educators and lecturers must have competence in the planning, delivery and evaluation of teaching. This includes maintaining appropriate relationships with individuals and groups of learners, as well as designing and using assessments effectively. The professional standards for lecturers in Scotland's colleges make reference to teachers developing their own values and understanding how these values impact their work. For adult educators, this is also the case, but values and personal responsibility for their development is central to their competency framework, in the explicit understanding that values are central to the practice of adult educators.

Comparing Adult Education competencies with those for Community Learning and Development

Adult educators, as with CLD workers, are expected to understand the community in which they work with the aim of developing programmes of learning that meet the needs of groups of learners and potentially the communities in which they live. Likewise, the need to understand this knowledge so that learners gain access to and progress towards new challenges and opportunities in the future. Both sets of standards acknowledge the potential for adult learning to transform or empower the lives of learners, with CLD placing emphasis on community empowerment.

For both CLD workers and adult educators there is the expectation to work with learners, colleagues and external partners to create educational programmes and support the professional learning of colleagues, to support learners and to support the development of adult learning opportunities more widely. Values relating to inclusion and empowerment are integral to both sets of competencies. Whilst CLD sets out the values expected to inform competent practices in community learning, adult educators are expected to take ownership of developing and critiquing their own values, perhaps indicative of the wider diversity of the organisations and contexts in which they work.

Though CLD's remit includes literacies learning, these are not explicitly mentioned in the professional standards as they are for adult educators. There is no reference to demonstrating effectiveness in the

main tasks associated with teaching e.g. preparation, teaching and assessment. However, there are overlaps in terms of managing groups effectively, developing learning programmes to meet the needs of learners, and evaluating effectiveness more widely in terms of meeting learners' own aspirations and goals, rather than the requirements of specific qualifications.

Adult Educators (REAL Competencies for adult educators)

(<http://realrpl.eu/media/real-rpl/REAL%20Competencies%20Scotland.pdf>)

V1 LEARNER NEEDS AND GOALS Make judgements and decisions that demonstrate commitment to the goals and aspirations of all learners and the experiences they bring to their education, ensuring that learners' voices are heard and influence educational provision
V2 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY Make judgements and decisions that demonstrate commitment to the need for equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to learners, the workforce, and the community
V3 DEVELOPING YOUR OWN VALUES Demonstrate commitment to critiquing, reflecting on, evaluating and challenging your practice, judgements, values and beliefs as an adult educator, with the aim of furthering the potential for education to transform lives
V4 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING Demonstrate commitment to taking up opportunities for professional learning as an educator and as an expert in own subject specialist area and its teaching
V5 RELATIONSHIPS IN EDUCATION Make judgements that demonstrate commitment to building constructive educational relationships with learners and positive relationships with colleagues in the interests of learners' progress and development
V6 INSPIRATION AND ENTHUSIASM Demonstrate how learners might be inspired, motivated and have their aspirations raised through your enthusiasm and knowledge
SK1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES Demonstrate ownership of the roles and responsibilities necessary to an effective subject specialist teacher
SK2 LITERACY AND NUMERACY -- Address the literacy needs of learners/students and work creatively to overcome individual barriers to learning
SK3 INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY Promote the benefits of technology, e-learning and ICT in own subject specialist area: *Own skills *Learners'/students' skills
SS4 PLANNING FOR TEACHING Draw upon my professional values and attributes to plan effectively for teaching and learning
SS5 GROUP MANAGEMENT Draw upon my professional values and attributes to make judgements and decisions - a safe, supportive and respectful environment
SS6 TEACHING Draw upon my professional values and attributes to make appropriate judgements and decisions in the undertaking of teaching
SK7 ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING Plan, implement and review appropriate assessment for learning and teaching
SS8 USE OF ASSESSMENTS Use assessment information effectively to support students'/learners' needs
SK9 ACCESS AND PROGRESSION Work with others to support access and progression as part of the community where education takes place

The above competencies map to SCQF Levels 7–10, depending on the level of practice

Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges¹ (<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0039/00390659.pdf>)

Initial Professional Standards for Guidance and Support

Identify learners' needs and provide appropriate guidance and support, referring to specialists where appropriate
Demonstrate an understanding of the lecturer's guidance and support roles, responsibilities and boundaries and how they relate to the remits of guidance tutors and other specialists
Promote and facilitate equality of opportunity and access to learning by providing effective guidance and support in line with an institution's policies and procedures
Apply a critical understanding of the principles, nature, purposes and stages of guidance and support
Obtain and use feedback from learners to evaluate and develop their own practice in guidance and support

Initial Professional Standards for Planning and Preparing the Learning Experience

Plan engaging, inclusive and creative learning opportunities that demonstrate a critical understanding of curriculum design and alignment, theories of learning, teaching and assessment, and knowledge of existing practice
Plan with learners contextualised learning and teaching taking account of the needs of learners and their development of essential skills
Design, produce and adapt to learner needs: a range of effective, engaging learning and teaching and assessment activities that builds on existing practice, motivates learners and also takes account of supportive technologies
Evaluate and select appropriate resources from a wide range of sources
Design, justify and implement a strategy to promote professional reflection and evaluation of the learner experience
Plan strategies to promote sustainable development

Initial Professional Standards for Teaching / Facilitating Learning

Create and maintain an interactive, supportive and safe learning environment that promotes learning
Communicate effectively and develop an ethos of mutual respect with learners, fellow curriculum team members and other professionals and external agencies to promote learning and positive behaviour
Implement effectively a broad range of strategies to promote active and independent learning at various levels by using different modes of delivery and technologies
Identify and take appropriate actions to address the collective and individual needs of learners
Promote positive attitudes to human diversity and global citizenship through accessible learning and teaching resources
Use learning, teaching and assessment and feedback strategies and resources effectively to meet diverse learning needs
Implement a range of strategies to evaluate the quality and impact of teaching on the learning experience and reflect on the implications for future practice

¹ The Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges were in the process of refreshment at time of writing

Initial Professional Standards for Assessment

Devise suitable assessment strategies based on a critical understanding of the principles, purposes, means and terminology of assessment
Design, produce and use a range of assessment instruments taking account of individual learners' needs
Evaluate and justify a range of assessment instruments having taken account of individual learners' needs
Measure and record progress and attainment of learners
Use assessment feedback to and from learners to inform practice and promote learning
Use performance indicators to inform the evaluation of learning and teaching
Comply with internal and external policies and procedures for assessment and verification

Initial Professional Standards for Quality and Standards

Demonstrate a critical understanding of the principles, purposes and processes of quality assurance and improvement, enhancement and sector good practice
Implement effectively college arrangements for quality assurance and improvement and enhancement as an individual and as a member of a team
Contribute effectively to the quality functions of curriculum teams by agreeing targets, formulating action plans (individual and team), following through and evaluating their impact
Use an appropriate range of evidence to identify strengths and areas for enhancement, weaknesses and areas for improvement at individual, team and college levels
Agree targets, formulate individual action plans and contribute to team plans to address identified areas for improvement and enhancement

Initial Professional Standards for Professional Practice and Development

Evaluate critically how education is influenced by, and contributes toward, policies that impact upon the wider political, social, economic, cultural and technological context
Critically reflect on personal values and how they align with and support the values and ethics that underpin professional practice
Understand the roles, rights and responsibilities of the lecturer and apply them to their professional practice
Comply with all applicable statutory requirements and relevant codes of practice and apply them to their professional practice
Promote good practice in relation to equality, social and cultural diversity and the protection and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable learners
Manage self, relationships and work demands to promote personal, emotional and physical well-being
Engage purposely in reflective practice
Identify and undertake relevant professional learning to enhance practice and maintain currency; develop and commit to personal continuing professional learning strategies to achieve individual, team and organisational goals

Teaching Qualifications in Further Education (TQFE) courses are mapped against either SCQF Level 10 or 11 depending on whether it is a post graduate or undergraduate qualification

Community Learning and Development Competencies (http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/?page_id=8)

The values of CLD are:

Self-determination – respecting the individual and valuing the right of people to make their own choices
Inclusion – valuing equality of both opportunity and outcome, and challenging discriminatory practice
Empowerment – increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence issues that affect them and their communities through individual and/ or collective action
Working collaboratively – maximising collaborative working relationships with the many agencies which contribute to CLD and/or which CLD contributes to, including collaborative work with participants, learners and communities
Promotion of learning as a lifelong activity – ensuring that individuals are aware of a range of learning opportunities and are able to access relevant options at any stage of their life

Know and understand the community in which we work

Conduct an external community/ environment assessment, considering the political, economic and social context of the community
Investigate internal views and information relating to the area within which you work
Critically analyse internal and external factors impacting on individuals and communities
Identify needs, assets and opportunities using relevant information and evidence
Involve other stakeholders in identifying and agreeing needs and local priorities
Evidence an awareness of challenges relating to barriers to participation within the local Community/environment
Ascertain conflicting needs and demands.

Build and maintain relationships with individuals and groups

Seek out and engage with individuals, groups and communities
Practise in different roles, such as facilitating, supporting, leading, advocating, that are appropriate to the work in which you are involved
Use informal dialogue in individual relationships and within groups
Handle challenges and opportunities constructively
Understand and deal with the underlying dynamics at work within relationships and groups
Work towards the resolution of conflict
Recognise the power dynamic and action needed to equalise power relationships in decision making;
Facilitate endings for individual and group relationships where appropriate

Provide learning and development opportunities in a range of contexts

Provide education and development opportunities that are developed in dialogue with individuals and communities
Generate learning opportunities that will stimulate personal and community change;
Tackle barriers to participation
Develop, design and deliver learner-centred programmes
Take advantage of learning and development opportunities in everyday situations
Use appropriate methods and techniques
Support progression and transition
Use appropriately targeted methods to promote learning and development opportunities.

Facilitate and promote community empowerment

Analyse and understand power dynamics and decision-making processes
Use community action as a means to achieve change
Be inclusive and involve the wider community
Interact within and across communities
Participate in decision-making structures and processes
Campaign for change
Identify and manage community assets

Organise and manage resources

Develop and plan programmes and project activities
Manage and monitor programmes and project activities
Promote and manage a culture based on equality
Organise, deploy and monitor resources effectively
Recruit, manage and support people (staff, volunteers)
Identify and access funding/ resources
Understand and manage risk
Interpret and apply relevant legislation (e.g. equalities, Child Protection, Health and Safety)

Develop and support collaborative working

Develop and support collaborative working within your own organisation
Initiate collaborative working with relevant organisations
Participate in partnership and collaborative working
Support community participation in partnership and collaborative working
Clarify and articulate the role of your own organisation and that of others
Negotiate and agree roles in collaborative and joint work, taking a leadership role where appropriate
Identify, put in place or provide appropriate training and development opportunities for collaborative working
Challenge and be challenged on issues undermining effective partnership working being aware of tensions and conflicts
Manage the ending of collaborative and joint relationships.

Evaluate and inform practice

Understand the differences between research, evaluation and associated concepts
Employ appropriate tools, frameworks and methodologies in the evaluation of practice
Draw on evaluation findings to inform your own practice
Use participative evaluative processes
Promote and support community led research and evaluation
Analyse policy, research and evaluation evidence
Learn from other perspectives and challenge your own assumptions
Interpret and use evidence related to outcomes and impact
Present evidence to a range of audiences using appropriate tools and technologies

CLD recognised degree courses are accredited at Level 10. Recognition is possible by portfolio evidencing 10 years professional service or its equivalent.

Appendix 2 On-line survey questions

Q1 What is your current job title?

Q2 Can you briefly describe your role?

Q3 How much of your role is involved in adult learning?

Q4 Who are the learners in your organisation, for example, are they ESOL or literacies learners, mostly young adults, mostly older adults, are they professionals or students receiving training?

Q5 How do you recruit the learners for your organisation?

Q6 What SCQF credit rated qualifications for adult learning do you currently hold? Please tick all that are relevant

Q7 On a scale from very easy to very difficult, how easy have you found it to access SCQF credit rated qualifications in adult learning?

Q8 What sort of non-formal or non-SCQF credit rated professional learning opportunities have you taken in the last calendar year?

Q9 On a scale from very easy to very difficult, how easy have you found it to access non-formal or non-SCQF credit rated professional learning in adult learning?

Q10 Thinking about the challenges faced by your learners, in which areas of knowledge and skills do you feel the need for learning opportunities that would assist you in your work?

Q11 What challenges do you face in the context in which you work?

Q12 What SCQF credit rated qualifications do you ask for when employing an adult learning tutor? Please tick all that are relevant

Q13 In the last calendar year, have you supported adult learning staff to attend any SCQF credit rated qualifications or non-formal professional learning opportunities?

Q14 In the last calendar year, what SCQF credit rated qualifications or non-formal professional learning for adult learning tutors has your organisation delivered?

Q15 What professional learning would you like to be able to do next?

Q16 If someone was new to the field of adult learning tutoring, what would you recommend as the most useful professional

Section B

Q17 What is your current job title?

Q18 Can you briefly describe your role?

Q19 How much of your role is involved in adult learning?

Q20 Who are your learners, for example, are they ESOL or literacies learners, mostly young adults, mostly older adults?

Q21 What SCQF credit rated qualifications for adult learning do you currently hold? Please tick all that are relevant

Q22 On a scale from very easy to very difficult, how easy have you found it to access SCQF credit rated qualifications in adult learning?

Q23 In the last calendar year, have you attended non-SCQF credit rated qualifications or non-formal professional learning opportunities?

Q24 On a scale from very easy to very difficult, how easy have you found it to access non-formal or non-SCQF credit rated professional learning in adult learning?

Q25 Thinking about the challenges faced by your learners, in which areas of knowledge and skills do you feel the need for learning opportunities that would assist you in your work?

Q26 What challenges do you face in the context in which you work?

Q27 What professional learning would you like to be able to do next?

Q28 If someone was new to the field of adult learning tutoring, what would you recommend as the most useful professional learning opportunity they could take?

Section C

Q29 Please tick all that apply:

Q30 Please add any additional comments you would like to make:

Q31 Do your answers to this survey relate to work carried out in:

Q32 Can you identify which local authority area you work in?

Q33 If you would like us to contact you again, please leave your details:

ⁱ Scottish Government (2014) Adult Learning in Scotland: Statement of Ambition
<https://www.education.gov.scot/Documents/adult-learning-statement.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Galloway, S (2015) Recognition for Adult Educators (REAL) Competency Framework Scotland), Stirling School of Education, retrieved from <http://realrpl.eu/media/real-rpl/REAL%20Competencies%20Scotland.pdf> . An explanation about how the competencies were created from National Occupational Standards is available at the back of this document. The competencies are also set out in greater detail and mapped against Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework Levels 7 – 10, with illustrative examples.

ⁱⁱⁱ At time of publication, the Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges (Morrison, 2012) <https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2012/03/6519> were in the process of being refreshed and may now have been replaced by a new version

^{iv} SCQF Database: <http://scqf.org.uk/the-framework/search-database/>