

# **Fire & Rescue Sector Qualifications Strategy**

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## SECTION 1: Executive Summary

The Fire and Rescue Sector Qualifications Strategy (SQS) has been developed through extensive research and consultation with employers and stakeholders. It presents an over-view of the qualifications and learning provision relevant to the Fire and Rescue Sector and the context within which qualifications are developed and used. It aims to be forward-looking, describing how qualifications and learning provision will continue to be developed to meet the future needs of employers.

There are many common factors in delivery of Fire and Rescue service delivery and service support responses across the UK, but there are also differences in legislation, working practices and the qualification systems of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland – these are, as far as possible, reflected in the SQS.

**Section 2** confirms the scope of the SQS, which includes coverage of:

- Local Authority (statutory) Fire and Rescue Services
- Civil Airport Fire Services
- Ministry of Defence Fire Services
- Occupational brigades

Key occupations within the Fire & Rescue sector covered by this SQS include firefighters (Wholetime; Retained Duty System and Volunteer), firefighter control, specialists and support staff.

Priorities in government policy are highlighted by reference to the Fire and Rescue National Frameworks for England and Wales, and the Scottish Learning and Development Strategy. Key themes are the continued importance of the core business of prevention, protection and response, together with increased recognition for:

- Delivery of an enhanced resilience capability
- Strengthening the equality and diversity agenda
- Meeting public expectations of a modern, efficient and effective Public Service

Priorities for workforce development policies include:

- Consistency of national standards supported by use of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS)
- Clear qualification frameworks and progression routes
- Leadership development
- Quality assurance of learning and development

**Section 3** explores the special characteristics of the Fire and Rescue working environment. For example, many operational aspects of fire service are 'risk critical' which has particular implications for how performance in the workplace is assessed and for the style of leadership and command and control required for incident management.

The duty systems and workforce structure are also highlighted as a significant feature, many work a shift based system, there is also a high proportion working on the retained duty system and some volunteer staff. Together with some services operating in remote locations, this places greater importance on the need for qualifications and learning provision which are both flexible and accessible.

A number of workforce trends and changes are identified including the impact of the Modernisation Agenda, targets to increase the diversity of the workforce, and an expectation of reductions in the funding available for learning and qualifications.



**Section 4.1** provides an overview of the various types of qualifications and other learning provision used by different Fire and Rescue organisations:

- National occupational standards (NOS) and S/NVQs are well established in the Fire and Rescue Sector. The NOS have also formed the basis for a modern apprenticeship, which was developed in the mid 1990s. From 2001, with the introduction of Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS), NOS were introduced into performance management and development of all staff. IPDS and the use of NOS and S/NVQs is a critical aspect of the modernisation of the Fire and Rescue sector across the UK.
- Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) are also an important part of current qualifications provision. A range of VRQs with relevance to the Fire and Rescue Sector are available including Awards, Certificates and Diplomas, and in Scotland the Professional Development Award (PDA) and Higher National Certificate (HNC).
- A number of professional bodies provide relevant qualifications including the IFE (Institution of Fire Engineers), ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management), CFPA Europe (Confederation of Fire Protection Association: Europe) and NEBOSH (National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health)
- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) provide academic qualifications relevant to the Fire and Rescue sector and more recently (in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) have developed Foundation Degrees combining academic study with workplace learning.

Therefore the range of provision includes the award of competence-based, vocational, technical and academic qualifications – although there is also much learning provision which is not formally accredited.

The available data on volumes of registrations and certifications for relevant qualifications is summarised in **Section 4.2** and presented in full in Appendix 1.

**Sections 4.3 and 6.1** explore the extent to which the available qualifications and other learning provision are a match to employers' needs. Through the desk research and an SQS 'stakeholder survey' a number of themes and issues emerged:

- **National recognition of qualifications** - there is a desire for Fire and Rescue Service qualifications to be recognised within and across the four nations.
- **IPDS and use of NOS** - there is recognition of the value of NOS to provide a basis for the development of qualifications, which relate to workplace practice.
- **Competency-based qualifications** -there is a strong wish to retain competency-based qualifications which attest to individuals' ability to perform competently and safely, particularly in operational roles. However, there is also a need to:
  - reduce the bureaucratic approach to assessment where it occurs and,
  - ensure consistency in assessment practice across the sector
- **Knowledge-based / technical skill qualifications** - for many the use of vocationally related qualifications (VRQs) or technical certificates holds a significant attraction. In particular, for risk critical activities this may offer a pre-requisite to confirm confidence in an individual's knowledge, skills and understanding before they apply their skills in the actual workplace. It is important that as new knowledge /technical skills based qualifications are developed, they are aligned to the knowledge and understanding of relevant NOS – in this way, the use of knowledge / technical skills based and competence-based qualifications would be complementary.
- **A modular approach** - consistent with the use of qualifications derived from NOS is the need for a modular approach. Qualifications based on units allow full qualifications to be awarded and also smaller 'development awards' comprising smaller clusters of units which, for example, can be used to accredit specialist functions.

- **Flexible learning delivery and assessment** - it is important that learning delivery and assessment processes are flexible to take account of the needs of people on all the different duty systems. A number of respondents to the SQS stakeholder survey proposed that flexible and distance learning (e.g. e-learning, learner packs etc) will become of greater importance.
- **Clear progression routes** - qualifications should provide for vertical and horizontal progression at all levels within the sector.

The vision is for the Justice sector as a whole to have a framework of flexible qualifications for all staff, to recognise their achievements and professionalism, which add value and offer opportunities for progression and transfer. Qualifications must aim to provide equal access to development opportunities, especially in the harder to engage sections of the workforce. Qualifications also need to be available which prepare individuals for employment in the sector and provide entry routes to the sector.

The development of the SQS for the Fire and Rescue sector suggests that the vision for the sector is broadly in alignment with the principles for the development of qualifications for the Justice sector as a whole.

**Section 6.3** identifies a number of key areas for action by Skills for Justice as follows:

- 1. Review and development of National Occupational Standards (NOS)** - Skills for Justice will continue to review current NOS and develop new NOS to meet the current and emerging needs of the Fire and Rescue Sector.
- 2. Supporting the development of qualifications** - Skills for Justice will work with Awarding Bodies and other stakeholders to develop and promote new qualifications to meet identified needs. For example, this includes the development of qualifications in the following areas:
  - Incident Command - by far the most frequently identified gap in current provision
  - Safety Critical Activities e.g. Breathing Apparatus, Water Rescue
  - National Resilience e.g. Civil Contingencies / Multi-agency Working
- 3. Credit and Qualification Frameworks** - Skills for Justice will ensure that NOS-based qualifications and awards are transferred to the appropriate credit and qualifications framework (i.e. QCF, CQFW or SCQF).
- 4. Supporting effective assessment** - Skills for Justice will assist organisations to develop innovative approaches to assessment and to help them build internal assessor capacity to support wider recognition of skills and knowledge.
- 5. Quality assurance of learning provision** - the Skills for Justice Skillsmark service will continue to be promoted as a key quality indicator when employers are looking to procure learning and development programmes.
- 6. Developing links with Higher Education** - Skills for Justice will actively engage with HEIs to ensure that HE provision is developed taking account of employers' needs.
- 7. Developing Apprenticeships** - Skills for Justice will look at developing guidance around training contracts to make schemes like the Apprenticeships more viable for employers in terms of financial investment and to link increments to achievement of milestones within the Apprenticeship framework.
- 8. Accreditation of support staff** - Skills for Justice will explore ways to support more accreditation of support staff, particularly to utilise awards which are already in existence (e.g. customer service, administration etc).
- 9. Raising the profile of the sector** - to further encourage recruitment into the sector from diverse backgrounds, and to cope with any changes in the age profile of the workforce,

Skills for Justice will work to raise the profile of the sector through provision of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).

This SQS aims to provide a strategic view of qualifications and learning provision for the Fire and Rescue sector, which will be kept under review and up-dated annually.

Skills for Justice raised awareness of the SQS and consulted widely with employers and other stakeholders in its development through a variety of means including existing forums (e.g. Fire and Rescue Occupational Committee; Chief Fire Officers Association; Country Groups; Awarding Body Forum etc) stakeholder interviews and an online survey.

Skills for Justice will continue to work closely with employers and other key stakeholders in implementing the strategy through the development of specific SQS Action Plans.

## SECTION 2: Scope of the SQS

### 2.1 UK-wide scope of the SQS

Provide details of the UK-wide scope of the SQS in terms of:

- sector coverage
- occupations covered (including details of any exclusions. Please note, it is expected that SQSs will cover the sector's full footprint wherever possible; exclusions must be explained together with future plans to address them).
- population of learners (who's included within the scope of the SQS and who isn't). NB it is acknowledged that in some cases this population may be the same as the sector coverage described above, and if so this should be explained.
- range of provision and types of current qualifications, including HE, apprenticeships, sector/employer training schemes (this should be as inclusive as possible so a full picture of the qualifications and other learning is captured).

Any differences and similarities between the four UK nations impacting on the scope should be highlighted, as well as any overlaps with other SSCs, including details of any collaboration taking place.

This section should cover both accredited and non-accredited qualifications as appropriate, and should be clear about the distinction between the two.

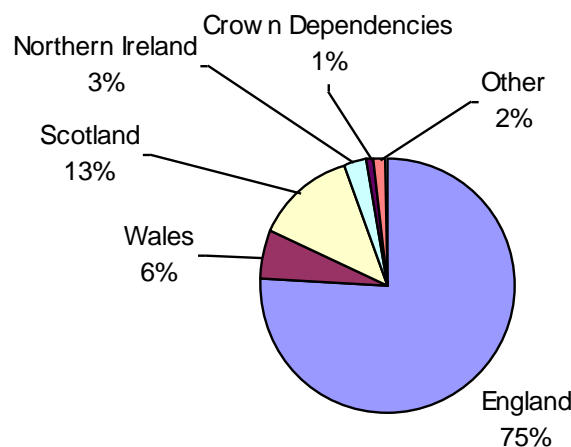
#### 2.1.1 Sector coverage and context

The Fire and Rescue Sector in the UK comprise a number of occupational groupings, notably:

- Local Authority (statutory) Fire and Rescue Services
- Civil Airport Fire Services
- Ministry of Defence Fire Services
- Occupational brigades, provided by and to protect private companies such as those in the nuclear and chemical, pharmaceutical and petroleum industries, ports and harbours, and a small number of event hire fire services.

In 2007-08, the Fire and Rescue sector workforce in the UK totalled approximately 74,228<sup>1</sup>.

The figure below presents the % of total UK workforce within each country of the UK<sup>2</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> Skills for Justice, LMI Report FRS Strand 2007-08

<sup>2</sup> Skills for Justice, Occupational Map for the Fire & Rescue Sector, July 2009  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services account for the vast majority of this workforce, with approximately 71,428 (96%)<sup>3</sup> of the UK total.

Local Authority Fire Services operate under devolved arrangements in each of the nations of the UK, with separate legislation and administration requirements. However, the common factor is that legislation requires both a preventative and reactive role, and the provision of an efficient and effective service in preventing deaths, injuries and damage to properties caused by fire or other incidents. Key service delivery responses include:

- Attending fires – to protect people, property and the environment
- Attending non-fire related incidents – including road traffic incidents, chemical, biological and radioactive exposures and spills, collapsed buildings, rescue of trapped people etc
- Community safety - including fire prevention and other initiatives aimed at reducing risks
- Auditing and enforcing fire safety legislation
- Planning for, and responding to civil contingencies such as major transport incidents, terrorist events and severe flooding.

The table below summarises the key Fire and Rescue employer organisations operating across the UK<sup>4</sup>.

Country	Public sector	Private sector
England	46 Fire & Rescue Services, run by locally accountable Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) – accountable to the Communities and Local Government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Airport fire services (e.g. BAA, and other non BAA airports, regulated by the Civil Aviation Authority)</li> <li>• Port fire services (e.g. Port of Felixstowe)</li> <li>• Industrial fire services (e.g. in chemical, pharmaceutical, nuclear, oil and gas industries)</li> <li>• Specialist private fire service firms</li> </ul>
Wales	3 Fire & Rescue Services, run by locally accountable Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) – accountable to the Welsh Assembly Government	
Scotland	8 Fire & Rescue Services, run by Scottish Fire and Rescue Authorities (SFRA) – accountable to the Scottish Government	
Northern Ireland	Fire & Rescue Service in Northern Ireland (NIFRS), divided into 4 area commands – accountable to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	
Crown dependencies	Fire & Rescue Services in Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man	
Other	Ministry of Defence (e.g. Royal Navy Fire Fighting Training Centre) Defence Fire Risk Management Organisation	

<sup>3</sup> Fire and Rescue Service Operational Statistics Bulletin, 2008

<sup>4</sup> Skills for Justice, LMI Report FRS Strand 2007-08  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

Each Fire and Rescue Authority in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland has appointed a Chief Fire Officer<sup>5</sup> to ensure their responsibilities under the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 (Fire (Scotland) Act 2005) are effectively discharged. As Heads of Service, Chief Fire Officers have a duty to meet statutory obligations under the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 (Fire (Scotland) Act 2005) and Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, both of which include a requirement to ensure staff are effectively trained. While Chief Fire Officers cannot be described as “employers” in this context, they form a key stakeholder group with significant interest (and a statutory duty) to ensure the skills needs of the sector are adequately addressed. The collective views of Chief Fire Officers are coordinated through the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) further contextualised in Section 6<sup>6</sup>

The majority of Fire and Rescue organisations in the UK have a workforce of 200 or more people. This is illustrated in the table below for each country of the UK<sup>7</sup>.

Country	Number of Fire and Rescue Service organisations by size of workforce				Size unknown	Total
	1-10	11-49	50-199	200+		
England	1	8	5	46	18	78
Wales	0	0	1	3	5	9
Scotland	0	1	0	8	0	9
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	1	0	1
Crown dependencies	0	0	3	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>106</b>

### 2.1.2 Occupations covered

The key occupations within the Fire & Rescue sector which aim to be covered by this SQS can be summarised as follows.

- Wholetime duty system firefighter (either contracted to work as a full or part time employee on this system)
- Retained duty system firefighter (contracted to be available for agreed periods of time, generally for firefighting purposes)
- Volunteer firefighter (usually based in rural areas).
- Firefighter (control) employed in fire and rescue control centres to answer emergency calls and deal with mobilising, communications and related activities on shift based systems either on a full or part time basis

<sup>5</sup> A Commissioner is appointed as the head of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

<sup>6</sup> Skills for Justice, Occupational Map for the Fire & Rescue Sector, July 2009

<sup>7</sup> Skills for Justice, LMI Report FRS Strand 2007-08

- Service support staff employed in fire and rescue services to fulfil technical, administrative and managerial responsibilities in support functions such as: equipment maintenance/ repair; technical services; information technology; finance, corporate services; learning and development; human resources and press and public relations.
- Specialists, such as fire safety officers, fire investigators, command support officers, community safety officers, commercial and service specific trainers are amongst the most common specialisms that exist within the sector .

### **2.1.3 The population of learners**

The learners that fall within the scope of this SQS include those working towards qualifying or training for employment, and those working in the sector who may be participating in learning in order to update skills or for career progression.

### **2.1.4 The range of learning provision and qualifications**

The SQS takes account of all the qualifications and learning opportunities that are available and required for the range of occupations within the Fire and Rescue sector. This includes accredited and non-accredited learning, learning delivered in-house and also that delivered in FE, HE and specialist college settings. The range of relevant learning provision and qualifications includes the following:

#### Accredited provision

- National Vocational Qualifications and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (NVQ/SVQ)
- Certificate / Degree / Diploma / Masters qualifications offered by HE
- Foundation Degrees
- Vocationally Related Qualifications (e.g. certificates awards and diplomas)
- Qualifications offered by professional bodies
- Professional Development Awards (Scotland)
- Higher National Certificates (Scotland)
- Apprenticeships.

#### Non-accredited provision

- In-house training and development (including induction programmes, short courses and CPD)
- Training and development provision delivered by FE, HE or private training providers

The full range of relevant learning provision, qualifications and related issues are explored further in Section 4.

## 2.2 Key priorities and alignment with government policy

*Highlight the key priorities for the sector in terms of qualifications and other learning provision, and indicate how existing government policies in each of the four UK nations have been taken into consideration in the production of your SQS; please include a synopsis of how the relevant government policy aligns with the sector's strategy.*

### 2.2.1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework (2008-11)<sup>8</sup> - England

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service in England.

Key priorities identified in the 2008-2011 National Framework are organised around 4 key themes:

- Prevention, protection and response - the core business of Fire and Rescue Authorities in analysing risks and taking action to meet and mitigate the effect of those risks;
- Resilience - covers the delivery of the key resilience programmes and the actions the authorities need to take to ensure they are fully equipped to meet the demands of the resilience agenda
- Diversity and workforce development - covers the importance of mainstreaming diversity in all levels of the fire and rescue services and workforce development, training and health and safety. It includes the requirements to implement the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Strategy
- Governance and Improvement - covers institutions in place to support the delivery of the fire and rescue authority business, the Local Government White Paper Framework<sup>9</sup> including Local Area Agreements, Performance Assessment and Finance

These key priorities are particularly reflected in the special features of the work environment (described in Section 3.1), and workforce trends and changes for the Fire and Rescue sector (described in Section 3.2).

The following key workforce development issues addressed within the National Framework<sup>10</sup> also provide synergies with the approach to qualifications outlined in Section 6.1:

#### **Consistency of national standards / use of the IPDS and NOS**

“To improve efficiency and develop staff effectively, it is vital that all staff are recruited, developed and progressed fairly and transparently, with overall performance and competencies regularly reviewed. To ensure effective cross border working and the health and safety of operational staff there is an additional need for the consistency of national standards. The Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) supports a competency based personnel management approach using role maps underpinned by National Occupational Standards.

Fire and Rescue Authorities must:

- Apply IPDS principles to the recruitment, development and progression of all staff.

<sup>8</sup> Communities and Local Government, Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11

<sup>9</sup> The Local Government White Paper strong and prosperous Communities (2006) fundamentally changed the relationship between central and local government and between local government and local communities. Local government is being given more freedom to shape local services which meet the needs of their local communities and to be more effective at delivering outcomes for their communities by working with local partners.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/fire/pdf/nationalframework200811.pdf>

- Use IPDS and the national processes based on it (National Firefighter Selection Tests, subject to final validation, and Assessment and Development Centres) for all Grey and Gold Book staff.”

Performance management has been consistently identified by the Audit Commission as an area in which the Service needs to improve. One key element of effective performance management is to ensure that staff have clearly defined personal objectives, that delivery is regularly reviewed through constructive feedback, and that operational capability and safety are maintained. IPDS supports the assessment of performance against objectives using the role maps/National Occupational Standards and Personal Qualities and Attributes.”

### **Competence based qualifications and clear progression routes**

“As recognised in the Leitch Report (Prosperity for all in the Global Economy: World Class Skills published December 2006) qualifications can be a useful testimony of knowledge and understanding. For example, National Vocational Qualifications help ensure that consistency of competence is achieved through everyone working toward nationally acknowledged standards. This enables people to benefit from transferability of competence both inside and outside the service.”

### **Leadership development**

“In 2006 the Communities and Local Government Select Committee identified the need for Fire and Rescue Authorities to strengthen leadership at all levels and in all sectors of the organisation to meet current and future challenges. Fire and Rescue Authorities are expected to ensure that those with leadership responsibilities or potential to have the opportunity and encouragement to develop their skills.”

### **Quality assurance**

Quality assurance is essential if learning and development standards across the Fire and Rescue Service are to be maintained and improved. A quality assurance framework designed specifically for the Fire and Rescue Service has been developed with stakeholders at the Fire Service College.

## **2.2.2 The Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales 2008-2011<sup>11</sup>**

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Welsh Assembly Government’s vision and priorities for the three Fire and Rescue Authorities (“FRAs”) in Wales and sets out three priority areas for FRAs:

- Providing statutory services which protect communities and meet their specific local needs by maximising and pooling resources. This will involve a more integrative, participative and collaborative approach between FRAs and the wider public sector.
- Strengthening their equality and diversity agenda to ensure that each FRA is fully representative of, and is fully engaged with, the diverse communities it serves, enabling it to meet its statutory and non statutory functions, and;
- Delivering a national resilience capability.

The Framework is issued under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (‘the 2004 Act’) by the Welsh Assembly Government on behalf of the Welsh Ministers.

Many aspects of the human resource strategy within the Framework are consistent with the priorities identified by the National Framework in England, in particular the recognition of the role of national occupational standards and the IPDS:

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<sup>11</sup> Welsh Assembly Government, Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales, 2008-2011  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

“The strategy focuses on people management, workforce planning and workforce development, whilst embedding the Integrated Personal Development System (‘IPDS’) (which provides a competency based personnel management approach using role maps underpinned by National Occupational Standards) within the broader HR function... The Assembly Government recognises the benefits and supports the principles of IPDS. FRAs should implement IPDS fully and consistently for all staff employed under Grey and Gold Book conditions. In addition, FRAs should apply IPDS principles to the recruitment, development and progression of all other staff. FRAs should ensure that all duty systems and staff groups have equal access to opportunities for development and progression”.

Two priorities which are given specific emphasis in the Framework for Wales are bilingual skills and the high proportion of firefighters within the Retained Duty System:

“It is important that bilingual skills are integrated into FRAs’ workforce planning, in order to ensure that FRAs are able to deliver bilingual services in line with statutory schemes and to reach out to the communities they serve. FRAs should, for instance, close any gaps that may exist between current and required levels of bilingual skills by providing training for staff who wish to learn Welsh and recruit staff with bilingual skills to specific posts within FRAs.”

“The Retained Duty System (‘RDS’) workforce in Wales constitutes 47 per cent of serving Welsh firefighters and is essential to the continued effectiveness of FRA activities”

### **2.2.3 Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) Learning and Development Strategy (January 2007) 12**

A Scottish Fire Services Learning and Development Strategy was first produced in October 2003. It gave recognition to the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) as a cornerstone of the Fire Service modernisation agenda and sought to utilise the IPDS as a framework that would allow the Service to implement “best practice” human resource development processes.

Since 2003, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has continued to redefine its role, with public and political accountability driving the process of change. Key drivers of change have been the enactment of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the subsequent publication of a Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. Other influencing factors include the Local Government in Scotland Act (2003), the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), the revision of the Chief Fire Officers Association in Scotland [CFOA(S)] Business Plan, the emergence of a Learning and Development Strategy for England and more recently the report published by the Scottish Executive – Transforming Public Services: The Next Phase of Reform.

Against this background the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services, as with other public sector bodies, has been required to review how their services are delivered with an emphasis on driving up quality, encouraging innovation, improving efficiency and productivity and collaborative working with other organisations.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) Learning and Development Strategy proposes the following policy framework for people development which provides synergies with the approach to qualifications outlined in Section 6.1:

- “Development is an integral part of the strategic planning process, in that it is aligned with organisational objectives via a performance management system.
- Value is placed on workplace learning and all staff will have a personal development plan that is updated regularly via dialogue with their line manager with regard to performance in the role.
- National Occupational Standards (NOS) form the basis of our competency frameworks.

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<sup>12</sup> Scottish Executive, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services, Learning and Development Strategy, January 2007  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

- Behavioural competencies, in the form of Personal Qualities and Attributes (PQAs), provide the framework to determine an individual's potential for progression within the organisation.
- Assessment and Development Centres (ADCs) will be used to support career progression; development for newly appointed staff will be based on feedback from the ADC process and a determination of prior learning and experience against the NOS for their new role.
- The NOS will be used to review existing programmes and to develop new programmes, to ensure that development is delivered to a nationally recognised level and in line with the role requirements.
- Development will be delivered on a flexible, modular basis.
- There is a commitment to e-learning and development will make maximum use of Information Technology.
- Where appropriate, nationally devised programmes will be accredited and aligned with the Scottish Qualifications and Credit framework. The aim is to offer access to learning and development opportunities that can lead to relevant qualifications.
- All programmes will be subject to impact assessment (risk management, health and safety, equality and diversity).
- All programmes will be subject to appropriate systems of evaluation and quality assurance.
- Succession planning will be supported by appropriate targeted development for staff who have been identified as "high potential" performers.

The electronic recording system will hold individual records of development, performance management and career progression information."

#### **2.2.4 Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Services (NIFRS) Draft HR Strategy 2009 - (March 2009) Part 2 Learning and Development**

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) is dependent on its people. If the Service is to progress and become more effective and efficient, all employees must be afforded the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge that they require to carry out their jobs effectively now and in the future.

The Service is committed to promoting a culture of continuous improvement through the provision of learning and development activities. These activities will be designed specifically to meet the needs and expectations of all employees and support the attainment of the Service's strategic aims and objectives.

The Learning and Development Strategy 2009-2014 builds on what has already been achieved and sets a challenging agenda for the future. It provides a framework within which NIFRS staff will be developed in order to gain the necessary skills and competencies that they require to ensure that they are both effective and safe.

This Learning and Development section of the Strategy identifies the medium and long-term strategies for developing all Service personnel. It addresses the key training issues and seeks to ensure that the resources allocated to training are used efficiently in accordance with UK Fire and Rescue Service best practice.

It is the policy of NIFRS that all employees will be afforded access to training and development on a fair and equitable basis. All employees will be developed using a co-ordinated approach to learning and development.

The achievement of a competent workforce is the principal aim of this strategy. The learning and development activities delivered will support the principle of Training for Competence using the framework of the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS). The Training and

Development Function will lead on mainstreaming the IPDS into NIFRS. In so doing it will enable the Service to attain its corporate aims and objectives and achieve the overarching objective of the IPDS - to drive down risk by ensuring competent performance.

This Strategy provides a policy and resource framework for the delivery of learning and development activities. The framework will support the achievement of corporate objectives and improved standards of service delivery using appropriate and cost effective training strategies.

### **1 - The Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS)**

The IPDS was intended to encompass the development needs of all staff at all stages of their careers. It embraces the full range of fire service activities and its purpose is to enable people to attain and maintain the level of competence required for the demands of their role.

A Partnership Agreement for the Fire & Rescue Sector has been drawn up with the Skills for Justice and NIFRS are a signatory to that Agreement.

Skills for Justice, working with a Fire & Rescue Occupational Committee, will manage, maintain and develop IPDS products for future use across the Service. It will also contribute to enabling the Service to meet the respective Public Service Agreement Targets set out for England and the Devolved Administrations.

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service is fully committed to using the IPDS as the framework for meeting the needs and expectations of the Service in accordance with legislation and other relevant national standards, codes and best practice.

The eight principle elements of the IPDS are;

- (1) National Occupational Standards (NOS)
- (2) Awards (NVQs)
- (3) Assessment Development Centres (ADCs)
- (4) Assessing Workplace Performance
- (5) Development Programmes
- (6) Personal Development Records
- (7) Continuing Personal Development (CPD)
- (8) Quality Assurance

Under IPDS all staff will be required to demonstrate and maintain competence in role. In many cases this will mean extending employees' existing knowledge, skills and understanding. The requirement for training and development within the Service will therefore increase.

While the IPDS provides the framework within which all staff development will take place, the Learning and Development Strategy creates and maintains the key processes which link personal development with organisational development.

NIFRS will implement learning and development strategies that integrate personal development needs with the organisational skills requirements identified through the Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) process. In so doing we will support the move from intervention to community-based safety initiatives and facilitate the introduction of Human Resource and other change management initiatives. The IPDS will provide the cornerstone for these strategies.

There has been rapid change within the Fire and Rescue Service arising from the implementation of the Government's modernising agenda. The move from a reactive role based on intervention to a proactive role of prevention has created a need for cultural change in the Service and the need to develop new skills which support increased social engagement as a means of enhancing community safety. In addition, the Integrated Risk

Management Planning (IRMP) process provides a risk-based methodology to determine resource deployment. This, combined with the requirement to plan and respond to a wider range of operational incidents will continue to create growing and more diverse learning and development needs.

## **2 - Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP)**

The purpose of the Integrated Risk Management Planning process is to ensure that NIFRS has the right human and physical resources in the right place at the right time, thereby bringing about improved community safety.

The IRMP process focuses upon the risks to society from all life threatening incidents including fire, road traffic collisions, water hazards, new dimension terrorism, etc. and it provides a measured response to risk through the application of robust risk assessment techniques.

In order to meet the above challenges, NIFRS must ensure that staff at all levels are trained and equipped to carry out their roles effectively and safely. This linkage between the IRMP and the Integrated Personal Development System will require effective training strategies and methodologies to ensure that staff are competent to deal with the challenges of their current and future roles.

The learning and development strategies and activities must also be responsive to changing societal risks and organisational response. The IRMP will identify these changes and be one of the major strategic factors that will determine future training needs.

## **3 - Fire & Rescue Service (Northern Ireland) Order 2006**

The Fire & Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order was made on 24 May 2006. The Order reflects many of the proposals already brought into effect in GB with regard to broadening the Service's duty to respond to a greater range of emergencies. The Order also reforms fire safety legislation in line with the increased emphasis on fire prevention. It replaces the Fire Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1984 and reflects broadly the legislative changes introduced in England and Wales, through the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and in Scotland, through the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

The policy objectives of the Order are:

- To define the role and structure of the modern fire and rescue service;
- To provide a statutory basis for core duties such as promoting community fire safety, firefighting, responding to road traffic accidents and other emergencies, and enforcing new fire safety requirements;
- To simplify existing fire safety legislation and reinforce the modern risk-based approach to fire prevention;
- To give effect to European Union Directives relating to health and safety at work.

The introduction of the new legislation and the broadening of the statutory duties has created a need for increased training and development, particularly in the area of fire safety.

## **4 - National Learning and Development Strategy for England**

The National Fire and Rescue Service Learning and Development Strategy for England was released in 2005 and implementation commenced in 2006. It provides a framework for English FRS learning and development over the next ten years and it commits to working in partnership with the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales and with Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

The key elements are set out under the four headings of:

- Planning and managing FRS learning effectively
- Improving access to learning
- Ensuring that standards are maintained
- Getting value for money

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service has a number of important links with English Services and with the Fire Service College as a major training provider. The local implementation of L&D strategies should not result in conflict with the implementation of the national strategy and this Learning and Development strategy seeks to align local and national strategies where possible.

## **5 – Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Services Corporate Plan**

The primary purpose of Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service is to reduce the risk to individuals and the environment from fire and other emergencies. The Service's Corporate Plan focuses on the following key corporate themes;

- Responding to Emergencies
- Developing a Fire Safety Community
- Supporting our People
- Managing our Resources
- Protecting the Environment

The key theme of '*Supporting Our People*' will be achieved by a number of Learning and Development Key Priorities which must be delivered within the broader strategic context described above. They emerge from an analysis of the strategic environment and they support IRMP and the NIFRS corporate objectives.

Four Key Priorities for learning and development flow from this:

### **6 - Key Priorities**

**1** Deliver appropriate and consistent learning and development activities which improve individual performance, support organisational objectives and contribute to a safe, effective and competent workforce.

**2** Provide a structured framework for personal and career development which develops accredited transferable skills, knowledge and understanding and recognises individual achievement of competence.

**3** Promote equality of access to learning and development opportunities for all staff in a manner that takes account of organisational need, personal development aspirations and individual skills, qualities and attributes.

**4** Establish and maintain structures for the local, regional and national delivery of training which ensures that resources secured for learning and development are used in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

In order to achieve the above priorities, supporting objectives have been identified. These strategic objectives, which will be translated into a series of planned initiatives and activities through the Annual Learning and Development Planning Process.

## SECTION 3: Sector Working Environment

### 3.1 Special features or characteristics of the work environment

*Explain special features or characteristics of the working environment that need to be taken into account to help to inform the design, delivery and assessment of appropriate learning provision to ensure that it is accessible to the existing and future workforce. Include any differences between the four UK nations, as appropriate. This section should be specific and related to the sector rather than covering general issues*

#### 3.1.1 A risk critical working environment

It is a feature of the sector that many operational aspects of the fire service are 'risk critical'. In this context, learning provision plays an important part in maintaining operational capability and ensuring the health and safety of the workforce. This may also result in the need for regular refresher training.

*“Training and development provides Fire and Rescue Authorities with appropriately skilled staff to meet their organisational objectives and offers staff the opportunity to build up their knowledge and skills. In particular, effective role related operational training, based on up to date experience, is essential to maintaining operational capability and ensuring the health and safety of staff. The recent Operational Assessment of Service Delivery identified training and development of staff and the currency and provision of risk information as a key area for improvement.”<sup>13</sup>*

A risk critical work environment also has implications for how performance in the workplace is assessed; for some aspects of operational activities the gathering of evidence of actual performance in the workplace is challenging. The existing practice of assessing skills in a simulated assessment is considered as safeguard, gives confidence to both the individual and the organisation and is supportive of the overall approach to learning and development. This also highlights the importance of providing a foundation of underpinning knowledge and skills development before assessing evidence of competent performance.

The context of the working environment not only has implications for front line firefighters, but also for the style of management and leadership required. For example, a number of respondents to the SQS stakeholder survey observed that the requirements for Incident Command are distinctly different from most other management and leadership:

*“The fire and rescue service is somewhat unusual (almost unique) in that the skills (and therefore the training) required of its officers for 95+ percent of the time are the same as any other sector; e.g. training aimed at developing a consultative and inclusive leadership style. However for that 5 percent (or less) of the time that its officers are engaged in often intense and high stakes incident command, then the skill sets demanded of these same officers for command and control are very different.” (Ref: CFRA England)*

#### 3.1.2 Fire safety and prevention

The modern fire and rescue service places an ever-increasing emphasis on the prevention of fire and incidents. This followed a review of the fire and rescue service and the publication of the Bain Report 2002, *The Future of the Fire Service: reducing risk, saving lives - The Independent Review of the Fire Service*

<sup>13</sup> Communities and Local Government, Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

Community fire safety and the prevention of fire and incidents through community involvement, education, research and awareness-raising all play vital roles in supporting the thrust of the review. Community fire safety is now as important a part of the Service's role as operational intervention, helping each year to drive down deaths and injuries. This is done by providing guidance, information and practical help to the public. Developing the skills of firefighters to support their community will continue to evolve as responses to differing needs are developed and put in place.

The Fire and Rescue Service also has a very important role to play in fire safety audit and enforcement. Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) are the primary enforcing authorities for the , Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, as issued under differing legislation within the home nations, which was introduced in October 2006 and replaced over 70 separate pieces of fire legislation. The impact of this change sees FRAs developing appropriate risk-based inspection regimes within the context of their Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The new approach needs to support the development and competence of fire safety officers to ensure that are equipped to take a pragmatic and proportionate approach to audit and enforcement and to deal with the ever increasing engineered responses to address hazards and risks from fire.

The Fire Safety Vocational Development Group (CFOA sponsored) are currently identifying the needs for appropriate qualifications in relation to NOS.

### **3.1.3 Duty systems / workforce structure**

Further important features of the sector are that it has:

- a largely shift based workforce
- retained duty system (RDS) staff (approximately 30% of the UK workforce)
- volunteer staff
- delivery of learning in remote locations

*“Evidence from a RDS [retained duty system] staff survey suggests that they do not always have the same access to training and development opportunities as their Wholetime colleagues. To develop an effective, professional and inclusive organisation Fire and Rescue Authorities will wish to ensure equality of access to training and development opportunities for all staff”<sup>14</sup>*

The implications of these features for the design, delivery and assessment of learning were also observed by a number of respondents to the SQS stakeholder survey:

- *“The provision of training and development opportunities which can cater for the various different duty systems including the Retained Duty System fire-fighter is necessary to ensure that all employees have access to and opportunity to develop and maintain competence.” (Ref: CFRA England)*
- *“There is a need to take account of the needs of the Retained Duty System fire-fighter. Designing appropriate training interventions to cater for part-time staff means that e-learning will need to be developed as a knowledge base for Fire domain purposes.” (Ref: Fire Service College England)*
- *“We need flexible qualifications that allow people in all roles to be developed and the delivery of this also needs to be flexible to meet the diversity of both the systems of work that exist and the demands on different types of role holders e.g. retained, shift, flexi duty etc.” (Ref: CFOA)*

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<sup>14</sup> Communities and Local Government, Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

- *“In meeting the demands of the service, we have developed multiple versions of papers to meet the needs of people working different shifts and duty patterns” (Ref: IFE).*

The delivery of learning to individuals on a Retained Duty System, volunteer contracts and with limited contact time is a particular challenge for those working in more remote locations:

*“The geographically diverse nature of Scotland and the part-time working arrangements of some staff have required access to more flexible and easily accessible learning environments. The SFSC has been to the forefront of the creation of e-learning modules and their Learning and Development strategy seeks to expand the use of these and other flexible delivery methods, such as distance learning, in the delivery of development programmes under the IPDS framework.”<sup>15</sup>*

*“The Retained Duty System (‘RDS’) workforce in Wales constitutes 47 per cent of serving Welsh firefighters and is essential to the continued effectiveness of FRA activities. Pay and terms and conditions are key to the retention and recruitment of a workforce which has high morale and self esteem. It is important that full use is made of the valuable skills RDS personnel have and that more is done to overcome recruitment and retention challenges.”<sup>16</sup>*

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<sup>15</sup> Scottish Executive, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services, Learning and Development Strategy, January 2007

<sup>16</sup> Welsh Assembly Government, Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales, 2008-2011  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

### **3.2 Workforce trends and changes forecast for the sector working environment**

*Provide an analysis of sectoral workforce trends for the future and any changes forecast (with anticipated timescales) to the working environment. Please be clear about the evidence base for your assertions. For SSCs this should be clearly based on SSA evidence and built upon if necessary. For SSBs the evidence base is the market analysis drawn from your LMI and other sources.*

#### **3.2.1 Size of the workforce**

It is hard to gain detailed information on the recruitment patterns for the Fire and Rescue sector across the UK, and predictions can only be made using general groupings around public sector services in which Fire and Rescue is included. Overall, changes appear likely to be minimal over the period to 2014 and it can be reasonably predicted that the Fire and Rescue workforce across the UK will remain reasonably static. Effectiveness and efficiency are a focus for the current workforce rather than a significant increase in numbers.<sup>17</sup>

#### **3.2.2 Diversity of the workforce**

It will be important for learning provision to reflect the diversity of the workforce and the communities with which the Fire and Rescue sector engage. This is against the background of targets to increase ethnic minority representation in the sector and to increase the proportion of women amongst uniformed operational staff.

For example, in England the National Equality and Diversity Strategy sets out the Service's commitment to ensuring that diversity and equality are fully integrated into all aspects of the Service. Improving workforce diversity through recruitment and retention is a key component of the Strategy. The Strategy sets targets on recruitment, retention and progression to be met by 2013 i.e.

- By 2013, a minimum of 15 per cent of new entrants to the operational sector to be women.
- By 2013 recruitment of minority ethnic staff across the whole organisation to be at the same percentage as the minority ethnic representation in the local working population.
- Fire and Rescue Authorities with very low minority ethnic working age populations and low recruitment requirements may set a target in terms of individuals recruited over the five year period rather than a percentage of total recruitment.
- By 2013, parity in rates of retention and progression between minority ethnic and white employees, and between men and women.

The aim in the long term is to change the composition of the Fire and Rescue Service workforce in England so that it includes the same percentage of minority ethnic staff as in the working age population (currently 12 per cent) and 15 per cent of women in operational roles (as an achievable basis for further action)...

To help and support Fire and Rescue Authorities in improving the diversity in their workforce at all levels Communities and Local Government are committed to working with stakeholders to develop the following initiatives:

- High Potential Development Programme (HPDS)
- Awareness raising campaigns to encourage people from under represented groups to consider the Fire and Rescue Service as a career.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Skills for Justice, Fire & Rescue Services in the UK

<sup>18</sup> Communities and Local Government, Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

### 3.2.3 Age profile of the workforce

Some respondents to the SQS survey suggested that changes to the Firefighters Pension Scheme could result in a more rapid turnover of staff e.g.

*“The pension rule changes made some 2 or 3 years ago, which removed the “golden handcuffs” by introducing a transferable pension, mean that the FRS demographic could well change. The workforce could be young to young middle aged. After completing 10 to 12 years in the FRS and, armed with a good CV and a portable pension, they could move on to pastures new more easily than the current workforce.” (Ref: Fire Service College England)*

If this proves to be correct, then it will have implications for the need to develop increased numbers of new recruits to the sector.

### 3.2.4 Modernisation Agenda

The Modernisation Agenda for the Fire and Rescue Service addresses the wider context of service delivery within a modernised Fire Service. This includes a greater emphasis on:

- Community Safety i.e. working to achieve prevention and protection in the community
- Resilience i.e. developing the capability to respond to major civil emergencies, particularly the response to new risks associated with terrorism and climate change. In particular, response to civil emergencies will require multi-agency working to meet the planning and response requirements.

These developments in the Fire and Rescue Service are having an impact on the development needs of the sector and its workforce.

### “FiReControl” in England

For example, Communities and Local Government is investing £1 billion in the Fire and Resilience Programme to increase resilience and enhance capability in England’s Fire & Rescue Services. Within this programme, the Fire Control project has been established to set up 9 English Regional Fire Control Centres (RCCs) to replace the control rooms in the 46 English Fire and Rescue Service. A learning and development strategy is being developed in conjunction with the chief executives of the local authority controlled companies (LACCs) responsible for the future running of the RCCs. It is anticipated that this will make use of the existing NVQ qualifications for control room operators (CROs) and to utilise the Fire Service IPDS. However, under these new arrangements Fire Control personnel will not be directly part of the Fire & Rescue Service, and therefore may require targeted development specific to their role.

### 3.2.5 Funding

Finally, the availability of funding is a major issue for the future delivery of learning and qualifications in the sector. The majority of respondents to the SQS stakeholder survey anticipated future reductions in the funding available for learning and qualifications. It was suggested that this would place greater emphasis on the need to minimise costs, obtain better value for money and if possible, access new funding opportunities:

*“Funding will certainly become an issue... Training providers will have to offer value for money and targeted training properly researched.” (Ref: British Nuclear Fuels)*

*“Financial constraint is having an impact on Fire Service budgets and could have adverse impact on the fire service achieving its aims of implementing qualifications within its workforce. Many funding opportunities exclude staff due to existing levels of qualifications. Any impact is*

*due to the age profile of a workforce when considering opportunities in areas of Advanced and Modern Apprenticeships which is a weakness in the national L&D strategy, any change here would be most welcome.” (Ref: Cleveland FRS / CFOA North East)*

*“In future it will be important to make good use of innovative ways to deliver learning and qualifications – to keep the cost down.” (Ref: Fire Protection Association)*

*“Funding staff development will always be an issue for Services and never more so than in this current economic climate – the trick will be to ensure services work together in identifying and securing the best deals available to them in order to demonstrate best value.” (Ref: Cheshire FRS)*

*“Partnerships give added value and benefits, particularly during times of a tight fiscal climate, when they present the potential to make savings. As an example, independent design, and delivery of appropriate learning provision within every FRS can be reduced through our partnership with SfJ.” (Ref: CFOA)*

## SECTION 4: Summary of current qualifications and learning provision

### 4.1 The main types of qualifications and learning provision for the sector

*Describe the main qualification types, and other learning provision as appropriate, for your sector for all relevant levels indicating their:*

- *purposes*
- *interrelationships (including progression routes)*
- *availability from different providers*
- *and any differences in the main types of qualifications within scope across the four UK nations.*

#### 4.1.1 Qualifications for the 14-19 age groups

General academic qualifications delivered mainly for the 14-19 age groups (e.g. GCSEs, A levels, Welsh Baccalaureate, Scottish Higher etc) do not provide any specific focus on the Fire and Rescue sector.

The development of 14-19 Diplomas (e.g. the 14-19 Diploma in Public Services) have the potential to provide a more vocational pathway of relevance to the Fire and Rescues Sector (See Section 6.3.2).

#### 4.1.2 National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)

National occupational standards (NOS) and S/NVQs are well established in the Fire and Rescue sector. From 2001, with the introduction of Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS), NOS were introduced into performance management and development of all staff. IPDS and the use of NOS and S/NVQs is a critical aspect of the modernisation of the Fire and Rescue sector across the UK.

Work on the standards and S/NVQs are steered by the Skills for Justice Fire and Rescue Sector Occupational Committee (see section 6.2.1) and managed and co-ordinated via the Fire and Rescue Sector NOS and Qualifications Workstream. Secretariat support for these groups is provided by Skills for Justice.

National occupational standards for the Fire and Rescue sector are currently available for seven key areas:

- **Operations in the community** – Firefighter,
- **Control operations** – Firefighter control.
- **Watch management** – Watch managers and, crew managers, at fire stations and mobilising control centres
- **Fire safety** – Fire safety officers within fire services and practitioners external to the service that have responsibility in their organisations for fire safety, examples of which may include: Fire Warden, Fire Marshall, Fire Safety Adviser, Fire Safety Manager and Fire Safety Engineer.
- **Fire investigation** – Fire investigators
- **Management and leadership** – senior staff within fire services with management responsibilities e.g. Station Manager, Group Manager, Area Manager, and Brigade Manager and within support staff functions.

- **Servicing and maintenance roles** – staff responsible for the servicing of specialist equipment such as breathing apparatus and fire hydrants.<sup>19</sup>

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) based on the standards are available in four of these areas:

- Fire safety (Levels 2, 3 and 4).
- Operations in the community (Level 3)
- Watch management (Level 3)
- Control operations (Level 3)

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) based on the standards are available in one of these areas:

- Operations in the community (Level 3).

#### **4.1.3 Modern Apprenticeship**

A modern apprenticeship has existed in the fire and rescue sector since the 1990's and was recredited in 2003 for 10 years, the title of the apprenticeship is:

- Advanced Apprenticeship Framework In Emergency Fire Service Operations (England )
- Modern Apprenticeship Framework in Emergency Fire Service Operations (Wales)

The qualification leads to:

- a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 3
- Key Skills qualifications: communication and application of number
- Technical Certificate

#### **4.1.4 Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs)**

Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) include qualifications which although vocationally related, are not necessarily competence-based. Unlike S/NVQs they are not always derived from NOS, and there is less emphasis on the assessment of workplace performance.

##### **England, Wales and Northern Ireland**

A range of VRQs of relevance to the Fire and Rescue sector are offered by Edexcel including BTEC Awards, Certificates and Diplomas at levels 2 and 3.

##### **Scotland**

The Professional Development Award (PDA) in Crew Management has been developed for the Scottish Fire Service to provide certificated programmes of management training to staff in first line management positions. It is a six credit certificate at SCQF level 7. Successful candidates can progress to the HNC in Watch Management.

The Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Watch Management (Fire and Rescue Service) was developed for the Scottish Fire Service and builds on the knowledge requirements of the PDA in Crew Management.

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<sup>19</sup> Standards are available to download at [www.skillsforjustice-nosfinder.com/suites.php](http://www.skillsforjustice-nosfinder.com/suites.php)

#### **4.1.5 Professional qualifications (UK-wide)**

A number of professional bodies provide qualifications of relevance to the Fire and Rescue sector including:

- IFE (Institution of Fire Engineers) – offering examination-based qualifications designed to assess underpinning knowledge and understanding at different levels, providing evidence of academic achievement in fire engineering i.e.
    - IFE Certificate at levels 2, 3 and 4
    - IFE Diploma at level 3
- IFE qualifications are cross mapped to the relevant NOS have the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator approval.
- ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management) – offering a range of management and leadership qualifications, including VRQs, S/NVQs, Awards, Certificates and Diplomas
  - CFFPA Europe (Confederation of Fire Protection Association: Europe)
    - European Diploma in Fire Protection
  - NEBOSH (National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health) e.g.
    - Fire Safety and Risk Management Certificate

#### **4.1.6 Higher Education (UK-wide)**

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) offer a number of academic qualifications (e.g. BSc, MSc, BEng, MEng, HND etc) relevant to the Fire and Rescue sector with course titles including:

- Fire & Risk Management
- Fire Engineering
- Fire Safety Engineering
- Fire and Leadership Studies
- Disaster Management

Although much HE provision emphasises knowledge-based academic study, recent years have also seen a move towards more vocational content in some HE provision and recognition of the importance of HEIs developing links with employers. This includes the development of qualifications based on work-based learning, and the validation of work-based provision with university credits.

#### **4.1.7 Foundation Degrees (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)**

Foundation Degrees are awarded by Universities (and also delivered in Colleges, working in partnership with Universities). Foundation Degrees combine academic study with workplace learning and require equivalent standards of academic attainment as the second year of an honours degree. Foundation Degrees currently available include

- Fire Safety
- Fire Service Management
- Fire Scene Investigation.

#### **4.1.8 Fire Service Colleges**

When considering learning delivery in the Fire and Rescue sector, it is important to acknowledge the role of the Fire Service Colleges in England and Scotland.

### **Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh**

The Fire Service College in England, based in Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, is an agency of Communities and Local Government (CLG). It is a trading Fund and as such is expected to cover costs from revenues. It, offers a mix of incident command and other advanced and specialist training, based on a fire ground unique in its size and range of facilities, which supports the improvement agenda.<sup>20</sup>

CLG sets the policy framework for the FRS in England in the National Framework, including training. FRAs are responsible as employers for ensuring that firefighters are trained to meet the requirements of their local Integrated Risk Management Plan and the National Framework, and that the training provided is good value for money.

The College offers a range of specialist qualifications and certificates linked to many of its courses including:

- In partnership with Coventry University and The Outreach Organisation Ltd;  
Specialist Diplomas in
  - Specialist Rescue and Incident Management
  - Fire Service Operations and Incident Management
  - Incident Management, Fire Service Operations and Specialist Rescue
  
- In partnership with the University of Central Lancashire;  
Foundation Degrees in
  - Fire Safety
  - Fire Service Management
  
- Edexcel/BTEC Advanced Certificates, Advanced Awards and Professional Diplomas (including a range of customised awards) in
  - Fire Safety
  - Fire Investigation

In Northern Ireland, the Fire and Rescue Training Centre, based in Boucher, Belfast, works in collaboration with the Fire Service College in England, to deliver necessary and developmental training to its fire sector. They also utilise NOS and NVQs in order to support development of staff.<sup>21</sup>

### **Scottish Fire Services College (SFSC)**

In Scotland the Scottish Fire Services College (SFSC), based in Gullane, East Lothian, provides support and training to the range of ranks within the Fire and Rescue Services, as well as in an advisory capacity for the development of learning materials and quality assurance of content and supporting systems. The SFSC is overseen by the Director of Fire Service Training for Scotland.<sup>22</sup>

In Scotland, funding is 'top sliced' from Fire and Rescue Service budgets and this funding (approximately £3.6m p.a.) is used by the SFSC to deliver provision. Therefore, unlike the Fire Service College in England, the SFSC is centrally funded and is required to deliver learning and development to meet agreed needs at a national level. Each year the college prospectus is sent out to the Fire and Rescue Services and they submit their requests – funding is then allocated accordingly.

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.fireservicecollege.ac.uk/>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.nifrs.org/careers.php?sec=438>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.scottish-fireservicesectorcollege.org/SFSCFront/>

Therefore, the provision of learning and development is a partnership activity with Scottish Government, CFOAS and the 8 Scottish Fire and Rescue Services collaborating to produce development opportunities for the sector. Work is currently on-going to develop a Scottish Delivery Framework, based on a detailed training needs analysis, which will support investment in training infrastructure at a local, regional and national level.

Accredited qualifications currently offered by the SFSC include:

- IOSH, Health, Safety and Risk Management: Managing Safety
- NEBOSH, General Certificate
- PDA in Crew Management
- HNC in Watch Management
- Various Management & Leadership qualifications.

All of the above form part of the Learning Development Pathway for the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service as agreed with Chief Fire Officers. The Pathway encompasses all roles and affords the opportunity to those identified through third party quality assured ADC processes to acquire academic qualifications and access to related personal development, including formal coaching and mentoring. For those aspiring to become principal officers, completion of the Pathway can be considered equivalent to the outcomes associated with the Executive Leadership Programme (ELP) which is currently undertaken by personnel in England, Wales & Northern Ireland.

#### **4.1.9 Delivery of qualifications and learning**

As outlined above, there are a wide range of provision currently available for qualifications and learning programmes in the Fire and Rescue sector.

In the SQS stakeholder survey, the Fire and Rescue sector typically indicated that they use a combination of these types of provision e.g.

- In-house provision
- Further and Higher Education institutions
- Professional Bodies
- Fire Service Colleges
- Other specialist providers.

This range of provision includes the award of competence-based, vocational, technical and academic qualifications – although there is also much learning provision which is not formally accredited. The take up of qualifications and other learning provision is explored more fully in the following sections.

## 4.2 Up-take of qualifications and learning provision

4.2 Provide an appropriate analysis of the available information about qualifications and other learning provision within the scope of the SQS to support the information presented in this section. Please be clear about the evidence base for any proposals or recommendations.

### 4.2.1. Information about qualifications and other learning provision

Data on volumes of registrations and certifications for relevant qualification were obtained as part of the research for this SQS from Awarding Bodies e.g. Edexcel and the SQA. This is presented in full in **Appendix 1**.

In addition, during 2008 the Fire Rescue and Safety Vocational Standards Group (FRSVSG) conducted a survey of existing qualifications relevant to the Fire and Rescue Service. A total of 22 Fire and Rescue organisations responded to the survey including 18 local authority services, 3 specialist services and the Fire Service College at Moreton; the respondent organisations are presented in **Appendix 2**. The survey findings included data on the qualifications being used by each organisation; this data is reflected in the sections below.

Further desk and internet research obtained data from other relevant sources such as UCAS.

However, it was not always possible to map out all provision available to the sector, as some data was either not available, or incomplete. Therefore, the following section presents the available data.

### 4.2.2. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)

#### England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Accreditation start date	Qualification	Total certifications to 2009 <sup>23</sup>
2005	Edexcel NVQ in Fire Safety Level 2	84
2005	Edexcel NVQ in Fire Safety Level 3	31
2005	Edexcel NVQ in Fire Safety Level 4	1
2001	Edexcel NVQ Level 3 in Emergency Fire Services: Operations in the Community	3,768
2001	Edexcel NVQ Level 3 in Emergency Fire Services: Watch Management	189
2001	Edexcel NVQ Level 3 in Emergency Fire Services: Control Operations	265
2008	Edexcel NVQ Level 3 in Fire and Rescue Sector Control Operations	1

<sup>23</sup> Edexcel, 2009  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

## Scotland

Accreditation start date	Qualification	Total certifications to 2009 <sup>24</sup>
2003	SVQ Level 3 in Emergency Fire Services: Operations in the Community	631

The significance of NVQs to the Fire and Rescue sector is shown by the number of registrations and certifications for the Operations in the Community S/NVQ. This qualification is aimed at those who work in the Fire and Rescue sector at an operational level in response, prevention and protection. Since 2000, there have been a total of 4,399 certifications for this S/NVQ (3,768 for the NVQ and 631 for the SVQ).

Of the 22 respondent organisations to the FRSVSG research, the number using the NVQ in Emergency Fire Services was<sup>25</sup>:

Operations in the Community	18 (82%)
Watch Management	9 (41%)
Control Operations	9 (41%)

### NVQ Assessor and Verifier Awards

The number of Fire and Rescue organisations using S/NVQs is also reflected by the high proportion of organisations using NVQ Assessor and Verifier Awards. Of the 22 respondent organisations to the FRSVSG research, the number using the NVQ Assessor and Verifier Awards was<sup>26</sup>:

A1 Assessor Award	18 (82%)
V1 Internal Verifier Award	18 (82%)

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<sup>24</sup> SQA, 2009

<sup>25</sup> FRSVSG 2008

<sup>26</sup> FRSVSG 2008

## 4.2.3 Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs)

### England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Accreditation start date	Qualification		Total certifications to 2009 <sup>27</sup>
2003	Edexcel Level 3 BTEC: Emergency Fire Services in the Community	Certificate	375
2007	Edexcel Level 3 BTEC: Compartment Fire Behaviour Training	Award	209
		Certificate	0
2008	Edexcel Level 2 BTEC: Fire and Rescue Services in the Community	Award	225
		Certificate	0
		Diploma	0

### Scotland

Accreditation start date	Qualification	Total certifications to 2009 <sup>28</sup>
2006	Professional Development Award (PDA) in Crew Management	291
2006	Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Watch Management (Fire and Rescue Service)	102

Other VRQs of relevance to the Fire and Rescue sector include:

- Edexcel level 3 BTEC National Award / Certificate / Diploma in Uniformed Public Services
- Edexcel level 1 BTEC Certificate in Public Services
- Edexcel level 1 BTEC Diploma in Public Services
- Edexcel level 5 BTEC Higher National Certificate in Public Services

However, it has not so far been possible to obtain data of registrations and certifications for these qualifications specific to the Fire and Rescue sector.

<sup>27</sup> Edexcel, 2009

<sup>28</sup> HN/SVQ People and Services, SQA  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

#### 4.2.4 Higher Education (UK-wide)<sup>29</sup>

HE qualifications specific to the Fire and Rescue Sector are offered at 5 HE institutions across England, Scotland and Wales.

HE Institution	Course	Students completed			
		2006	2007	2008	2009
University of Central Lancashire	Hon BSc Fire and Leadership Studies	Data not obtained			
	Hon BEng Fire Engineering				
	Hon BSc Fire Safety & Risk Management				
University of Edinburgh	Hon BEng/MEng Structural and Fire Safety Engineering	1	3	3	-
Glasgow Caledonian University	Hon BSc Fire Risk Engineering	Data not obtained			
University of Leeds	Hon BEng/MEng Fire & Explosion	-	-	-	10
	MSc Fire & Explosion	-	-	-	14
University of Wales, Newport	HNC Fire Safety Engineering	-	4	12	8
	HND Fire Safety Engineering	-	1	4	10
	Hon BSc Fire Safety Engineering	-	0	1	0

There are also a number of other HE qualifications in areas related to fire and rescue e.g.

HE Institution	Course	Students completed			
		2006	2007	2008	2009
Coventry University	Hon BSc Disaster Management	Data not obtained			
	Hon BSc Disaster Management & Emergency Planning				
Teesside University	Hon BSc Disaster Management	8	11	7	6
	B Eng Civil Engineering with Disaster Management	1	2	1	2
University of Glamorgan, Cardiff & Pontypridd	HND Public and Emergency Sector	-	-	-	-
Brooklands College	HND Public Sector Management	-	-	-	18

<sup>29</sup> UCAS, 2009 / Skills for Justice Research Team 2009  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

In addition, HE qualifications in more generic subjects such as “Public Services” and “Public Services Management” are offered by approximately 34 HEIs across the UK<sup>30</sup>.

Data on the number of students completing HE qualifications has been difficult to obtain. However, the available data would suggest that although HE qualifications are an important part of the overall qualifications offer, they are only achieved by a relatively small proportion of the workforce.

#### 4.2.5 Foundation Degrees (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)

Foundation Degrees include those with a specific focus on Fire and Rescue and others which have relevance to the Fire and Rescue sector. These are more recently developed and therefore there is so far, only limited data available regarding their up-take:

HE Institution	Foundation Degree	Student numbers
Duchy College	Rescue and Emergency Management	Data not obtained
East Lancashire Institute of Higher Education at Blackburn College	Fire and Rescue Service Management	18 completed in 2009
Teeside University (in partnership with Durham & Darlington FRS)	Fire Scene Investigation	First 10 officers enrolled Oct 2009
University of Brighton	Public and Emergency Services Management	Data not obtained
University of Central Lancashire (also delivered at Moreton Fire Service College)	Fire Safety Engineering Fire Service Management	Data not obtained
University of the West of England	Uniformed Services	Data not obtained

#### 4.2.6 Specialist Fire Service Colleges

##### Fire Service College (FSC), Moreton-in-Marsh

The FSC in England provided the following data for Fire and Rescue sector staff who access learning and qualifications through the College:

- Centre for Leadership
  - Executive Leadership Programme : 26 per year,
  - Elected Members : approx 70 per year
- FSC HE partnerships
  - University of Central Lancashire: Foundation Degree/ Honours Degrees/Post graduate Cert: approx 50 in total.
  - Coventry University: Diplomas in Specialist Rescue, Fire Service Operations, and Fire Service Instruction: 160 registrations for modules

<sup>30</sup> UCAS, 2009  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

### **Scottish Fire Services College (SFSC)<sup>31</sup>**

The number of individuals participating in qualifications through the SFSC from April 2009 to April 2010 is as follows:

- IOSH Managing Safely: 50 predicted / 25 actual (to November 2009)
- NEBOSH General Certificate: 49 predicted / 31 actual (to November 2009)
- ILM Certificate in First Line Management: 30 predicted
- PDA in Crew Management: 65 enrolled
- HNC in Watch Management: 50 enrolled
- Diploma in Public Service Leadership: 12 enrolled
- Executive Diploma in Management: 6 enrolled
- MBA in Business Management: 13 enrolled
- SVQ Level 3 in Operations in the Community: 107 predicted / 117 actual (April 09 onwards)
- A1 Assessor Award: 48 (April 09 onwards)
- V1 Verifier Award: 13 (April 09 onwards)

#### **4.2.7 Other learning provision**

In addition to the data for accredited qualifications outlined above, a number of respondents to the SQS stakeholder survey observed that staff are involved in on-going learning programmes, not necessarily leading to formal qualifications:

*“It is important to note that all watch based operational staff are constantly undertaking learning and development activities through structured development and maintenance phase programmes.” (Ref: Scottish Fire Services College)*

*“All staff are constantly attending internal/external mandatory development programmes, which are mapped to their role and Personal Review development needs.” (Ref: West Yorkshire FRS / CFOA Yorkshire & Humberside)*

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<sup>31</sup> Scottish Fire Services College, November 2009  
Version 2 - amended February 2011

### 4.3 Qualifications currently used and the match to employers' needs

*Provide detail of*

- *What qualifications and other learning provision are currently used/valued and accepted by employers for*
  - *pre-entry and entry to the sector at all levels and*
  - *for the existing workforce at all levels, including professional development at higher levels*
- *Any gaps between the qualifications or learning provision available and what employers want and need*
- *Where there are gaps/needs what needs to be done to address those gaps/needs*
- *Details of where there is employer driven evidence for the rationalisation or development of (new) qualifications or learning provision*

*Note: the SQS should not propose arbitrary changes; it should only propose changes for which it can provide strong rationales. Otherwise the SQS will not carry sufficient weight with other stakeholders.*

#### 4.3.1 Pre-entry and entry to the sector

The minimum age for entry to firefighter and firefighter control roles is 18 years. Applicants to firefighter roles must pass a medical examination and job related tests.

Applicants for fire control roles must demonstrate basic literacy and numeracy, keyboard and communication skills.

Some Fire and Rescue organisations also operate direct entry recruitment processes to managerial operational roles (this is particularly the case in England & Wales).

Entry to service support roles is in some instances based on a standard interview process, based on a specified job description.

#### Initial Training and Development

All staff in operational and control roles undertake structured development, an assessment of competency and systematic maintenance of skills. This training and development is based on the NOS for the sector and specific operating requirements and guidance, such as the National Fire Service Manuals, standard operating procedures and statutory requirements (e.g. those set by the Health & Safety Executive).

Although individuals are assessed against common standards and qualifications are used extensively at key parts of the development process it is still clear that there is variation in the delivery and assessment of training and development across the different segments of the sector.

#### 4.3.2 Career development and progression

Career progression routes vary between sections of the sector. Within the Fire and Rescue sector, the main routes for progression are through interview and Assessment and Development Centres (ADCs). ADCs are used to identify individuals with potential to make the step between firefighter and supervisory manager (crew manager), first line manager and middle manager (station manager) and middle and strategic manager (area manager). Individuals successful at ADC are provided with targeted development to enable them to realise their potential at the next role. Finally, interviews are used to recruit individuals to specific posts and to progress within each management banding (e.g. from crew to watch manager. Further detail on this process is available via the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) website".<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.skillsforjustice-ipds.com/>

### **Personal Qualities and Attributes (PQA) Framework**

The PQA Framework is a competence based framework used to identify and assess the training and development needs of staff. The framework forms the basis of the national recruitment and progression processes.

### **Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS)**

The project to develop IPDS was part of the workforce modernisation programme and finished in 2005. The project put in place a system of National Occupational Standards, role maps, PQAs, guidance on development and assessment in the workplace and national processes for recruitment and progression.

Within the IPDS there are role maps and development modules for the following ranks:

- firefighter
- crew manager
- watch manager
- firefighter (control)
- crew manager (control)
- watch manager (control)
- station manager
- group manager
- area manager
- brigade manager

The Emergency Fire Services (EFS) database<sup>33</sup> contains the role maps, NOS and development modules for roles within the Fire and Rescue sector. It is a tool which can be utilised by all members of the Fire and Rescue sector to support their learning and development strategies.

Flexible working arrangements, job sharing, part time service etc, may mean that some people may not be able to access all development opportunities as those who work full time and in more traditional patterns. This has motivated the development of flexible means of developing people, including e-, distance and twilight learning.<sup>34</sup>

#### **4.3.3 Are current qualifications fit for purpose in England, Wales and Northern Ireland?**

The SQS stakeholder survey asked whether current qualifications are fit for purpose. There was a variety of responses, which is perhaps indicative of the different models of learning provision and qualifications adopted across the sector.

A number of respondents commented that current qualifications *are* fit for purpose. However, there were also many issues raised regarding the limitations and potential changes to the current qualifications on offer:

#### **Competence-based qualifications (e.g. NVQs)**

Respondents to the SQS survey were broadly supportive of the principles of using competence-based qualifications. The assessment of workplace competence leading to formal accreditation was generally regarded as something that is very important to the sector:

- *“Competence based assessment is critical to the delivery of an effective service and ensuring effective health and safety arrangements.” (Ref: CFRA England)*
- *“we would like to continue down the NVQ route (competency based training)... as an organisation we have embraced fully the NVQ process including self-sufficient with A1 assessors and V1 internal Verifiers” (Ref: Sembcorp)*

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<sup>33</sup> <http://www.skillsforjustice-ipds.com/efsdatabase.php>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.skillsforjustice-ipds.com/>

- *“I do believe that National Occupational Standards are still required for the Service to enable competence to be assured across the Fire & Rescue Service” (Ref: North Yorkshire FRS)*

However, for some, there were concerns regarding NOS and the NVQ assessment process:

- *“The need for a competence element in a qualifications strategy for the FRS is paramount. However, NVQs... can be cumbersome, long drawn-out, resource intensive and time consuming... There is a question mark over the Ops in the Community and Watch Manager NVQs, which have had a relatively poor uptake in the local authority FRS. Part of the reason for this is the cumbersome nature of evidence collection and the resources required for assessment.” (Ref: Fire Service College England)*
- *“The principle of NVQs is still appropriate for this sector but their delivery must be reviewed to ensure ease of use and relevance across the sector.” (Ref: V T Group)*
- *“If we were to continue with the NVQ we would want a reduction in bureaucracy and allow the controlled development of innovative ways of assessing and quality assuring NVQs.” (Ref: West Yorkshire FRS / CFOA Yorkshire & Humberside)*
- *“This service holds the view that an effective competency framework underpinned by a clear knowledge development strategy is one element of developing our workforce but that the often cumbersome and excessively bureaucratic IPDS tools should be challenged and developed rather than enshrined. The NOS remain very generic and cumbersome and require review or ‘translation’ into a more meaningful format for employees to work with” (Ref: Essex FRS)*

Some respondents also expressed concern at the lack of consistency in assessment practice across the UK:

- *“Whilst existing qualifications provide a suitable framework for firefighters role map, we are unsure as to whether the relevant assurance can be provided by current processes that all fire and rescue service staff have relevant and suitable qualifications and the necessary underpinning knowledge for specific risk critical elements of their role. We believe that many operations such, as BA initial training, competency assurance frameworks and underpinning knowledge, vary considerably across the sector.” (Ref: CFRA England)*
- *“Structuring qualifications within a single awarding body with one common set of systems of delivery and assessment will simplify arrangements for the service and lead to more consistency. Qualifications need to be accessible and not over burdensome to attain and maintain” (Ref: Hampshire FRS)*
- *“There is currently a wide variance in the approach taken by each FRS regarding the establishment, maintenance and certification for both operational and non operational personnel. National recommended approaches should be highlighted and promoted to ensure national standards of competence are achieved and maintained” (Ref: Cumbria FRS)*

It is important to note that the above quotations aim to reflect the variety of responses to the SQS survey and many of the issues regarding NVQs may be local to specific organisations. This emphasises the importance of recognising and sharing good practice in NVQ assessment, both to overcome some of the concerns identified by some respondents, and to achieve greater consistency in assessment practice.

### **Knowledge-based qualifications**

There were also concerns from some SQS survey respondents that the shift to the assessment of competence and NOS role profiles has diluted the rigour of developing and assessing the knowledge of individuals. It was in this context that a number of survey respondents expressed their interest in using knowledge-based / ‘technical’ qualifications.

Clearly, assessment of competence requires candidates to also demonstrate the relevant underpinning knowledge and understanding. However, it appears that in many parts of the sector there is a demand for a mix of qualification types to enable the separate accreditation of knowledge in addition to the knowledge component of competence-based qualifications – and to recognise that knowledge-based and competence-based qualifications can be complementary, not mutually exclusive.

- *“It is important that knowledge based learning/quals are used for initial knowledge acquisition, followed up with competence based quals when skills and knowledge are put into practice” (Ref: BAA)*
- *“We must also not fall foul of believing that if we can state something then we can do it. Understanding something theoretically needs to be seen in the context of doing the job and the NVQ in combination with a technical type certificate fits the bill.” (Ref: Cleveland FRS / CFOA North East)*
- *“In a risk-critical occupation, we have serious concerns about the impact on safety and the effectiveness of emergency incident resolution due to the shift in focus from tests of theoretical knowledge and practical competence. The, now defunct, Fire Service Examinations Board with combined statutory practical and theoretical examinations for promotion to specific roles is missed by the service since the system provided the whole fire and rescue service with confidence that people applying for promotion to front-line managements posts possessed and were able to demonstrate at least a minimum level of practical knowledge and competence. In addition to this, the system required people to study and gain a wide range of underpinning knowledge in contrast to the current system that only requires staff to demonstrate competence.” (Ref: Fire Officers Association)*
- *“Fundamentally it is a blend of approaches i.e. by NVQ and by knowledge-based assessment which will address the various qualification needs of the FRS.” (Ref: Fire Service College England)*
- *“Current qualifications (NVQs) are fit for purpose but should be supplemented with a range of fire-craft technical knowledge based qualifications that would provide evidence of technical learning to compliment ADC entry (maybe this could provide a prerequisite to promotion/substantive following an ADC pass). IFE technical range of certificates may deliver this option. The current knowledge requirements may lack the rigour required to ensure technical knowledge is embedded at each role.” (Ref: Staffordshire FRS / CFOA West Midlands)*
- *“Evidence of internal audits indicates that there is a technical knowledge gap and linking to some externally accredited award would be helpful. The current ADC process as used in Services does not test the individual operational competencies that are risk critical to the role people are expected to fulfil... There is also a gap that could potentially be bridged by the IFE tailoring technical and professional qualifications but not doing it piece meal as currently happens in a variety of Services.” (Ref: Hertfordshire FRS)*

In particular, there were concerns that the issue of assessing and accredited knowledge needs to be tackled to avoid a proliferation of local responses to this issue:

*“It must be obvious, to observers of the fire and rescue service, that something different is needed since a growing number of services have commissioned, or are in the process of commissioning, the development of local theoretical examinations from organisations such as the Institution of Fire Engineers. At the same time, we are seeing the introduction of local practical tests.*

*We are very concerned about fragmentation of the service’s approach through the unilateral introduction such as examinations and tests. Whilst services might argue that they are working to standards set by national role maps, without a standard national assessment system, the actual standards achieved could vary significantly depending on the testing methods applied, the experience of supervisors or their experience of theoretical testing / practical assessment.*

*It therefore becomes difficult to gauge whether a person deemed competent in one service is at the same level as a person in another. Variation between fire and rescue services is now hindering free movement around the UK.*

*To this Association, the extent of local variation indicates that there is a lack of confidence in current national standards and instead of coming together or referring issues to a central point, the solution is to design bespoke systems or adaptations which are perceived to meet local needs.” (Ref: Fire Officers Association)*

#### **4.3.4 Are current qualifications fit for purpose in Scotland?**

As noted in Section 4.1 the provision of learning and development in Scotland is a partnership activity with the Scottish Government, CFOAS and the 8 Scottish Fire and Rescue Services collaborating to produce development opportunities for the sector. Therefore, the issues regarding qualifications provision in Scotland warrant consideration separately from the other countries of the UK.

The Scottish national qualifications framework is reviewed on an annual basis and as new qualifications come on stream. Through this process, the Scottish Fire Services College therefore views the current qualifications as being fit for purpose. However, it is also important to note that the qualifications framework in Scotland is subject to ongoing review. For example a number of the management qualifications utilised are currently under review or are in the process of being replaced by more relevant or up to date qualifications. This work is the focus an ongoing discussion across the Scottish FRS/Scottish Fire Service College partnership and will be an ongoing characteristic of how the Scottish Services utilise and access qualifications.

There is an ongoing aspiration to develop additional levels of quality assurance through appropriate quality assurance systems, levelling or accreditation for all learning and development activities delivered through the national Scottish Fire Services College and Scottish FRS partnership.

The College has initiated work to create a set of criteria against which the partnership can assess the level of quality assurance required for each of the core learning and development activities undertaken across the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services. It is intended that this criteria will be used to define whether a course of learning is considered for:

- Additional external quality assurance (e.g. Skillsmark or an equivalent 3rd party QA framework).
- Levelling on the SCQF.
- Development/progression to a full qualification, where a relevant qualification does not already exist.

The key factors which will influence whether a qualification status is sought for a learning programme are likely to include the level of importance/risks associated with:

- the need for consistency of learner experience, assessment of learning outcomes and application of learning in practice/workplace.
- the needs for independent third party quality assurance, linked to the requirement of probity and accountability of the development processes, of the learning process and quality of learning content.
- the value placed on the formal recognition of learning undertaken by an individual, by the workforce, the sector and the wider employment market.

Although this work is ongoing, it is the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service priority to apply the outcomes of this work to the core operational elements of workforce competence.

In terms of use of the SVQ, the Scottish FRS continues to apply the SVQ Operations in the Community (Level 3) for all wholetime firefighters in development. Although it is the intention of the Services to continue to use this qualification for this particular area of workforce development, there are no current plans to extend the use of the SVQ into a wider context.

*(Ref: Scottish Fire Services College)*

#### **4.3.5 What new qualifications are required?**

In the course of the research for the SQS, the demand from the sector for a number of new qualifications became apparent:

##### **Incident Command**

In the SQS stakeholder survey, by far the most frequently identified gap in current provision was for a new qualification in Incident Command. A sample of comments related to this issue is as follows:

- *“We need further development of technical type certificates and NVQs for all levels of the service in meeting FRS incident response, Command and Control and specialisms.” (Ref: Cleveland FRS / CFOA North East)*
- *“There is always a need to ensure employees at all levels have the underpinning knowledge to support the practical input... We use the Fire Service College for Incident Command courses and we would like these to be accredited and be part of the Quals Framework.” (Ref: East Sussex FRS / CFOA)*
- *“The Scottish Fire Services College and the Scottish FRS... are actively engaging with Skills for Justice to develop qualifications through their Skillsmark process. One example of this is the Scottish Gold and Silver Incident Command programme, delivered to all flexible duty system officers across all 8 Scottish FRS.” (Ref: CFOAS)*
- *“We are aware from our delegates of a groundswell for Incident Command qualifications.” (Ref: Fire Service College England)*
- *“A review of common risks and incidents involving Firefighter injuries or deaths highlights the need for rigorous training and assessment in core skills including Incident Command Training. A nationally accredited scheme to address these core issues is required.” (Ref: V T Group)*

##### **Safety critical activities**

Safety critical areas for new qualifications or awards identified through the SQS stakeholder survey were as follows:

- Breathing Apparatus (BA) and BA instructor
- Water Rescue

There was also an indication to further scope the need for the following qualifications:

- Urban Search and Rescue (specialist roles) VQ
- Air Incident Response VQ
- Maritime Incident Response VQ
- HAZMAT Incident VQ
- Command Support for operations and (non-operations - staffing) NOS

- Fire Safety
- Fire Investigation

### **National resilience**

National resilience was also identified as a significant area where qualifications or awards could be developed:

- Civil contingencies / resilience
- Multi-agency co-operation

Other gaps in qualifications identified by individual respondents from the sector in England were:

- Fire risk assessor

Many respondents expressed a preference for a modular approach for 'skill specific courses', and that there should be a national lead to establishing these qualifications for the entire Fire and Rescue sector.

### **Qualifications frameworks**

A number of respondents noted the potential benefits of nationally recognised qualifications frameworks:

*"Qualifications... should be fully aligned to the proposed QCF to enable transferability with other qualifications at all levels... A nationally recognised set of qualifications, that are not administratively onerous, would encourage take up by FRS's and therefore increase the commercial viability for training providers to develop quality courses" (Ref: Hampshire FRS)*

*"Consideration should be given to those personnel who have specialist roles but are non-operational... the introduction of the Qualification Credit Framework (QCF) may provide the opportunity to provide more linkage between operational and non-operational competences" (Ref: Cumbria FRS)*

## **SECTION 5: Other Sector Uses of Qualifications**

### **5.1 Use of qualifications for the regulation of practice**

*Describe any use made of qualifications for the regulation of practice within the sector, including any different uses in each of the four UK nations, as appropriate.*

Qualifications are not formally required for the regulation of practice in the Fire and Rescue sector. However, as noted elsewhere in this SQS, Fire and Rescue Service role profiles are based on National Occupational Standards as part of the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS). It is a system designed to minimise risk and was intended to be applied across the board for all workforce development. The Fire and Rescue Service NOS also provide a basis for qualifications.

It is also the case that in certain 'risk critical' work situations, qualifications do offer a means to ensure that the required standards of competence and safety are achieved.

### **5.2 Use of qualifications to promote customer confidence and protect the public**

*Describe any specific use made of qualifications to promote customer confidence and to protect consumers / the public within the sector (see Guidance for examples), including any different uses in each of the four UK nations, as appropriate.*

Although qualifications are not typically used for regulation of practice in the Fire and Rescue sector or elsewhere in the Justice sector, they do provide a 'benchmark' against which to measure competence, and as such, have the potential to promote confidence in the competence of practitioners in the sector.

As a public service, often dealing with people who are vulnerable or at risk, workers who can demonstrate competence through the achievement of relevant qualifications or awards may provide reassurance to promote public confidence and offer some assurance of minimum standards of practice.

## **SECTION 6: How Skills for Justice will help realise the future**

### **6.1 The vision for future qualifications and learning provision**

*Describe the sector's view of the future in terms of qualifications and other learning provision. These should be the anticipated outcomes of implementing any action the sector intends to take. Please refer to researched projections identified in the working environment section 3.2.*

The vision for the Justice sector as a whole is to have a framework of flexible qualifications for all staff, to recognise their achievements and professionalism, which add value and offer opportunities for progression and transfer. Qualifications must aim to provide equal access to development opportunities, especially in the harder to engage sections of the workforce. Qualifications also need to be available which prepare individuals for employment in the sector and provide entry routes to the sector.

This vision is based on the principles that qualifications should:

- Clearly link to career structures, providing pathways to advancement within and across occupations.
- Provide a recognised credit or qualification for in-house learning
- Enable the recognition and transfer of skills, knowledge and achievements across the sector through qualifications
- Recognise the need for both academic and vocational qualifications which meet the needs of employment, and making clear relationships between them
- Recognise and encourage continuing professional development across the sector through qualifications
- Be supported by flexible delivery and assessment systems
- Be responsive to, and used to influence, key policy drivers / initiatives across the sector
- Use National Occupational Standards to provide a common currency between learning, qualifications and practice.

The development of the SQS for the Fire and Rescue sector suggests that the vision for Fire and Rescue organisations is broadly in alignment with the principles for the development of qualifications for the Justice sector as a whole.

In the course of the research for the Fire and Rescue SQS, a number of specific findings and issues have emerged:

#### **6.1.1. National recognition of qualifications**

There is a desire for Fire and Rescue Service qualifications to be recognised within and across the four nations.

#### **6.1.2. IPDS and use of NOS**

There is increasing recognition of the value of NOS to provide a basis for the development of qualifications, which relate to workplace practice. Organisations within the local authority sector continue to acknowledge the primacy of IPDS and NOS based role maps. This also applies to a minority of non-local authority Fire and Rescue organisations.

### **6.1.3. Competency-based qualifications**

There is a strong wish to retain competency-based qualifications which attest to individuals' ability to perform competently and safely, particularly in operation roles. However, there is also a need to:

- a) reduce the bureaucratic 'box-ticking' approach to assessment and,
- b) ensure consistency in assessment practice across the sector

In Scotland, the SVQ Operations in the Community (Level 3) continues to be used for all Wholetime firefighters in development. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the NVQs could continue to be used, but there may also opportunities for other types of competency-based qualifications based on NOS with the advent of the new Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

### **6.1.4. Knowledge-based / technical qualifications**

It is also observed that competence-based qualifications are not always the most appropriate routes to accreditation.

For many the use of vocationally related qualifications (VRQs) or technical certificates holds quite some attraction. These may require completion of examinations or work-related simulations and assignments which may provide a more efficient and consistent method of assessing candidates' knowledge and skills. In particular, for risk critical activities this offers the opportunity to have a national pre-requisite to confirm confidence in an individual's performance before they apply their skills in the actual workplace.

Therefore, it is important that as new knowledge-based/technical skill qualifications are developed, they are aligned to the knowledge and understanding of relevant NOS – in this way, the use of knowledge-based and competence-based qualifications would be complementary.

### **6.1.5. A modular approach**

Consistent with the use of qualifications derived from NOS is the need for a modular approach. Qualifications based on units will not only allow full qualifications to be awarded and also smaller 'development awards' comprising smaller clusters of units which, for example, can be used to accredit specialist functions and continuing professional development (e.g. Incident Command, Breathing Apparatus, Water Rescue etc).

### **6.1.6. Flexible learning delivery and assessment**

It is important that learning delivery and assessment processes are flexible (e.g. to take account of the different duty systems). A number of respondents to the SQS stakeholder survey proposed that flexible and distance learning (e.g. e-learning, learner packs etc) will be an important resource.

### **6.1.7. Clear progression routes**

Qualifications should provide for vertical and horizontal progression at all levels within the sector. A national framework of qualifications has the potential to provide clarity and transparency regarding progression routes.

### **6.1.8. Engagement with Higher Education (HE) sector**

There is a need for more engagement with the HE sector. This is both to ensure that HE qualifications meet the needs of the sector and to benefit from the resources and expertise available through the HE sector. The HE sector has a particular role to play in the provision of qualifications for more senior roles. For example, Foundation Degrees which are based on

NOS (in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) provide both a valid qualification in themselves and a platform for further progression in Higher Education.

#### **6.1.9. Use of NOS and qualifications from other sectors**

Use should be made of appropriate NOS and qualifications from other sectors where relevant. For example, this may particularly apply to

- support staff
- management and leadership

This results in learning and qualifications which are potentially transferable and recognised beyond the sector. It also means learning and qualifications can be used from a range of existing providers, offering greater choice regarding quality of provision and value for money.

#### **6.1.10. Enhanced quality assurance of qualifications and learning provision**

There is a requirement for enhanced quality assurance of qualifications and learning provision.

## 6.2 Past and future dialogues and partnership working

*Summarise how the SSC or SSB has worked with partners to arrive at its current provision, and how it will continue to work with partners to realise its view of the future and action plans through dialogue, as appropriate, with*

- employers
- government departments
- funding agencies in the four countries
- review authorities (e.g. QAA), accrediting authorities (e.g. professional bodies that grant exemptions for university courses), and the qualifications regulators (i.e. SQA, CCEA, DELLS and QCA)
- awarding bodies
- learning providers

### 6.2.1 On-going dialogue with employers and strategic stakeholders

Skills for Justice has a well established track record of liaison and joint-working with key employers and stakeholders through the Board, Country Groups and Occupational Committees.

#### **The Board**

The Skills for Justice Board (which meets quarterly) includes key strategic representatives from across the UK Justice sector. 2009/10 board members include:

- The Director of Fire & Resilience, Communities & Local Government
- The Chief Fire Officer, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service.

Membership of the Board is presented in **Appendix 3**.

#### **Country Groups**

There are Country Groups in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and a Cross Sector Forum in England which meet on a quarterly basis to advise on priorities for business planning and action regarding skills development. Membership includes key employers and stakeholders from the Justice sector, including representatives of the Fire and Rescue sector. There are also regional employer groups within England.

Membership of the Country Groups is presented in **Appendix 3**.

#### **The Fire and Rescue Occupational Committee (FROC)**

There are Occupational Committees for each strand of the sector which meet on a quarterly basis to assist with identification of skills needs and workforce priorities within each sector strand.

The UK Fire and Rescue Occupational Committee brings together all key organisations (both local authority and private sector) that provide the fire and rescue sector in the UK. The Occupational Committee meets four times each year with dates set in advance by Skills for Justice in conjunction with the Chair.

The Committee performs three essential functions:

- To hold Skills for Justice accountable for its activities within the Fire and Rescue Strand of the Justice Sector
- To advise the Board of Skills for Justice on matters relating to the Fire and Rescue occupational group.
- To direct and contribute to Skills for Justice's annual business planning process with regard to Fire and Rescue Sector issues.

The Fire and Rescue Occupational Committee member organisations are as follows:

- Representing Employers and Chief Fire Officers

- Local Government Association (LGA)
  - Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
  - Chief Fire Officers Association – English FR&S
  - Chief Fire Officers Association – Scottish FR&S
  - Chief Fire Officers Association – Welsh FR&S
  - Chief Fire Officers Association – Northern Ireland FR&S
  - London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
  - Joint Oil and Industry Fire Forum
  - Defence Fire Risk Management Organisation
  - Association of Airport Operators
- Representing Government/Devolved Administrations
    - Communities & Local Government (CLG)
    - Scottish Government
    - Welsh Assembly Government
    - Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service
    - Civil Aviation Authority
- Representing Trades Unions and Staff Associations
    - Association of Principal Fire Officers (APFO)
    - Fire Brigades Union
    - Fire Officers Association
    - Retained Fire-fighters Union
    - GMB
    - Unison
    - Unite
    - Prospect
- Representing Fire and Rescue Sector Learning and Development Providers (Observers)<sup>35</sup>
    - Fire Service College
    - Scottish Fire Services College
    - Fire Service Association
- Representing Regulators and other organisations (Observers)
    - Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
    - Scottish Qualifications Authority

### **Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA)**

The collective views of Chief Fire Officers across the UK are co-ordinated through the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA).

A briefing paper about the Fire and Rescue sector SQS was prepared for the CFOA, and the CFOA was briefed on the development of the SQS by the Skills for Justice Qualifications & Development Manager who attended their meeting on 9 September 2009. This resulted in a contribution from the CFOA regarding a number of key issues for the SQS to address.

Also, importantly, this resulted in the CFOA providing access to their Regional Secretaries and the Secretaries of the devolved administrations for inclusion in stakeholder survey during the development of the draft SQS.

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<sup>35</sup> Learning and Development Providers have observer status on the Occupational Committee and are able to advise the Committee.

### 6.2.2 SQS stakeholder survey

A range of key contacts within stakeholder organisations from across the Fire and Rescue sector in the UK were invited to contribute to the development of the SQS, including the representatives of the CFOA regions (see **Appendix 4**).

Key contacts were each sent a questionnaire by email to seek their views relevant to the development of the SQS. Many completed the questionnaire with detailed responses, and others were contacted by telephone to complete telephone interviews. This process provided valuable input to ensure that as far as possible, the SQS represents the views of employers and other stakeholders across the Fire and Rescue sector.

In total, there were 31 respondents to the questionnaire and telephone interviews; these are presented in **Appendix 5**.

### 6.2.3 SQS Consultation

Following the development of the draft SQS and Action Plan, there was a further consultation period from the end of November 2009 to mid February 2010. The draft SQS and Action Plan were available for download from the Skills for Justice web site, with an on-line survey to obtain feedback. This resulted in 42 respondents to the on-line survey comprising:

Fire & Rescue organisations	34
Trade Unions	2
Education/Learning Providers	5
Other	1

A further 11 detailed responses were received by email.

The feedback and comments received through this consultation process resulted in further additions and refinements to this SQS and Action Plan.

### 6.2.4 Working with partners to develop qualifications

Skills for Justice will continue to work with partner SSCs and other key stakeholders, including employers, providers, QCA, SQA and Awarding Bodies on cross-sector projects to develop qualifications. For example, Skills for Justice is working with Government Skills, Skills for Health and others to develop the Diploma in Public Services in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

### 6.2.5 Working with HE and FE

Skills for Justice will seek closer liaison with HE, FE and other learning providers, particularly where there is potential for these providers to deliver entry level and CPD qualifications. Skills for Justice will establish an HE Forum to engage proactively with HEIs (e.g. to explore a 'common credit system' for modules delivered by HEIs across the UK).

In addition, through the consultation on this SQS, Foundation Degree Forward (FdF) expressed their interest in working with Skills for Justice to support the development of higher level programmes and qualifications:

*"fDf are very willing to assist with the consultation and the development of appropriate qualifications frameworks for the sector. We have been working closely with West Yorkshire FRS in the accreditation of much of their in-house training, and have assisted Durham &*

*Darlington FRS in the development of their recently launched Foundation Degree in Fire Scene Investigation. Several of the more general Public Sector management and leadership programmes around the country have also been developed with input and advice from fDf.* (Ref: fDf)

#### **6.2.6 Working with partners to develop National Occupational Standards**

Skills for Justice will continue its programme of work for the development and review of NOS (and where relevant, the development of qualifications structures). This, by its nature, involves working closely with employers, stakeholders and practitioners to ensure the NOS are fit for purpose. Skills for Justice will also continue to work with other SSCs on cross-sector projects to develop NOS.

In the course of developing this SQS, a number of respondents expressed their desire to work with Skills for Justice in the development of qualifications and NOS e.g.

*“As we are, through our arrangements, able to have a greater understanding of the services needs, we would ask for greater involvement in the future development of NOS and qualifications through contribution within expert groups. Similar to organisations such as JOIFF and the FPA we do have a membership and would wish to integrate the views of our members into future Skills for Justice products.”* (Ref IFE).

### **6.3 Practical help provided by Skills for Justice**

*Describe how the SSC or SSB will prepare or help with the preparation of information and materials, including the areas that action plans are likely to focus on at UK, national and regional levels. For example:*

*UK-wide (e.g.):*

- *NOS related work, including e.g.*
  - *Updating of NOS and other related products (assessment strategies, qualifications structures etc)*
  - *Development of new NOS*

*Nation-specific (e.g.):*

- *Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland*
- *Review of level 2 entitlement in England*
- *CQFW in Wales*
- *Welsh language-medium qualification provision*

As a result, of the research for the Fire and Rescue SQS, and the broader vision for the Justice sector as a whole, Skills for Justice proposes the following areas for action:

#### **6.3.1. Review and development of National Occupational Standards (NOS)**

Skills for Justice will continue to review current NOS and develop new NOS to meet the current and emerging needs of the Fire and Rescue Sector. This will include developing new NOS relevant to specialist functions where required.

Where a need is identified, applications will be made for funding to translate NOS and qualifications into Welsh.

#### **6.3.2. Supporting the development of qualifications**

Skills for Justice will work with Awarding Bodies and other stakeholders to develop and promote new qualifications to meet identified needs. For example, this includes the development of:

- Fire & Rescue sector Breathing Apparatus
- Fire & Rescue sector Incident Command
- Fire & Rescue sector Water Rescue
- Development Award in Multi-agency Working
- Award/Certificate in Civil Contingencies
- 14-19 Diploma in Public Services (in partnership with other SSCs)

#### **6.3.3. Credit and Qualification Frameworks**

In recognition of the demand for a modular approach to qualifications and unit-based credit, Skills for Justice will ensure that NOS-based qualifications and awards are transferred to the appropriate credit and qualifications framework (i.e. QCF, CQFW or SCQF).

#### **6.3.4. Integrated qualification frameworks**

One of the key ways to provide clear entry routes and career progression is the development of integrated qualification frameworks. Initiatives to develop qualification frameworks are already being taken forward in some strands of the sector (e.g. Custodial Care, and Youth Justice). Qualifications frameworks will be developed and also integrated as far as practicable, across the Justice sector as a whole.

### **6.3.5. Supporting effective assessment**

Skills for Justice will assist organisations to develop innovative approaches to assessment and to help them build internal assessor capacity to support wider recognition of skills and knowledge. The solution proposes the development of an Access to Assessment database providing information on assessment services; the sharing of best practice and resources via the internet; an assessment implementation service which would help organisations develop assessment services themselves. One option is to work with employers to establish networks in order to share best practice and resources and to encourage standardisation in assessment decisions.

### **6.3.6. Quality assurance of learning provision: Skillsmark**

Both the Government and the public need to be assured of the skills knowledge and experience of Justice sector staff across the UK. The Skills for Justice Skillsmark service is one mechanism for doing this. It will continue to be promoted as the key quality indicator when employers are looking to procure learning and development programmes.

### **6.3.7. Developing links with Higher Education**

The development of Foundation Degrees (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) has considerable potential, both to provide entry-level qualifications, and as a progression route for people already employed in the sector. Skills for Justice will actively engage with HEIs to ensure that Foundation Degrees are developed in full consultation with the sector to ensure they reflect employers' needs.

### **6.3.8. Developing Apprenticeships**

Skills for Justice are looking at developing guidance around training contracts to make schemes like the Apprenticeships more viable for employers in terms of financial investment and to link increments to achievement of milestones within the Apprenticeship framework. For example, the change to the way Apprenticeships are funded in England (funding is now available for over 25s) has opened up new opportunities for Justice sector employees and should lead to an increased take up of Apprenticeships. The Apprenticeship framework offers opportunities for accreditation based on S/NVQ, technical certificate and key/core skills.

### **6.3.9. Accreditation of support staff**

There is potential for Skills for Justice to support more accreditation for support staff. Awards are already in existence for many members of staff within this group (e.g. customer service, administration etc) and there are potentially large numbers of staff involved. In future, there may be more potential to access public funding for this in England with the implementation of the recommendations from the Leitch Review.

### **6.3.10. Raising the profile of the sector**

To further encourage recruitment into the sector from diverse backgrounds, and to cope with any changes in the age profile of the workforce, Skills for Justice will work to raise the profile of the sector through provision of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). Two possible IAG services could be offered by Skills for Justice:

- providing a web-based, email and telephone helpline service for careers enquiries and,
- signposting people to existing sources of information about careers and jobs in the justice sector, and making available information about job opportunities, career paths, education and training provision where this information is not available from another source.

### **6.3.11. Improving the LMI base**

Accurate identification of learning-related issues and priorities for the sector relies on robust labour market information and intelligence. The sector has in the past tended to operate as a number of silos, so that even if the sector has a common issue that affects the whole, different parts of the sector may address those issues in isolation. Related to this is the fact that, although organisations and parts of the sector may collect their own data for workforce planning purposes, they may collect it in a different format making it difficult for it to be collated with data from other organisations or parts of the sector. Gaps in information may therefore arise, making it more difficult to address common issues in a collaborative way.

Skills for Justice is implementing processes to improve the quality and availability of sector wide LMI and will work in consultation and cooperation with key employers, stakeholders and government departments to enhance the sector's capacity to make informed decisions on investment in skills and training priorities.

### **6.4 Monitoring and evaluating the SQS**

*Describe how the SQS will be monitored and evaluated to ensure that it is successfully implemented and kept up to date, accounting for potential changes in legislation etc. (For SSCs the SQS should be integrated into the strategic cycle for refreshing the Sector Skills Agreement. For other Standard Setting Bodies a similar 3 year cycle should be considered.)*

The SQS will be kept under review and up-dated annually which will involve an up-dating of the assessment of current provision and a review of the vision for future provision for the sector. Annual review is regarded as more appropriate than the three yearly cycle for the SSA, as this reflects the rapidly changing and high profile nature of the Justice sector.

Delivery of the SQS will be through the SQS Action Plan, which will be monitored annually by the Skills for Justice SQS project manager, senior managers and sector leads.

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## Appendix 1: S/NVQ and VRQ registrations and certifications

### Edexcel NVQ in Fire Safety<sup>36</sup>

Accreditation start date: October 2005 / Certification end date: August 2012 / 2013

		2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	Totals
<b>Level 2</b>	Registrations	8	2	8	91	<b>109</b>
	Certifications	0	6	6	72	<b>84</b>
<b>Level 3</b>	Registrations	16	45	27	20	<b>108</b>
	Certifications	0	2	11	18	<b>31</b>
<b>Level 4</b>	Registrations	0	0	14	5	<b>19</b>
	Certifications	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>

### Edexcel level 3 NVQ in Emergency Fire Services<sup>37</sup>

Accreditation start date: December 2001

		2000 /01	2001 /02	2002 /03	2003 /04	2004 /05	2005 /06	2006 /07	2007 /08	2008 /09	Totals
<b>Operations in the Community</b> Cert' end date: Dec 2013	Reg's	74	475	956	831	690	818	1095	645	774	<b>6,358</b>
	Cert's	0	0	0	379	566	719	628	685	791	<b>3,768</b>
<b>Watch Management</b> Cert' end date: Dec 2013	Reg's	0	28	40	75	102	210	137	93	214	<b>899</b>
	Cert's	0	0	0	0	18	26	43	46	56	<b>189</b>
<b>Control Operations</b> Cert' end date: Oct 2011	Reg's	30	36	20	73	81	83	85	81	7	<b>685</b>
	Cert's	0	0	0	5	36	67	55	52	50	<b>265</b>

### Edexcel level 3 NVQ in Fire and Rescue Sector Control Operations<sup>38</sup>

Accreditation start date: December 2008 / Certification end date: December 2013

	2007/08	2008/09	Totals
Registrations	21	53	<b>74</b>
Certifications	0	1	<b>1</b>

<sup>36</sup> Edexcel, 2009

<sup>37</sup> Edexcel, 2009

<sup>38</sup> Edexcel, 2009

### SQA level 3 SVQ Emergency Fire Services: Operations in the Community<sup>39</sup>

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Totals
Entries	154	133	189	224	71	228	145	<b>1144</b>
Awards	0	0	15	77	162	173	204	<b>631</b>

### Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs)

#### England, Wales and Northern Ireland

### Edexcel level 2 BTEC: Fire and Rescue Services in the Community<sup>40</sup>

Accreditation start date: 2008 / Certification end date: August 2012

		2007/08	2008/09	Totals
<b>Award</b>	Registrations	199	451	<b>650</b>
	Certifications	0	225	<b>225</b>
<b>Certificate</b>	Registrations	17	210	<b>227</b>
	Certifications	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Diploma</b>	Registrations	16	2	<b>18</b>
	Certifications	0	0	<b>0</b>

### Edexcel level 3 BTEC: Compartment Fire Behaviour Training<sup>41</sup>

Accreditation start date: September 2007 / Certification end date: August 2013

		2007/08	2008/09	Totals
<b>Award</b>	Registrations	52	211	<b>263</b>
	Certifications	0	209	<b>209</b>
<b>Certificate</b>	Registrations	2	22	<b>24</b>
	Certifications	0	0	<b>0</b>

<sup>39</sup> SQA, 2009

<sup>40</sup> Edexcel, 2009

<sup>41</sup> Edexcel, 2009

### Edexcel level 3 BTEC: Emergency Fire Services in the Community<sup>42</sup>

Accreditation start date: July 2003 / Certification end date: December 2013

		2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	Totals
Certificate	Registrations	70	87	137	149	82	102	<b>627</b>
	Certifications	0	42	119	106	71	37	<b>375</b>

### Scotland

#### Professional Development Award (PDA) in Crew Management<sup>43</sup>

	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
Entries	75	191	85	239	<b>590</b>
Awards	0	143	5	143	<b>291</b>

#### Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Watch Management (Fire and Rescue Service)<sup>44</sup>

	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
Entries	42	21	122	92	<b>277</b>
Awards	0	43	1	58	<b>102</b>

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<sup>42</sup> Edexcel, 2009

<sup>43</sup> HN/SVQ People and Services, SQA

<sup>44</sup> HN/SVQ People and Services, SQA

Version 2 - amended February 2011

## **Appendix 2: Respondent organisations to the FRSVSG qualifications research (2008)**

1. Cumbria FRS
2. Durham & Darlington FRS
3. Dumfries & Galloway FRS
4. Fife FRS
5. Fire Protection Association
6. Gloucestershire FRS
7. Grampian FRS
8. Hampshire FRS
9. Hertfordshire FRS
10. Highlands & Islands FRS
11. Humberside FRS
12. Joint Oil Industry Forum
13. London FRS
14. Lothian & Borders FRS
15. Moreton UK College
16. North Yorkshire FRS
17. Royal Berkshire FRS
18. Sellafield FRS
19. Strathclyde FRS
20. Tayside FRS
21. West Midlands FRS
22. West Sussex FRS

## Appendix 3: Membership of employer and stakeholder forums

### Skills for Justice Board Members

Skills for Justice Board is chaired by John Randall

**John Randall** is Chair of the Police Negotiating Board and the Police Advisory Board for England and Wales. He is a member of the Legal Services Consultative Panel, and was previously Chief Executive of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. He is a former Director of Professional Standards and Development at the Law Society, and served on the former National Council for Vocational Qualifications. He is a member of the Council and Executive Committee of the City and Guilds of London Institute.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Representing</b>
John Cooke	Member of Lancashire Police Authority	Police Authorities
Shona Dunn	Director of Fire & Resilience, Communities & Local Government	Fire & Rescue Services
Ken Gilliver	HR Business Partner for Wales & Cheshire, HM Courts Service	Wales Country Group
Gill Henson	Chief Executive, SOVA	Voluntary organisations
Vic Hogg	Police Human Resources, Home Office	Policing Policy, Home Office
Ian Latimer	Chief Constable, Northern Constabulary	ACPOS
Walter MacGowan	Managing Director, The GEO Group Ltd	Private Sector
Frances Mannsaker	Pro Vice Chancellor, University of Lincoln	Independent member
Nick McCarthy	Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS)	Staff Organisations
Steve McGuirk	Chief Fire Officer, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service	Fire & Rescue Services
Paul McKeever	Chair	Police Federation
Bill McKinlay	Governor in Charge, HM Barlinnie	Scottish Country Group
Angela O'Connor	Head of People Policy	National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA)
David Wood	Strategic Director of Criminality and Detention, UKBA	UK Borders Agency
Peter Fahy	Chief Constable, Greater Manchester Police	Police Forces
David Reardon	Independent	Race and Diversity
Alison Schofield	Ministry of Justice	Courts Services
Michael Selby	National Trustee, Victim Support	Victims organisations
Joe Stewart	Senior Director of Human Resources Police Service of Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland Country Group
Robin Wilkinson	Director of Human Resources	National Offender Management Service (NOMS)

### **Skills for Justice Country Group - Northern Ireland**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Joe Stewart (Chair)	PSNI
Mark McGuckin	NI Prison Service
Gillian Faulkner	PBNI
Dan Mulholland	Community Safety Unit
Alice Chapman	Youth Justice Agency
Liam Strain	Public Prosecution Service
Susan Reid	Victim Support NI
Brian Ingram	NIO
Roisin Sloan	DEL
Brian Grzymek	NIO
Liz Cuddy	EXTERN
Paula Gow	NI Policing Board
Mary O'Kane	NI Court Service
Stan Brown	Forensic Science NI
Philip O'Neill	NI Prison Service
Gwyneth Buchanan	Police Federation
Bryan Milford	NIPSA
Kevin Dunwoody	PSNI College
Dale Ashford	NIFRS
Philip O'Neill	NI Prison Service College

### **Skills for Justice Country Group – Scotland**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Alan Swift	Scottish Court Service
Angela Morgan	Includem
Bill McKinlay	Scottish Prison Service
Bob Virtue	Scottish Government
Brian Robertson	Apex Scotland
Bruce Milne	Scottish Police College
Bryan Goodfellow	Scottish Court Service
David Hutchison	Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service
Gillian Aitchison	Skills for Justice
Ian Latimer	Northern Constabulary
Ian McMillan	Serco
Janice Irvine	Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service
Joe Rafferty	Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Liv Cockburn	Victim Support Scotland
Mark McSherry	Scottish Government
Rod MacCowan	Scottish Prison Service
Stephen Murphy	Scottish Prison Service
Steven Torrie	Central Scotland Fire and Rescue Service
Tom Halpin	Sacro
Tony McNulty	South Lanarkshire
Yvonne Robson	Association of Directors of Social Work

## **Skills for Justice Country Group – Wales**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Ken Gilliver	HR Business Partner for Wales HMCS
Phill Pyke	Assistant Director of L&D SWP
Julia Attwell	HR Development Manager Probation Wales Training Consortia
Kerry Citric	FRS Branch WAG
Mark Coombs	Regional Manager quals unit HMPS
Nicola Mahoney	Executive Director Safer Merthyr Tydfil
Steve Dobson	HR & LD Advisor YJB for Wales
Jon Giblin	Wales Regional Rep Police Federation of England and Wales
Angela Griffiths	L&D Manager G4S Parc Prison
Phil Haynes	HR Director SWFRS
Stephen Hopkins	Enforcement and Compliance learning HMRC Risk and intelligence
Ian Lankshear	SW Probation Service
Jackie Leggett	HRD Manager Probation Wales Training Consortia
Julie Minty	Staff Training and Development HMP Cardiff
Mike Quinn	NAPO
Glyn Roberts	Training Co-coordinator HM Courts Service
Gaynor McKeown	Regional Manager Wales Victim Support
Marie Emler	UKBA
Rick Glover	UKBA
Rae Cornish	Sector Manager DCELLS WAG Observer
Martin	Spain Dyfed Powys Police
Yvonne Murray	Victim Support

## **Skills for Justice Cross Sector Forum – England**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Harrison, Marc	NOMS
Taylor, Caroline	Avon and Somerset Constabulary
Beech, Graham	Catch 22
Thomson, Malcolm	Clinks
Veasey, Liz	G4S Care & Justice Services
Sutton, Anna	Skills Funding Agency
Thompson, Lesley	Merseyside Probation Training Consortia
Cox, Tony	Metropolitan Police Service
Holding, Chris	Ministry of Justice
	Napo (Trade Union and Professional Association for Family Court and Probation Staff)
Pillay, Cordell	
Bolger, Maggie	NOMS
Pointon, Mandy	NOMS
Lyon, Juliet	Prison Reform Trust
Lloyd, Laura	Public & Commercial Services Union
Cope , Steve	Reliance Secure Task Management Limited
Freeman, Mark	Skills - Third Sector
	Supporting Others through Volunteer Action (SOVA Cymru)
Cooper, Susan	
Wade, Chris	Victim Support
Searle, Ruth	Youth Justice Board
Furlong, Simon	West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

## **Appendix 4: Fire and Rescue Service stakeholders targeted for SQS research**

1. Airport Operators Association - Robert Siddall, Chief Executive
2. Association of Principal Fire Officers – Chris Griffin, Secretary
3. BAA - Tony Storer - Group Fire Service Training Manager
4. British Fire Services Association – Derek Crouch
5. British Nuclear Fuels - Pat Robertson
6. CFO Northern Ireland – Colin Lammey
7. Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) HR Chair and Regional Chairs
8. Civil Aviation Authority - Owen Healey, Senior Aerodrome Inspector (RFF)
9. Commandant, Defence Services Training, Manston
10. Convention of Scottish Local Authorities - Fire Advisor
11. Fire Advisor England - Carlton Kerr, Fire and Rescue Adviser on Equalities & Diversity, RDS, IPDS, Training
12. Fire Advisor Scotland – Brian Fraser
13. Fire Brigades Union – Sean Starbuck
14. Fire Officers Association - Glyn Morgan, CEO
15. Fire Protection Association - Sue Tyley
16. Fire Service College England – Kim Robinson, CEO
17. Fire Service College Scotland - Bob Virtue, Director of Fire Service Training for Scotland
18. FRS Advisor to the Welsh Assembly Govt – Paul Young
19. GMB Union Vic Bagnelle
20. Institution of Fire Engineers
21. Joint Oil & Industry Fire Forum (JOIFF) - Alec Feldman
22. Local Government Employers – Fire Advisor
23. Networking Women in the Fire Service – Lindsay Turner
24. Retained Firefighters Union – John Barton
25. Sembcorp - Peter Burke
26. University College Lancashire (Fire Safety Engineering) – Anna Stec
27. V T Group – Andy Colgan, Severn Park Training Centre
28. Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser – Sir Ken Knight

## Appendix 5: SQS stakeholder survey; interviews and questionnaire respondents

No	Organisation Name	Key Contact Name/Job title
1.	BAA	Tony Storer, Group Fire Service Training Manager
2.	British Nuclear Fuels, Sellafield	Pat Robertson
3.	Cheshire FRS	Paul Hancock, Chief Fire Officer
4.	Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA)	Peter Dartford, Chairman, CFOA Operational Assurance Task & Finish Group
5.	Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA)	Des Prichard, Strategic Director, Human Resources
6.	Chief Fire Officers Association Scotland (CFOAS)	David Hutchison, Assistant Chief Officer, Strathclyde FRS
7.	Chief Fire & Rescue Adviser (CFRA) England	Carlton Kerr, Fire & Rescue Adviser
8.	Civil Aviation Authority	Owen Healey, Senior Aerodrome Inspector
9.	Cleveland FRS	Christine Chisholm
10.	Cumbria FRS	Dominic Harrison, Chief Fire Officer
11.	Defence Services Training, Manston	Sim Nex, DO, Brigade Training Manager
12.	East Sussex FRS / CFOA	Hannah Scott-Youldon, Workforce Development Manager
13.	Fire Officers Association	Glyn Morgan, Chief Executive
14.	Fire Protection Association	Sue Tyley, Associate Director
15.	Fire Safety Vocational Group	Andy Stapleton
16.	Fire Service College England	Kenny Grant, Head of Quality and Vocational Standards
17.	Hampshire FRS	Mark Rayner, Area Manager HFRS / Head of Training & Development
18.	Hertfordshire FRS	John Mills, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
19.	Institute of Fire Engineers	Louise Craig, CEO Richard Davis, Qualifications Manager
20.	Joint Oil & Industry Fire Forum (JOIFF)	Alec Feldman
21.	Leicestershire FRS	Tim Herbert, Head of Training,

		Development & Integrated Risk Management Planning
22.	Local Government Employers	Gill Gittins, Principal Negotiating Officer Fiona Turton
23.	Northamptonshire FRS	Dawn Whittaker, Brigade Manager
24.	CFOA North East Region (Cleveland FRS, Durham & Darlington FRS, Northumberland FRS, Tyne & Wear FRS	C McCletchie, Chair, North East Region People Management Group
25.	North Yorkshire FRS	Simon Errington Andy Trowsdale
26.	Scottish Fire Services College	Linda Hunter, Learning & Development Manager
27.	Sembcorp	Peter Burke
28.	Staffordshire FRS / CFOA West Midlands	Christine Walker
29.	V T Group, Severn Park Training Centre	Andy Colgan
30.	Warwickshire FRS	Balbir Singh, Head of Policy and Performance
31.	West Yorkshire FRS / CFOA Yorkshire & Humberside	Bob Anderson, Area Manager Julie Comb, Workforce Development Manager