

DEVELOPMENT OF A QUALIFICATIONS STRATEGY AND FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS



Consultation Questionnaire: 2010

Introduction

Since 2004 when the Community Development field agreed a structure for Community Development learning and qualifications at a national conference (Roots & Routes), further development of this have been based on the National Qualification Framework (NQF), and the then existing CD National Occupational Standards.

The NQF is being replaced by a new national framework called the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) and the CD NOS were revised in the latter part of 2009.

Following this, a range of new qualifications that are based on the revised NOS, and which fit the requirements of this new framework, have to be developed. This work is now urgent as the original project was running late and then was cancelled by government bodies in January 2010. The requirement is to develop a new framework for what the Community Development field needs as new qualifications so that the actual units within the planned qualifications can be written. There are no Community Development qualifications on the new QCF, and the existing qualifications will have run out by the end of this year. This presents the opportunity to design new qualifications which are both mapped to the new NOS and take advantage of the flexibility which is a design feature of the QCF.

So two things are required urgently:

1. Decide what kind of framework of qualifications is required for CD
2. Gather evidence to make a business case to awarding bodies about why they should invest in developing new qualifications in CD

The purpose of this questionnaire is to consult with people involved in the community development field to inform the review of existing, and development of new, vocational qualifications for the Community Development Sector within a new qualifications strategy for the sector.

The deadline for receipt of all comments is March 9th, or earlier if you can manage it. **Please do not feel you have to answer all the questions** – some are quite technical and will be relevant to people designing and delivering training, others are more about what you want for yourself, your staff and community activists, some rely on you knowing what has been delivered before... **So please give us whatever information you can – it will be highly appreciated!**

We will use this information to draft a framework / strategy for CD qualifications which will be discussed and agreed at the 2 day CD conference in Loughborough at the end of April (details on FCDL's web site: www.fcdl.org.uk)

Just to remind you who this framework is for – CD practitioners

'Community development practitioner' is used as an inclusive term to describe the whole range of community development workers including fieldworkers, issue based workers, trainers, consultants, researchers, who use community development approaches, skills, knowledge etc in their role. This may be as a community development worker (paid / unpaid/ activist / volunteer) or as part of their work in another kind of job e.g. housing, health, regeneration worker.

The definition of community development is expressed in the following key purpose in the revised CD NOS (2009):

Community Development is a long term value based process which aims to address imbalances in power and bring about change founded on social justice, equality and inclusion.

The process enables people to organise and work together to:

- » identify their own needs and aspirations
- » take action to exert influence on the decisions which affect their lives
- » improve the quality of their own lives, the communities¹ in which they live, and societies of which they are a part.

To fill in this questionnaire use the highlighted fields in Adobe Acrobat Reader. In order to save the form with your data in it you must have the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader. This is free software and is available from www.adobe.com

To submit:

Fill in your form and then click the **BLUE** submit button at the bottom of the last page. The form will try to send the information to us via your e-mail client or if you use a web-based e-mail it will direct you to save the form on your computer and send it to us as an attachment. You should also be able to directly save the form to your computer using the save as function on the file menu. Please then send it to us at:

laura@malapartnership.co.uk

If you would prefer to fill in and print the form please fax it to: 01274 582191 or post it to: Val Harris, 10 Hall Royd, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD18 3ED.

Please note, the response fields/ boxes have plenty of room in them, even if the box doesn't look big enough the data will be saved. There are several sections to this questionnaire – to help you find the bits you are most interested in, they are listed here:

Section 1 - Your details – please complete this so we can demonstrate the range of people who are filling this in and to check if we have missed any key set of stakeholders

Section 2 - Making the business case for CD qualifications – collecting any data to show the past and potential demand for CD qualifications

Section 3 - Roles and responsibilities taken by CD practitioners and what this means for the qualifications they need; this starts to build the outline of the framework and the qualifications within it

Section 4 - Aspects of the Developing Framework; there are a number of issues which we need your comments on in order to develop the framework which include the indicative content of units and what should be mandatory / core and what might be optional, how the content of the units should be bundled, what other units could we import, your thoughts on progression and on the assessment of practice

Section 5 – other related and big issues of professionalisation and licence to practice

¹ Communities refer to those that can be defined geographically or by identity or interest.

Section 1: Details relating to you and your organisation

1.1	Name:
1.2	Name of organisation you are working for/involved with: (if you work for more than one, enter the principal organisation)
1.3	Your Sector (please make bold or tick all that apply) (a) Public (b) Private c) Voluntary / Community / Faith (d) Armed Forces
1.4	Your Job Title/ Main Role
1.5	Are you completing this questionnaire as (please tick all that apply): (a) Training Provider (b) Employee (part time) (c) Employee (full time) (d) Policy Maker (e) Self-Employed (f) Manager (g) Employer (h) Trustee / Committee Member (i) Unpaid Worker / Activist / Volunteer (j) Other (please specify):
1.6	Do you consider yourself to be (please tick all that apply): (a) A Community Development Practitioner (b) A manager of community development practitioners (c) Employer of community development practice (d) Funder of community development practice (e) Someone whose core role is not community development but does incorporate community development work practice into their role (f) Community development trainer
1.7	Location of your organisation: (a) England (b) Scotland (c) Wales (d) Northern Ireland (e) Republic of Ireland Which Regions:
1.8	Are your organisation's activities rural based, urban based or both (a) Rural (b) Urban (c) Both

1.9

What experience have you had in relation to existing CD qualifications e.g. Have you delivered any? Have you been a participant on a programme? Have you sent your staff on courses? Please give us enough details so we can put your answers into context

Section 2: Making the business case for CD qualifications

2.1

Have you delivered any accredited CD programmes in the past 5 years? If so give the titles of the programmes and the levels you delivered them at

2.2

If you have any numbers about people a) registering and b) people completing any of the programmes you mentioned above please list them here

2.3

Were there any factors that affected the take up / completion of the programmes you delivered?

2.4

Have you delivered any non - accredited CD programmes in the past 5 years? If so give the titles of the programmes and brief details about their length and content

2.5

Have you been asked to deliver CD programmes but were unable to do so? Or know of unmet demand for CD qualifications? Please give any details you can and say what the reason might be

Please give any explanations you can for your choices so we can better understand your rationale:

3.3

What type and size of qualification does each of these roles need?
(see Briefing Paper 2 and 3 for further information on size of qualifications)

Types of qualifications – these are predetermined and are known as awards, certificates and diplomas, and they vary by size; each type of qualification is available at each level.

The building blocks within the framework are credits which are equivalent to a notional 10 hours of learning. For each qualification, at each Level, there is a predetermined number of credits to be achieved.

Awards: 1 - 12 credits (10 – 120 hours)

Certificates: 13 – 36 credits (130 – 360 hours)

Diplomas: 37+ credits (more than 370 hours)

There can be a number of different permutations at each level for example we could have an award only, award and certificate, diploma only, and different sets of qualifications at different levels. We know that this looks a technical question but we need to get a sense of what size of qualifications people would be attracted to and what their employers/ organisations might be willing to fund them to attend.

We want to know which kinds of qualifications you think we need at each level or none at some levels, and also how big they should be within the available range – do we want bigger qualifications or smaller ones? Which makes them more user friendly and achievable?

Please tick and add in the credit size you would like each qualification to be at each level.

Level of Qualification	Size of Qualification		
	Award	Certificate	Diploma
1			
2			
3			

Level of Qualification	Size of Qualification		
	Award	Certificate	Diploma
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

3.3.1

Please add any comments you wish to make about your preferred options re size and type of qualification.

3.3.2

We need to get some sense of priority as it may not be possible to develop all the units and qualification details in 2010. For example: Should we aim to get some small awards at each level as a starting point for anyone coming into CD? Do we need a larger higher level certificate as access to a foundation degree or to link with an apprenticeship?

This may relate to available funding, pent up demand, an urgent need for some practitioners to understand what CD is...

3.4

Do you think that we should develop a range of apprenticeships in CD?

Please tick (see Briefing Paper 4 for further information on Apprenticeships)

YES NO

If yes - who do you think would be interested in these and at what level?

3.5

We are planning to build in accreditation through learning from experience schemes (The Recognition Schemes – see Briefing Sheet 5)– Who would be interested in these and what levels would be needed?

Section 4 - Aspects of the Developing Framework

There are a number of issues which we need your comments on in order to develop the framework:

- a. The indicative content of units and what should be mandatory / core and what might be optional
- b. Should the units be based more on the key skills / knowledge needed by practitioners which the provider then develops and customizes for specific job roles/ area of work?
- c. Should the units be based around the Key Areas and their associated Standards as the revised CD NOS (2009) is set out – more of an NVQ approach
- d. What other units exist on the QCF from other occupations which we might accept as imported into our qualifications?
- e. Issues relating to progression within the QCF
- f. The prescription of assessed CD practice in qualifications

4.1.1

Indicative content; levels 1, 2 and 3

In our current framework we have a mixture of units at level 1, 2 and 3;

Some are based on a general introduction to CD e.g. Understanding Community Development Work; Community Development Work Skills; Reflective Community Development Work Practice; Practice and Principles in Community Development Work; Social Justice

Some are based on core skills that CD practitioners need e.g. Understanding Meetings; Community Group Work Skills; Involving People in Community Development; Community Development Monitoring and Evaluation; Developing Community Organisations; Effective Partnership Working; Planning for Community Groups; Publicity Skills for Community Organisations; Identifying Needs in Communities

Some are based on key areas of knowledge that CD practitioners need eg Government and Community; Policy and Decision Making; Sustainable Communities

Some relate to more specialised areas of CD practice e.g.; Representing a Community of Interest or Identity; Funding and Resources for Community Groups; Neighbourhood Regeneration; Community Development and Environmental Action; Engaging Communities – Improving Health; Health Inequalities

Do you have any preference for what type of units should exist at these levels in the new framework?

Indicative content; level 4

In our current framework we have a mixture of units at level 4.

Some are based on a general introduction to CD e.g. Personal Development and Reflective Practice in CDW; Values and Principles in CDW; Understanding CD and Other Approaches to Working in Communities; Diversity and Inequality within Communities; CD Principles and Practice;

Some are based on core skills that CD practitioners need e.g. Working Collectively to Support Community Groups; Research Evaluation and Development within CDW; Building the Capacity of Community Groups; Using Creative Techniques to Encourage Community Participation;

4.1.2

Some are based on key areas of knowledge that CD practitioners need e.g. Social and Welfare Policy Relating to CDW; Understand Government for Effective CD; Role of Informal Learning in CD; CD Approach to Developing Sustainable Communities

Some relate to more specialized areas of CD practice e.g.; Managing a CD project; Funding and Resources for Community Groups; Understanding Finance to Support Community Groups; Legal Frameworks for Community Groups; Marketing and Publicity for Community Groups; CD Approach to Neighbourhood Regeneration; Promoting Health and Wellbeing; CD and Globalisation; CD Approach to Partnership Working; CD with Families and Young People

Do you have any preference for what type of units should exist at these levels in the new framework?

4.1.3

Mandatory Units: within the CD NOS (2009), Key Area One is core and it is essential for all Community Development practice across all levels, roles, and settings. Should this now form the basis of all qualifications as an Award at each level, with other units added in to achieve Certificates or Diplomas

Please tick, as appropriate, and add any comments below:

YES NO

Comments

4.1.4

Should there be other mandatory units within the qualifications – if so what topics should be included? Use the lists at 4.1.1 and 4.1.2. as guides

4.1.5

Optional Units: which topics or units from the CD NOS (2009) should be included as optional units to enable people to customise the qualification to reflect their practice? Use the lists at 4.1.1 and 4.1.2. as guides

4.2

Do you think that having units which relate to specific areas of CD work, or specific roles is useful?

Should the framework concentrate on units related to areas of skills and knowledge which can be contextualised by the tutor/ trainer to meet the needs of specific audiences?

Which do you think provides the better alternative?

4.3

Relationship of units to Key Areas within the revised CD NOS

Should Units be more closely related to the way the NOS is laid out or is bundling around areas of work / activity preferred?

Within the developing QCF there is an option of creating competence-based assessment criteria in each unit, basically a redrafting and rebranding NVQs in line with the revised CD NOS. Is this an option that you consider viable and required?

4.4.1

Are there other Units from other qualifications that you know about that are on the QCF that should be looked at, with a view to their inclusion as optional units?

Please provide as much detail as possible so we can cross reference easily.

4.4.2

If we are to include named units from other qualifications to acknowledge prior learning and experience, what percentage of imported Units should be acceptable within any qualification?

4.4.3

Do you have any views on the balance between mandatory and optional Units in a qualification? If so comment on the balance within the different levels and types of qualification? For eg is there a percentage you would feel happy with?

4.5

Encouraging progression

4.5.1

'Spikey' qualifications There is an option to allow people to put forward units gained at one level towards a higher level qualification; so for eg 10 credits from the level 2 award could contribute 6 credits towards a level 3 award and the participant would then add evidence of additional learning. Would this be helpful within the CD framework?

4.5.2 The QCF is designed to encourage progression; what are the issues we need to address in order for the level 3 to enable progression to HE qualifications? And for apprenticeships and recognition schemes to be accepted as leading to other higher level qualifications?

4.6 Do you think that we should expect that there is an element of assessed community development practice in all qualifications – whether course or work based programmes?

YES NO

And if you say yes should this apply to all levels within the framework or at the higher levels – please list the levels you think there should be assessed practice?

Should the amount of assessed practice vary with the size of qualification?

Should the amount of practice vary with the level of qualifications?

Section 5 – Other Related and Big Issues

5.1 The research report prepared by the previous LLUK appointed consultants for this project suggested that there is a demand from the field for a “professionalisation” of Community Development practitioners with qualifications linked to terms and conditions of employment. In Scotland this is already a Degree requirement, and in other countries employers often ask for a degree but do not specify that it must be in Community Development.

What are your thoughts of creating a link between one or more qualifications and terms and conditions of employment?

If you think there should be a link, at what level(s) should this operate? For eg should we look at what has happened in youth work?

5.2 A "licence to practice" or "registration" (similar to the teaching profession) has also been suggested, possibly linked to specific qualifications or posts. What are your view on this suggestion?

5.3 Any final/general/miscellaneous comments that you couldn't put anywhere else?

**Thank you for assisting in the development of a Qualifications Strategy
for the Community Development field**

**Please save a copy of this form on your computer
and return it as an attachment to: laura@malapartnership.co.uk**

OR

Print and fax to: 01274 582191

OR

Print and post to: 10 Hall Royd, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD18 3ED