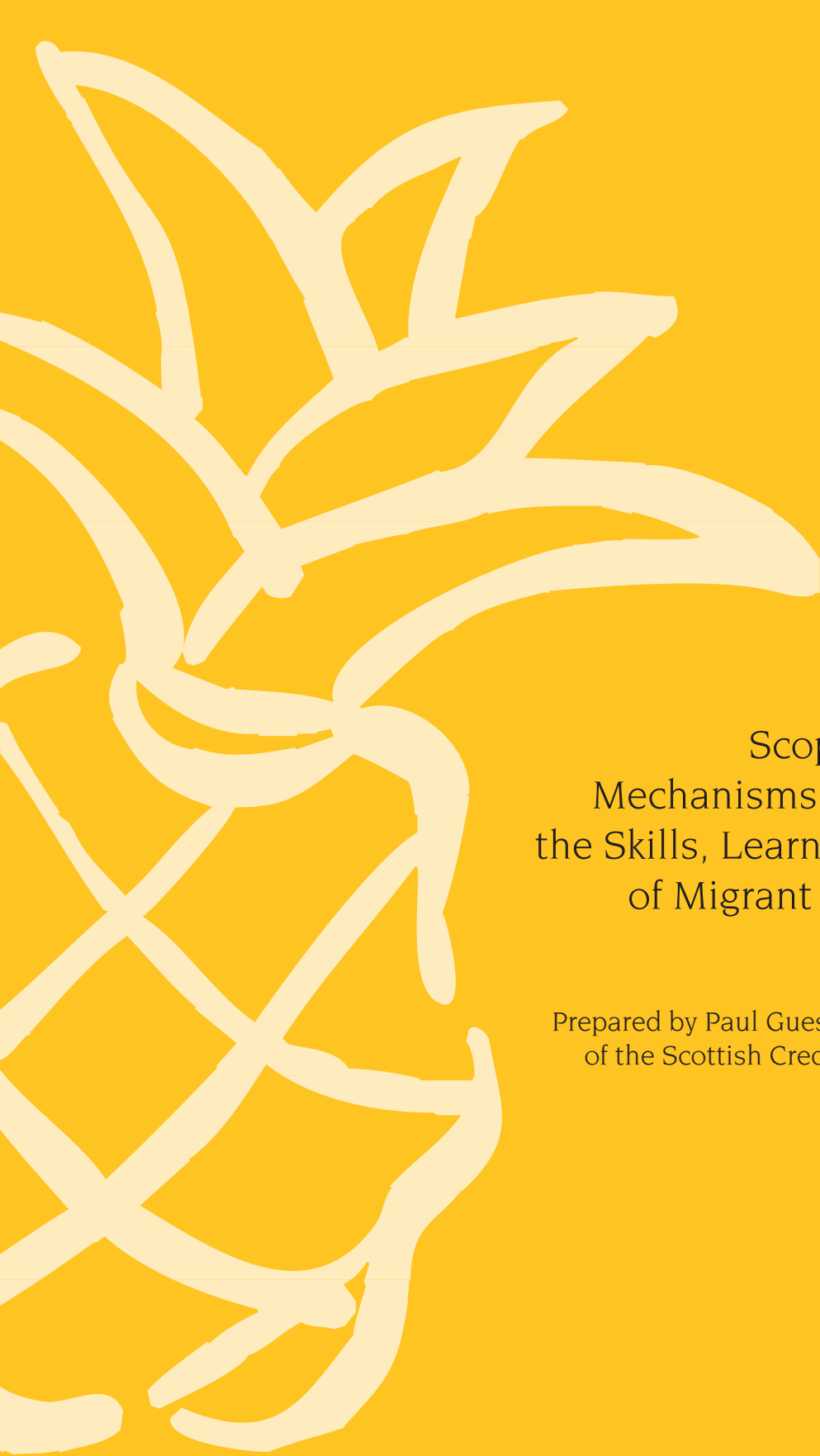


Scoping Study on Support Mechanisms for the Recognition of the Skills, Learning and Qualifications of Migrant Workers and Refugees - Final Report

July 2010





Scoping Study on Support
Mechanisms for the Recognition of
the Skills, Learning and Qualifications
of Migrant Workers and Refugees

Prepared by Paul Guest and Michela Vecchia on behalf
of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
(SCQF) Partnership

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Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
Setting the Scene - The Fresh Talent Initiative	5
Aims and Objectives	6
Methodology	7
Research, Data Collection and Analysis	8
Regulating Professional, Academic and Vocational Recognition	14
Stakeholder Consultation	17
Recognition of Skills, Learning and Qualifications in Scotland	19
European and International Scoping	23
Option Appraisal	27
Recognition Models for Scotland	30
Conclusions	39
Glossary of Terms	42
Bibliography	44
Appendix 1: Project Management Group – List of Members	46
Appendix 2: Advisory Group – List of Members	47
Appendix 3: Participating Organisations and Networks	48

Executive Summary

For a number of years, key stakeholders in the fields of education, employment, training, guidance and support, including Scottish Government, have discussed and debated the potential of introducing a recognition centre (or service) able to formally recognise the skills, learning and qualifications of migrant workers and refugees in Scotland, in order to facilitate access to education, employment or training at a level commensurate with existing skills and/or qualifications.

One of a range of measures led by the Scottish Government's Fresh Talent Initiative, with a focus upon meeting the population growth target set out in the Government's Economic Strategy, was a study which explored the need, and preferred delivery mechanisms, for a dedicated recognition service for Scotland.

The current report presents, in greater detail, the rationale, objectives and agreed methodology alongside the findings and conclusions resulting from research, data analysis and stakeholder consultation activity in Scotland and beyond.

Having confirmed the primary target group as migrant workers and refugees legally entitled to live, work and study in Scotland, an early review of past studies and publications confirmed a wide-range of activity yet often similar findings, conclusions and recommendations. Many studies and reports confirmed a need for a common approach to the recognition of the skills, learning and qualifications of migrant workers and refugees in Scotland. The recognition and transferability of skills and qualifications was also confirmed, early in the study, as being one of three overriding barriers for migrant workers and refugees, alongside (often negative) employer attitudes and (a perceived lack of) language ability.

Data collection and consultation activity, including direct dialogue with the end user group and a review of models in 6 other countries, confirmed that whilst significant experience exists, in Scotland, in providing recognition and recognition-related services, there remains a need to make such services much more visible to and accessible by the target group with recognition and support services often lacking the required joined-up approach.

An option appraisal exercise acted as a filter, with the gathered data and consultation responses each considered in terms of the requirements for any future recognition service or centre in Scotland, resulting in the proposal of three possible recognition models (VIRTUAL, RELAY AND GLOBAL). The benefits, constraints and potential implications of each model were discussed amongst wider stakeholders, including employers as a key target for any future recognition centre or service, with eventual preference for the proposed RELAY model (a hub and spoke model that builds capacity amongst existing service providers), albeit with a number of recommended changes.

Early indications towards the establishment of a dedicated Scottish Recognition Centre were eventually unendorsed by wider stakeholders with a preference, and undeniable demand, for a Scottish centre (or service) able to actively facilitate the process of recognition for migrants workers or refugees coming to (or living in) Scotland.

Introduction

For a number of years, key stakeholders in the fields of education, employment, training, guidance and support, including Scottish Government, have discussed and debated the potential of introducing a recognition centre (or service) able to formally recognise the skills, learning and qualifications of migrant workers and refugees in Scotland, in order to facilitate access to education, employment or training at a level commensurate with existing skills and/or qualifications.

To move discussion forward, funding was sought - and subsequently obtained - from Scottish Government for a Scoping study (*hereafter referred to as the study*) able to consult existing Scottish stakeholders, including employers, in terms of the need, or not, for a dedicated recognition service for Scotland. In addition to reviewing existing recognition mechanisms in Scotland, the study also aimed to identify possible gaps in service provision and to consider the ease of access to existing recognition services for identified end beneficiaries (migrant workers and refugees legally entitled to work or study in Scotland).

In addition to undertaking direct stakeholder consultation in Scotland, the study was further tasked with reviewing wider recognition models across a number of other countries (international scoping) with a focus upon identifying good or interesting practice able to influence any future recognition provision in Scotland.

The study was governed by a Project Management Group, led by the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Partnership, and further guided by an extensive Advisory Group, comprising key Scottish stakeholders from across the fields of education, training, guidance and employment and further including services working directly with the end beneficiary groups. End beneficiary representatives were also present in the Advisory Group.

The study itself was undertaken by two experienced, independent consultants with activity divided between research, data review and analysis and wider stakeholder consultation in Scotland (Paul Guest) and a review of European and international regulations and interesting recognition practice beyond Scotland and the UK (Michela Vecchia).

The current final report for the study presents an outline of key study activity taking place from May 2009 to June 2010 and concludes in proposing three possible recognition models for Scotland, the latter alongside the views and perceptions, on each of these three models, from wider recognition stakeholders relevant to Scotland.

Setting the Scene

The Scottish Government's overall purpose is to increase sustainable economic growth. Achieving that growth is supported by efforts to grow the population and to improve skills levels amongst the population. Whilst Scotland has a skilled, well-educated and flexible workforce, the Scottish Government wishes to expand the labour market from within Scotland and beyond, to raise and make best possible use of Scotland's skills, to diversify the workforce and to fill any skills gaps that might hold back economic growth.

Following the publication of the New Scots report¹ and driven by demographic projections for Scotland, concern that an ageing population could affect the economic future of Scotland and wider recognition of the benefits of a more skilled and diverse workforce, the Scottish Executive launched the Fresh Talent initiative in 2004. While recent population figures are more optimistic, projected increases are dependent upon migration which will continue to play an important part in efforts to boost the population. The Government Economic Strategy², sets an ambitious target to match average European (EU15) population growth between 2007 and 2017.

An integral part of the Government's approach centres around activities to support the retention and integration of migrants into Scottish society. As such, the Scottish Government aims to provide:

- o information to migrants on a range of subjects through the Relocation Advisory Service, associated websites, and the Polish language Welcome to Scotland guide
- o improved provision of services, through a co ordinated approach to policy development. This includes working with the COSLA³ Strategic Migration Partnership, migrants organisations and consulates in Scotland
- o improved access to English language training through the provision of funding to local authorities to assist in the implementation of the Government's Adult ESOL Strategy and expanded ESOL provision

With a focus upon facilitating and enhancing skills utilisation among Scotland's migrant communities, the Scottish Government funded this study to explore the need, and best delivery mechanism, for recognition services in Scotland. In global terms, the study aims to consider how best to facilitate the recognition of skills, learning and qualifications from overseas to assist migrants in accessing higher value employment and in continuing their skills development.

1 www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/02/18984/33666

2 www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/11/12115041/0

3 Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the study was to propose and outline three potential models for the recognition of competences and qualifications for migrant workers and refugees living in Scotland, models which actively consider existing best or effective practice from Scotland and further afield and which promote access to relevant education, employment and/or training.

To achieve this aim, the following key objectives were agreed:

1. To work directly with the Project Management Group (PMG) and Advisory Group (AG) to agree the parameters of the study and to identify existing best or effective practice in terms of support being provided to migrant workers and refugees in Scotland
2. To research and analyse existing support mechanisms and models in Scotland, and the rest of the UK, in line with the agreed parameters of the study
3. To research and analyse existing support mechanisms and models from other countries (Europe, worldwide) in line with the agreed parameters of the study
4. To review formal mechanisms towards the recognition of competences and qualifications at national (Scotland) and European level
5. To directly engage with Scottish stakeholder groups to discuss and debate existing support mechanisms and approaches, to identify any gaps and to gauge stakeholder expectations in terms of any future Scottish support model through three initial and three follow-up consultation events
6. To directly engage with end beneficiaries (migrant workers and refugees) to confirm their needs and/or requirements alongside the relevance and accessibility of existing approaches in Scotland through the organisation of three focus groups for target beneficiaries in Scotland
7. To identify three examples of good or interesting practice, beyond the UK, for subsequent visits and detailed investigation
8. To analyse all research and consultation outcomes and to synthesise key results, reporting upon findings after each of the main research and consultation phases
9. To undertake an option appraisal of possible models for the recognition of skills, learning and qualifications for migrant workers and refugees living in Scotland, presenting the primary benefits and constraints of each model
10. To propose a potential three sustainable models for the support of migrant workers and refugees in Scotland.

Methodology

At the very outset of the study, discussion took place in order to confirm the parameters of the study with an eventual decision that the focus should be upon a possible recognition service for migrant workers and refugees legally entitled to work or study in Scotland and that, in terms of educational levels, the focus would be upon the recognition of skills, learning and qualifications resulting from non-compulsory education.

It was further agreed with the Project Management Group, at the launch of the study, that the wider goals of this exercise were to progress discussions on a dedicated recognition service for Scotland, actively consulting Scottish stakeholders and eventually proposing possible steps forward, in the form of three possible recognition models for Scotland.

Activities were subsequently agreed across three individual phases covering research, data collection and analysis; stakeholder consultation and option appraisal and the production and submission of a final report including three possible Recognition Models for Scotland (*fig.1*).

Fig. 1: Outline of Key Work Phases



Phase I activity was forecast to include a review of past research and study activity (with the aim being not to repeat such activity but to learn from the past), targeted data collection involving organisations who directly provide recognition, skills development and support services to migrant workers and refugees in Scotland, a reflection on good (or interesting) practice in other countries and a wider review of European regulations relating to the recognition of professional, academic and vocational qualifications.

Phase II activity was forecast to include stakeholder consultation events and focus groups alongside international scoping activity and an option appraisal exercise, the latter appraising and reviewing options towards identifying effective, efficient and sustainable recognition models for Scotland.

Phase III activity foresaw the production of a final report presenting study activity and key findings and conclusions, alongside three possible recognition models for Scotland, for circulation to wider stakeholders in Scotland and beyond.

Research, Data Collection and Analysis

Initial study activity focused upon scoping existing activity and setting the scene. Numerous players were involved across a range of activities with key activities further outlined below.



Review of Past Research and Study Activity

More than 90 reports and publications were identified, in terms of their relevance to the theme of recognition and the identified target groups, and subsequently reviewed. Unsurprisingly, the majority of publications and reports that were reviewed related to either European or international activity (39%), often externally funded, or to studies launched by local or national government into the impact of migrant workers in Scotland (20%).

Whilst a wide-range of approaches was adopted, the resulting conclusions and recommendations were often rather similar, with numerous studies and resultant reports confirming the need for a common approach to the recognition of the skills, learning and qualifications of migrant workers and refugees in Scotland.

Noteworthy extracts, identified during the initial research-review phase include:

"...qualification equivalencies was often mentioned and participants reported that it was either impossible to do this or that the processes were not clear... in a few cases people decided to go through the same college training as they had already done in their home country in order to get Scottish certificates... not many were aware of the NARIC service"⁴

"...many refugees with higher skills and/or professional qualifications are only able to find work at levels below their skills and are therefore underemployed"⁵

"there are barriers to improving employment chances due to English language difficulties, and qualifications and training achieved overseas are often unable to be satisfactorily equated to UK qualifications"⁶

"the biggest difficulty facing migrant workers appears to be recognition of their existing skills... employers often have difficulty in recognising qualifications... many migrant workers have chosen to undertake jobs below their skills levels"⁷

"around one-half have either a degree or under-graduate qualification but most don't make any use of these in their current job... over 70% make no use of their qualifications or skills in their current job... 45% said employers in this country did not recognise their qualifications at all"⁸

4 Smart Consultancy, Eddy Adams Consultants and ANAKO Liaison on behalf of Highlands and Island Enterprise. Developing Career Planning Services for Migrant Workers. 2008

5 Carter M. Navigation Guide: Employment Issues for Refugees and Asylum-Seekers in the UK. Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees (ICAR). 2008.

6 Crowley H. Continental Drift: Understanding Advice and Information Needs for A8 Migrant Workers in Scotland. Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS). 2008.

7 Sim D., Barclay A., Anderson I. Achieving a Better Understanding of 'A8' Migrant Labour Needs in Lanarkshire. Department of Applied Science, University of Stirling. 2007.

8 Ballingall A. Migrant Workers in Fife. Fife Partnership. 2007.

“the majority of migrant workers in the study were over-qualified for the mainly semi-skilled or unskilled positions they were working in. Most migrant workers reported they had been unable to use their qualifications because of their poor grasp of English and because their qualifications weren’t recognised. Service providers were frustrated that migrant workers’ skills were not being utilised, despite reported skills gaps/shortages. They expressed a need to develop a system whereby overseas qualifications, training and experience can be assessed for the UK equivalent swiftly”⁹

“For the incoming migrant population, it was repeatedly acknowledged, across many of the consulted reports and study findings and results that said recognition is only one of three identified barriers to active participation and progression in the Scottish labour market and this is no better confirmed than in the conclusions of a study commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise which confirms that “the key overriding barriers to progression for migrant workers are language ability, transferability of skills and qualifications and employer attitudes”¹⁰. It is worth adding that employers were often felt to be uninformed of the potential for recognising qualifications from overseas and are therefore a target group, in their own right, for any future Recognition Centre for Scotland.

Electronic Data Collection and Analysis

Targeted electronic data collection took place early in the study to ensure that organisations outwith the college, HEI¹¹ and IAG¹² sectors (each addressed in the section: Sectoral Data Collection and Analysis) were also able to actively contribute. A short e-questionnaire, comprising a mixture of open and closed questions, was designed and subsequently circulated to 54 organisations, primarily in Scotland¹³. The questionnaire focused upon identifying and/or confirming existing approaches to recognition and/or the provision of recognition-related support to the target group.

Respondents were required to self-assess existing provision within their own organisation and to provide further detail where provision was felt to be relevant to the goals of the study. Eventual responses numbered 28 (52%) of which 16 responses¹⁴ confirmed relevant activity within their organisation.

Fig. 2: Organisations confirming relevant recognition/support activity involving migrant workers and/or refugees



9 De Lima, Philomena et al. A Study of Migrant Workers in Grampian. University of the Highlands and Islands. 2007.

10 Hall Aitken. Progression of Migrant Workers. Highlands and Islands Enterprise. 2008.

11 referred to in this report as the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) sector, this is deemed to represent all institutions represented by Universities Scotland, a key partner in the study and member of the Project Management Group

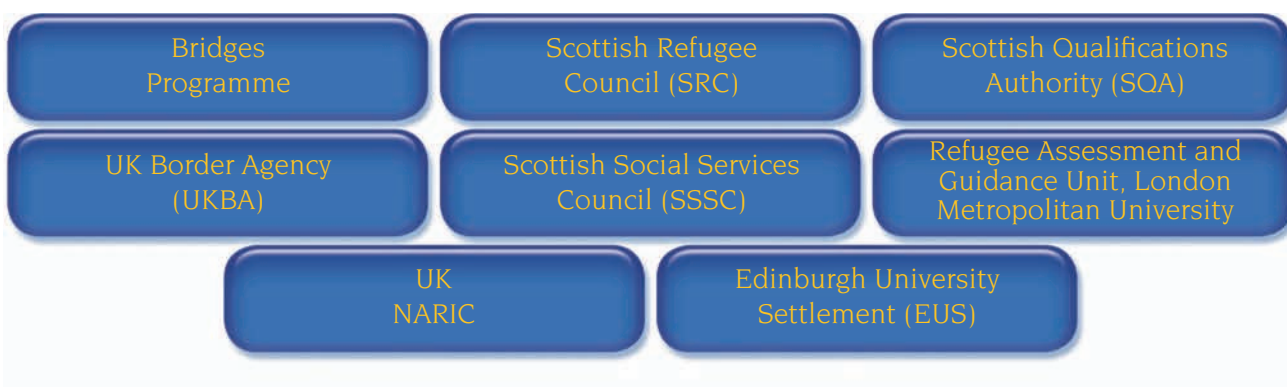
12 referred to in this report as the IAG Sector, much of the associated consultation activity involved staff from Skills Development Scotland (SDS), the largest provider of career information, advice and guidance in Scotland, as a key partner in the study and member of the Project Management Group

13 organisations not located in Scotland yet included in the e-consultation were approached as a result of having some level of responsibility for information and/or service provision in Scotland (e.g. Euroguidance)

14 multiple positive responses were received from Jobcentre Plus and EURES

Building upon the initial electronic collection of data, a small number of organisations were confirmed as clearly relevant either to the theme of recognition and/or to the identified target group of migrant workers and refugees and, considering the potential for data collection in terms of existing approaches and practices, face-to-face visits were subsequently arranged.

Fig. 3: Organisations visited (or met with) during Phase I of the Study



Subsequent data collection (electronic and in-situ) took place involving professional bodies and the recruitment and staffing industry, although responses to the latter were minimal (3) and included one zero-response in terms of relevant activity.

In consultation with the Advisory Group, a series of six professional sectors were agreed to be approached, including a number of key economic sectors for Scotland. Of the six selected sectors (accountancy; dentistry; energy-oil and gas; medicine-doctors and nurses; social services; teaching) full responses were received from four professional bodies with a further, partial response submitted by one of the two remaining bodies.

Generally, responses confirmed that individual (professional) bodies held much of the required recognition expertise internally and that (professional) recognition services were primarily funded through annual registration fees, paid by individual professionals, within a particular sector. The only perceived benefit of a centralised recognition service for Scotland, according to the feedback received, was the potential for two-way signposting to existing recognition service provision.

Sectoral Data Collection and Analysis

The college sector, HEI sector and IAG sector were each actively involved in the implementation of the study, represented by Scotland's Colleges, Universities Scotland and Skills Development Scotland respectively. In addition to direct participation in the Project Management Group, each of these organisations was responsible for investigating current recognition (and related) service provision for migrant workers and refugees within their sector and for reporting upon key findings.

First to report findings was the **HEI sector**, having adopted a web-based survey technique (SurveyMonkey), building upon prior desk-based research, to gather data across the sector. The response rate within the HEI sector was high (80%) with 16 of the 20 higher education institutions (HEIs) in Scotland responding.

Perceived barriers and/or challenges relating to the recognition of skills, learning and qualifications within the HEI sector, at that time, included:

- resource implications (and a need to better fund specialist in-house provision)
- language barriers (and a need for increased support to overcome such barriers)

- increasing demands for documentary evidence
- increasing requirements from professional bodies (often inhibiting the RPL process)
- exclusion of the target group from higher education (funding-related) and the consequent potential for deskilling and/or disengagement

More globally, findings from the HEI sector confirmed that:

- intra-institutional awareness was not constant with individuals directly involved with the target group and/or working on recognition issues often only aware of their own activity and with other staff often much less aware of recognition approaches, even within their own institution
- persons working directly on recognition issues were often not easy to locate within an individual HEI, even for staff working within the sector
- specific target group expertise exists within the HEI sector, as a result of past-projects and activity, including the RITeS¹⁵, GOPiP¹⁶, GRAMNet¹⁷, Diverse Routes into Higher Education¹⁸ and CARA Pathfinder¹⁹ projects and networks

The **IAG sector** also adopted a web-based approach, with staff from across Skills Development Scotland (SDS), as the largest provider of career information, advice and guidance in Scotland, invited to complete a series of questions covering existing service provision, staff roles, local networking and possible recognition barriers for the target group.

With invitations sent to around 400 SDS staff members across Scotland, an eventual 102 responses were received (circa 25% response rate) for which key results are provided below:

- 61% of respondents felt their role to be supportive of the target group, at one level or another
- 55% of respondents confirmed the existence of a tailored-approach to working with the target group, citing the use of leaflets/guides in different languages; information on and signposting to external support bodies and the use of customised information packs
- 27% of respondents cited additional services such as translation, interpretation and ESOL support
- 70% of respondents used established mechanisms for the recognition of the skills, learning and qualifications of the target group - most notably via SQA and UK NARIC
- 61% of respondents were aware of approaches towards the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning

Findings from SDS, representing the IAG sector, confirmed that:

- existing career IAG service provision leaned towards the recognition of vocational and professional (rather than academic) qualifications; general support to recognise informal and non-formal skills was also provided
- continued capacity-building with partners could better meet the needs of migrant workers and refugees through more varied channels of delivery, including face-to-face, telephone and web-enabled formats
- ways in which further capacity could be built include continued development of recognition of informal learning through new coaching and self-help techniques and awareness-raising of individuals' career management skills
- the profile and range of services offered by SDS to the target group has been enhanced through active signposting to and from related partners (e.g. Jobcentre Plus, UK NARIC, Scotland's Colleges)
- SDS is committed to exploring ways in which extreme collaboration can be developed with projects, organisations and networks which support the recognition of the skills, learning and qualifications of migrant workers and refugees

15 www.strath.ac.uk/cps/rites/

16 www.gcu.ac.uk/gopip/

17 www.gla.ac.uk/departments/gramnet/researchclusters/

18 www.diverseroutes.co.uk/

19 www.academic-refugees.org/pathfinder-university-grants.asp

For the **college sector**, it was decided early in the lifetime of the study that telephone and/or face-to-face interviews would potentially have more success in terms of securing a fuller college sector response. With this in mind, an extended time period was allowed for data collection and analysis, with results for the sector provided early in 2010.

Eventual responses numbered 18 out of a potential 43 Scottish colleges (42%) of which 13 respondents confirmed relevant activity.

Additional feedback from the college sector confirms that the response rate, whilst low, is both geographically representative (with responses spread across mainland Scotland) and wholly representative of those colleges for whom the recognition of the skills, learning and qualifications of migrant workers and refugees is, in any way, a relevant activity.

Respondent colleges were confirmed to be already working with almost 4000 migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland.

Data collection for the sector was structured around 17 key questions and covered policy, practice and key challenges relating to recognition, in the college sector, for the target group.

Emergent and important themes resulting from the college sector include:

- many respondents would like to do more to assist migrant workers and refugees but are often constrained by a lack of (financial) resources
- many colleges already collaborate with numerous partners across the community (e.g. local authorities, housing associations, other learning providers, community representatives) to develop synergies and address resource constraints
- many respondents were self-critical indicating areas for self-improvement (e.g. developing better referral networks; building a more cohesive approach through focused staff training)
- some respondents felt that there were, at times, unnecessary barriers within the HEI sector, with some institutions cited as being unsympathetic and/or unhelpful in promoting access to often professionally-qualified migrant workers and refugees

More global findings within the college sector confirmed that:

- there is little appetite in the sector, for a separate or specialist recognition service for Scotland, with any additional recognition service perceived as a further institutional barrier for migrant workers and refugees
- any specialist recognition service has the potential to limit capacity-building within the sector
- increased outreach and community-based services could enhance service-provision to migrant workers, refugees and their families and might be modelled on and informed by wider-access activities
- flexible out-of-hours provision and childcare are crucial considerations for any future recognition service, particularly for those individuals that are currently (under)employed
- in many cases, whilst migrant workers and refugees might initially approach a college to meet personal ESOL development needs, such requests often extend to cover a need for information, advice and support on recognition issues (referred to as ESOL plus provision)

Review of European Regulations and International Best Practice

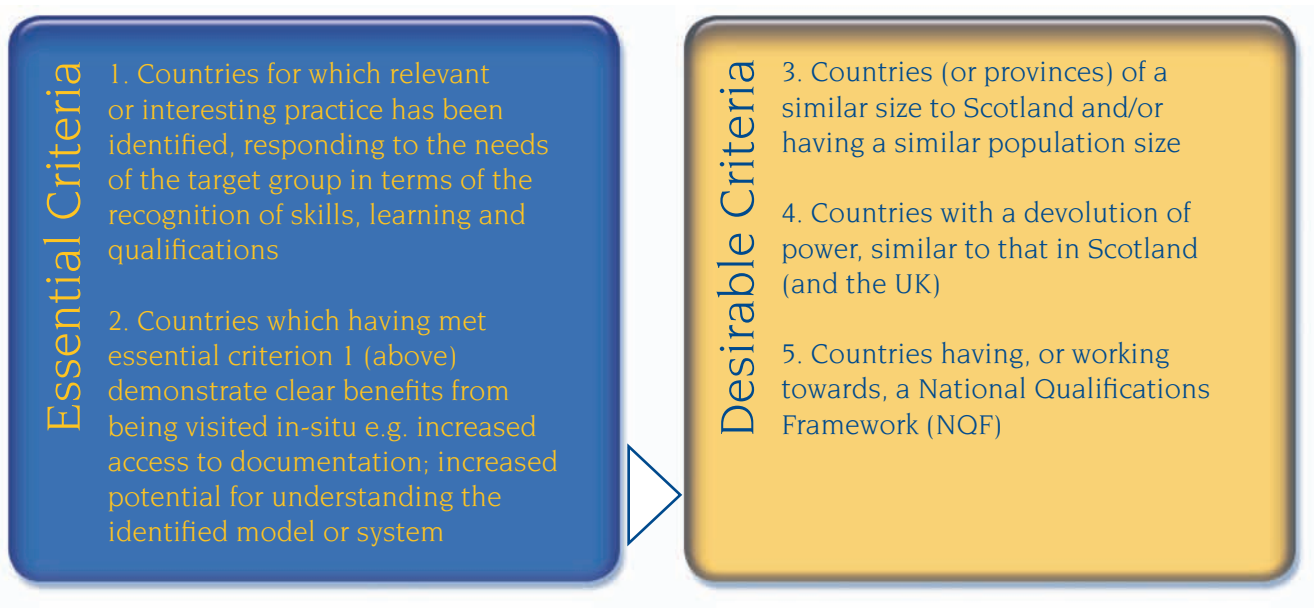
A two-step approach, primarily involving desk-based research focused upon:

- reviewing existing European legislation which regulates the provision of professional, academic and vocational recognition within the European Union
- reviewing good (or interesting) practice in the recognition of the skills, learning and qualifications of migrant workers and refugees, both in Europe and beyond

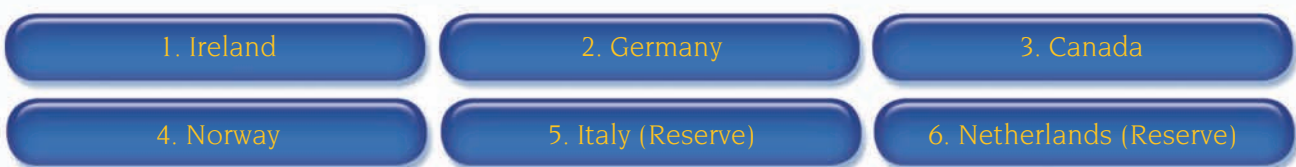
The results of research into existing European legislation are provided later in this report in the section entitled: Regulating Professional, Academic and Vocational Recognition.

The review of good practice was primarily a pre-selection activity allowing countries with established recognition frameworks and/or interesting recognition practice to be selected, and subsequently visited, in order to contribute to the overall goals of the study in proposing three possible recognition models for Scotland.

The Project Management Group initially confirmed the following essential (2) and desirable (3) criteria for use in selecting good - or interesting - practice:



Desk research into existing provision, practice and experience in the field of recognition, and in working directly with the target group of migrant workers and refugees, led to the proposal of the following countries:



The four countries proposed to be visited were discussed and subsequently agreed by the Advisory Group with three trips agreed to be directly funded as a part of the study and further data collection planned as part of an already-planned trip to Canada by SCQF Partnership. Additional data on the results of international scoping activity is provided later in this report in the section entitled: European and International Scoping.

Regulating Professional, Academic and Vocational Recognition

Research took place, as a part of the study, to confirm all or any European legislation regulating the provision of professional, academic and vocational recognition.

In the world of recognition, the underlying principle that must be considered is the right of European Union (EU) citizens to establish themselves in another EU Member State and/or to provide services elsewhere in the EU, this being one of the fundamental freedoms afforded by the European single market²⁰.

Professional Recognition

Significant activity has taken place at European level, in the past, with a focus upon the harmonisation of training requirements in certain professions enabling automatic professional recognition (*specific sectors*), the mutual recognition of professional qualifications (*general system*), the automatic recognition of professional experience within the craft, commerce and industry sectors, the provision of services by legal professionals and the recognition of qualifications in the fields of commerce and toxic substance distribution.

Considering recognition for professional purposes, it is important to distinguish between regulated professions (requiring minimum qualifications to be able to practise a certain profession) and non-regulated professions. An individual seeking recognition of their diploma (qualification) in order to pursue a regulated profession, whether employed or self-employed, in a Member State other than that in which they obtained their original qualification, is covered by Community law covering the right of establishment, the freedom to provide services and the free movement of workers (fundamental principles of the EC Treaty). Those individuals accessing non-regulated professions are primarily subject to the rules and demands of local labour markets.

Professional recognition has been governed, for many years, by a number of European directives covering both regulated and non-regulated professions. More recently however, a new common European directive was introduced, subsuming all previously introduced and related directives, in order to rationalise the system for the recognition of professional qualifications. This new directive (*Directive 2005/36/EC*²¹) now forms a single legal European instrument governing professional recognition.

The new directive governing professional recognition relies upon three titles or sections covering the definition of, and access to, regulated professions (Title I); the free provision of services on a temporary and occasional basis (Title II) and the recognition of training and professional experience²² alongside the automatic recognition of qualifications in seven key professions²³ (Title III).

Of particular interest in Title III (chapter I) is a five-level qualifications *framework* [fig. 4] which begins with general compulsory education and continues through to education or training at higher or university level. This *framework* was developed to assist specifically in the evaluation of non-regulated professional qualifications, promoting both the *level of education* and the *duration of education* as key evaluation criteria.

20 http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/unit/charte/en/charter-freedoms.html (articles 15 and 16)

21 http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/future_en.htm

22 in specific sub-sectors relating to industrial, craft and commercial activity

23 doctor, general care nurse, dentist, veterinary surgeon, midwife, pharmacist and architect

Fig. 4: Five-level framework for the recognition of non-regulated Professional Qualifications



It is worth mentioning that the five levels included in this new European directive do not currently equate to the eight levels provided for within the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)²⁴.

In certain cases, the host country can insist upon additional measures such as aptitude tests or an adaptation period of up to three years. Such cases might reflect instances where past education or training is at least one-year shorter than that required by the host country, where past education or training covers substantially different matters from those formally required in the host country and/or where the profession, as defined in the host country, comprises one or more regulated professional activities which do not exist, in the corresponding profession, in the home state.

In the UK, the National Contact Point (NCP) for Professional Recognition²⁵ - a publicly accessible information point for professional recognition matters - is operated by ECCTIS Limited on behalf of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills²⁶.

²⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc44_en.htm

²⁵ www.europeopen.org.uk/

²⁶ www.bis.gov.uk

Academic Recognition

Academic recognition, specifically the recognition of academic diplomas (qualifications) to enable entry to a course of continuing, higher or professional education, remains the responsibility of individual Member States, and often the responsibility of an individual education institution, with no current Community legislation on the mutual recognition of diplomas (except for regulated occupations covered under professional recognition). However, the European Commission strongly encourages mutual recognition, for academic purposes, between EU Member States through programmes such as Erasmus²⁷ whereby participating Universities and HEIs are required to observe common guidelines when awarding academic credits for study undertaken both at home and in other EU Member States. This academic credit system is widely known as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)²⁸.

In order to promote wider understanding of the academic recognition of qualifications, at European level, the European Commission established the network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC)²⁹ in 1984. The NARIC network aims specifically at improving the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study in EU Member States, EEA countries and beyond and at promoting the mobility of students, teachers and researchers, through providing authoritative advice and information on academic recognition. NARICs continue to exist in all EU Member States, and beyond, and are formally designated to undertake this academic recognition activity by national Ministries of Education in each country. The status and scope of individual NARICs can differ significantly across Europe both in terms of the level of service provision and the decision upon whether or not to host the NARIC directly within the education ministry or department.

UK NARIC³⁰, operated by ECCTIS Limited, is currently responsible for improving and supporting academic recognition in the UK, under the direction of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Vocational Recognition

The recognition of vocational qualifications remains a priority at European level with much of the current activity centred round the testing of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), the ongoing promotion of Europass (in particular Europass Mobility, the Europass Certificate Supplement and the Europass Diploma Supplement) and the referencing of national qualifications frameworks to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The UK National Reference Point (NRP) for Vocational Qualifications³¹ - a central information point for information on vocational education, training and qualifications in the UK and abroad – is managed by ECCTIS Limited on behalf of the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, as is the National Europass Centre (NEC)³², which forms a part of the network of national Europass information centres across Europe.

27 Erasmus is a one of four sectoral programmes which together form the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme (http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc80_en.htm)

28 http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48_en.htm

29 <http://www.enic-naric.net/>

30 www.naric.org.uk

31 www.uknrc.org.uk/

32 <http://uknec.org.uk/>

Stakeholder Consultation

Fundamental to the study has been the active consultation of stakeholders within the fields of education, employment, training, careers guidance, community support and local and national government, including those organisations working to facilitate the entry of migrant workers and refugees to education and/or employment at a level commensurate with existing skills levels and qualifications.

Two series of stakeholder consultation events were held, each comprising three events held in key Scottish cities (Glasgow, Edinburgh and Inverness) and each attracting a wide range of stakeholder participants. Participants (listed in Appendix 3) totalled 53 participants and 66 participants, respectively, for each series of events.

Initial stakeholder consultation events allowed participants to discuss how best to support migrant workers and refugees through the recognition process and further invited suggestions and recommendations towards a future recognition model for Scotland. Follow-up stakeholder consultation events were held towards the end of the study period and allowed the results of the option appraisal exercise to be presented, in the form of three possible recognition models for Scotland, with the benefits, constraints and potential implications of each model actively discussed. Noteworthy is the fact that a small number of (larger) employers participated in this second series of stakeholder events, providing the previously-lacking demand perspective.

Beyond wider stakeholder consultation, the study foresaw, and was successful in securing, the direct contribution of end beneficiaries through their active consultation in a series of three focus groups held in Glasgow (2) and Inverness (1). Total participants numbered 17 across the three focus groups and whilst minimal in terms of eventual numbers, each of these events was wholly successful in confirming recognition priorities from the perspective of the end user groups. Focus group participants comprised both refugees (35%) and migrant workers (65%) living in Scotland with the largest group, unsurprisingly, Polish nationals (47%).

Fig. 5: Input from the Focus Groups (extracts)



End beneficiary participants confirmed a lack of visible routes to recognition with many migrant workers and refugees relying upon friends, family and members of their own communities to advise on such matters, often based upon their own experiences. Beyond this, community support centres were a vital source of information and support although few participants were able to confirm a joined-up approach to information and advice with a need to often consult additional organisations when considering access to employment and/or further education or training.

Also noteworthy, in terms of stakeholder participation, is the active participation of up to 24 members of the Advisory Group (including two end beneficiary representatives) during the lifetime of the study. Considering each of the above-described consultation events and workshops alongside wider (advisory) contributions, stakeholders directly contributing to the study, including end beneficiaries, totalled 160.

Recognition of Skills, Learning and Qualifications in Scotland

Data collection and analysis (Phase I) and stakeholder consultation (Phase II) activity confirmed that, when referring to recognition in Scotland, there is a wide range of organisations, and organisation types, already providing recognition-related services, at one level or another. What was confirmed by all parties as clearly lacking, however, is a solidly branded, easily identifiable recognition service able to support migrant workers and refugees in accessing relevant education, training and employment.

What also became evident during the lifetime of the study was the wealth of often-confusing terminology and varying definitions that exist in terms of recognition and recognition-related activity. With differing definitions of recognition provided across academic and professional domains, compounded by a cornucopia of related terms (validation, referencing, accreditation, evaluation, assessment), in active circulation at national and European level, this was confirmed as a clearly contributing factor to continuing confusion for those at the frontline. It was also eventually confirmed as an important consideration for any future Recognition Centre for Scotland with a need to ensure that any future recognition service provision in Scotland is both clearly branded and appropriately marketed, ensuring end users are 100% clear in terms of the type and level of recognition support able to be provided.

Whilst the original goal of the study was to consider the recognition of skills, learning and qualifications, each reliant upon differing recognition processes and mechanisms, it became quickly apparent that existing approaches to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)³³, in Scotland, could be extended to encompass the needs and requirements of the target group without too much additional effort. Increasingly evident requirements for active branding, signposting and enhanced linguistic support, revealed during early data collection and stakeholder consultation activity, would however need to be considered in any future, extended RPL provision.

Noteworthy, in terms of the refugee target group, was the interesting practice already taking place within the Bridges Programmes³⁴ in Glasgow, whereby individual clients lacking the required documentation were supported in documenting and recording previous learning, skills and qualifications to facilitate access to the labour market. Also noteworthy is the fact that, during the lifetime of the study, SCQF Partnership - in collaboration with the SCQF RPL Network and other stakeholders - was actively developing a dedicated RPL Toolkit for use by learning and training providers, employers and human resource personnel in Scotland, with the eventual RPL Toolkit³⁵ released to the wider stakeholder public in May 2010.

In terms of the current study, the most significant challenge, according to those individuals and organisations consulted, relates to the formal recognition of qualifications³⁶, specifically the recognition of formal education and training programmes from overseas, with many organisations already actively involved yet with room for improvement clearly acknowledged in terms of both facilitating access to, and increasing the visibility of, the recognition process for the target group. A number of organisations were cited regularly during the lifetime of the study, either in terms of their (perceived) direct involvement in the recognition process for migrant workers and refugees coming to or living in Scotland, or in terms of their (perceived) wider contribution to the recognition process in Scotland.

³³ also referred to as the Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

³⁴ www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk

³⁵ www.scqf.org.uk/News/LatestNews/RPLToolkitNowAvailable.aspx

³⁶ formal acknowledgement of individual academic or professional qualifications by a competent recognition authority

Fig. 6: Examples of organisations (perceived as) providing recognition and/or recognition support services in Scotland

Careers Europe – UK Euroguidance

Careers Europe, as the UK Euroguidance Centre, provides European and International Careers Information to UK information, advice and guidance professionals. Additionally, Careers Europe produces an information resource (Eisodus) aimed specifically at asylum seekers, refugees and EU migrants, and those working directly with these target groups in the UK. Eisodus provides background information and presents a series of materials aimed at asylum seekers/refugees and EU migrant workers respectively with materials produced in multiple languages relevant to each of these groups. Eisodus further includes a series of 40 country profiles each with introductory text on the respective education system. Whilst not a part of any formal recognition process, Eisodus is a clear starting point for information officers, advisors and support workers working with the target groups.

European Employment Service – EURES

Funded by the European Commission, EURES offers a network of trained, specialist advisers able to provide information and guidance to both jobseekers and employers interested in the wider European job market. As a network, EURES has developed specialised expertise in practical, legal and administrative matters relating to mobility at national and cross-border levels and, often being situated directly within the offices of the public employment service, is in a prime position to advise those travelling to look for work in other European Union countries. In Scotland, there are 2 EURES advisers situated in Jobcentre Plus offices in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Partnership

Established to manage the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (Framework), SCQF Partnership is responsible for maintaining the quality and integrity of the Framework, promoting and developing the Framework as a tool to support lifelong learning and developing and maintaining relationships with other frameworks in the UK, Europe and internationally. SCQF Partnership was also actively involved in development of the RPL Toolkit for Scotland.

Scottish Qualifications Authority – SQA

SQA is the national accreditation and awarding body in Scotland, working in partnership with industry, universities, colleges and schools. SQA is responsible for devising, developing, accrediting, validating and reviewing qualifications from Access 1 (SCQF level 1) through to high level Professional Development Awards (SCQF level 12), including all Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ1 to SVQ5).

Skills Development Scotland – SDS

Created in 2008, Skills Development Scotland brings together the careers, skills, training and funding services of Careers Scotland alongside Scottish University for Industry (learndirect scotland) and the skills intervention arms of Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise. With offices across Scotland, SDS aims to support clients, of all ages, in making career and learning related decisions and works actively with employers and learning providers. As the largest provider of information, advice and guidance (IAG) in Scotland, SDS already provides a range of support measures aimed at migrant workers and refugees living and working in Scotland.

UK NARIC

Responsible for providing information, advice and expert opinion on professional, academic and vocational skills and qualifications from over 180 countries worldwide. Working to contract with the UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, UK NARIC provides an official source of information on international qualifications to a wide range of individuals and organisations across the UK, including the UK Border Agency. ECCTIS Limited, as the company behind UK NARIC, also acts as the UK National Reference Point (NRP) for Vocational Qualifications, the UK Europass Centre (NEC) and the National Contact Point (NCP) for Professional Qualifications in the UK.

These examples are by no means exhaustive in terms of those cited during the study but go some way to confirming the range of organisations and organisation types perceived as actively contributing, at one level or another, to the process of recognition in Scotland.

Considering organisation types, a number of these are also worth mentioning in terms of their confirmed role in the recognition of skills, learning and qualifications in Scotland:

Fig. 7: Types of organisations providing recognition and/or recognition support services in Scotland



Stakeholder consultation, at all stages of the study, also confirmed wide-ranging and often widely-differing levels of recognition and recognition-related service provision in Scotland³⁷ including:

Information: a wide range of organisations in Scotland continue to provide information to migrant workers and/or refugees either directly (face-to-face) or indirectly (online or via partner networks) with access to education, training and employment clearly a priority.

Advice and Guidance: whilst the depth of advice and/or guidance may vary both in terms of subjects covered and depth of service provision, there is no shortage of organisations willing to provide advice and/or guidance to migrant workers and refugees coming to or living in Scotland; service providers range from the relatively well-known such as Skills Development Scotland, Citizens Advice Bureaux, the Scottish Refugee Council and the Bridges Programmes through to lesser-known but no less active or effective services based across Scottish regions, cities, towns and communities.

³⁷ some service providers are based outwith Scotland yet provide recognition related information and service provision in Scotland e.g. UK NARIC, Careers Europe

Signposting: a wide range of bodies and organisations are actively involved in the (academic and professional) recognition process in Scotland, ranging from individual education and/or training establishments (providing access to continuing learning or skills development, including English language and soft skills development), to sector skills councils and professional bodies (often informing upon and/or directly regulating a particular profession or series of professions) to UK NARIC (providing a range of academic, vocational and professional recognition services, primarily fee-paid, to both individuals and organisations in Scotland).

Recognition of Qualifications: currently only UK NARIC appears to have the required knowledge, experience and UK government mandate for the provision of academic recognition services in all four countries of the United Kingdom.

Recognition of Prior Learning: whilst not addressed in any great detail in the current study, reflecting instead upon the potential for extending existing RPL service provision to migrant workers and refugees living in Scotland, there was a clear confirmation by wider stakeholders of the wealth of RPL experience that already exists in Scotland and of the need for any future recognition service to both inform of and signpost to existing RPL service provision.

Early consultation findings, particularly relevant to existing recognition or recognition-related service provision in Scotland, included:

- o whilst many Scottish organisations actively involved in the recognition of academic and professional qualifications from overseas (including Skills Development Scotland and many further and higher education providers) subscribe annually to the services of UK NARIC, many respondents confirmed a need to ensure that UK NARIC is more directly responsive to the needs of Scotland and more clearly informed upon qualifications and qualifications frameworks in Scotland (later consultation findings hinted at the potential of a future Recognition Centre for Scotland in terms of increased negotiating and purchasing power and a possible single user license for all recognition stakeholders in Scotland)
- o a clear priority for stakeholders and end beneficiaries alike, relates to a need for the active marketing of any future Recognition Service for Scotland, this alongside a need to establish a common brand or identity for which the two ticks symbol (awarded to organisations *positive about disabled people*) was cited as a successful example
- o considering the breadth of existing recognition or recognition-related service provision in Scotland, demand was confirmed for a centralised signposting database allowing all such networks, bodies and organisations to self-define (self-describe) existing recognition and/or recognition-related provision
- o supporting the development of English language skills for migrant workers and refugees, and their families, there is a confirmed need for greater equity in recognising qualifications; in particular, Higher and Intermediate 2 ESOL need to be more commonly and widely accepted by the HEI and college sectors for entry to continuing education and training

European and International Scoping

As a part of Phase I study activity, desk research took place with a view to identifying good (or interesting) recognition practice, specifically practice targeted at migrant workers and refugees, in countries beyond Scotland and the UK.

Interesting practice was narrowed down to six countries (using criteria cited earlier in this report), with four countries eventually selected for international scoping activity (Ireland, Germany, Canada and Norway).

Three of the four countries selected for international scoping, to allow existing recognition and recognition-related practices to be reviewed in more detail, were visited by the consultant team. In the case of Canada, however, the visit was twinned with pre-arranged conference attendance by SCQF Partnership and was consequently confined to confirming relevant individuals and organisations willing to contribute to the study, ultimately through extended electronic consultation.

In Ireland, a series of three visits took place in December 2009, to the following organisations:

- o **Department of Education and Science (DES)**³⁸: established as a result of the introduction of the European Sectoral Directive³⁹ and responsible for informing all individuals, coming to Ireland, of the requirements for professional recognition although often reliant upon signposting to the 38 competent authorities in Ireland where the majority of recognition experience is held and with whom the department is in regular contact
- o **National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI)**⁴⁰: responsible for establishing and maintaining a framework for the development, recognition and award of qualifications, improving educational standards and facilitating access, transfer and progression in education and training; in terms of recognition, NQAI also hosts the National Europass Centre (NEC) for Ireland alongside the EQF National Contact Point (NCP-EQF) and Qualifications Recognition – Ireland (Irish NARIC); as a state agency, all NQAI services, including NARIC services are freely available to all target groups and with an open-door policy, NQAI encourages access by the target group - which also includes Irish citizens considering international mobility - via a range of channels including drop-in, telephone and online services (online assessment is currently not provided); the recognition focus for NQAI is primarily academic recognition
- o **Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC)**⁴¹: funded jointly by the Department of Education and Science and member institutions (award fees), HETAC is a state-aided agency which primarily serves Irish Universities, Institutes of Technology and other, specialist, higher education bodies; in addition to awarding qualifications at all levels of higher education and training, HETAC is responsible for standards setting, the validation of education and training programmes and ensuring equity in student assessment; in terms of recognition, HETAC confirmed that individual HEIs in Ireland are responsible for making the final decision on the acceptability (or not) of qualifications for entry into HE but also confirmed that all institutions observe the Lisbon Recognition Convention as a basis for all such recognition; in terms of academic recognition, NQAI continues to act as a centralised knowledge base for the further and higher education sectors in Ireland.

38 www.education.ie/home/home.jsp?pcategory=17216&ecategory=28966&language=EN

39 Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 7 September 2005, on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications

40 www.qualificationsrecognition.ie/recognition/

41 www.hetac.ie/

In Germany, a series of three visits were also planned although unforeseen circumstances led to one of the visits being cancelled with data consequently gathered remotely at a later stage. Visits (and later, remote data collection) involved:

- **Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Technologie⁴² (Ministry of Economy and Technology - Internal Market Unit):** established as a result of the introduction of the European Sectoral Directive, the Internal Market Unit is responsible for informing EU migrants (alongside third country nationals having obtained their qualifications within the EU) of the requirements for professional recognition in Germany, although is often reliant upon signposting to the competent authorities; the Internal Market Unit works directly with three national coordinators, based in different cities/regions across Germany, each responsible for one of three key professional groups (teachers & cultural professions, health and economics)
- **Tür an Tür - Migranet⁴³:** initially established as a volunteer organisation assisting asylum seekers and refugees, Tür an Tür offers a wide range of services ranging from the provision of sheltered housing (for migrant workers, refugees and others on a low income) to the development of specific training and support for disadvantaged groups, including migrant workers, refugees and asylum-seekers, the latter often funded through European development funding; in terms of recognition, Migranet is a project currently operated by Tür an Tür as a part of the Integration through Qualification (IQ) network and focuses specifically upon skills assessment (www.fluequal-kompetenzbilanz.de) to facilitate entry to the German labour market; Migranet also actively supports the process of qualifications recognition, often assisting clients during this formal recognition process
- **Berlin-Brandenburgische Auslandsgesellschaft (BBAG) e.V⁴⁴:** established in 1991 and covering the areas of Berlin and Brandenburg, BBAG promotes lifelong and creative learning and plays an active role in bringing people together, with a specific focus upon the integration of migrants to Germany; as a state recognised training body, covering a wide range of political, intercultural and linguistic development activities, those activities particularly relevant to the target group (for this study) include integration and language courses for incoming migrants and the coaching of migrants to facilitate entry to the German labour market; reliant upon external (European) funding for many of its activities, BBAG has worked directly with the above-mentioned Tür an Tür in order to facilitate skills recognition (Migration Point project) and has recently undertaken a pilot project involving the preparation of in-migrant doctors for formal registration to practise in Germany (top-up courses, language courses, etc.), this pilot activity expects to be repeated, in the near future, for nurses and other health workers

In Norway, a visit to the National Contact Point (NCP) for Professional Recognition was cancelled at the last minute, due to ill-health, leaving visits to the following two organisations:

- **Counselling and Information Service at Oslo Adult Education Service Centre (Oslo VO)⁴⁵:** established in 2007 by the Municipality and County of Oslo (a common body), Oslo VO built upon past activity to establish a coordinated “freedom to learn” approach (a one-stop shop) able to respond to the demands of Norwegian legislation - as contained within the Education Act and the Norwegian Introduction Act (2003) - which respectively confirm the rights to the recognition of prior learning for adults and to Norwegian language and social orientation courses for in-migrants in Norway; in addition to promoting Norwegian language and orientation courses for adult immigrants, Oslo VO promotes access to education, allows registration for public examinations (including for Norwegian nationals) and provides an information and counselling service offering

42 www.bmwi.de/BMWi/Navigation/Ausbildung-und-Beruf/gleichstellung-auslaendischer-pruefungszeugnisse.html

43 www.migranet.org/

44 www.bbag-ev.de/index.html

45 www.velkommenoslo.no/english/help/about_us.htm

information and advice on Norwegian language courses, on the evaluation and recognition of foreign credentials and on the evaluation of formal/non-formal vocational skills; in terms of actual recognition, Oslo VO relies upon signposting to existing bodies such as the NCP for Professional Recognition, NOKUT and/or individual education institutions (for academic recognition) and the relevant local municipality/county (for vocational/skills recognition)

- o **Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen (NOKUT)**⁴⁶: as the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Adult Education, NOKUT was established in 2003 by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research to provide a quality-assured recognition system forming a part of the official Bologna response in Norway; in addition to acting as the national ENIC-NARIC centre in Norway, NOKUT separately houses the national accreditation authorities for Higher Education and VET; NOKUT deals directly with individual applications concerning the general recognition of foreign higher education, is responsible for information about the system of recognition as regards foreign higher education, is responsible for informing foreign bodies about the Norwegian educational system and contributes generally to improving the quality of higher education and tertiary vocational education in Norway; wholly funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research all NOKUT services are free although individuals remain responsible for costs associated with the translation and certification of documents; as a public service provider, NOKUT is further responsible for the formal control of certification documentation with cases of fraudulent documentation officially reported to the Norwegian police; NOKUT primarily focuses upon academic recognition (for access to employment, education and/or training) most often providing general recognition rather than any detailed investigation into the content of a particular academic course or qualification; applicants are subsequently advised of the perceived value of their qualification in terms of the Norwegian qualifications system; in the future, it is expected that the NCP for professional recognition will be launched as a new department within NOKUT although the Ministry of Education and Research will continue to act as the National Coordinator for Professional Recognition

As previously mentioned, the international scoping visit to Canada was restricted to confirming relevant local contacts, with data on existing provision subsequently gathered remotely. One response from the **Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC)**⁴⁷ in Ontario confirmed a commitment to transparent, objective, impartial and fair professional registration practices, in the province, and cited the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act (FARPA) 2006 which governs the professional registration process. OFC requires that professional regulatory bodies, sometimes called colleges, review and report upon professional registration processes and undergo regular compliance audits. A further response from **World Education Services (WES)**⁴⁸ outlined a more commercial service provision, providing an online recognition service for academic credentials (qualifications) obtained outside Canada and serving a wide range of target groups including individual applicants, employers and education providers. WES is established in both the US and Canada and is primarily reliant upon individual fee-paid recognition services for funding. WES works to guidelines issued by the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services in Canada (ACESC).

An unforeseen yet clearly welcome addition to planned international scoping activity was a contribution from Hong Kong, building upon existing contacts between SCQF Partnership and the **Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications**⁴⁹ (the Council). The Council was established in 2007 and is dedicated to providing quality assurance and assessment services to education and training institutions, continuing education providers and the general public. With a primary focus upon the recognition and accreditation of *qualifications*, rather than skills or experience, the Council provides an opinion (rather than any formal endorsement) as to how an applicant's qualification meets the standard of a particular qualification obtained in Hong Kong.

46 www.nokut.no/en/

47 www.fairnesscommissioner.ca/en/index.php

48 www.wes.org

49 www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/en/main.asp

Whilst a state-operated agency, the Council operates a fee-paid service for the recognition of non-local qualifications.

All data gathered during international scoping activity contributes to the option appraisal exercise with input considered across six agreed criteria (c.f. next section: Option Appraisal). It is worth reiterating, however, the importance of international scoping during the lifetime of the study, with a range of differing practices confirmed alongside the perceived benefits and constraints of each. Examples of comparative contributions resulting from this activity include fee-paid versus freely available recognition services, the varying breadth and depth of recognition services and the perceived value (worth) of recognition services - amongst wider stakeholders from education and employment - across the organisations and countries visited.

Option Appraisal

The original business case for the study foresaw the option appraisal⁵⁰ of a number of models and ways of providing support ultimately focusing upon potential recognition models for Scotland.

Working with members of the Project Management Group (PMG), the option appraisal was confirmed, for the purposes of the study, as a filtering phase during which all incoming data and consultation responses would be considered against a number of agreed criteria (metrics) relevant to a future recognition model for Scotland.

Numerous data sources were considered, during option appraisal, all of which have been described earlier in this report.

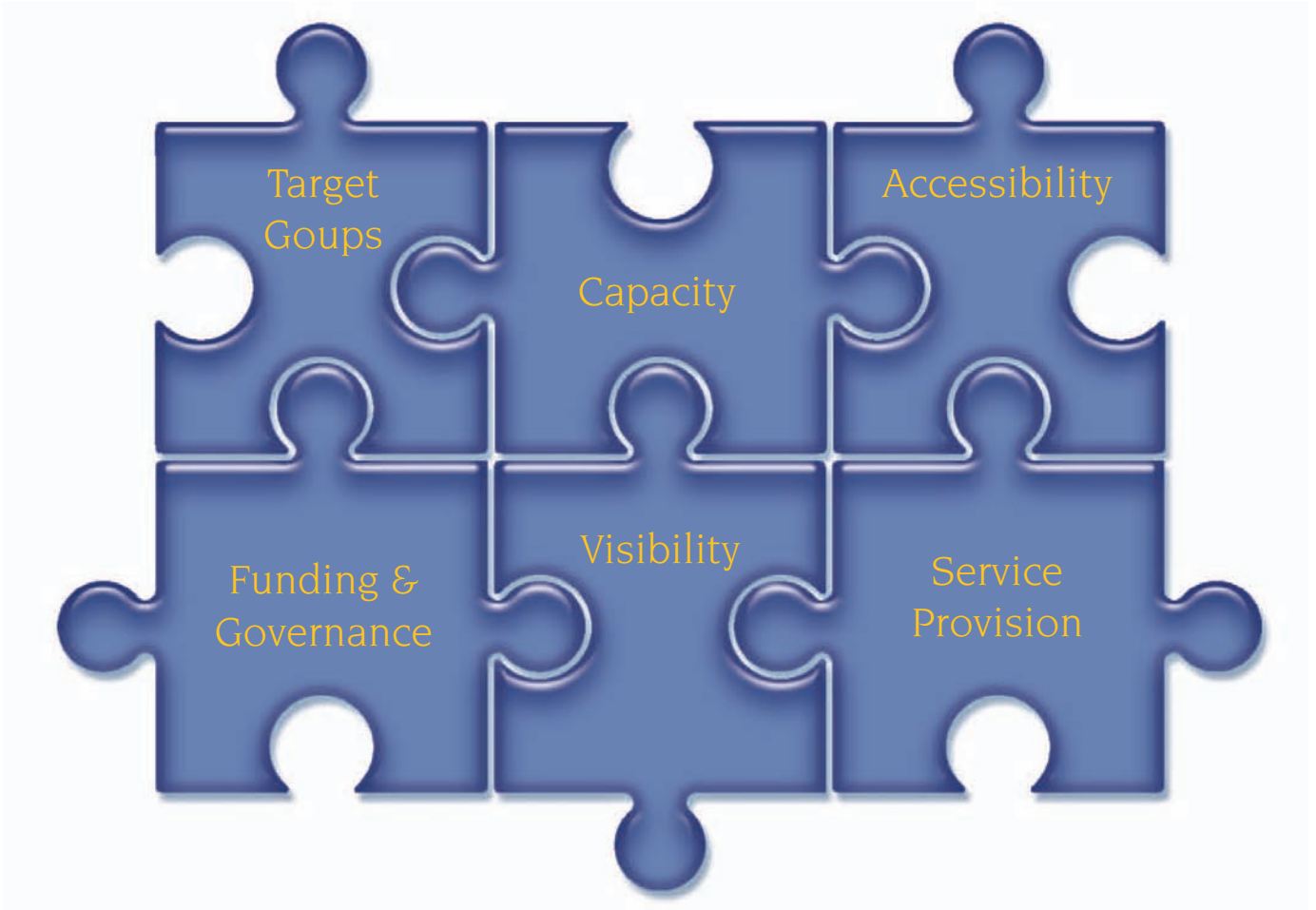
Fig. 8: Data Sources used during Option Appraisal



⁵⁰ a technique for setting objectives, creating and reviewing options and analysing their relative costs and benefits, option appraisal should help develop a value-for-money solution that meets the objectives of the project (Scottish Executive. Option Appraisal: Building Our Future. 2004)

Discussion with PMG Members and Scottish Government (February 2010) led to agreement that the data and consultation responses, gathered from across the nine data sources, would be reviewed against six key criteria, each deemed fundamental in terms of proposing one or more recognition models for Scotland.

Fig. 9: Key Criteria used during Option Appraisal



Contributing data was examined and categorised using the six agreed criteria with results entered into an option appraisal matrix. The populated option appraisal matrix provided an overview of stakeholder requirements resulting from an analysis of the gathered data. Detailed comments were also prepared for each of the six key criteria (target groups, capacity, accessibility, funding and governance, visibility and service provision) with results, including the option appraisal matrix, included in a separate option appraisal report circulated to PMG members early in 2010.

The option appraisal matrix [fig. 10] and supporting data, was the basis upon which three possible recognition models for Scotland (virtual, relay and global) were developed and proposed. Each of the three proposed models was subsequently presented for wider discussion and debate during a series of follow-up stakeholder consultation events held in Edinburgh, Inverness and Glasgow in June 2010.

Fig. 10: Option Appraisal Matrix (contains example criteria only)

<p style="text-align: center;">OPTION APPRAISAL MATRIX</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Indication of Stakeholder Requirements</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(data and consultation responses used to confirm stakeholder requirements/preferences across a number of sub-options)</p>	HEI Sector	Colleges Sector	IAG Sector (SDS)	e-Consultation and In-Situ Visits	Focus Groups	Stakeholder Consultation Events	International Scoping	Professional Sectors	Recruitment & Staffing Industry
1. Funding and Governance									
A service which is wholly funded and directly governed by Government					●	●	●		●
A service with some Government funding which retains some financial autonomy							●		
2. Accessibility									
A service that is accessible in more than one language (i.e. more than English)		●			●		●		
A service accessible via multiple channels (online, physical, mail, email, telephone) in one or more locations				●	●	●	●	●	
3. Visibility									
A service that is backed-up by a focused media campaign alongside a strong brand or identity		●			●	●	●	●	
A service that is actively promoted in more than one country and/or more than one language		●	●						
4. Target Groups									
A single service addressing a range of different target groups with often-differing requirements	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
A service which also directly targets employers and other stakeholder groups (e.g. professional bodies)						●	●		●
5. Service Provision									
A holistic service acting as a one-stop shop for all recognition and skills development issues	●	●	●		●		●	●	●
A service allowing users to select from a wide range of initial (and add-on) recognition & support activities						●			
6. Capacity									
A service which builds upon existing data sources (e.g. UK NARIC, Professional Associations)	●		●			●	●		●
A service that recognises the need for a wide range of staff profiles to support different target/user groups		●				●	●	●	

Recognition Models for Scotland

The primary output of the option appraisal exercise was a series of three proposed recognition models for Scotland with each of the three models actively considering the numerous data inputs and stakeholder contributions gathered throughout the lifetime of the study.

The three proposed models were naturally emerging, in the sense that there were clear indicators towards a need for an online presence (VIRTUAL), a need to build upon existing recognition and recognition-related service provision already in place across Scotland (RELAY) and a need to provide a holistic recognition service across Scotland (RELAY/GLOBAL). An additional consideration, in proposing the three models, was the need to consider a series of models, each with differing initial and continuing funding requirements.

Acknowledging the fact that the next step in the study was wider discussion and debate, on the three proposed recognition models, amongst recognition stakeholders for Scotland, each of the models was presented solely in graphical form relying upon pictograms⁵¹ to express the range of service-provision alongside the physical/virtual and geographical presence of each model.

Fig. 11: Key to Pictograms

Presence		Service Provision			
	Scotland		Information		Stakeholder Workshops
	UK		Advice & Guidance		Skills Development
	European/ International		Signposting		Training
	Physical		Web Presence		National Marketing
	Virtual		Qualifications Recognition		International Marketing

The three proposed recognition models for Scotland are each presented below, both in their original design and accompanied by the original explanatory notes (each as presented to participants during the series of follow-up stakeholder consultation events). Beyond this, additional feedback, gathered during the three consultation events in Edinburgh, Inverness and Glasgow (June 2010), is provided.

⁵¹ a symbol or graphic that conveys its meaning through its pictorial resemblance to a physical object or item

Fig. 12: Proposed Recognition Model 1 - Virtual



Original Explanatory Notes

The VIRTUAL model requires only minimal funding to support what is primarily a virtual (or web-based) presence. With an expected staffing of 1-2 persons within an existing body or organisation in Scotland, this model expects to act as a VIRTUAL Scottish Centre for Recognition, informing and signposting migrant workers and refugees, either living in or planning to come to Scotland, in relation to existing recognition and support services relevant to Scotland (e.g. UK NARIC, Professional Associations, Sector Skills Sectors, etc.). No physical access to the recognition service is foreseen although the service would be actively promoted as a National Contact Point on Qualifications Recognition in Scotland, supported and recognised by Scottish Government. The VIRTUAL model would require active marketing both within and beyond Scotland (possibly in more than one language) and would make use of an easily-recognisable brand-identity to ensure the widest possible access by the end beneficiary group.

Feedback from Stakeholder Consultation Events

A vote took place during the final series of stakeholder consultation events (June 2010) with participants each invited to state their preference for one of the three proposed recognition models for Scotland. Whilst it is clearly important to consider voting results only alongside the more detailed written comments provided during these events, both comments and eventual voting results (6% of votes) confirm this as the least popular of the three proposed recognition models. Having reviewed the feedback provided, the following extracts (some blended, some combined) are noteworthy in terms of the proposed VIRTUAL recognition model:

- o not enough on its own... needs a blended model... somewhere between virtual and global (or virtual and relay)
- o requires a physical presence... needs face-to-face support
- o this is not sufficient... there is a need to judge cases on an individual basis
- o there is the potential to lose clients in the signposting process... requires the buy-in of stakeholders to ensure those referred are followed-up
- o might be useful for information and advice agencies... less so for individual clients
- o could be an add-on to existing sites (or services) such as the Relocation Advisory Service or Skills Development Scotland... unclear how this differs from Relocation Advisory Service
- o needs to have some element of interactivity... some way for clients to ask questions e.g. via email, an online chat service or through a forum facility
- o would be difficult to keep up-to-date, especially when signposting to other sites and/or organisations
- o a lot of the proposed services already exist (e.g. UK NARIC, Europass)... good but only if complementary to existing services... a great add-on
- o this is the most realistic in the current economic climate
- o need to be clear about what the site provides... avoid raising false expectations
- o might need to extend beyond Scotland... not all clients recognise the difference between Scotland and the UK
- o if well done, it could increase Scotland's visibility overseas
- o fails to build capacity... might also need to have a virtual community for information, advice and guidance staff
- o internet access could be a problem, especially in rural areas
- o needs to exist in more than one language... cannot exist solely in English
- o the required multilingual presence reduces the cost-effectiveness of this model
- o would need to have a strong branding and be well marketed... would require aggressive marketing... needs to be carefully branded
- o does not support the development of soft skills which is a key requirement for the target group

Fig. 13: Proposed Recognition Model 2 – Relay



Original Explanatory Notes

The RELAY model requires significant launch funding with a focus upon establishing a publicly-accessible Scottish Centre for Recognition, to act as a one-stop shop for all issues relating to the recognition of skills, learning and qualifications for migrant workers and refugees, either living in or planning to come to Scotland. The centre would be fully recognised and annually funded by Scottish Government and, via a centralised hub, would provide information, advice and guidance, recognition (of international qualifications) and signposting to professional associations, skills development bodies and to other organisations working on the recognition of learning and skills, including RPL.

The centralised hub would require a potential 4-6 full-time staff (some multilingual) and would rely further upon licensed RELAY points in other Scottish cities. Third-party organisations would act as licensed recognition RELAY points in order to provide a locally-accessible information and advice service for migrant workers and refugees although actual recognition services would be undertaken directly by staff in the centralised hub (Scottish Centre for Recognition). The centralised hub would be responsible for quality-assurance of all RELAY points through the provision of a minimum service checklist and through providing induction, training and ongoing support to all licensed (third-party) RELAY points.

At the outset, the RELAY model expects to be clearly reliant upon existing UK data sources for the recognition of international qualifications (e.g. UK NARIC), possibly through the agreement of a national license for Scotland, although such data will eventually be complemented through a locally-developed knowledge base for Scotland.

The RELAY model (centralised hub and recognition RELAY points) will require strong links to existing networks of information, advice, guidance and skills development agencies (including ESOL providers and existing recognition bodies and networks) in the UK and beyond and may require formal agreements with some information providers (e.g. Euroguidance, UK NARIC).

In addition to maintaining a publicly-accessible network of centres (centralised hub and recognition RELAY centres), an active web presence is also vital for the RELAY model with a focus upon providing an introduction to the recognition process, outlining service provision at the Scottish Centre for Recognition and signposting users to other relevant UK recognition bodies. Such a web presence should also facilitate the download of promotional materials including a dedicated guide to qualifications recognition in Scotland.

The RELAY model will require active marketing both within and beyond Scotland (possibly in more than one language) and should make use of an easily-recognisable brand-identity to ensure the widest possible access by the end beneficiary group. Promotional activity should further focus upon informing wider national stakeholder networks (e.g. sectoral bodies, professional associations) of service provision, and of the added-value of the Scottish Centre for Recognition, and should directly target employers (in particular SMEs) as a part of any awareness-raising activity, possibly via an annual information event or workshop.

The RELAY model should investigate potential income generation measures during the initial 2-3 years of service.

Feedback from Stakeholder Consultation Events

Considering both the results of the votes (66% of votes overall) and the written feedback provided, this model proved the most popular although active discussion during the three stakeholder events focused upon the expected remit of such a model with many stakeholders leaning towards a RELAY model that signposted to existing qualifications recognition services rather than attempting to launch something new and independent for Scotland.

The following extracts (some blended, some combined) are noteworthy in terms of the proposed RELAY recognition model:

- o effectiveness depends upon who has the local contract and upon the accessibility of individual relay points... there may be differing standards and priorities
- o use of existing services for local delivery might be difficult due to limited resources and cutbacks
- o organisations might choose to simply promote their own services... requires a totally impartial agency at the centre... the hub needs to be seen as independent
- o needs to be actively linked to EURES and the Relocation Advisory Service... not sure if Jobcentre Plus has the resources to act as a local relay point... requires good partnership working
- o would be useful to have a range of language resources... why not take the lead from the banking sector e.g. a dedicated Polish language service
- o a recognised logo to indicate the presence of the relay service would be useful... marketing of the service is important... branding required for centres providing this service

- o given the current economic climate, this is the most likely model to be funded... probably the most feasible model given current financial constraints
- o needs to be more than a recognition service, enabling career planning and skills development... good to have bases in existing, easily accessible services... positive opportunity for face-to-face contact... human contact is important... for many support is also required in developing soft skills
- o yet another service for the client group... could be further confusing... why not just use colleges or job centres, without the need for re-branding
- o independence of advice and guidance is crucial
- o training is an essential requirement for any future relay model... consistency of information is important as is the training of frontline staff... there is a need to ensure minimum quality standards... staff development is key for the relay points
- o better accessibility using existing networks (e.g. SDS)
- o as long as this model is well managed, it has real potential to mainstream specialist services
- o would require a strong supporting website i.e. virtual plus service... initial contact centre supported by website... virtual plus = relay
- o using existing knowledge and skills seems to be the most beneficial
- o is funding realistic... this could be more expensive than the global model... would need more staff than currently foreseen
- o most realistic (and complementary) model... a real plus is the potential for competency building, providing added-security for ongoing provision should there be changes to funding... definitely my preferred model, especially in terms of sustainability... if the hub ceases the increased knowledge and expertise remain
- o this is the most balanced and reasonable solution... best model, no point in reinventing the wheel
- o the hub would need to look at all aspects of qualifications recognition information and would need to manage this centrally... information needs to be up-to-date
- o could also act as a hub for employers
- o this seems the most sensible and cost-effective model... signposting to the relevant authority is often the best option
- o mapping, guidance and signposting is good but this service cannot offer recognition... the term validation must be avoided
- o this model cannot be a centre for recognition or validation with such services only available through signposting to relevant and competent authorities
- o some form of referencing to SCOF / EQF could be included
- o would be useful to have a single access point for all types of migrants that can signpost and direct to relevant bodies

Fig. 14: Proposed Recognition Model 3 – Global



Original Explanatory Notes

As with the previous model (RELAY), the GLOBAL model requires significant launch funding with a focus upon establishing a publicly-accessible Scottish Centre for Recognition to act as a one-stop shop for all issues relating to the recognition of skills, learning and qualifications for migrant workers and refugees, either living in or planning to come to Scotland. The centre would be fully recognised and annually funded by Scottish Government and would provide information, advice and guidance, recognition (of international qualifications) and signposting to professional associations, skills development bodies and to other organisations working on the recognition of learning and skills, including RPL.

The GLOBAL model expects to be hosted by an established service provider with existing local access points across Scotland and, in addition to hosting a centralised, multilingual team of 8-10 staff would rely upon an additional, part-time role being undertaken by staff in local offices. The centralised office would be responsible for managing all information, advice and recognition services undertaken by staff in local offices and for overall quality assurance of the Scottish Centre for Recognition ensuring minimum service provision and the induction and training of remote staff alongside management and maintenance of the Scottish knowledge base.

At the outset, the GLOBAL model will be clearly reliant upon existing UK data sources for the recognition of international qualifications (e.g. UK NARIC), possibly through the agreement of a national license for Scotland, although such arrangements would be forecast for replacement by a dedicated national knowledge base for Scotland within 5-10 years of the launch of the centre.

As with the previous model (RELAY), the GLOBAL model will require strong links to existing networks of information, advice, guidance and skills development agencies (including ESOL providers and existing recognition bodies and networks) in the UK and beyond and may initially require formal agreements with some information providers (e.g. Euroguidance, UK NARIC).

The GLOBAL model should take a proactive approach to marketing the Scottish Centre for Recognition (possibly in more than one language) and to assuring the support of all Scottish stakeholders, including employers (in particular SMEs), through the hosting of annual information days, workshops and promotional events. The GLOBAL model, as with previous models (VIRTUAL and RELAY), should make use of an easily-recognisable brand-identity to ensure the widest possible access by the end beneficiary group.

The GLOBAL model requires an active web presence able to inform users of recognition service provision, to signpost users to other relevant recognition bodies in Scotland and the UK and to allow the download of relevant recognition guides and promotional materials. In the longer-term, the potential for an online recognition service, to support the Scottish Centre for Recognition, should also be investigated.

The GLOBAL model should investigate potential income generation measures during the initial 2-3 years of service and should foresee financial independence in the longer-term.

Feedback from Stakeholder Consultation Events

Neither the most nor the least popular of the proposed models according to voting results (14% of votes overall) and written feedback. Many of the comments provided focused upon the potential cost of launching the GLOBAL model with many respondents unconvinced that such a model is possible in the current economic climate. The following extracts are noteworthy in terms of the proposed GLOBAL recognition model:

- o needs to provide a full range of services covering information, advice and guidance... requires fully trained advisers
- o selecting the right organisation to host this model is crucial (e.g. SDS)... EURES might be the right organisation to host this model as they are well known across Europe – although there currently only 2 locations in Scotland... SDS is a good potential host, as is the International Guidance model in Inverness... could sit as an area of expertise with an existing organisation such as Careers Scotland or SDS... too expensive unless delivered within the remit of an existing organisation
- o the number of physical locations needs to be quantified... how well will rural areas be serviced
- o the number of migrant workers might decrease, making this an expensive model
- o the global model is the only model that will fully meet the needs of migrant workers and employers alike
- o strong marketing/branding would be required making the service easy to identify... branding and promotion is essential... needs a good website
- o global model would require guarantees on consistency of information being provided... must be impartial, perhaps governed by a management board

- o probably not appropriate in the current financial climate but the best option... would be better through existing providers (RELAY) – too expensive a model to operate... too broad, strengthen existing structures instead... good all-encompassing service although cost could be a concern... costs is a huge factor in the current financial climate
- o direct approach better than virtual, less reliant upon ICT skills... agree with physical presence as advocacy is often required
- o requires a contact centre supported by a website providing information on ESOL (and/or signposting to ESOL)... contact centre should signpost to professional associations and/or skills development organisations
- o should promote telephone contact and offer bi-lingual support... not sure whether local recognition offices are financially viable, consider instead the possibility of a central hub with translation services and staff to answer telephone enquiries... what about a central resource operated through a multi-lingual contact centre... this is a resource intensive option and I would question the requirement for fixed hub offices
- o secondment opportunities should be considered within such a centre
- o need to be cautious – such a centre could easily be misrepresented by the media
- o GLOBAL model appears to be the Rolls Royce option, given current climate and funding restraints the need might be more easily met through the RELAY model... partnership with existing, local offices might be more cost-effective... in the current economic climate this could be a step too far
- o do not invest in a Scottish alternative to NARIC... cannot replace awarding bodies or NARIC... danger of stepping on the toes of other organisations and possibly raising false expectations
- o would need to prepare individuals for credit-rating and refer to relevant bodies
- o almost ideal – recruitment of the right people would be key... the potential for major expense should not put us off asking for this model
- o this model needs to clearly recognise its limitations – not a credit rating, accreditation or benchmarking service... cannot undertake recognition or validation
- o maybe focus upon a lesser model and move towards full service provision... seems to tick all the boxes however it might be better to start with a VIRTUAL model that could be built upon
- o partnership with existing agencies will need to be strong, otherwise it could become an additional layer of bureaucracy

Conclusions

At the end of 14 months of research, data collection and analysis, active stakeholder consultation and international scoping it is abundantly clear that there is no shortage of recognition-related activity in Scotland. Such activity might relate to the recognition of formal qualifications obtained overseas or to the recognition of prior learning, skills and experience for those lacking formal qualifications documentation, for one reason or another. Such activity might be complementary to the formal recognition process with a plethora of activity evident across a wide range of organisations and organisation types in Scotland. Such activity might be targeted directly at migrant workers and refugees wishing to access education, training and/or employment in Scotland, at a level commensurate with existing qualifications, skills and experience but might as easily be part of a holistic service provision aimed at all persons living, working or studying in Scotland.

However, considering recognition of the skills, learning and qualifications of migrant workers and refugees more globally, a number of gaps are apparent in terms of existing provision, with a confirmed need to increase the visibility and accessibility of all such recognition services in Scotland. As a minimum, all or any services providing recognition or recognition-related services should consider the use of a common brand, identity or logo able to signal the presence of such services to end beneficiaries. A more ambitious model might also rely upon a centralised information and signposting service with some form of complementary online presence.

Many of these thoughts have been echoed throughout the research, data collection and consultation phases of the study, with a number of additional thoughts and conclusions presented below, using the six key criteria originally developed during option appraisal.

In terms of **target groups**, there were times when it was important to re-focus, asking stakeholder contributors to look beyond institutional and organisational provision and to more widely consider how the recognition needs of migrant workers and refugees (and their families) in Scotland might be met. There were also suggestions that any future Recognition Centre (or service) for Scotland actively consider the potentially preparatory needs of asylum-seekers. Whilst employer participation in the scoping study was limited, employers, specifically SMEs, were confirmed as an equally important target group for any future recognition centre with a need to regularly and actively inform employers of both national qualifications frameworks and the role and benefits of recognition services in Scotland. Consultation of the target groups themselves confirmed a need for a more visible and accessible recognition service in Scotland (see below: visibility).

The **accessibility** of any future Recognition Centre (or service) for Scotland was considered on two equally important levels, the first confirming a clear need for access to recognition services across Scotland, including in rural and island communities, a point made both by service providers and potential end users (end beneficiaries). Beyond this, it was important to consider the merits of a *virtual* versus a *physical* recognition service and whilst the latter was unarguably confirmed as the clear winner with many arguments presented in terms of the need for face-to-face advice, guidance and support, many convincing claims were also made in terms of the need for a complementary online presence supporting any future recognition service or centre in Scotland.

With the final series of stakeholder consultation events taking place during the same week as the first budget announcement of the new UK coalition government, **funding and governance** were clearly at the forefront of participants' minds, with many references to potentially reduced service provision and an expected lack of funding to support any future Recognition Model for Scotland. However, with a focus upon continuing support to address the underemployment of migrant workers and refugees, to meet identified future skills gaps in Scotland, clear favour was shown for the proposed RELAY model

(albeit not in its current guise) with many observing the fact that this both increases capacity amongst wider recognition stakeholders and yet builds upon existing recognition services and expertise in Scotland. Respondents generally also felt that any future Recognition Centre (or service) for Scotland should be governed by an independent management board which also involves Scottish Government, this to ensure impartiality of service provision.

Perhaps the least obvious consideration at the outset of the study, and yet confirmed by stakeholder and end beneficiary contributors alike as of clear importance, is the **visibility** of any future Recognition Centre (or service) for Scotland. In all research, data collection and wider consultation activity, feedback was equally strong and confirmed the need for a common, easily recognisable brand, identity or logo which could be used to actively market any future recognition centre or service both nationally and across Europe and the wider world. Significant worth was also given to the potential for increased marketing of any future service provision within home markets (e.g. to employers and other beneficiary stakeholders in Scotland). It was also recognised however that any future brand or identity should clearly reflect the depth of recognition-related service provision being provided, this to ensure that end users were clearly aware, from the outset, of the recognition and/or recognition-related services immediately on offer.

The **capacity** of any future Recognition Centre (or service) for Scotland was actively discussed with a focus upon organisational capacity and the staffing requirements of any future service (or centre). End beneficiaries confirmed a need to look beyond monolingual service provision with suggestions towards increased information on the recognition process in other European languages. Wider stakeholder input ranged from a need for multi-lingual staff, to a need to ensure that all involved staff are adequately trained, to a need to ensure that any future recognition centre or service is adequately staffed in terms of providing the required support to what are clearly differing target groups (migrant workers and refugees) with often differing needs.

The most widely debated criteria, and one which was most evident during the final series of stakeholder consultation events, during which the three proposed recognition models were proposed, discussed and deliberated, is that of **service provision** and the depth and breadth of service that any future Recognition Centre (or service) for Scotland might need to provide. Participant feedback confirms that whilst none of the three proposed models was perfect - with suggestions instead towards a "VIRTUAL Plus" or "Reduced RELAY" model - the idea of a model that is more than VIRTUAL, less than GLOBAL, and which involves some form of hub-and-spoke presence able to build capacity in the community, was not only the preferred hybrid-model but was also relatively well regarded. Feedback did however clearly state that the one aspect of the current RELAY model that must be abandoned, in favour of signposting to existing service provision, was that relating to the formal recognition of (academic and professional) qualifications.

All things considered, this leads us to believe that there is little current favour to replace existing arrangements in Scotland for formal academic and professional recognition, and for the recognition of prior learning, maintaining instead the status quo in terms of the provision of actual recognition services.

This does not mean however that changes are not required, with undeniable demand and support for the introduction of a dedicated recognition centre or service which directly targets migrant workers and refugees coming to (or living in) Scotland and which aims at actively facilitating the recognition process. The remit of any future recognition centre or service would however be restricted to informing, advising, guiding and signposting end beneficiaries and to actively promoting and marketing such services at national, European and international level.

There was, and is, clear support amongst beneficiaries and wider stakeholders alike for a one-stop shop able to offer all such recognition-related services whilst actively networking with, and signposting to, relevant recognition stakeholders in Scotland and beyond.

In summary, early indications towards the establishment of a dedicated Scottish Recognition Centre were eventually unendorsed by wider stakeholders with a preference instead, and undeniable demand, for a Scottish centre (or service) able to actively facilitate the process of recognition for migrants workers or refugees coming to (or living in) Scotland. In terms of the proposed recognition models, the RELAY model proved a clear favourite amongst those consulted, albeit with a number of recommended changes, the most significant being a need to remove all or any references to formal recognition, leaving such activity to those organisations already active in this field.

Glossary of Terms

Academic Recognition

Procedures and/or processes for the acknowledgement and (often conditional) acceptance of higher education qualifications between institutions and countries.

Assessment

Methods and processes used to establish the extent to which a learner has in fact attained particular knowledge, skills and competence.

Asylum Seeker

A person whose application for *refugee* status has been officially submitted and who has not yet received a final decision.

Competence

The proven ability to use knowledge and skills.

Formal Learning

Learning that takes place within the context of programmes delivered by learning and training providers, that is assessed and leads to recognised qualifications.

Informal Learning

Experiential, often unintentional, learning that takes place through a person's lifetime; often the learner may not recognise, at the time of the experience, that this has contributed to the development of their skills and knowledge.

Learning

The cognitive process of acquiring skill or knowledge; acquiring new knowledge, behaviours, skills, values, preferences or understanding.

Migrant Worker

A person that has relocated to another country to take up employment on a permanent, fixed-term, seasonal or casual basis.

Non-formal Learning

Learning that takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training that may be assessed but does not typically lead to formal certification.

Option Appraisal

A technique for setting objectives, creating and reviewing options and analysing their relative costs and benefits.

Professional Recognition

Formal acknowledgement of an individual's professional status and right to practice a profession, in accordance with professional standards and subject to professional and/or regulatory controls.

Qualification

A formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent institution determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

Recognition of Prior Learning

The process for recognising learning that has its source in experience and/or previous formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts (including knowledge and skills gained within school, college and university and outside formal learning situations such as through life and work experience).

Refugee

Any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail him/herself of the protection of that country; or who not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it [*according to article 1A of the Geneva Convention*]; persons granted Refugee Status in the UK are generally granted five years leave to remain (previously Indefinite Leave to Remain) and have the same rights to work, housing and welfare support as a UK national.

Refugee Status

Status granted by a state to a person who is a refugee and admitted, as such, to the territory of that state; status awarded to a person that the UK Border Agency (UKBA) recognises as a refugee.

Skills

The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems.

Stakeholders

Individuals or institutions that may, directly or indirectly, positively or negatively, affect or be affected by an activity or course of action.

Target Groups

Individuals or groups directly (and most often positively) affected by an activity or course of action.

Training

Imparting and acquiring skills; the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences.

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Appendix 1: Project Management Group – List of Members

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Partnership

Represented by Margaret Cameron

Scotland's Colleges

Represented by Dugald Craig

Universities Scotland

Represented by Ruth Whittaker

Skills Development Scotland

Represented by Abigail Kinsella

External Consultant

Paul Guest

Appendix 2: Advisory Group – List of Members

Alliance of Sector Skills Councils

Represented by Stewart McKinlay (SEMTA) and Kevin McCrudden (LANTRA)

Bridges Programme

Represented by Maggie Lennon

Confederation of British Industry (CBI Scotland)

Represented by Iain Ferguson

Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)

Represented by Mhoraig Green and Laura Jamieson

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)

Represented by Ruth Sime and Marta Chaba

Jobcentre Plus

Represented by Celia Pappas and Michael Kennedy

Learner Representatives

Carolina Geribello and Marie Muhamirizo

Scottish Chambers

Represented by Martin Chisholm

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Partnership

Represented by Sir Andrew Cubie

Scottish Funding Council (SFC)

Represented by Ian Robertson and Lesley Sutherland

Scottish Government

Represented by Ian Kernohan, Karen McAvenue and George MacPherson

Scottish Refugee Council

Represented by Gary Christie and Wafa Shaheen

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

Represented by John Lewis (originally Sarah Breslin)

Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC)

Represented by Wendy Burton

Scotland's Colleges

Represented by Kate Lonergan

Universities Scotland

Represented by Simin Abrahams

Additionally, all members of the Project Management Group participate in the Advisory Group (see Annex 1) which is chaired by Aileen Ponton, Chief Executive of SCQF Partnership.

Appendix 3: Participating Organisations and Networks

The following list confirms all organisations participating in the study, either through attendance at one of initial or follow-up stakeholder consultation events, through responding to one of various consultation activities (including sectoral consultation) or through meeting directly with the external consultants.

No.	Network / Organisation / Body (alphabetical order)	Stakeholder Consultation Events (1)	Stakeholder Consultation Events (2)	Consultation Activity, Visit or Meeting
1	A4E Scotland		●	
2	Aberdeen City Council		●	
3	Abertay University			●
4	ACT (A Consortium of Training)		●	
5	Adam Smith College		●	●
6	Alliance of Sector Skills Councils			●
7	Angus College			●
8	Anniesland College	●	●	●
9	Asset Skills	●		
10	Bedzin Town Council (Poland)		●	
11	Berlin-Brandenburgische Auslandsgesellschaft (Germany)			●
12	Borders College			●
13	Bridges Programmes			●
14	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Technologie (Germany)			●
15	Cardonald College	●	●	●
16	Careers Europe			●
17	Central College			●
18	Centre for Remote and Rural Studies - University of the Highlands and Islands	●		
19	Citizens Advice Bureaux	●		
20	City of Edinburgh Council	●		
21	Community Learning and Development		●	
22	Confederation of British Industry - CBI Scotland	●		●
23	Contract Scotland			●
24	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities	●	●	●
25	Council for Assisting Refugee Academics			●
26	Department of Education and Science (Ireland)			●
27	Dundee International Women's Centre		●	
28	Dundee University			●
29	Edinburgh College of Art			●

30	Edinburgh University Settlement			•
31	Edinburgh's Telford College			•
32	Elmwood College			•
33	Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH) Limited			•
34	Energy and Utility Skills			•
35	Energy Institute			•
36	EURES			•
37	Fife Council		•	
38	Forth Valley College			•
39	General Dental Council			•
40	General Medical Council		•	•
41	Glasgow Caledonian University	•	•	•
42	Glasgow City Council	•	•	
43	Glasgow School of Art			•
44	Glasgow University			•
45	Global Highland Management Service Ltd.	•	•	
46	Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Authority - HABIA			•
47	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education			•
48	Heriot-Watt University			•
49	Higher Education and Training Awards Council (Ireland)			•
50	Highland Adult Literacies Partnership / Highland Council	•		
51	Highland ESOL Providers Network			•
52	Highlands and Islands Enterprise	•	•	
53	Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (Hong Kong)			•
54	Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland			•
55	Institute of the Motor Industry			•
56	Inverness College	•		•
57	James Watt College			•
58	Jobcentre Plus		•	
59	John Wheatley College	•		•
60	Johnstons		•	
61	Langside College			•
62	Lifelong Learning UK			•
63	Lighthouse Caledonia Ltd.	•		
64	Maryhill CAB Asylum Seeker & Refugee Project		•	
65	Napier University			•

66	Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen - NOKUT (Norway)			•
67	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education			•
68	National Qualifications Authority of Ireland			•
69	New Migrants Action Project - Positive Action in Housing			•
70	NHS Education for Scotland		•	
71	NHS Highland		•	
72	North Highland College - University of the Highlands and Islands		•	
73	North Scotland Industries Group	•		
74	Nursing and Midwifery Council			•
75	Office of the Fairness Commissioner (Canada)			•
76	Open University	•	•	•
77	Oslo Adult Education Service Centre (Norway)			•
78	Perth College - University of the Highlands and Islands	•		
79	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA Scotland)	•		
80	Queen Margaret University			•
81	Recruitment and Employment Confederation			•
82	Refugee Assessment and Guidance Unit (LMU)			•
83	Refugees into Teaching in Scotland		•	
84	Relocation Advisory Service		•	
85	Robert Gordon University			•
86	Scotland's Colleges	•	•	
87	Scotland's Learning Partnership			•
88	Scottish Agricultural College			•
89	Scottish Chambers of Commerce			•
90	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership	•		
91	Scottish Funding Council		•	•
92	Scottish Government	•	•	
93	Scottish Highlands & Islands and Moray Chinese Association	•		
94	Scottish Poverty Information Unit		•	
95	Scottish Qualifications Authority	•	•	•
96	Scottish Refugee Council	•	•	•
97	Scottish Social Services Council	•	•	•
98	Scottish Trades Union Congress	•	•	•
99	Skills Development Scotland	•	•	

100	SkillsActive			•
101	Steele Dixon			•
102	Stirling University			•
103	Strathclyde University			•
104	Summit Skills			•
105	Tür an Tür - Migranet (Germany)			•
106	UK Border Agency		•	•
107	UK NARIC		•	•
108	UNISON	•	•	
109	Universities Scotland		•	
110	University of Glasgow	•	•	
111	University of the Highlands and Islands		•	•
112	University of the West of Scotland		•	•
113	Volunteer Development Scotland	•		
114	Workers' Educational Association	•	•	•
115	World Education Services (Canada)			•
116	YMCA	•		

Notes

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scottish credit and
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