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Consultation Document

Proposed registration of youth workers

Proposal for the registration of youth workers with the Education Workforce Council

Date of issue: 8 January 2016

Action required: Responses by 31 March 2016

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Proposed registration of youth workers

Overview	This document invites views relating to the proposals for enhancing the functions and role of the Education Workforce Council.
How to respond	Responses to this consultation should be e-mailed/posted to the address below to arrive by 31 March 2016 at the latest.
Further information and related documents	<p>Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.</p> <p>Further information about the Welsh Government's Programme for Government can be found at www.wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/?lang=en</p>
Contact details	<p>For further information:</p> <p>Nathan Huish Practitioner Standards and Professional Development Division School Standards and Workforce Directorate Welsh Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ</p> <p>e-mail: ewc.enquiries@wales.gsi.gov.uk Tel: 029 2082 3039</p>
Data protection	<p>How the views and information you give us will be used</p> <p>Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future</p>

consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

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Summary

The Education (Wales) Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) reconfigured and renamed the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW); extending the remit of the body; and the composition of its membership in order for it to become the Education Workforce Council (“the Council”). This took place on 1 April 2015, which was also the point at which the requirement for professional registration was extended to Further Education (FE) teachers, in addition to school teachers. From April 2016 registration will be extended to school/FE learning support workers.

It is proposed that, from April 2017, in order to work in aspects of Youth Work in Wales, a person must be registered with the Council. This consultation invites comments on Welsh Governments proposals for the registration of Youth Workers in Wales.

1. Background

1.1 Although the Welsh Government initially identified professions required to register with the Council (under Schedule 2 to the 2014 Act), this did not preclude the future registration of other groups such as Youth Workers and Work Based Learning practitioners; who also provide a valuable contribution to the education and training of our children and young people. The 2014 Act creates a framework that enables the Welsh Government to add new categories of registration, if and when appropriate; and subject to the agreement of the National Assembly for Wales.

1.2 It is vital that all these different practitioners work together effectively and are able to access well designed qualifications, support and development. Their professionalism, suitability and standards of conduct, training, and development, are key to their success. The Welsh Government wants to ensure that we recognise the role of all those working to support teaching and learning as part of a single and coherent education workforce in Wales.

2. Aims of the Education Workforce Council

The statutory aims of the Council are to:

- contribute to the improvement of standards of teaching and the quality of learning in Wales; and,
- maintain and improve standards of professional conduct amongst teachers and others in the education workforce who support teaching and learning.

3. Introduction

3.1 The Council currently has a statutory duty to establish and maintain a register of school teachers, FE teachers and school/FE learning support workers. Registration is required for all four categories if they wish to work in maintained schools or FE institutions in Wales, including peripatetic teachers and those in agency, substitute or temporary positions. All employers are required to ensure that they only employ persons who are registered with the Council.

3.2 Youth Workers are currently not required to register with any registration body.

4. Rationale for change

4.1 During the 2012 consultation on 'proposals to amend the requirement for registration of the education workforce in Wales'¹, the majority of respondents from the youth worker sector were in favour of registration with an appropriate regulatory body. However, some respondents suggested that voluntary youth workers should not be subject to compulsory registration, as it could prevent volunteers from coming forward to join the sector; with the added disincentive of a registration fee.

4.2 It was felt that there would be a number of benefits through affiliation with a regulatory body, such as an appropriate system of regulation and registration that will ensure the quality and professionalism of individuals employed as youth workers. It was also suggested that registration would address a perceived long-standing issue of individuals calling themselves youth workers, without holding an appropriate qualification in youth work or practicing youth work in accordance with the National Occupational Standards (2012).

4.3 The Youth Work National Occupational Standards (2012) (the NOS) states that the key purpose of youth work is to:

- enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential.

The NOS is applicable to all UK nations.

4.4 Youth work adds value to the lives of all young people with whom it engages, helping them through significant and difficult changes in their lives and developing lasting skills and attributes, and can particularly affect the lives of young people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, or find it difficult to adapt to the requirements of formal educational institutions. Via its complementary approach, youth work can help to build confidence, provide role models, open up new experiences and give young people a sense of belonging.

4.5 Youth work has been enhancing the lives of young people and adults in Wales for many years. Youth work is above all an educational and developmental process,

¹ <http://gov.wales/consultations/education/workforceregistration/?status=closed&lang=en>

based on young people's active and voluntary participation and commitment. It provides personal, social and political education to young people. It is based on a complementary, 'non-formal and informal educational approach'. Youth work is open to all young people within the specified age range 11 to 25. Good youth work provides young people with opportunities to enhance their life chances.

4.6 The Minister for Education and Skills made clear in 'The National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014 - 2018' that high-quality youth work has a crucial role to play supporting many young people to achieve their full potential. Through informal and non-formal educational approaches, effective youth work practice builds the capacity and resilience of young people and can change young people's lives for the better. Through participation in youth work young people gain confidence and competence, develop self-assurance and have the opportunity to establish high expectations and aspirations for themselves.

4.7 Youth work is provided by both the voluntary and local authority sectors and through a variety of youth work settings and methods. Youth workers can be paid employees or volunteers and may work on a full-time or part-time basis.

4.8 The Welsh Governments vision is for all of our young people to have ambition for themselves, to be confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens; and to be nurtured, safe, active, healthy, achieving, included, respected and responsible. We believe that youth work has a significant role to play in realising this vision for young people.

4.9 The values of youth work match the purpose of education and are fundamental to the process, raising the confidence of individuals, their contribution to society, and their value as citizens.

4.10 It is clear that youth work practice can be effective in directly and indirectly supporting young peoples learning outcomes and that there are significant benefits for young people from closer working between schools, colleges and youth work organisations.

4.11 Ministers recognise that Youth work is a skilled profession and want to strengthen the value and status of youth work as a service and a profession.

5. Registration

5.1 The 2014 Act provides that the Welsh Ministers may extend registration with the Council to a wider group of practitioners.

5.2 A key feature of many professions is a requirement to register with a professional regulatory body that sets and maintains professional standards, retaining public confidence and demonstrating a shared commitment to professionalism.

5.3 The benefits to registration are that those who are registered will be seen as:

- credible members of the workforce having professional status;
- meeting the specific standards for entry and continued membership of that profession; and
- being suitable to be a member of the profession – maintaining public trust and confidence.

5.4 Registering Youth Workers with the Education Workforce Council will strengthen their profile in ways that are supportive, rather than in ways that negatively impact on the diversity that is observable within the sector. We will be recognising the value of youth work and the contributions that youth workers make in the lives of young people. We will also be recognise youth workers role in supporting young people to successfully remain engaged in, and progress through, their formal education and training.

5.5 The Welsh Government undertook two consultations regarding proposals for the registration of the wider education workforce in Wales. An overwhelming majority were in agreement that other groups within the education sector should be required to register; and that they should pay a fee for that registration.

5.6 The requirement for registration within the education workforce is the same as the requirement with any other registration body, such as nurses, midwives and physiotherapists. Professionals in those sectors are also required to fund their own registration as a requirement of employment.

6. Proposal under consideration

6.1 This consultation seeks views on the proposed new category of service providers within the youth worker sector who will be required to be registered with the Council from 1 April 2017.

6.2 In the first instance, the Welsh Government is only considering a registration requirement on two roles. These are:

- A Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC)² recognised Professional Youth Worker employed to work by either a local authority, school, college or the voluntary sector, and

² The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for youth and community workers is the body that sets the national framework used to grade and pay youth work jobs. The JNC recognises youth and community workers' qualifications which have been professionally approved by the Education Training Standards (ETS) Wales (or other UK ETS bodies). Gaining a qualification that is endorsed ensures it has been quality checked and fit for purpose. A list of the currently endorsed programmes can be viewed at: http://www.etswales.org.uk/home.php?page_id=5153

- A Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) recognised Youth Support Worker employed to work by either a local authority, school or college in Wales; and who assists in the delivery of operational youth and community work.

A Professional Youth Worker is defined as someone who has successfully completed approved/relevant qualifications in youth work or community studies. This will include the following professional level youth work qualification:

- BA (Hons): three years full time and part time equivalent – level 6
- PG Dip: one year full time and part time equivalent – level 7
- MA: one year and part time equivalent – level 7
- Graduate Diploma: two years full time – level 6

A Youth Support Worker is defined as someone who has completed a youth work practice qualification. This will include:

- Level 2 Awards in Youth Work Practice.
- Level 2 Certificate in Youth Work Practice
- Level 3 Certificate in Youth Work Practice
- Level 3 Diploma in Youth Work Practice

* Predecessor qualifications

6.3 There are a small number of other qualifications which confer qualified youth worker status.

- People who gained the status of qualified teacher by 31 December 1988 are recognised as qualified to hold professional youth work posts.
- Those who gained a social science degree between 1974 and 1981 will be recognised as qualified subject to supervision and satisfactory performance in the work place for a period of one year, which has been formally signed off.
- A Diploma in Higher Education which was available prior to 2010.

Youth Support Workers

- NVQ/VRQ levels 2 and 3 Certificate and Diploma.
- North East Wales Institute (NEWI) Foundation Course (Level 4).
- University College Newport Certificate of Higher Education.
- WJEC locally agreed programmes, such as a 'Bessey' course available in local authorities.

*These qualifications are indicative, and employees should seek advice from the relevant body (one of the five nations ETS committees) to see if a qualification is valid.

6.4 The Welsh Government does not want this policy proposal to impact on volunteers who give up their free time to work within the sector. However, registration is still open to these practitioners on a voluntary basis, providing they meet the necessary registration criteria; and as long as they are content to pay the associated registration fee (which will be consulted on separately, along with the fee structure for the wider educational workforce).

6.5 As with School/ FE learning support workers, the Council will play a key role alongside the Welsh Government in identify those service providers who will be required to register, prior to April 2017.

7. How to comment on this proposal

Specific questions are listed in the response form and you are invited to provide answers to these questions or to comment in more general terms, in writing or in print, electronically or in hard copy to the address at the beginning of this document.