

# Research into Qualification Needs For Work With Parents

**Final Report**

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Research and Developed for Parenting UK by:

## Pye Tait Limited

9, Royal Parade  
Harrogate  
HG1 2SZ  
T: 01423-509433  
F: 01423-509502  
e-mail: [info@pyetait.com](mailto:info@pyetait.com)  
web: [www.pyetait.com](http://www.pyetait.com)



Cert No: 5120

Abbey House  
83, Princes Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 ZER  
T : 0131-2477540  
F : 0131-2477541

e-mail : [info-scot@pyetait.com](mailto:info-scot@pyetait.com)  
web : [www.pyetait.com](http://www.pyetait.com)

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# 1. Introduction to the Study

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## 1.1 Introduction

Parenting UK (formerly the Parenting, Education and Support Forum) is establishing a wide range of avenues of assistance for those working with parents in the UK. As part of that work it wants to obtain an initial view of the attitudes and requirements of its sector with regard to standards and qualifications.

This report outlines the findings of research conducted by Pye Tait Limited over a three month period in early 2006 to establish the immediate and longer-term views of, and interest in, qualifications specifically for work with parents.

As a result of this work, Pye Tait has collected information on the main gaps in knowledge and skills required to work with parents as well as the likely take up of different types of qualifications, from pre-university to university level.

Considering the time pressures on practitioners, the research has also investigated the preferred modes of study, including distance learning and work-based provision.

## 1.2 Method

- The work that Pye Tait undertook was as follows: the mapping of existing qualifications recognising the skills and knowledge required specifically for working with parents
- the design and implementation of a web-based questionnaire of Parenting UK's membership, practitioners and employers
- holding telephone discussions with 23 key stakeholders including: awarding bodies; the Learning and Skills Council (LSC); interest groups, charities; colleges and universities

A total of 164 practitioners and employers responded to web based questions on the likely demand for qualifications.

A list of the stakeholders consulted for this work is provided in **Appendix C**.

The web based questionnaire and telephone interviews provided broad discussion on the potential interest in the different types of qualification. The scope of the work has not allowed for more detailed exploration of the usefulness of each qualification.

During this period, Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) – the Sector Skills Council for the lifelong learning sector - also conducted a consultation with the parenting sector on the draft qualification structure for an S/NVQ and VRQs at levels 2, 3 and 4.

This involved checking that the proposed structure meets the needs of practitioners and employers. In addition, the sector was asked to specify the numbers of staff that would be interested in these two types of qualification and at which levels.

It is understood that findings from the LLUK study will be available at around the same time as this report is finalised.

## 2. Background and Scope

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### 2.1 Work with Parents

Parenting education and support involves offering appropriate information and advice to parents. It also involves assisting parents in developing the skills required to deal with different and challenging experiences. In summary, these activities include:

- one-to-one support from professionals (such as health visitors or child psychologists) or volunteers either in the parent's own home or elsewhere
- self-help parenting groups
- parenting courses
- confidential support via telephone helplines and the Internet
- information resources and services<sup>1</sup>

Parenting education and support encompasses a range of different activities:

***'It enables parents, prospective parents and those in a parenting role to improve their understanding of their own and their children's personal, social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs and the context in which family life takes place. This enhances family life and the contribution which families make to society'<sup>2</sup>.***

This study has focussed primarily on the skills and qualification needs of **practitioners for whom their main role is to work with parents.**

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<sup>1</sup> PAULO (2001) 'An Occupational and Functional Map of the UK Parenting Education and Support Sector', p.13.

<sup>2</sup> [www.parenting-forum.org.uk](http://www.parenting-forum.org.uk)

**Table 1: Those Whose Main Role is to Work with Parents**

<b>Those whose Main Role is to Work with Parents</b>	
Regional development workers	Policy or project leader
Workers fronting telephone or internet support	Education welfare officer
Group facilitator	Sure start or children's centre worker
Programme tutor	Parenting worker attached to extended schools
Co-ordinator	Youth offending team parenting worker
Health visitor or other home visitor	Provider of parenting support in prisons and young offender institutions
Midwife	Child and mental health service workers

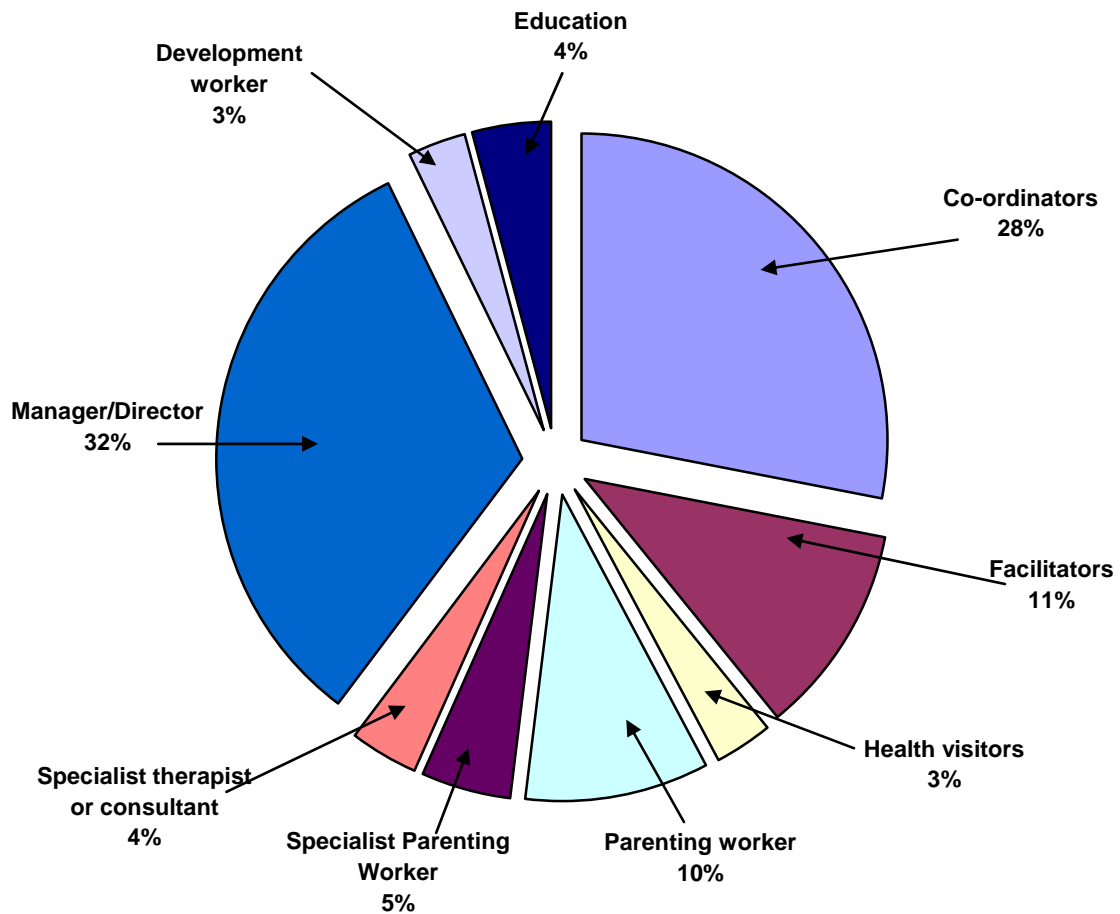
These roles cover the public and voluntary and community sectors and include voluntary workers as well as those employed in a paid capacity.

It is recognised that other professionals such as educational psychologists, children's nurses, policy officers and GPs do interact with parents but this is not their core function.

Profile of Practitioners Engaged in the Research

Parenting UK's members were notified of the web based questionnaire as an opportunity to state what they felt the likely interest would be in different types of qualifications. Highlighted below is a breakdown of the profile of the different practitioners that responded.

Figure 1: Profile of Practitioners Engaged in the Research



Co-ordinators, facilitators and parenting workers accounted for many of the responses. Other roles included partnership officers, social workers; and tutors. A few *specialist* parenting workers also responded. These tended to support parents and families in coping with disabilities and alcohol or substance misuse.

Thirty two per cent of respondents were team leaders or centre managers and were able to comment on the skills needs and potential market for qualifications from the perspective of their organisation. These also included directors, chairs and trustees of organisations.

## 2.2 Policy Context

The role of parents and those supporting them in developing children and families is currently the subject of considerable government attention in the form of a wide range of policies and initiatives. These present significant challenges for the workforce. They include:

- ***'Every Child Matters'*** Green Paper (September 2003)

A range of measures were outlined in this Green Paper, designed to improve the quality of services for children and young people. These include the *Change for Children* programme, which focuses on enhancing information for parents and the provision of specialist support where required. The proposals involve multi-agency working, tying in with existing developments such as children's centres and extended schools. It also requires practitioners to offer direct advice to parents through telephone helplines and web based sources of reference<sup>3</sup>.

- ***Children's Workforce Strategy*** (April 2005) – just one of the recommendations from *'Every Child Matters'*

This strategy aims to improve the skills of all those working with children, young people and families to help ensure the improvement of outcomes in their development.

Although this is not specifically aimed at the skills of those who support parents, it does involve a range of professions that include some contact with them, such as early years teachers and social workers working with children and families. It is important to note that qualified social workers may well specialise in work with parents.

- ***Integrated Qualifications Framework***

As part of the strategy, the Children's Workforce Network (CWN) and the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) is leading on work to rationalise existing arrangements for the assessment and accreditation of a large number of qualifications that are relevant to the early years and social care workforce.

It will aim to enhance access to, and movement between roles in the different sub-sectors of children's services, and ensure that all relevant knowledge, skills and experiences are recognised<sup>4</sup>.

- ***Respect Action Plan*** (January 2006)

This will impact on the professional standing of youth workers, youth offending teams and parenting workers. It proposes measures to improve the provision of support for parents across the nation. It will build on the activities of children's centres by piloting Parent Support Advisers in schools and establishing a National Parenting Academy. Currently, it is not clear whether a qualification or a range of qualifications, based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for work with parents, will be used as a means of confirming this development.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/parents/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/parents/)

<sup>4</sup> DfES (2005) 'Children's Workforce Strategy: Building an Integrated Qualifications Framework', p.3.

## 3. National Occupational Standards

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### 3.1 National Occupational Standards for Work with Parents

An occupational and functional map was produced for the sector in 2001<sup>5</sup>. This highlighted the wide range of job roles that involve contact with parents.

These include:

- a) those whose main role is to work with parents and those in a parenting role; and
- b) those who interact with parents but for whom it is not their core role.

The mapping exercise also indicated the need for Standards and a qualifications framework.

Since then, National Occupational Standards (NOS) have been developed specifically for work with parents. These were launched in October 2005.

The Standards have been very well received. These are helpful not only for those working in and alongside the sector, but also those working in other professions who may wish to move into this field.

### 3.2 Other National Occupational Standards

The need to consider **existing** Standards and qualifications and the policy context of work with parents has been raised by a number of stakeholders and those working within the sector. Great care needs to be taken to make sure any developments taken forward from the findings of this research **do not replicate** what is already in place or being planned.

***“Any new qualification systems need to tie in with qualifications that are already in place, such as DIP social work, and DANOS in the drugs field to ensure that people are not already duplicating competences they have already met”.***

Senior Practitioner (Drugs Service)

#### Family Learning

Standards have also been developed by Lifelong Learning UK for family learning. Although these clearly relate more specifically to the work of those involved in educating families, there is some crossover with these activities and the work of supporting parents.

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<sup>5</sup> PAULO (2001) 'An Occupational and Functional Map of the UK Parenting Education and Support Sector'.

NIACE and the LSC have stated that there is a small amount of crossover between these Standards and those for work with parents. It is important that any qualifications for work with parents incorporate units from these Standards where relevant. One example is one unit from the Family Learning Standards on work with families with complex needs and those who find services hard to reach.

### Children's Care, Learning and Development (CCLD)

Clearly the planned activities of the Children's Workforce Strategy to review National Occupational Standards in Children's Care, Learning and Development (CCLD) and existing qualifications for the care of children and young people will also have implications for any new units and qualifications that are developed.

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) is keen that units are imported from the CCLD NOS into any new qualifications for work with parents. Although the Standards for work with parents cover developing and promoting positive relationships and supporting agency working, units from the CCLD Standards for understanding behaviour could be relevant here. This is one area which the CWDC feels is not covered sufficiently by the new NOS, of which those who work with parents need to have a good grasp.

Units from these NOS could also be used in early years qualifications when they are revised as part of the rationalisation to form the new Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF).

The IQF aims to encourage horizontal movement into different professions and allow practitioners to develop additional specialisms. It is crucial that the relevance of the Standards in family learning and units from existing qualifications such as those accredited by CACHE are considered before the introduction of a whole new qualification in work with parents at levels 2 and 3. In fact, it has been suggested that units should be imported to make up the S/NVQ and any VRQs, rather than starting from scratch.

***“Work with parents has been promoted at such a pace that agencies are struggling to deliver a high quality service which conforms to national standards. Professionals working in the field are often drawing on a wealth of experience and enthusiasm with training delivered in an erratic pick and mix form. Coherent training would go a long way towards delivering better quality programmes which are planned and evaluated to national standards”.***

Education and Parenting Officer (Youth Offending Service)

In addition, key policy developments such as the Children's Workforce Strategy and the 'Respect' agenda, are bound to impact on the demand for qualifications, particularly at levels 2, 3 and 4.

On top of this, there is generally so much scrutiny and emphasis on the roles of those supporting parents, that it has been suggested that their training should be a part of any proposed qualification.

## 4. The Demand for Qualifications

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### 4.1 Types of Qualifications

Many working in the sector already have qualifications in working with children and young people but have not completed formal courses and therefore received any accreditation for their work in supporting parents.

The range of potential qualifications that can be made available to any sector is extensive: Scottish /National Vocational Qualification; Vocational Related Qualifications (VRQs); Higher National Certificates or Higher National Diplomas (HNC/HND); Foundation Degrees; and higher level qualifications such as a full honours degree; and Masters programmes.

Some professional bodies also offer qualifications that demonstrate that individuals possess specialist skills within their particular field.

A detailed description of the design and purpose of these different qualifications is included in **Appendix B**.

Practitioners and employers who responded to the web based survey were asked how valuable a qualification specifically in working with parents would be for individuals. Just under 100% - ie **98.8% felt that a qualification would be very valuable**.

Their reasons are that they feel it is important for practitioners to achieve a parenting-dedicated qualification to provide evidence of their specialist knowledge. Primarily, there is a strong belief that **their competence needs to be formally confirmed to those they work with**.

***“Qualifications offer a baseline for the quality of training provision, and thus enable parents seeking help be confident that the programme they attend is of good quality. They also offer a way of establishing criteria for areas such as job specifications, assessment, pay standards etc. They can also offer an opportunity for career development for practitioners”.***

Parent Support Scheme Project Worker (a Family Centre)

The research has identified that qualifications are seen as useful for both those **who may not have any such qualification**, as well as those who have **already achieved a qualification** in a related field but would like to build up their knowledge in work with parents.

The following section highlights demand from different practitioners in more detail. Information presented here has been collected from discussions with key stakeholders as well as responses to the web based survey.

### NVQs/SVQs

Definite interest has been shown in this qualification type and it is seen as especially relevant for those working directly with parents. This confirmation also came from those at assistant level in health and social care.

Skills for Health SSC suggested that Health Care Assistants who work with midwives and health visitors may well use an NVQ in working with parents. Trained to NVQ levels 2 and 3 they would be interested in using a further qualification to bolster their specialism in this area.

This would also be a useful route for facilitators and coordinators who do not necessarily possess a formal qualification. However, they are experienced and competent practitioners. In some cases, they are also parents themselves.

Facilitators play a crucial part in training and encouraging parents to identify and meet their own needs or to ask for help. This can involve organising role play, brainstorming and providing support and information. Many are parents who have decided to become a facilitator after receiving such support themselves, either in a group or on a one-to-one basis. It is considered to be an extremely important role that can be central to encouraging development amongst parents.

Development workers and others involved in community work, such as youth workers and youth offending team officers often perform this role, too.

Co-ordinators plan the design, delivery and evaluation of parenting education and support services. This role is required in most government funded activities and other voluntary provision. Members of Parenting UK that responded to the web survey who are in this role appear to work for local authorities, including children's services, Sure Start programmes and youth offending teams. A number of respondents work in Primary Care Trusts as Parenting Coordinators or as Health Visitors of which an element of their role involves acting as Parenting Coordinators.

Individuals, who plan services to parents, are interested in an S/NVQ to help confirm their knowledge and understanding in providing services that meet parents' needs at level 3 and developing inter-agency working at level 4.

According to our survey, skills in building and maintaining effective and positive relationships with parents, colleagues and the wider community are a considerable priority for further development. Practitioners are only too aware of the increasing importance in being able to plan cohesive provision at local level.

Youth support workers and Education Welfare Workers may also want to undertake an NVQ in the future as their role expands in line with the Children's Workforce Strategy, to build on their existing qualifications at level 3.

Organisations responding to the web based survey felt that the majority of support staff would use an S/NVQ. Fifty five organisation representatives (about one third of all organisations) responded to a question about the number of workers who may take up this qualification. This totals some 680 workers and accounts for circa 12 staff per organisation.

Each of the local authorities responding to the survey felt that around 20-40 or more staff would be interested in NVQs/SVQs. It is likely that this approximation accounts for most of the relevant workforce that works directly with parents. Within local authorities this constitutes a team of parent coordinators and those working within adult and family learning and could amount to an average of 30 staff, depending on the size of the authority<sup>6</sup>.

This supports the findings from the occupational and functional map completed in 2001, that highlighted around 80-100% of volunteers and paid workers would take up this qualification<sup>7</sup>.

Most of the roles that involve working with parents, including those delivering Sure Start initiatives and based in children's centres, are subject to requirements set out in the Children's Workforce Strategy, ie that a higher proportion of workers will be qualified to level 3. Local workforce development strategies will help to identify and drive this demand.

**Working on the assumption that most of the relevant existing as well as the new workforce at levels 2 and 3 would undertake an S/NVQ, the total interested could be around 24,000. The previous mapping report of 2001 indicated that its estimates of around 20,000 UK workers, such as coordinators and facilitators (including volunteers) working with parents, was likely to be heavily underestimated. In addition, around 1,100 youth support workers<sup>8</sup> and 2,600 health care assistants could potentially take up this qualification.**

### VRQs

The majority of key stakeholders have highlighted that VRQs are required by the sector in addition to S/NVQs. Responses from the sector have also supported this. Availability of these qualifications will allow those coming into the sector to build up their understanding of the skills required in work with parents.

This includes parents who have received support from practitioners and become interested themselves in training in this area to become facilitators and co-ordinators. In addition, many relevant volunteer workers may benefit from this as a point of access.

In summary, likely candidates for the VRQs include:

- practitioners who already have an NVQ at level 2 or 3 relevant to their profession such as health and social care
- facilitators and co-ordinators
- those entering the sector who would like to develop more of an understanding in this area
- parents wanting to become parent educators at level 2
- volunteer workers

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<sup>6</sup> This has been estimated through discussions with a few local authorities and is an estimate only.

<sup>7</sup> PAULO (2001) 'An Occupational and Functional Mapping of the UK Parenting Education and Support Sector', p.26.

<sup>8</sup> Figures provided by the National Youth Agency suggest that around 5,371 youth workers are employed in the UK and that around 20% of these are youth support workers.

**Although there is demand for VRQs, it appears these would attract fewer individuals than an S/NVQ in work with parents. According to practitioners consulted for the research, this equates to around one quarter of the demand. Potentially this could translate into 6,000 that may take up such a qualification.**

It is important to note that there has been a mixed response from facilitators and co-ordinators on the **type** of qualification they would find useful. There does not appear to be a particularly strong preference for either an S/NVQ or a VRQ. Many have mentioned that both of these would be suitable. This may be because there are people in this role who feel they have the experience to be able to undertake a competency based assessment and others that feel they are just moving into this area and need more theory based practice. This could also be due to a difference in interpretation of what these different qualifications involve.

### HNC/HND

Less interest is evident in an HNC or HND, however there is some interest from social workers. This is seen as a useful vehicle for parents who have received support from this field and have considered this type of work as a career for themselves. In addition it is perceived as necessary for those who are new to the profession and need to build up their confidence in working with parents.

In most cases however, an HNC/HND is regarded as unnecessary. The BTEC certificate and diploma in work with children and families is used by those in early years as a licence to practice. However, development of skills in working with parents at this level is seen as more usefully studied in the workplace.

### Foundation Degrees

Foundation Degrees, launched as a qualification type in 2001, have similarities with HNCs/HNDs but it is recognised in time there will be more of the former than the latter.

Practitioners would prefer a foundation degree to an HNC/HND. However, it is not clear to what extent this would be used and by which practitioners.

One of the key points to have emerged from the research has been the **importance of building up experience** in the field. A foundation degree could be used by nursery and play workers to help fill a gap in their career pathway. This could also be useful for youth workers and social workers working directly with parents. It could even be relevant for those already qualified to degree level who want to move into in supporting parents as their core role.

Individuals wanting to specialise in this area could potentially use a work placement if they are not already employed, as is currently arranged for the course offered by De Montfort University.

### Higher Levels

Provision at level 5 and above is required by those already qualified at degree level to help extend the breadth of their knowledge in working with parents in different contexts. In this instance, the provision could cater for *specialist areas* for example - supporting parents of children with disabilities, alcohol misuse etc.

#### Units as opposed to a whole degree

There does not appear to be demand for a whole degree specifically for work with parents. This would best be developed through individual modules that could be studied on their own, or built up as credits to comprise a diploma or degree at levels 5 and 6.

More experienced candidates, such as those who have worked with parents for more than a few years, may also wish to undertake this higher level provision as part of their continuing professional development.

***“[Work with parents] is a complex area requiring high level skill. We need to develop a workforce with those [high level] skills in order to offer a range of quality services to meet local and individual needs”.***

Children’s Centre Development Officer

***“The higher you go up the framework, the more defined the specialism. It would definitely be useful to have degrees with strong elements of work with parents, but this is probably not enough for a whole degree”.***

Children’s Workforce Development Council

#### Levels 5 plus

There appears to be a demand for higher level access courses at levels 5 and 6 for practitioners who are aiming to enter into work with children and families. The Open University ran four courses of the level 4<sup>9</sup> ‘working with children in the early years’ in 2005, each with around 600 students. Students then went on to complete an additional 120 points to achieve a degree.

Development would need to be available at levels 5 and 6 for midwives and health visitors, as they are registered after completing relevant degrees and are unlikely to be attracted by lower level qualifications. De Montfort University already offers a module in ‘Parenting Positively’ in the third year of degree studies for health visitors and this has proved to be popular.

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<sup>9</sup> This is the old level 4 – this course is now more in line with level 5 on the new qualifications framework.

Practitioners and employers see completion of units at higher level as an opportunity for those individuals, already in possession of a related qualification, to explore work with parents within different contexts, such as working with families affected by mental health or alcohol misuse.

Individuals who support parents caring for children and adolescents with mental health problems would also be interested in a qualification. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provides a comprehensive range of support in every local authority through a designated mental health team.

Significant pressure is placed on these teams and professionals working in children's centres to deal with, what appears to be a growing number of, cases of hyperactivity and other difficulties. These practitioners tend to be nursery nurses and many study towards higher level through an access course in strategies for parenting at De Montfort University. This is usually accessed through distance learning.

Youth workers and social workers also feel they would benefit from an additional qualification where they are involved in work with parents on a regular basis, such as in prisons. Qualifications they currently use are seen as too generalised and do not cover the specialist skills required.

It has also been mentioned that specialist areas could include "kinship care", ie social workers working with kinship carers such as grandparents and extended family members.

Nursery nurses take up modules in dealing with behavioural difficulties via distance learning at level 5. De Montfort University has developed two new modules from the NOS for work with parents to be available for these candidates from September 2006. This a useful stepping stone for those who have an NVQ or OCN qualification and would like to move into a relevant degree pathway.

***"I am a qualified Nursery Nurse but have no training in working with parents. A qualification would add weight to the parenting sessions that I have with parents and enable me to do my job more efficiently".***

Occupational Therapy Technician

Forty one individuals stated there would be interest from their organisation in units at these levels (25% of all respondents). This amounts to around 295 potential users. Just under forty four percent (43.9%) of respondents to the web survey that expressed an interest were co-ordinators and health visitors. The remainder was a mix of project managers and a few development workers.

Thirty seven percent of responses registering an interest in higher level units were from Primary Care Trusts, local authorities, youth offending teams or Sure Start programmes. Others included voluntary organisations.

There is also interest from those who are building up to a degree to qualify to practice in their profession, such as mental health nurses.

## Qualification Needs of Those Who Work with Parents

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There are 35,000 midwives and 2,500 school nurses in the UK<sup>10</sup> and around 13,000 health visitors. This amounts to a workforce of around 50,500. Potentially, all of these could be interested in units at these higher levels.

It is more difficult to ascertain an accurate number of co-ordinators. However, there could well be one in each youth offending team (in each local authority). There could also be at least one working in each local authority children's services or children's trusts. As there are 140 local authorities in England, this could mean at least 280 additional potential candidates. Plus there are currently 524 Sure Start programmes that may employ Co-ordinators and 302 Primary Care Trusts.

By 2010, there will be 3,500 Children Centres; all 4,000 secondary and 19,000 primary schools will be Extended Schools with a duty to provide, either in-house or outsourced, support for parents in their parenting role. The National Service Framework for Children Young People and Maternity Services envisages all parents being offered a range of support from the pre-natal stage through to adolescence. The recent NICE<sup>11</sup> decision was that Parent Training programmes are effective and cost-effective in the treatment of conduct disorder and should be made available for parents of children up to 12 who need them. There is a welcome emphasis on the need for good quality provision offered by trained providers. The NICE guidelines recommend 8 to 12 individual or group-based sessions for parents, and stress the need for delivery by trained and skilled facilitators.

**Therefore, numbers with an interest in higher level units around levels 5 and 6 could potentially equate to a minimum of around 52,000, but in reality could be much higher in view of the recent NICE decision.**

### Level 7 plus

It is likely that some social workers and health visitors would access units at level 7 as part of their professional development. The demand appears to be for *very specialist study* in areas such as supporting parents of those at risk, or with severe disabilities. General qualifications in these professional areas do not currently build up these required skills.

De Montfort University, separately, surveyed Parenting UK's members on the likely interest in a Masters programme specifically on working with parents. Specific competence is required in counselling skills and helping families to adjust to intervention from services.

Around 100 members of Parenting UK responded to a previous survey conducted by De Montfort University to express interest in units at this higher level. Considering the number of health visitors and social workers (13,000 and 76,300<sup>12</sup> respectively),

**The number with a potential interest could amount to circa 90,000. Clearly it is not likely that all these practitioners would undertake higher level units at level 7. Even if this is halved, a figure of around 45,000, could be more realistic.**

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<sup>10</sup> Figures provided by Skills for Health.

<sup>11</sup> National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence - NICE is an independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on promoting good health and preventing and treating ill health.

<sup>12</sup> Figures provided by General Social Work Council.

### Professional Qualifications

There is a definite demand for professional qualifications specifically for work with parents. Practitioners perceive this to be a useful means of demonstrating to parents that they are qualified to provide the appropriate support.

**Half of organisations** that responded to the web based survey said staff would want to take this up as a confirmation of the specialist knowledge they already hold in this area **and just under half of these were coordinators or facilitators, and parenting or project workers.** The remainder respondents comprised mainly health visitors and youth workers.

The numbers from the survey that may be interested amounts to 445 and this is the equivalent to around 6 practitioners per respondent organisation.

**At least half of all coordinators and facilitators could potentially be interested in “professional” qualifications. In addition, around half of health visitors and youth workers would be interested. This could equate to around 29,000 workers, although again, this figure may be heavily underestimated.**

### 4.2 Modes of Study

Any new qualifications for work with parents would need to **recognise prior learning and experience.** This is crucial because of the various pathways taken into the sector. Facilitators, co-ordinators and volunteers working in assistant or support roles may not have relevant qualifications in this field although they have been working in this field for some time.

Overall, those who work with parents would like to be able to study for a qualification on an incremental/ ad hoc basis and build up their knowledge. This is especially useful for those who find it difficult to fit training around other work commitments.

Practitioners would prefer unitised qualifications which they can complete via accumulation of credits. OCN currently offer national programmes of training for parent educators. These are achieved through credits in 10 hour blocks and have proved to be very popular because of this ‘bite sized’ approach. These could count towards a Work with Parents VRQ.

***“I think it is very important to offer CPD to practitioners to help maintain their confidence, develop from listening to peers and keep their motivation and skills sets fresh. This could be developed on a points or credits system similar to lawyers and other professions. Achievement of x points/credits could lead to the next level of qualification”.***

Parent and Teen Coach

Although there is demand for bite sized learning and qualifications, those who work with parents are still very keen on using workshops and short courses as part of their CPD and would want these to still be considered as an important activity.

VRQs would need to include a link between theory and reflective practice, allowing those already working in a different field to have a useful stepping stone to work with parents.

For much of the areas of study to be covered, **Part-time study** and provision that is available **by distance learning is preferable** according to nearly all of the 164 members that responded to the survey. Learning needs to be accessible from home, but also through local adult education and community centres.

Those already working with parents feel that these methods are the only way that study can be completed, considering the time restraints placed on these roles. This would also be most appropriate for those working in a volunteering capacity.

Universities, consulted within this research, deliver modules through distance learning in some of their second and third year degree programmes. In many cases, training has been delivered in this way for some years because this fits best with practitioners' requirements.

The majority of practitioners were clear that if they were to undertake a foundation degree, for example, they would want to complete this part-time.

### 4.3 Payment

The demand for qualifications indicated above has not taken into account the issue of paying for units/qualifications or for the study towards accreditation. Although the question of payment was put to respondents, it is difficult to measure the relative weight accorded to this factor by practitioners.

According to the survey, payment for qualifications is considered to the responsibility of the employer.

Many consulted for the research were clear that the organisation should pay if the qualifications were recognised as necessary to help drive up the standards of service to parents. The government could also introduce a system of financial support, considering the requirements in recent policy to raise standards of delivery.

Currently there are some definite issues around the allocation of funding for training for those employed by statutory services. Practitioners have raised concern over the move by Primary Care Trusts to withdraw community staff away from work with families and parents. This has had a negative impact on the extent to which individuals can undertake CPD activity.

***“My thinking about this is that it is due to the current restraints of the health economy – statutory services are all working with limited resources within a service cutting climate”.***

Project Manager

It appears there are few circumstances in which individuals would subsidise their own training. Current low rates of pay for practitioners who are not qualified in their professions is a significant barrier.

It is also important to recognise the difficulties faced by those working in a voluntary capacity who may have other priorities and/or limited funds to contribute.

*“I was fortunate enough to have my employer contribute to some of my training for working with parents. However, the majority of my training I have funded myself. I have been happy to be self-funded for this training but am aware that if the government want all people working with parents to gain some qualifications to do so, they will have to put the money forward to enable this to happen. This will show people how valuable they consider the work to be and send a strong message that it is highly skilled work that requires specific training”.*

Parent Project Co-ordinator

The needs of the self employed should also be considered. Many trainers and parenting coaches work for themselves and would find it difficult to pay for a whole qualification.

### 4.4 Other Supporting Evidence for Qualifications

A number of universities have expressed an interest in developing frameworks for foundation degrees, degrees and Masters programmes. Some of these have conducted their own surveys with students on access courses to determine if they would undertake a foundation degree, when employed, as well as ascertain the potential market in terms of numbers.

Those considering developing a Masters programme have reported a high level of interest from those currently studying for degree courses either as internal candidates or practitioners completing a few modules as part of their CPD. Consultations with potential candidates have already indicated that this should be delivered via distance learning, at least in part.

The separate LLUK-led consultation with the sector, which has taken place at the same time as this research, will also provide an idea of the numbers of individuals who may be interested in an S/NVQ in Work with Parents and VRQs at levels 2, 3 and 4.

In addition, the LLUK work has asked whether there would be demand for further progression through a foundation degree or post-graduate qualifications. Again this will add to the evidence base collected through the research conducted for this particular project. These data can be bought together to further underline demand for different qualifications.

The Children’s Workforce Strategy sets in place plans to review the existing relevant foundation degrees, and degrees in terms of how well they are meeting the common core of skills and knowledge, as well as requirements for working with parents and carers<sup>13</sup>. Again, relevant units could be imported and undertaken by practitioners working with parents who do not want to undertake a whole qualification at this level.

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<sup>13</sup> DfES (2006) ‘Children’s Workforce Strategy: The Government’s Response to the Consultation’, p.30.

The Respect Action Plan, published in January 2006, outlines plans for developing those who work with parents, through a National Parenting Academy. It is intended that this will enhance the skills of practitioners in delivering high quality support to parents. This may well push forward demand for an S/NVQ at level 3 and higher levels.

The Race Equality Unit (REU) delivers a programme of training for facilitators who work with community groups, including those from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. This was developed from a course model delivered in the United States and has proved to be quite popular with large charities such as Barnardo's.

OCN accredits national and local programmes that train parent educators. One example of this is the programme developed in conjunction with 'Gingerbread' – a charity representing lone parents.

The Gingerbread and REU national programmes are programmes aimed at parents and delivered by parent educators. There is also an option for parents to progress on to level 2/3 programmes that would enable them to gain skills in group work and facilitation skills.

The REU programme 'Strengthening Families and Communities', and similar programmes, may benefit from being mapped to the new National Occupational Standards and accredited as level 3.

Responses by facilitators themselves have also suggested that it would be useful if units were linked with an initial teaching qualification such as the City & Guilds 7307 to help ensure they can cater for clients from diverse backgrounds.

## 5. Content of Qualifications

Stakeholders consulted for this research have highlighted the need for any new qualifications for work with parents to reflect differences in:

- a) skills required for being a parenting tutor/educator; and
- b) working alongside parents to help ensure they are empowered and are able to represent their needs

This section presents evidence on the priority skills areas for work with parents that must be developed now and in the future, as highlighted by practitioners, employers and key stakeholders.

### 5.1 Current Skills Needs

The new National Occupational Standards (NOS) form a useful frame of reference for identifying skills requirements.

The units developed for the NOS for work with parents are as follows:

- Build and maintain effective and positive relationships with parents, colleagues and wider community
- Develop parents' awareness, knowledge and skills
- Update knowledge and develop and reflect on own practice and support the development of others' knowledge and practice

## Qualification Needs of Those Who Work with Parents

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- Provide parenting services in accordance with the values and principles of the sector
- Create and provide safe, inclusive environments
- Plan, prepare and deliver parenting services
- Influence and contribute to policies, strategies and development opportunities for parenting services and projects
- Create and sustain a framework for ensuring and maintaining the quality in parenting services

Practitioners and employers were asked to prioritise these units in terms of the learning and development that is required now.

Overall, the sector appears to be most concerned about the current skills in the first of the above units: **building and maintaining effective and positive relationships with parents, colleagues and the wider community**<sup>14</sup>. The majority of individuals rated this as the first priority, particularly in terms of building trust from parents. This means this is an area where skills are currently not at a sufficient level.

Developing and undertaking inter-agency, cross-sector working has been developed as a unit at level 4.

Many were also keen to emphasise the importance of being able to **influence and contribute to policies, strategies and development opportunities** for parenting services and projects.

Understanding is required of:

- how policy is influencing delivery in practice at local level
- how this impacts on the work undertaken by different agencies
- how to consider these factors in effective planning

Comments were also made in terms of planning, preparing and delivering parenting services.

Ability to:

- initiate and develop parenting support
- deliver programmes/activities in innovating and interesting ways
- effectively facilitate experiential discussions and exercises for parents

## 5.2 Future Skills Needs

In terms of future needs, there was a more mixed response, with no single role emerging as a major priority. A limited number of respondents believed that all of the units of the NOS are important.

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<sup>14</sup> This is well covered within the level 3 unit "build and maintain relationships with the wider community".

Additional comments from respondents to the web survey again emphasised the growing importance of engaging with the wider community. A number of responses spoke in terms of involving parents in helping to deliver services in their own areas by providing them with appropriate training. Empowering those who have received support from practitioners is seen as a key priority for the future, particularly extending parent groups within local areas.

Recent policy changes and their outlined recommendations will surely impact on the qualifications requirements placed on practitioners - and therefore - the demand for these.

### 5.3 Other Factors

This work has highlighted the importance of being very clear on the requirement for qualifications from those whose work with parents is their main role and those who work alongside these individuals.

Primarily, this research has focussed on the needs of those who support parents on a regular basis.

Research undertaken for this project involved a review of all existing qualifications that are relevant to the skills required for working with parents. **Appendix A** describes these qualifications.

Most of the existing qualifications are aimed at levels 2 and 3 and accredited by Edexcel, City & Guilds, OCR and EDI among others. Although some of these qualifications focus to some extent on work with parents, none cover ALL the different skills required - such as enabling parents to reflect on influences on parenting or how to deliver services that value and respect parents.

For example, those working in health, childcare and social care have the option to undertake NVQ units at level 3 on building relationships and maintaining contact with families. Supporting parenting skills are also included in these options. However, currently, all these vital skills are included within just one OPTIONAL unit.

The Level 3 Diploma "Child care and education" awarded by CACHE includes one mandatory unit called "working with parents". However, this appears to be the only example of mandatory study for practitioners.

While it is possible that health care assistants and social workers, for example, may undertake a relevant optional unit that covers one of the main training needs in building and maintaining relationships with parents, this still leaves significant gaps for practitioners who want to develop their skills further.

A few universities started to deliver directly relevant qualifications, developed in partnership with Parenting UK, before the new NOS were launched.

De Montfort University has validated a Foundation Degree in Families, Parenting and Communities, which covers understanding of the issues in working with parents in the community. It also covers strategies for working with parents, aimed at those who will be involved in helping to coordinate services in partnership with other agencies.

## **Qualification Needs of Those Who Work with Parents**

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A credit based course is also available from The Open University on Working with Children and Families. In addition, the OU offers a number of foundation degrees in different faculties aimed at health workers, child care professionals and youth and community workers. These focus on work with children, young people and families.

## 6. Conclusions

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### Demand for Qualifications

Currently there are no qualifications specifically focussed on work with parents. Qualifications are available that refer to some of the required skills (see Appendix A). The Foundation Degree in Families, Parenting and Communities, as validated by De Montfort University goes some way in covering the different skills.

Qualifications in early years and working with children and families only appear to skim the surface of these needs and this provision is mainly through optional units within NVQs and VRQs.

The need for qualifications within this sector will not be met through just one qualification. Qualifications and units are required that are fit for purpose and reflect the different routes taken by people into and within the sector.

Due to the paucity of qualifications that focus on work with parents, those whose main role is to work with parents such as facilitators and co-ordinators, for example, may not have a qualification but are very keen to have access to one. Those who work in health care and development work, for example, and whose role also involves working with parents, tend to possess a health care specific qualification. It seems these different starting points impact on the type of qualification provision required.

***“I believe that parenting support is a very important issue...to ensure that each client receives the type of support that meets their needs will need a trained and qualified practitioner. It is my experience that many people ‘fall into’ their Working with Parents roles for a variety of reasons and that many of these practitioners are seeking out good quality training”.***

Principal Trainer (charity)

The sector is very keen to develop their skills through a basis of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Practitioners require provision that allows them to confirm and build up their knowledge through learning.

The research has highlighted that there is immediate demand for qualifications at levels 2 and 3 and units at higher levels.

Recent policy such as the Children’s Workforce Strategy and the Respect Action Plan may well be an additional driver for qualifications at these levels.

**Qualifications Content**

Practitioners and employers are concerned about competence in **building and maintaining effective relationships with parents**. This also includes **working with colleagues and the wider community** – a key element for development workers, Children’s Centre workers and those working in the field of mental health, are just some examples.

Influencing and contributing to policies, strategies and development opportunities is a very important skill currently required of those who work with parents and is particularly relevant at level 4 and above. The policy environment necessitates an ability of workers to navigate around the different demands placed on them and to ensure parents are supported in the best way possible by new developments. This includes developing and undertaking multi-agency working.

*“Without genuine connections within communities then parenting work is a misnomer...engaging with communities makes the work more genuinely understood, likely to be effective/passed on and creates situations for future services/help/ideas”.*

Psychotherapist (NHS Trust)

**Links with other (existing) qualifications**

The Children’s Workforce Development Strategy and the Learning and Skills Council are clear that any new qualifications for work with parents are developed within the context of existing qualifications in early years and childcare and also in recognition of aims to rationalise these through the planned Integrated Qualifications Framework.

Awarding Bodies consulted for the work also stressed that any new qualifications would need to sit with those already in existence for the different professions.

**Possible Market for Qualifications**

Section 4 of this report explores the **potential market** for different qualifications and units. The table below summarises these indications of demand. It is important to note that some of these practitioners may feel they already possess qualifications that are sufficient in meeting the skills requirements of their job role.

Qualification Type	Practitioners	Potential Market
S/NVQ in Work with Parents – levels 2 and 3	Health care assistants, youth support workers, facilitators, co-ordinators	24,000
VRQs in Work with Parents – levels 2 and 3	Facilitators, coordinators, others wanting to move into the sector	6,000
HNC/HND	Limited interest	-
Foundation Degree <i>(via distance learning)</i>	No clear evidence of definite demand, but possibly youth workers, social workers and those qualified in the health sector	Not known

<b>Qualification Type</b>	<b>Practitioners</b>	<b>Potential Market</b>
Degree <i>(unit based study and distance learning)</i>	Health visitors, midwives, co-ordinators	52,000 +
<b>Qualification Type</b>	<b>Practitioners</b>	<b>Potential Market</b>
Masters programme <i>(unit based study and distance learning)</i>	Health visitors, social workers	45,000
Professional Qualifications	Coordinators, facilitators and other parenting workers, plus some health visitors and youth workers	29,000

These are indications of likely numbers only and are based on figures provided from the relevant Sector Skills Councils and other sources.

## 6.1 Key Areas of Interest

Findings from this research support existing data in the Parenting Occupational and Functional Map which suggests that many working directly with parents may benefit from an S/NVQ or a VRQ at levels 2 and 3 with options<sup>15</sup>.

- **S/NVQ called Work with Parents**

There is immediate demand for an S/NVQ in Work with Parents based on the National Occupational Standards at levels 2 and 3. This is most useful for those already in work to allow them to obtain recognition for the work they are already conducting.

This would also be useful for health care assistants, youth support workers, facilitators and co-ordinators. This qualification would need to cover the core elements required in supporting and developing parents to provide a good grounding for practitioners already working in this area.

Use of work based learning to help confirm the knowledge of individuals is crucial for those who already have significant experience in this specialist area. The S/NVQ is a work-based qualification that may be ideal in providing practitioners the opportunity to demonstrate competence.

- **VRQ called Work with Parents**

Practitioners, employers and key stakeholders are in agreement that a VRQ would also be needed at the same levels. This would be most useful for individuals considering the sector or those who are already entering this such as facilitators. This also ensures the inclusion of individuals who have 'fallen into' the sector.

Any VRQs developed would need to make the link between theory and reflection on practice, with some element of work based activity.

<sup>15</sup> PAULO (2001) 'An Occupational and Functional Mapping of the UK Parenting Education and Support Sector', p.48.

There has been a mixed response from facilitators and co-ordinators on the type of qualification they would find useful. There does not appear to be a particularly strong preference for an S/NVQ or a VRQ. Many have mentioned that both of these would be suitable.

- ***Units in Working with Parents at Higher Level***

Study at higher level is mainly in demand from practitioners who are already qualified in their own profession and who want to build up their knowledge in certain areas in working with parents. Units would also be used by individuals building up their knowledge as part of their CPD.

Some of the evidence collected suggests that an entire Masters programme may be required by health visitors and other practitioners such as social workers.

The required study at higher level appears to be in specialist areas such as assisting with assessments and developing plans for families in distress affected by alcohol misuse or mental health issues. Assessing the needs of carers and families of individuals with mental health needs is covered within the 'framework competence' for mental health, developed by Skills for Health. The competence required in supporting families (including parents) through this process is also covered in the suite of competences developed for the health sector.

However, whilst the research indicates that there is an interest here and there are potentially large numbers, the extent of this demand and whether it genuinely warrants academic study would need to be further discussed and has not been examined in this study. In other words, the work being described by health visitors appears to be the same work "functionally" ie work with parents, and it is unclear if work with parents with additional issues (or parents of children with additional issues) signifies the need for academic study and thus high level qualifications.

- ***Professional Qualifications***

Practitioners are clear that an additional element of learning is needed that recognises the specialist knowledge and skills required in working effectively with parents. A **professional qualification** was highlighted as useful. However, it is not clear how professional is being interpreted. Some may have been interested in membership offered by a parenting-specific professional body, or some may have interpreted this as a qualification that confirms the professional status of their skills and knowledge. The scope of this research has not allowed for further exploration of this area.

- ***Foundation Degree – less clear evidence of demand***

Work based provision is also needed at level 5. However, it is **not** clear from the research whether there is sufficient demand for a foundation degree. This does not necessarily mean that demand is limited, but that the demand for this type of qualification did not come out as strongly from responses as it did for S/NVQs, VRQs and units at higher levels.

Professionals working with parents require a flexible approach to undertaking continual professional development. It has been suggested that those working in youth justice and social care, who are already qualified to practice through achievement of NVQs, may be interested in such a programme.

Discussions with Universities also suggest that many from the health sector that work with parents as their core role would benefit from work based, practical development of their skills. A Foundation Degree could be a useful stepping stone for those who are already working in a relevant role and are unlikely to be able to spend time away from the workplace.

Further focussed exploration is needed to help Parenting UK establish a clearer picture of demand for Foundation Degrees.

### *Modes of Study and Payment*

- ***Qualifications need to be made available via distance learning***

There is a definite requirement for flexible learning and needs to include distance learning, especially for degree level and above.

Availability of part-time study with some face-to-face tuition is also essential.

- ***Practitioners and employers may not be able to fund study in the field of working with parents***

Most of the practitioners and employers consulted for this research felt that organisations (ie employers) should cover the cost of training for their staff.

However, there are **financial constraints** on the involvement in qualifications for those employed in the public sector such as health visitors, midwives, social workers and youth workers.

Government priorities are aimed at training the workforce up to S/NVQ level 2 could help subsidise this training to some extent for those who work with parents without any prior level 2 qualifications.

Considering all the evidence collected through the research, the focus for development of learning provision specifically in work with parents, should be placed on the S/NVQ, VRQ and possibly the higher level units.

In addition, this work will most likely include establishing the potential sources of funding for any S/NVQ training required at levels 2 and 3.

## 7. Recommendations

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The research has identified a definite desire for qualifications and units in work with parents.

A number of actions are needed to help ensure the appropriate qualifications or components of qualifications are made available to practitioners whose main role is to work with parents as well as those who interact with parents but for whom it is not their core/sole function.

Recommendations are outlined below which Parenting UK may wish to consider and which will, of course, require that Parenting UK works in partnership with the DfES, Children's Workforce Development Council and other key stakeholders such as Sector Skills Councils, National Youth

## Qualification Needs of Those Who Work with Parents

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Agency and Youth Justice Board in establishing qualifications for those working with parents within the contexts of children's centres, youth offending teams and parenting orders etc.

Parenting UK has already begun discussions with certain Awarding Bodies about the potential in developing the S/NVQ and VRQs.

Suggested actions, below, are intended to inform future work.

### Qualifications

1. Introduce a **'Work with Parents' NVQ at both levels 2 and 3** using the NOS for "work with parents"

Units from early years and childcare qualifications, such as those for Children's Care, Learning and Development (CCLD)<sup>16</sup> should be reviewed for applicability.

2. Introduce a **VRQ at the same levels** for **'work with parents'** for practitioners moving into this area<sup>17</sup>

Work with Awarding Bodies to highlight existing training, such as training for facilitators, which can inform unit development for the VRQ.

### Units at Higher Levels

3. Develop accredited units at levels 5 and 6 to allow practitioners to build up learning in very specific areas of working with parents; examples might be supporting those caring for young people with alcohol misuse or mental health problems – these units should be obtained through modular 'chunks' of working and would need to be achievable via distance learning with face-to-face support where required
4. Conduct further work to investigate the demand for Foundation Degree programmes
5. Investigate and confirm the demand for a Masters programme to universities – evidence points to a demand, but further work will be needed to confirm the extent of real interest from practitioners. Examples suggested cover different areas such as supporting parents of those with severe disabilities; these maybe could build on unit titles in the NOS including managing and coordinating sensitive and inclusive parenting environments
6. Work with professional bodies such to consider introducing a professional qualification for work with parents – the proposed national Parenting Academy could be considered as a possible source of a professional qualification when the full intentions of this part of the 'Respect' agenda is made clear

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<sup>16</sup> LLUK is currently consulting on a revised qualification structure at levels 2, 3 and 4 for an S/NVQ and also a VRQ. A draft of this structure can be found in Appendix C.

<sup>17</sup> To avoid confusion with the S/NVQ, it is recommended that the VRQ is given a different title.

## Appendix A: Scoping of Existing Qualifications

## Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent

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### Scoping Existing Qualifications

Scope: ***Building relationships with parents, informing and protecting them. Supporting parents in influencing relationships with - and the development of - children and young people***

Level 2

Qualification Type	Title	Awarding Body	Aimed at?
VRQ	Certificate in Developing Skills for Working with Children and Young People  Unit on providing a range of appropriate activities for children and young people, including child development and wellbeing	NCFE	Workers in social care and health settings

Level 3

Qualification Type	Title	Awarding Body	Aimed at?
NVQ	Learning, Development and Support Services for Children, Young People and Those who Care for Them  Includes optional unit on enabling families and carers to address issues related to the behaviour of children and young people	Open University	Workers in health, education, childcare and social care settings
NVQ	Custodial Care  Includes optional unit on assisting parents in custody to develop their parenting skills plus develop and maintain effective working relationships with the families of those held in custody	Edexcel Limited and City & Guilds	Custodial officers

## Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent

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NVQ	Community Justice (Work with Offending Behaviour)  Optional unit on supporting parents in developing their parenting skills	City & Guilds	Community justice workers, community development workers
NVQ	Health and Social Care  Optional unit on relating, to families, parents and carers and working with families, carers and key people to maintain contact with individuals	Edexcel Limited, City & Guilds, EDI, OU, OCR, CACHE	Health and social care professionals
NVQ	Health  Optional unit on relating to families, parents and carers	Edexcel Limited, City & Guilds	Health and social care professionals
VRQ	Diploma in Early Years Practice  Includes a mandatory unit on developing partnerships with parents and others	CACHE	Workers in health, education, childcare and social care settings
VRQ	Diploma in Home-Based Childcare  Mandatory unit on working in partnership with parents in the home-based setting	CACHE	Education, health and social care professionals
VRQ	Diploma in Child Care and Education  Mandatory unit on working with parents	CACHE	Education and social care professionals
VRQ	Progression Award in Early Years Childcare and Education  Mandatory unit on working with parents and carers	City & Guilds	Education and social care professionals
VRQ	Certificate of Professional Development in Work with Children and Young People Optional units on supporting families: in distress and in daily living.	CACHE	Workers in health, education, childcare and social care settings

## Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent

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VRQ	<p>Certificate in Working with People who have Learning Disabilities</p> <p>Optional unit on supporting parenting skills and also supporting parents whose children are the subject of child protection conferences</p>	City & Guilds	Education, health and social care professionals
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Level 4

Qualification Type	Title	Awarding Body	Aimed at?
NVQ	<p>Health and Social Care</p> <p>Includes optional units on: helping parents and carers to acquire and use skills to protect and take care of children and young people; empower families, carers and others to support individuals; and advocate with and on behalf of families, carers, groups and communities</p>	Edexcel Limited, City & Guilds, OU, EDI and OCR	Health and social care professionals
VRQ	<p>BTEC Higher National Certificate in Advanced Practice in Work with Children and Families</p> <p>Includes optional unit on working with families</p>	Edexcel Limited	Education and health and social care professionals

## Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent

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### Level 5

Qualification Type	Title	Awarding Body	Aimed at?
VRQ	BTEC Higher National Diploma in Advanced Practice in Work with Children and Families  Includes optional unit on working with families	Edexcel Limited	Education and health and social care professionals
HL	Foundation Degree in Families, Parenting and Communities  Covers understanding of the contemporary issues in families, parenting and communities. Module on 'working with families' and the social context of family life	De Montfort University	Those thinking about work in the caring professions – can lead to the final year of BA (Hons) Health Studies
Credit based – 30 points	Working with Children In the Early Years  Covers practice in working with parents and carers	Open University	Workers in field of childcare and education
Credit based – 60 points	Working with Children and Families  Includes promoting quality parenting and services for children and families	Open University	Workers in health, education, childcare and social care settings

### Level 6

Qualification Type	Title	Awarding Body	Aimed at?
HL	BA Honours Childhood and Youth Studies  Covers awareness of different work with children and young people and their families eg: health visitors, social workers.	De Montfort University	Those already working with children and young people and wishing to further their careers in these areas

## Appendix B: Types of Qualification and Levels

**Types of Qualification and Levels**

	<b>QCA Levels</b>	<b>SQA Levels</b>
<p><b>National Vocational Qualification (NVQ/SVQ)</b></p> <p>competence based qualifications (assessed whilst carrying out the work ) - links to a work based learning training provider or a college that can instruct and assess (can be available at levels 1 to 5 )</p>	Levels 1-7	Levels 1-5
<p><b>Vocational Related Qualification (VRQ)</b></p> <p>A knowledge-based qualification. Vocationally related education is intended to improve the knowledge, skills and understanding of the area of employment the student wants to enter, or is in already. It does not measure competence at a particular job - this is done by National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) (usually studied in FE college) (can be available at levels 1 to 5 )</p>	Levels 1-7	Levels 1-5
<p><b>Higher National Certificate/Diploma/Foundation Degree</b></p> <p>can be studied by those in work already as a part time student or as a full time student and are very much geared to the sector's needs (level 5 on the new qualifications framework). The courses are rigorous, but include a strong vocational element. It is possible to progress from an HNC/HND to a degree course. Foundation Degree courses combine the level of learning offered by a degree programme, with practical, commercial experience. They are designed and delivered in partnership with employers. They are validated by universities to ensure they meet the standards of Higher Education and are broadly equivalent to the first two years of an Honours degree.</p>	Level 5	Levels 6-7

## Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent

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<b>Higher Education</b> Degree level qualifications studied at an actual or virtual University. Degree courses are available in a wide range of academic and vocational subjects and, in can provide all or part of a professional qualification or training. Many degrees are studied over three years full-time. Some degrees can last for four or more years.	Levels 6-7	Levels 9-11
<b>Professional qualifications</b> eg: Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) recognised qualifications for Youth and Community Workers	Level 8	Level 12

## Appendix C: Draft Qualification Structure

## NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS IN WORK WITH PARENTS

### DRAFT QUALIFICATIONS STRUCTURE FOR SVQ/NVQ/VRQ PURPOSES

### SVQ/NVQ LEVEL 2 IN WORK WITH PARENTS CONSISTS OF 6 UNITS

Level 2 mandatory units – Take 4		
WWP 201 Contribute to building relationships in work with parents	201.1	Listen and respond to parents
	201.2	Help parents to use parenting services
WWP 202 Provide access to knowledge and information	202.1	Request and provide information in an appropriate language and format
	202.2	Directly provide knowledge and information to parents
	202.3	Enable parents to access knowledge and information
WWP 203 Contribute to providing safe, inclusive environments	203.1	Help parents to feel comfortable and confident
	203.2	Value and respect the diversity in culture and background of parents
WWP 204 Help to keep parents safe and secure	204.1	Follow procedures in relation to security and safety
	204.2	Recognise threats to safety and security
	204.3	Follow emergency procedures

LEVEL 2 Optional Units – Take 2		
WWP304 Build and maintain relationships with colleagues	304.1	Establish contact and communicate effectively with colleagues
	304.2	Recognise and value the work of colleagues

## Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent

<b>WWP 305</b> Build and maintain relationships with the wider community	305.1	Identify and make contact with key stakeholders in the wider community
	305.2	Seek opportunities to network with key stakeholders in the wider community
	305.3	Share information and encourage a supportive approach towards parents from the wider community
<b>WWP 308</b> Work with parents to meet their children's needs	308.1	Work with parents to explore children's needs
	308.2	Work with parents to find positive ways to meet children's physical needs
	308.3	Work with parents to find positive ways to meet children's emotional needs
<b>WWP 310</b> Reflect on and update own knowledge and practice	310.1	Reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of your own practice
	310.2	Identify and make use of opportunities to develop and update practice and learn from the experience
	310.3	Incorporate new knowledge, the experience of others and current thinking into own practice

### SVQ/NVQ LEVEL 3 IN WORK WITH PARENTS CONSISTS OF 6 UNITS

Level 3 mandatory units – Take 6		
<b>WWP 301</b> Build and maintain relationships in work with parents	301.1	Negotiate and agree the basis of relationships with parents
	301.2	Agree the boundaries of the relationship
	301.3	Maintain the relationship with parents
<b>WWP 302</b> Communicate effectively with parents	302.1	Encourage and facilitate communication with parents
	302.2	Recognise and respond to communication needs
	302.3	Recognise and respond to barriers to communication
<b>WWP 303</b> Ensure confidentiality whilst maintaining good practice in child protection	303.1	Maintain confidentiality
	303.2	Maintain records and keep them confidential
	303.3	Respond to child protection concerns
<b>WWP 308</b> Work with parents to meet their children's needs	308.1	Work with parents to explore children's needs
	308.2	Work with parents to find positive ways to meet children's physical needs

## Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent

	<b>308.3</b>	<b>Work with parents to find positive ways to meet children's emotional needs</b>
<b>WWP 310</b> <b>Reflect on and update own knowledge and practice</b>	<b>310.1</b>	<b>Reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of your own practice</b>
	<b>310.2</b>	<b>Identify and make use of opportunities to develop and update practice and learn from the experience</b>
	<b>310.3</b>	<b>Incorporate new knowledge, the experience of others and current thinking into own practice</b>
<b>WWP 312</b> <b>Deliver services that value and respect parents</b>	<b>312.1</b>	<b>Listen to parents and acknowledge their feelings and experiences</b>
	<b>312.2</b>	<b>Recognise parents' strengths and help to build on these</b>
	<b>312.3</b>	<b>Promote the value and recognition of diversity in social and in parenting roles</b>
	<b>312.4</b>	<b>Recognise the difficulties that individual families may face and identify the support they need</b>

<b>LEVEL 3 Optional Units – Take 3</b>		
<b>WWP304</b> <b>Build and maintain relationships with colleagues engaged in work with parents</b>	<b>304.1</b>	<b>Establish contact and communicate effectively with colleagues</b>
	<b>304.2</b>	<b>Recognise and value the work of colleagues</b>
<b>WWP 305</b> <b>Build and maintain relationships with the wider community</b>	<b>305.1</b>	<b>Identify and make contact with key stakeholders in the wider community</b>
	<b>305.2</b>	<b>Seek opportunities to network with key stakeholders in the wider community</b>
	<b>305.3</b>	<b>Share information and encourage a supportive approach towards parents from the wider community</b>
<b>WWP 306</b> <b>Work with groups of parents</b>	<b>306.1</b>	<b>Negotiate and agree the scope and basis of the work</b>
	<b>306.2</b>	<b>Select strategies and materials to meet the needs of the group</b>
	<b>306.3</b>	<b>Enable the effective working of the group</b>
<b>WWP 307</b> <b>Enable parents to reflect on the influences on parenting and the parent-child relationship</b>	<b>307.1</b>	<b>Help parents to look at influences on parenting and recognise their effects</b>
	<b>307.2</b>	<b>Work with parents to use knowledge and awareness of influences on parenting</b>
<b>WWP 309</b>		

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<b>Work with parents to understand and meet their own needs</b>	<b>309.1</b>	<b>Facilitate exploration of parents' needs</b>
	<b>309.2</b>	<b>Work with parents to help them meet their identified needs</b>
<b>WWP 311 Contribute to the work of a team</b>	<b>311.1</b>	<b>Work as a member of a team</b>
	<b>311.2</b>	<b>Support others to develop their roles</b>
<b>WWP 313 Provide services that meet parents' needs</b>	<b>313.1</b>	<b>Work with parents to agree their needs</b>
	<b>313.2</b>	<b>Work with parents to explore the effect of change and challenges</b>
	<b>313.3</b>	<b>Work with parents to develop strategies to manage change and challenges</b>
<b>WWP 314 Work with parents with complex needs who find services hard to reach</b>	<b>314.1</b>	<b>Design services that meet parents' needs</b>
	<b>314.2</b>	<b>Enable parents to access services and support</b>
	<b>314.3</b>	<b>Enable parents with complex needs to learn about parenting</b>
<b>WWP 315 Meet requirements for the protection and safety of parents</b>	<b>315.1</b>	<b>Protect adults from abuse and/or violence</b>
	<b>315.2</b>	<b>Implement health, safety and security requirements</b>
	<b>315.3</b>	<b>Follow emergency procedures</b>
<b>WWP 316 Provide environments that are sensitive to the culture, religion, gender or disability of the parents</b>	<b>316.1</b>	<b>Provide an environment in which parents feel comfortable and confident</b>
	<b>316.2</b>	<b>Provide physical equipment, resources and surroundings that meet parents' needs</b>
<b>WWP 317 Publicise services and recruit parents</b>	<b>317.1</b>	<b>Provide publicity and information about parenting services</b>
	<b>317.2</b>	<b>Recruit parents onto parenting programmes</b>
<b>WWP 318 Develop training sessions (imported from Learning &amp; Development Standards)</b>	<b>318.1</b>	<b>Identify options for training sessions</b>
	<b>318.2</b>	<b>Deliver training sessions for learners</b>

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**SVQ/NVQ LEVEL 4 IN WORK WITH PARENTS CONSISTS OF 10 UNITS**

<b>Level 4 Mandatory units – Take 5</b>		
<b>WWP 401 Develop and undertake inter-agency, cross-sector working</b>	<b>401.1</b>	<b>Promote integration and cross-sector strategies</b>
	<b>401.2</b>	<b>Communicate and liaise with other agencies/sectors</b>
	<b>401.3</b>	<b>Establish boundaries and define agency roles</b>
<b>WWP 402 Support others in developing their practice</b>	<b>402.1</b>	<b>Support and share problems and difficult issues with others</b>
	<b>402.2</b>	<b>Share own experience to benefit others</b>
<b>WWP 404 Manage or co-ordinate sensitive and inclusive parenting environments</b>	<b>404.1</b>	<b>Promote a culture that values diversity and difference</b>
	<b>404.2</b>	<b>Help practitioners to respond to the needs of parents for an inclusive environment</b>
	<b>404.3</b>	<b>Monitor and review the effectiveness of environments in promoting inclusion</b>
<b>WWP 405 Take responsibility for the safety and security of parents, staff and environments</b>	<b>405.1</b>	<b>Comply with statutory health and safety requirements</b>
	<b>405.2</b>	<b>Ensure that staff have regular and updated training for health and safety and child protection</b>
	<b>405.3</b>	<b>Develop systems and procedures for sharing information in relation to child protection</b>
<b>WWP 409 Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements</b>	<b>Imported from the Management Standards</b>	

<b>LEVEL 4 Optional Units – Take 5</b>	
<b>WWP 403 Provide leadership to your team</b>	<b>Imported from the National Occupational Standards for Management and leadership</b>

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<b>WWP 406 Co-ordinate resources</b>	<b>406.1</b>	<b>Secure and deploy resources</b>
	<b>406.2</b>	<b>Monitor effective use of resources</b>
<b>WWP 407 Monitor and evaluate the impact of trends and developments in parenting</b>	<b>407.1</b>	<b>Identify and analyse information about parenting</b>
	<b>407.2</b>	<b>Identify and evaluate the impact of trends and developments</b>
<b>WWP 408 Promote a culture of quality in parenting provision</b>	<b>408.1</b>	<b>Raise the profile of quality in delivery of work with parents</b>
	<b>408.2</b>	<b>Establish, maintain and review quality assurance systems procedures</b>
<b>WWP 301 Build and maintain relationships in work with parents</b>	<b>301.1</b>	<b>Negotiate and agree the basis of relationships with parents</b>
	<b>301.2</b>	<b>Agree the boundaries of the relationship</b>
	<b>301.3</b>	<b>Maintain the relationship with parents</b>
<b>WWP 302 Communicate effectively with parents</b>	<b>302.1</b>	<b>Encourage and facilitate communication with parents</b>
	<b>302.2</b>	<b>Recognise and respond to communication needs</b>
	<b>302.3</b>	<b>Recognise and respond to barriers to communication</b>
<b>WWP 303 Ensure confidentiality whilst maintaining good practice in child protection</b>	<b>303.1</b>	<b>Maintain confidentiality</b>
	<b>303.2</b>	<b>Maintain records and keep them confidential</b>
	<b>303.3</b>	<b>Respond to child protection concerns</b>
<b>WWP 304 Build and maintain relationships with colleagues engaged in work with parents</b>	<b>304.1</b>	<b>Establish contact and communicate effectively with colleagues</b>
	<b>304.2</b>	<b>Recognise and value the work of colleagues</b>
<b>WWP 305 Build and maintain relationships with the wider community</b>	<b>305.1</b>	<b>Identify and make contact with key stakeholders in the wider community</b>
	<b>305.2</b>	<b>Seek opportunities to network with key stakeholders in the wider community</b>
	<b>305.3</b>	<b>Share information and encourage a supportive approach towards parents from the wider community</b>
<b>WWP 306</b>	<b>306.1</b>	<b>Negotiate and agree the scope and basis of the work</b>

**Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent**

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<b>Work with groups of parents</b>	<b>306.2</b>	<b>Select strategies and materials to meet the needs of the group</b>
	<b>306.3</b>	<b>Enable the effective working of the group</b>
<b>WWP 307 Enable parents to reflect on the influences on parenting and the parent-child relationship</b>	<b>307.1</b>	<b>Help parents to look at influences on parenting and recognise their effects</b>
	<b>307.2</b>	<b>Work with parents to use knowledge and awareness of influences on parenting</b>
<b>WWP 308 Work with parents to meet their children's needs</b>	<b>308.1</b>	<b>Work with parents to explore children's needs</b>
	<b>308.2</b>	<b>Work with parents to find positive ways to meet children's physical needs</b>
	<b>308.3</b>	<b>Work with parents to find positive ways to meet children's emotional needs</b>
<b>WWP 309 Work with parents to understand and meet their own needs</b>	<b>309.1</b>	<b>Facilitate exploration of parent's needs</b>
	<b>309.2</b>	<b>Work with parents to help them meet their identified needs</b>
<b>WWP 310 Reflect on and update own knowledge and practice</b>	<b>310.1</b>	<b>Reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of your own practice</b>
	<b>310.2</b>	<b>Identify and make use of opportunities to develop and update practice and learn from the experience of others</b>
	<b>310.3</b>	<b>Incorporate new knowledge, the experience of others and current thinking into own practice</b>
<b>WWP 311 Contribute to the work of a team</b>	<b>311.1</b>	<b>Work as a member of a team</b>
	<b>311.2</b>	<b>Support others to develop their roles</b>
<b>WWP 312 Deliver services that value and respect parents</b>	<b>312.1</b>	<b>Listen to parents and acknowledge their feelings and experiences</b>
	<b>312.2</b>	<b>Recognise parents' strengths and help to build on these</b>
	<b>312.3</b>	<b>Promote the value and recognition of diversity in social and in parenting roles</b>
	<b>312.4</b>	<b>Recognise the difficulties that individual families may face and identify the support they need</b>
<b>WWP 313 Provide services that meet parents' needs</b>	<b>313.1</b>	<b>Work with parents to agree their needs</b>
	<b>313.2</b>	<b>Work with parents to explore the effect of change and challenges</b>

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	313.3	Work with parents to develop strategies to manage change and challenges
<b>WWP 314</b> Work with parents with complex needs who find services hard to reach	314.1	Design services that meet parents' needs
	314.2	Enable parents to access services and support
	314.3	Enable parents with complex needs to learn about parenting
<b>WWP 315</b> Meet requirements for the protection and safety of parents	315.1	Protect adults from abuse and/or violence
	315.2	Implement health, safety and security requirements
	315.3	Follow emergency procedures
<b>WWP 316</b> Provide environments that are sensitive to the culture, religion, gender or disability of the parents	316.1	Provide an environment in which parents feel comfortable and confident
	316.2	Provide physical equipment, resources and surroundings that meet parents' needs
<b>WWP 317</b> Publicise services and recruit parents	317.1	Provide publicity and information about parenting services
	317.2	Recruit parents onto parenting programmes
<b>WWP 318</b> Develop training sessions (imported from Learning & Development Standards)	318.1	Identify options for training sessions
	318.2	Deliver training sessions for learners
<b>WWP 201+</b> Contribute to building relationships in work with parents	201.1	Listen and respond to parents
	201.2	Help parents to use parenting services
<b>WWP 202</b> Provide access to knowledge and information	202.1	Request and provide information in an appropriate language and format
	202.2	Directly provide knowledge and information to parents
	202.3	Enable parents to access knowledge and information
<b>WWP 203</b> Contribute to	203.1	Help parents to feel comfortable and confident

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<b>providing safe, inclusive environments</b>	<b>203.2</b>	<b>Value and respect the diversity in culture and background of parents</b>
<b>WWP204 Help to keep parents safe and secure</b>	<b>204.1</b>	<b>Follow procedures in relation to security and safety</b>
	<b>204.2</b>	<b>Recognise threats to security and safety</b>
	<b>204.3</b>	<b>Follow emergency procedures</b>

## Appendix D: Stakeholders Consulted

## Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent

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### Stakeholders Consulted

Stakeholders
★ Children in Wales
★ City & Guilds
★ Consultant
★ De Montfort University
★ DfES
★ Edexcel
★ EDI (Education Development International)
★ Learning and Skills Council
★ Lifelong Learning UK
★ LLU+ (formerly London Language and Literacy Unit) South Bank University
★ Manchester Adult Education Service
★ National Children's Home
★ National Youth Agency
★ NCFE
★ NIACE
★ Open College Network
★ Open University
★ QCA
★ Race Equality Unit
★ Skills for Care and Development
★ Skills for Health
★ Skills for Justice
★ The Children's Workforce Development Council
★ University of Central Lancaster

## Qualification Needs of Those who Work With Parent

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★ University of Dundee
★ University of Portsmouth
★ University of Worcester
★ West Cheshire College