Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of Social Policy & Social Work at the University of Oxford

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Sharon Anne Vitali

GREEN COLLEGE

BARNETT HOUSE – SOCIAL WORK & SOCIAL POLICY

Supervisor: Dr. Ann Buchanan

2005

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

ABSTRACT

Several recent high profile cases (including the tragic death of Victoria Climbie) have highlighted perceived failures of child protection services. Post qualification training programmes have been introduced to provide front line social workers with contemporary specialised knowledge and skills in this complex field.

This project follows a cohort of 36 child protection social workers (and their line managers) over eighteen months while they undertook the Post Qualification Child Care Award for England and Wales.

A mixed methods, repeated measures, programme evaluation explored both the effectiveness and the impact of the training. Ipsative (self-referencing) evaluation data was triangulated against line manager, academic tutor and practice assessor evaluations. An action research philosophy ensured that formative findings were provided concurrently to the programme providers to effect timely redesign and remediation.

Statistically significant increases in candidates' levels of competency were demonstrated at the conclusion of the programme and at six months post-programme, suggesting both programme efficacy and effectiveness. An inexpensive user-friendly methodology for quantifying and measuring the acquisition of competency is presented.

In general, respondents were enthusiastic about what they had learned and all respondents agreed that the programme improved standards for childcare work. Despite qualitative feedback expressing dissatisfaction with the delivery model, the candidates' levels of enthusiasm for the programme decreased only slightly over the course, whilst line managers' level of enthusiasm increased.

Ninety percent of candidates reported stress associated with the combined pressures of work and the programme, yet their quantitative distress levels at the end of the program were actually lower than at the beginning. A number of adverse effects were identified. The conflict between the qualitative and quantitative findings is explored.

The programme was further evaluated by means of a unique international comparison contrasting it to a parallel Canadian post-qualification educational programme.

The result is a series of **LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE**, which have implications for the design and delivery of post-qualification training programmes for social workers, as well as other front line service delivery professionals.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

"To begin with it is a toy and an amusement;
then it becomes a mistress,
then it becomes a master,
and then a tyrant."
(Winston Churchill)

A project of this size and duration is never accomplished through solitary effort or hardship. In my case, many have contributed.

My parents, Jack and Frances Vitali taught me from an early age to believe in myself and my ability to accomplish my goals. They continue to inspire me daily with their life-long commitments to learning and their love.

Rose Marie Jaco, Ken Gordon, Judith Belle Brown, Teresa Smith, Rebecca Surender, Barbara Hudson and Ann Buchanan all provided academic inspiration and guidance.

Jennifer Fraser and Janet Palamides provided invaluable support and information.

The members of the Thames Valley PQCCA Consortium and the candidates in the first cohort were most gracious and supportive in allowing me entry into their programme, and assisting me in seeing the project through to completion.

Whether close by or far, my sisters and brothers never wavered in their support or patience.

My work colleagues at both Barnett House and Oxford Brookes have generously supported me in my work obligations, endured my whinging and constantly encouraged me.

The most important members of the team were my husband George, my son Malcolm and my daughter Jennifer, without whom this project would never have seen completion.

In Appreciation and Humility

Sharon

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

SHARON VITALI

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Context, Background & Review of the Literature (pgs. 1-47)

1.1. Introduction
1.2. Social Work - an Emerging Profession
1.3. Societal Responsibility for the Protection of Children
1.4. The Role of Social Workers in Child Protection
1.5. Child Protection in England
1.6. Child Protection in Ontario
1.7. Impact of Public Opinion & the Media
1.8. Social Work and Evaluation
1.9. Recent Trends in Social Work & Child Protection
1.10. The Impact of Global Information Dissemination
1.11. Competency Based Education, Training & Assessment for Social Workers

Chapter Two: Two Competency Based Educational Programmes (pgs. 48 – 64)

2.1. Introduction
2.2. The Ontario Capacity Building Project & Ontario Child Protection Training Programme (OCPTP)
2.2.1. Political Context - Ontario
2.2.2. Mandate & Mission - OCPTP
2.2.3. Programme Development & Design - OCPTP
2.2.4. Programme Delivery- OCPTP
2.3. The Post Qualification Child Care Award in England (PQCCA)
2.3.1. Political Context – England
2.3.2. Government Expectations – PQCCA
2.3.3. Programme Development & Design
2.3.4. Programme Delivery – PQCCA
2.3.5 The Local Partnership & Programme

Chapter Three: The Research Project (pgs. 65 – 69)

3.1. Rationale for the Project
3.2. Primary Goals of the Research
3.3. Concomitant Goals of the Project
3.4. Definition of Terms for the Project – Effectiveness & Efficacy

Chapter Four: The Methodology (pgs. 70 – 102)

4.1. The Research Question
4.2. Designing the Project – Challenges & Strategies for Evaluation
4.2.1. The Lack of Experience & Variable Enthusiasm for Research In Social Work
4.2.2. The Debate between Quantitative & Qualitative Methods
4.2.3. Developing a Mixed Method Model
4.2.4. The Case for Ipsative (Individual & Self) Goal Setting & Evaluation
4.2.5. Data Triangulation to Overcome Subjectivity
4.2.6. The Multiplicity of Stakeholders with Differing & Conflicting Goals
4.2.7. Determining Outcome Criteria & Measurement
4.2.8. Instrument Development
4.2.9. Entry & Compliance
4.2.10. Ethical Considerations
4.3. Overview of the research project design

Chapter Five: MICRO LEVEL FNDINGS:
The Sample & the Programme (pgs. 103- 169)

5.1. Description of the Sample
5.2. External Validity, Comparability and Generalisability
5.3. Demographics of the Study Respondents
5.3.1. Age of Candidates
5.3.2. Gender Distribution of Candidates
5.3.3. Marital Status & Family Responsibilities of Candidates
5.3.4. Membership in Minority Group
5.3.5. Highest Level of Education Attained
5.3.6. Social Work Qualifications
5.3.7. Specialized Social Work Training or Education
5.3.8. Time Employed as Social Worker
5.3.9. Rate of Pay
5.4. Formative Reports for Programme Re-design
5.4.1. The Baseline Report
5.4.2. Module One Formative Report
5.4.3. Module Two Formative Report
5.4.4. Module Three Formative Report
5.5. Summative Evaluation Reports for Programme Re-design
5.6. Auxiliary Data Collection for Programme Evaluation and Re-design

Chapter Six: MEZZO-LEVEL FINDINGS: Impact on Participants and Line Managers (pgs. 170 – 217)

6.1. Introduction
6.2. Motivation for Involvement
6.3. Levels of Enthusiasm
6.4. Sources of Stress for Candidates
6.5. Sources of Stress for Line Managers
6.6. Changes in Levels of Distress
6.7. Non-Completers & Adverse Effects
6.7.1. Profile of Non-Completers
6.7.2. Gender of Non-Completers
6.7.3. Marital Status of Non-Completers
6.7.4. Family Responsibility of Non-Completers
6.7.5. Areas of Difficulty for Non-Completers
6.7.6. Extra Hours Required
6.7.7. Qualitative Feedback from Candidates
6.8. Occupational Goals
6.8.1. Intention to Stay in Social Work
6.8.2. Aspirations to be a Line Manager
6.8.3. Aspirations to be a Practice Teacher
6.8.4. Aspiration to be a Practice Assessor
6.9. Success Rates in Practice Competencies
6.10. Average Academic Grades
6.11. Best Gains from Taking PQCCA
6.12. Professional Competencies in Need of Improvement
6.12.1. Line Managers' Ranking of Competencies in Need of Improvement
6.12.2. Candidates' Ranking of Competencies in Need of Improvement
6.13. Competencies Believed to Have Improved Most by Participation in PQCCA (Based on Opinion of Respondents)
6.14. Changes in Levels of Competency in each Learning Objective
6.14.1. Module One Learning Objectives/Competencies
6.14.2. Module Two Learning Objectives/Competencies
6.14.3. Module Three Learning Objectives/Competencies
6.15. Changes in Levels of Competency in Individual Learning Objectives
6.16. Reported & Sustained Changes in Levels of Competency (Based on Competency Scores)

Chapter Seven: MACRO-LEVEL FINDINGS: Suggestions for the Profession (pgs. 218 – 239)

7.1. Implications of Macro Level Findings
7.2. Programme Goals
7.3. Participant's Expectations
7.4. Generalisibility to Other PQCCA Programmes
7.5. **LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE**
7.5.1. Stress, Recruitment & Retention
7.5.2. Unintended Perverse Outcome of Magnitude of Workforce Retraining

7.5.3. Lack of Recognition
7.5.4. Perceived Inadequacy of Dedicated Resources
7.5.5. National Curriculum
7.5.6. Inclusion of Line Managers and Experienced Workers
7.5.7. Dealing with Candidates Unable to Make the Grade & Conflicts of Interest with Practice Assessor Selection
7.5.8. Keeping Current

Chapter Eight: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS - The Way Forward (pgs. 240 – 261)

8.1. Introduction
8.2. Study Goals
8.3. Research Questions
8.4. Study Accomplishments
8.5. Programme Limitations
8.6. Study Limitations
8.7. The Way Forward
8.8. Concluding Remarks

BIBLIOGRAPHY: (pgs. 262-288)

APPENDICES:
A Data Collection Flow Chart & Instruments
B Correspondence to Participants
C Reports & Documents for TVPQCCA & GSCC
D Ontario Child Protection Training Programme Materials
E Supplementary Tables and Figures

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

SHARON VITALI

Index of Figures

Figure 4.1	Multiple Stakeholders	C.4	p. 84
Figure 4.2	Delineating the Goal	C.4	p. 86
Figure 4.3	Study Design	C.4	p.100
Figure 5.1	Age of Candidates	C.5	p.107
Figure 5.2	Gender Distribution	C.5	p.108
Figure 5.3	Marital Status	C.5	p.109
Figure 5.4	Number of Children	C.5	p.109
Figure 5.5	Membership in Minority Groups	C.5	p.110
Figure 5.6	Highest Level of Education Attained	C.5	p.111
Figure 5.7	Social Work Qualifications	C.5	p.112
Figure 5.8	Specialised Social Work Training	C.5	p.113
Figure 5.9	Time Employed as Social Worker	C.5	p.114
Figure 5.10	Rate of Pay	C.5	p.115
Figure 5.11	Candidate Ranking of Competencies: M1	C.5	p.127
Figure 5.12	Mean Average Change in Competency: M1	C.5	p.129
Figure 5.13	Average Change in Anxiety:M1	C.5	p.130
Figure 5.14	Module One Anxiety Levels	C.5	p.131
Figure 5.15	Achievement of Module One Aims	C.5	p.132
Figure 5.16	Effectiveness of Teaching Format:M1	C.5	p.133
Figure 5.17	Relevance of Teaching Content:M1	C.5	p.135
Figure 5.18	Satisfaction with Library Resources:M1	C.5	p.136
Figure 5.19	Relevance of Assignment to Learning:M1	C.5	p.137
Figure 5.20	Effectiveness of Teaching Aides:M1	C.5	p.138
Figure 5.21	Sufficiency of Attention to Racism:M1	C.5	p.139
Figure 5.22	Adequacy of Teaching Venue:M1	C.5	p.140
Figure 5.23	Competencies Most in Need: M2	C.5	p.149
Figure 5.24	Achievement of Module Two Aims	C.5	p.150
Figure 5.25	Effectiveness of Teaching Format:M2	C.5	p.150
Figure 5.26	Relevance of Teaching Content:M2	C.5	p.151
Figure 5.27	Satisfaction with Library Resources:M2	C.5	p.151
Figure 5.28	Relevance of Assignment to Learning:M2	C.5	p.151
Figure 5.29	Effectiveness of Teaching Aides:M2	C.5	p.151
Figure 5.30	Sufficiency of Attention to Racism:M2	C.5	p.152
Figure 5.31	Adequacy of Teaching Venue:M2	C.5	p.152
Figure 5.32	Adequacy of Tutor Support:M2	C.5	p.153
Figure 5.33	Competencies Most in Need:M3	C.5	p.157
Figure 5.34	Achievement of Module Three Aims	C.5	p.158
Figure 5.35	Effectiveness of Teaching Format:M3	C.5	p.159

Figure 5.36	Relevance of Teaching Content:M3	C.5	p.159
Figure 5.37	Satisfaction with Library Resources:M3	C.5	p.159
Figure 5.38	Relevance of Assignment to Learning:M3	C.5	p.160
Figure 5.39	Effectiveness of Teaching Aides:M3	C.5	p.160
Figure 5.40	Sufficiency of Attention to Racism:M3	C.5	p.160
Figure 5.41	Adequacy of Teaching Venue:M3	C.5	p.161
Figure 5.42	Adequacy of Tutor Support:M3	C.5	p.161
Figure 6.1	Primary Motivations for Enrolling	C.6	p.171
Figure 6.2	Mean Average Changes in Enthusiasm	C.6	p.174
Figure 6.3	Changes in Levels of Enthusiasm	C.6	p.175
Figure 6.4	Greatest Sources of Stress for Candidates	C.6	p.176
Figure 6.5	Greatest Sources of Stress for Line Mgrs	C.6	p.178
Figure 6.6	Mean Average Changes in Distress	C.6	p.180
Figure 6.7	Changes in Levels of Distress	C.6	p.181
Figure 6.8	Profile of Non-Completers vs. Full Cohort	C.6	p.182
Figure 6.9	Gender of Non-Completers	C.6	p.183
Figure 6.10	Marital Status of Non-Completers	C.6	p.184
Figure 6.11	Family Responsibilities of Non-Completers	C.6	p.184
Figure 6.12	Areas of Difficulty for Non-Completers	C.6	p.185
Figure 6.13	Extra Hours Required	C.6	p.186
Figure 6.14	Intention to Stay in Social Work	C.6	p.190
Figure 6.15	Aspiration to be a Line Manager	C.6	p.191
Figure 6.16	Aspiration to be a Practice Teacher	C.6	p.192
Figure 6.17	Aspiration to be a Practice Assessor	C.6	p.193
Figure 6.18	Success in Practice Competencies	C.6	p.194
Figure 6.19	Mean Average (Academic) Grades	C.6	p.195
Figure 6.20	Best Gains from Taking the PQCCA	C.6	p.196
Figure 6.21	Line Mgrs – Competencies Most in Need	C.6	p.198
Figure 6.22	Candidates Competencies Most in Need:M1	C.6	p.199
Figure 6.23	Candidates Competencies Most in Need:M2	C.6	p.199
Figure 6.24	Candidates Competencies Most in Need:M3	C.6	p.200
Figure 6.25	Competencies Most Improved	C.6	p.202
Figure 6.26	Competencies Most Improved post 6 M	C.6	p.206
Figure 6.27	M1 Changes in Competencies –Part A	C.6	p.210
Figure 6.28	M1 Changes in Competencies –Part B	C.6	p.210
Figure 6.29	M2 Changes in Competencies –Part A	C.6	p.211
Figure 6.30	M2 Changes in Competencies –Part B	C.6	p.211
Figure 6.31	M3 Changes in Competencies –Part A	C.6	p.212
Figure 6.32	M1 Changes in Competencies –Part A	C.6	p.212
Figure 6.33	Changes in Levels of Competency	C.6	p.214
Figure 6.34	Changes in Levels of Competency	C.6	p.216
Figure 7.1	Attainment of Programme Goals	C.7	p.221
Figure 7.2	Meeting of Expectations	C.7	p.222

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

SHARON VITALI

Index of Tables

Table 4.1	Data Collection Schedule	C.4	p. 91
Table 5.2	Baseline Test –Motivations & Expectations	C.5	p.122
Table 6.1	Cand. Motivations for Taking PQCCA	C.6	p.172
Table 6.2	LM's Motivations for Sending to PQCCA	C.6	p.173
Table 6.3	Cand. Anxieties Prior to PQCCA	C.6	p.177
Table 6.4	Cand Stressors from the PQCCA	C.6	p.177
Table 6.5	LM's Anxieties Prior to PQCCA	C.6	p.178
Table 6.6	LM's Stressors from the PQCCA	C.6	p.179
Table 6.7	Candidate Qualitative Comments	C.6	p.187
Table 6.8	Competencies Most in Need	C.6	p.201
Table 6.9	Candidates' Three Best Competencies	C.6	p.204
Table 6.10	LM's Three Best Competencies	C.6	p.205
Table 6.11	Cand. Three Best Competencies (6 mth pp)	C.6	p.207
Table 6.12	LM's Three Best Competencies (6 mth pp)	C.6	p.208

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Chapter One: Context, Background and Review of the Literature

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Globally, child protection[1], child welfare and childcare social work has been under considerable scrutiny, reform and redesign for several decades. In the nineteen-nineties, child protection services in England and Canada were beleaguered when a series of highly publicised inquests into child-abuse mortality cases brought the issue into central focus. Severe criticism instigated sweeping governmental reforms, legislative revisions and initiatives.

The English Government responded in earnest, commissioning research, updating knowledge, reordering legislation, re-structuring service delivery, and imposing stringent standards upon those delivering the services. Within this complex and comprehensive reform, one training/educational initiative **The Post Qualifying Child Care Award for England (PQCCA),** was targeted at qualified childcare social workers, aiming to "…ensure the education and training of critically reflective social workers whose practice is child centred" (General Social Care Council 2002a, p31).

[1] For the purposes of clarity, this paper will refer to ***child protection*** as the statutory provision of services to protect children against abuse, the illicit use of drugs, economic, sexual and all other forms of exploitation, following practice guidelines directed and supported by legislation. In the England this area of speciality is subsumed within the umbrella of ***child care (or child welfare) policy and practice*** which covers a much broader range of services provided to children and families who are experiencing difficulties. Internationally, these three terms are often used synonymously. [Davies 2000]

Contemporaneously, the Government of the Province of Ontario (Canada) also identified a need to increase and improve the **capacity** of their child protection workers for optimal performance of their duties. Within a similar, overarching reform of Child Welfare, **The Ontario Child Protection Training Programme (OCPTP)** was designed with the aim of training protection workers in "…best practice principles and [to ensure] acquisition of the competencies required to engage in successful child protection work" (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2004, p1).

These two educational initiatives simultaneously pursued a shared goal - better education and training of front-line child protection (childcare) social workers. The **Ontario Child Protection Training Programme** was piloted in 1989/99 and formally introduced in 2000. The **Post Qualification Child Care Award** for England was piloted in 1999 and inaugurated in 2000. As the author was involved in developing the Ontario programme, the introduction of the Post Qualification Child Care Award provided a unique opportunity to conduct a comparative view research project. The primary focus of the research in this thesis is the in-depth evaluation of one of the first cohorts to undertake training in the Post Qualification Child Care Award in England, and examines the findings against the backdrop of the Ontario Programme.

Chapter One of the thesis places the research project into broad general context: tracing the history of social work as an emerging profession, society's adoption of the

responsibility for protection of children, and the role of social workers in performing those duties on behalf of society. The education, training and deployment of social workers in England have many similarities, and also some differences with the author's Canadian experience. Here we primarily focus on the **training** of **child protection** social workers. The societal milieu is examined in a discussion that acknowledges the impact of the public opinion and the media upon social work and social policy. Furthermore, there is an exploration of evaluation of social work intervention. **Chapter One** concludes with an examination of recent trends in social work (especially child protection), the impact of global information dissemination on this field and introduces the theory and history of Competency Based Education and Training for Social Work.

Chapter Two provides an overview of the two competency based training programmes - the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme (OCPTP) and the Post Qualification Child Care Award (PQCCA) for England. The Post Qualification Child Care Award is discussed in greater detail, as it is the focus of the research project, however, throughout the thesis it will be juxtaposed against the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme, to provide contrast and comparisons.

Both countries identified the need for a consistent standard of specialised knowledge and skills delivered through a mandatory, remedial training programme at a post-qualification level. Both programmes (the Post Qualification Child Care Award and the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme) were developed in response to

politically and publicly fuelled criticism of perceived failures of the system to protect vulnerable children. The curricula and assessment formats of both programmes were developed around a competency-based model of training and assessment, with a significant amount of overlap in the competencies identified and the knowledge base drawn upon. The training delivery models, however, are quite divergent and have resulted in different consequences; thereby providing perspective on the development and delivery of professional training in a field where the concepts of objective comparative evaluation and evidence based assessment are relatively new.

This research was conducted at a time of tremendous change and reform in social work education and training, especially in England. In pursuit of clarity, the early part of the thesis will focus primarily on the pre-Climbié political and policy environment that established the Post Qualification Child Care Award Programme. The findings provide information and suggested guidance that may be helpful in this period of accelerating reform of social work policy, education and regulation - especially the re-design of post qualifying training for social workers. Later policy initiatives and international perspectives will be interwoven as relevant to the underlying thematic goals.

The Post Qualification Child Care Award for England, like the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme was introduced with a well-identified problem, a well-intentioned goal, and a well-rationalised method for addressing and attaining that goal. However, in neither of these initiatives was there an integrated evaluation

component to measure the effectiveness of the intervention. Recognising the delays and limitations in retrospective programme evaluations, the author sought to undertake research to help ensure that the lessons from the considerable expenditures of time, money and effort would be appreciated.

Chapter Three sets the parameters for the research project and it's questions. The primary goals were: (1) to design and apply an integrated model of evaluation providing qualitative and quantitative data that could test the efficacy and effectiveness of the training programme and (2) to collect information which could inform the improvement and re-design of the programme. Concomitant research goals of quantifying and measuring (3) the acquisition of competency, and (4) the impact of the programme on participants, are also discussed.

Chapter Four presents the philosophy, rationale and design of the methodology, including a discussion of the limitations. With a strong commitment to parallel process, an action-research philosophy was adopted by which the participants would be empowered and benefit from their input. The resultant evaluation methodology was found to be user-friendly, cost effective and easily transferable to other educational/training programmes. All instruments developed and administered are presented in **Appendix A**. Correspondence to participants and tracking documents can be located in **Appendix B.**

The second part of the thesis consists of an exploration and discussion of the findings of the research. These findings are divided into three chapters.

Chapter Five presents the Micro Level Findings, related to the candidate sample and the course logistics. A series of detailed formative reports were generated throughout the research project in order to guide immediate and longer-term revision and redesign of the programme. The findings and suggestions, which were provided to the Committees of the Consortium and the General Social Care Council, are presented and discussed. Original versions of these reports can be viewed in **Appendix C.** Mezzo Level Findings are discussed in **Chapter Six,** exploring the impact of the Programme on the Participants and their Line Managers. **Chapter Seven** is dedicated to the Macro Level Findings, where the in-depth findings from the Post Qualification Child Care Award are transposed against the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme and extrapolated onto social work training programmes, in an attempt to quarry the **Lessons from the Front Line.**

Chapter Eight – The Way Forward, concludes with a succinct summary and discussion of the research; identifying its strengths, acknowledging its weaknesses, and outlining implications for social work education, training and for further research. During the design and execution of this research project, child welfare and social work policy initiatives continued to evolve and reform rapidly in England. It became increasingly necessary to define a specific temporal endpoint for the thesis subject. For the purpose of the academic D.Phil. award, a notional end was drawn in 2003

with the Victoria Climbié Inquiry (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2003a; 2003b; 2003c; 2003d; Department of Health – Social Services Inspectorate 2003a; 2003b).

The release of Lord Laming's Report on the Victoria Climbié Inquiry (January 2003) precipitated a natural watershed for policy and procedure in this area. In September 2003, the Government formally responded to Lord Laming's findings and recommendations and subsequently released the **Every Child Matters: Green Paper (**DfES 2003). Months of consultation produced **Every Child Matters: Next Steps** (DfES 2004a) and the introduction of the **Children Act 2004 (c. 31),** which has dramatic and far-reaching implications for policy, practice and training.

In a parallel yet interdependent pattern, the General Social Care Council (regulatory body for Social Work & Social Care in England) embarked on a series of reforms. These included enhanced academic standards through the introduction of a three-year honours BA degree in social work and professional regulation with stringent requirements demanded of those registered and employed as qualified social workers. The Post Qualification Framework, (the backbone for continuing professional development required for registered social workers), was reconsidered and after lengthy consultation is in the midst of redesign.

The Post Qualification Child Care Award educational programme was built on a foundation of literature, legislation and policy, which was pre-Climbié, and will be

discussed within that context. Literature that is more recent will be introduced only where it is relevant to discuss specific issues. It may well be, that some of the lessons learned during the conduct of this research will have be addressed in the dramatic shift change of these new initiatives, and it is recognised that only the passage of time will judge the full impact of the Climbié initiatives.

1.2 SOCIAL WORK - AN EMERGING PROFESSION:

"Caring for the psychosocial needs of others is as old as humanity but social work as a profession is relatively young and a product of the secularisation of the western world" (Chandler, 1986 p.332). With an ancestry of "…snoopers, busy bodies and folks addicted to minding other people's business" (Polansky, 1975 p.6) and a service record of good intentions (Macdonald 2001), it is not surprising that social work has struggled to attain the recognition and status of a profession. The establishment in 1884 of the Settlement Movement (Toynbee Hall in England; replicated in Canada and the United States), followed by the Charity Organisation Society (1869 in England and 1877 in the United States), instigated a gradual, yet incremental advance in the professionalism of social work.

Internationally, the models of training have differed, and to some extent, continue to do so. North American social work has embraced a casework model, whilst social work in the England has adopted a model more focused on case management. Over time, the roles and responsibilities of social workers have been heavily dictated by the

prevailing political climate, and by available societal resources. A review of the literature on social work training illustrates the geographic and political differences and trends. Regardless of the shifts in these trends, a common theme has been that social workers are charged with the binary responsibility of providing social care and control to vulnerable populations, on behalf of the state.

The current proliferation of discipline-specific publications, conferences, Internet websites, and University degree level education is evidence of increased specificity and clarity in the development and dissemination of social work knowledge, skills and values. (Erault 1989; Erault 1994; Munro 2002; Munro 2003). Professional associations have aided in setting standards for best practice and increasing public understanding of the profession. Gradually, regulatory legislation and governing bodies have been established in many countries to ensure protection of the public, concomitant with protection of professional title.

In the England, the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) has been disbanded in favour of a regulatory board called the General Social Care Council (GSCC). The General Social Care Council has a remit that includes: establishing, evaluating and overseeing standards for education, setting and evaluating eligibility for registration (which will be mandatory for all English social workers by the spring of 2005), setting standards for and evaluating regular and continuous professional development and establishing and overseeing mechanisms for protection of the public. (General Social Care Council, 2004)

The reform and **modernisation** of social work in the England have brought many changes, including the advent of clear professional standards, codes of practice, performance indicators and incentives for local authorities. These have led to massive re-education of the existing work force, evaluation and accreditation of worker competency and suitability (health and character), improved consistency of practice and a commitment to research and evidence based practice[2].

Although each of these components is important in the pursuit of social work professionalism, the greatest challenge is posed by the development of evidence-based practice. In 1975, Polansky (p.1) argued "…science is dedicated to obtaining information, ordering it into laws, and then disseminating it throughout society. Social workers, on the other hand, are not primarily knowers, they are doers."

Historically, this inability of social work, compared to the hard sciences, to measure and demonstrate positive outcomes of intervention has resulted in poor professional credibility (Macdonald, Sheldon & Gillespie 1992; Lishman 1984; Lishman 2003). Social work has been relatively slow to adopt a scientific method of evaluating social problems and interventions.

[2] 'Evidence-based practice indicates an approach to decision-making which is transparent, accountable, and based on a careful consideration of the most compelling evidence we have about the effects of particular interventions on the welfare of individuals, groups and communities'. (Macdonald 2001, p xviii). "Evidence based social care is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions regarding the welfare of those in need." (Sheldon & Chilver 2000, p 5)

This is no accident, nor is it the result of recalcitrance on the part of the field. On the contrary, there is strong motivation to deliver optimal and accountable care. As far back as 1931, Dr. Richard Clarke Cabot encouraged social workers to "measure, evaluate, estimate, appraise your results in some form, in any terms that rest on something beyond faith, assertion and illustrative cases." However, in the same address he also acknowledged that some social problems are "…too difficult for any wisdom yet existent" (Allport, 1951 p.v). Social science and social work researchers have been handicapped by the relative inability to have control over the many variables which influence the outcomes of interest, particularly in a knowledge base which is still relatively young and unsophisticated (Buchanan 2000; Munro 2002; Munro 2003; Milner & O'Bryne 2002).

Social work can be viewed as a pole apart from the sharply contrasting experimental method in laboratory rodents. Here the use of inbred strains, standardised laboratory conditions and interventions allow strict controls of genetic and environmental variables. In social work research in contrast, where such control is intractable, the only consolation is the unambiguous relevance of the questions.

Nevertheless, embracing 'consilience' (Sheldon & Chilver 2000), we can learn from the experience of the medical sciences, where progress has been achieved by asking narrow and discrete questions. The focus on meaningful outcomes is instructive. With these strategies and goals in mind, this research project was designed to evaluate

one circumscribed component of the reform of social work - the re-education of childcare / child protection workers.

The title, **Lessons from the Front Line**, puts into bold relief, the experts who will provide the lessons. Analogous to the front-line soldiers in battle, front line child protection workers possess the knowledge and experience to inform the strategists in the command post, who are designing the educational programmes.

1.3 SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN:

In the modern era, where children's rights and sense of entitlement often appear to outweigh those of their adult counterparts, it is easy to forget that this privileged position has only been held since the industrial revolution. Even now, it is restricted to specific cultures and countries (Buchanan 1996; Crosson Tower 1999; Buchanan 2000; Macdonald 2001; Munro 2002). Variations in the societal value and rights of the individual child reflect the political, economic and cultural specificity of host societies (Parton 1985; Dingwall 1994; Crosson Tower 1999; Aldgate & Statham 2001). These considerations are demonstrated in the social constructs that delineate definitions of childhood, appropriate parenting, child neglect (Levinson 1989) and child abuse (Cartwright 1973; Aber & Zigler 1981; Giovannoni 1989; Hutchinson 1994; Buchanan 1996; Hendrick 1997; Crosson Tower 1999; Buchanan 2000; Macdonald 2001; Aldgate & Statham 2001; Munro 2002).

In the England, rapidly incremental recognition and legislation of the rights of the child were undertaken during the sixty-year reign of Queen Victoria. Early legislation (1840) dealt with the regulation of employment related activities whilst later legislation clarified state recognition of children as distinct from adults. In 1898, with great impetus provided by the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (forerunner of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children), child protection legislation, (such as **Children Ill Treated and Starved in the Houses of the Drunkard, of the Idle, of the Vicious and of the Tyrannical Parent**), were introduced. For the first time, the State had the right and obligation to interfere with *paltria potest* - the unlimited right of the parent over the child (Hall 1897). Benjamin Waugh optimistically believed that over time the **Children's Charter** would be effective in "…converting children's miseries and frailties into peace and strength" (Hall 1897, p.xiv). Qualitatively, his descriptions of cruelty and neglect of children differ very little from the child protection cases of today.

As is the case in most areas of social welfare, Canadian (especially the Province of Ontario) social policy has been highly influenced by the example and legislation introduced in the England. By 1874, charitable institutions in Ontario could legally intervene and assist apprenticed children who were being mistreated. The **1888 Act for the Protection and Reformation of Neglected Children** (OACAS, 2004) provided state intervention and funding for children to be **cared for** in institutions or by charitable organisations. A 24-year-old immigrant from the United Kingdom, J. J. Kelso, used his influence as a newspaper reporter to increase public awareness of the

plight of abused and neglected children. In 1888, Kelso established the Toronto Humane Society "…to promote the social causes of child and animal welfare" (Chappell 1997; Canadian Libraries 2004). In 1891 Kelso established the first Children's Aid Society, and lobbied for the introduction of the 1893 **Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to and Better Protection of Children**. Over the next three decades sixty Children's Aid Societies were established across Ontario, and in 1912 joined together to form the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. (OACAS 2004).

Although idiosyncratically interpreted, most economically advanced societies, today articulate a commitment to ***societal responsibility for protecting children against harm inflicted by their parent(s) or carer(s)*** (Tunstill and Aldgate 2000; Aldgate & Statham 2001; Gambrill, Leever et al 2002; Munro 2002). As Macdonald (2001, p. xvii) notes "…it is one of the few areas where the state seeks to intervene in an otherwise private arena, that of family life."

This philosophy was formalised internationally in 1989, when all members of the United Nations (except the United States of America and Somalia) ratified the **United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child Article 19:**

> State parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other persons who have care of the child.

Although not a signatory, the United States of America adheres to a consistent value base, articulated through state specific legislation. For example, in Illinois, "The child welfare professional is a person who functions in a societal sanctioned decision making capacity for neglected and/or abused children and their families." (Gambrill, Leever et al 2002, p.1)

The sanctioning of child protection as an appropriate and necessary role of government requires a concomitant commitment to policy and expenditure. Buchanan (1996) argues that this **political responsibility** demands the development of policy based on knowledge of how best to intervene. In turn, this requires a commitment to thoughtful, longitudinal evaluation of interventions and outcomes to ensure that the knowledge base does instruct on 'how best to intervene'. A 2003 annual expenditure of £ 3.1 billion for **Services to Children in Need** (DfES, 2004b DfES 2004c) warrants continuous scrutiny, evaluation and improvement. [3]

The costs associated with child protection are not measured simply in fiscal terms. The potential risk of child harm or death (morbidity or mortality[4]) is precariously balanced against the potential damage of the loss of family integrity and disruption of family life (Butler-Sloss 1988; Maclean & Kurczewski 1994; Buchanan 1996; Gambrill, Leever et al 2002; Munro 2002). The former, which is more easily

[3] Ontario expenditure for 2003 =C$ 1.064 Billion (OACAS 2004). Rough per capita calculations provides estimates of $ 65.20 in Ontario, and £59.61 in England.

[4] Creighton & Gallagher (1988) suggested '…that 198 child deaths per annum in the UK are directly caused, or contributed to, by abuse or neglect…Wilczynski (1994, 1997) estimates an annual figure in England and Wales of 308 (Reder & Duncan, 1999, p 2). Macdonald (2001) estimates that '…Failures in child protection regularly cost the lives of some fifty children a year and blight many more.'(p. xvii)

measured, may trump the latter which is less easily quantified yet intuitively of major importance. Intervention should provide a demonstrably better alternative. Yet often this relies on approaches which are self-evident, but not universally so. Despite the goal of protecting children from harm and improving their life opportunities, longitudinal research by Gibbons, Gallagher et al. (1995, p.49) revealed:

> We could find no evidence that children who were legally protected (by care or other orders) did significantly better. Nor did those removed from their abusers, and placed in new permanent or long-term families, have significantly better outcomes.

For those on the front line of service design and delivery: social workers, policy makers and politicians, these difficult (if not impossible decisions) must be made with finite knowledge of how best to intervene. The limitations imposed by the political, social and economic climate of the day carry with them the pervasive threat of damage or destruction of professional or political careers (Buchanan 1996; 2000). Ascertaining the correct balance between **the paramountcy of a child's welfare** and parental rights continues to be elusive (Aldgate and Statham 2001; Leschied et al 2003).

A cost-benefit analysis of fatal child abuse inquiries would compare the fiscal and personal costs associated against the actual improvement in child protection. This has not been done, perhaps because it would be difficult and controversial, regardless of outcome.

1.4 THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN CHILD PROTECTION:

It could be argued that the protection of children is the responsibility of all members of society, especially their parents or carers, (Barth et al 1994; Buchanan 1996; Aldgate & Statham 2001; Munro 2002; Dudding 2003; Trocme & Chamberland 2003; Leschied et al 2003; DfES 2003). However, it has been generally presumed that 'first tier' professionals with whom children interface most often (doctors, teachers, health visitors and police) and, specifically social services (especially child protection social workers) are ultimately accountable.

Child protection is one of the primary duties within the social work profession's domain of social policing (McMahon 2000; Gambrill, Leever et al, 2002). For intervention to be effective, the social worker must employ a fluid and dynamic amalgam of social control and care (Aldgate & Colman 1999; Buchanan 2000; Aldgate & Statham 2001; Macdonald 2001; Munro 2002). Understandably, this binary role can cause confusion to the service users and the social workers (D'Agostino 1975).

Furthermore, this balance of control and care shifts in the winds of financial and political climates to the extent that Barth et al (1994, p.273), claim "…child welfare services are…the weather vane for the greater society". Historically, whenever resources have become restricted, the threshold for intervention (Holland & Scourfield 2004) has been raised and the interventions become primarily social

control (Buchanan 1996; Munro 2002). Usually, this has been followed by a swing in policy where there is recognition that child maltreatment is not solely a family matter (Department of Health & Social Security 1974a) but is influenced by the larger social environment (Garbarino 1993). Investment into a more ecological model with universal programmes and increased family support and social care then follows.

Buchanan (2000), Munro (2002), Shaw & Lishman (2003) have expressed concern that the mandate for child welfare services has now grown and evolved from its simple goal of prevention of harm into the all encompassing ideal that "…every child should have the opportunity of achieving optimal outcomes in his or her development" (Aldgate & Colman 1999). With the expansion of this mandate, a myriad of well-intentioned legislation and legislative reform has been introduced to address the many areas where state involvement might potentially contribute to child welfare including poverty, health, living conditions, education, corrections and court proceedings. Aldgate & Statham (2001, p.5) note, "Consequently, by the early 1980s, the law concerning the upbringing of children was, at best, complex and confused and, at worst, contradictory".

This legislative quagmire was addressed in the nineteen-eighties, and found culmination in the **Children Act of 1989** (Department of Health 1989), instituted in 1991 (Department of Health 1991a), which sought to provide a "…unifying framework for most aspects of the law relating to the care and upbringing of children." (Aldgate & Statham 1991, p.7).

Historically, periodic shifts in governmental philosophy, policy and funding (Macdonald 2001) have impeded the evaluation of intervention effectiveness, not the least because the most important outcomes long surpass terms of office at national and local governmental levels. Advocates for children struggle against historical models of policy development, often based more on **prevailing political winds** than on "…substantial input from research and practice" (Zigler & Hall 2000, p. 914).

In England, a tremendous amount of research has been commissioned to evaluate the impact of the changes that the legislation had wrought (Department of Health, 1991b) and to design on going policy and procedure reform (Aldgate & Statham 2001). This includes "… a great deal of evaluative research …exploring the impact of policy shifts and changes in legislation on the lives of children in care or at risk of care" (Macdonald 2001, p.16).

This trend is echoed internationally, particularly with the recognition of the importance of international large cohort longitudinal studies such as the **Looked After Children Project** (Department of Health 1992; 1994a; 1995a; 1995b; Woodward & Mayhew 2003; Hurley, et al 2003). This project is attempting to explore the associations between policy and intervention shifts and long-term outcomes for children. Advances in technology, communication and international cooperation have accelerated the collation of this body of knowledge, but to date, the research has been somewhat limited by its retrospective and descriptive nature. As the results of the large cohort studies begin to be tabled, there should an increase in our

confidence that legislation, policy and front-line intervention can be informed by evidence.

The next challenge is to transfer this latest knowledge of research evidence and best practice to the front-line social workers. Reder & Duncan (2004, p.95) argue that post- Climbié, what is needed is not bureaucratic changes of structures, protocols and procedure, but "…frontline staff's need to improve their understanding of complex cases and to acquire and apply appropriate skills." This goal is the primary focus of educational programmes such as the Post Qualification Child Care Award and the Ontario Child Protection Worker Training Programme, and a major impetus for this research.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION IN THE ENGLAND:

As discussed earlier (footnote 1, p.1) **child protection** is the statutory provision of services to protect children against abuse, the illicit use of drugs, economic, sexual and all other forms of exploitation, following practice guidelines directed and supported by legislation. In the England this area of speciality is subsumed within the umbrella of ***child care (or child welfare) policy and practice*** which covers a much broader range of services provided to children and families who are experiencing difficulties. Internationally, these three terms are often used synonymously. (Davies 2000). **The English Children Act 1989** defines **child protection** "…safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in need at risk of significant harm or at risk of impairment". Although the **Ontario Child and Family Services Act of 1998** does

not include a specific definition for child protection, Part XII.1states " The paramount purpose of this Act is to promote the best interests, protection and well being of children." Part III Sec 37(2) defines a child as being in need of protection because of: physical harm, neglect, failing to supervise, risk of physical harm, neglect, & failing to supervise, sexual molestation/ exploitation, risk of sexual molestation/ exploitation, failure to provide medical treatment, suffered emotional harm, risk of emotional harm, child suffers from mental, emotional or developmental condition that parent does not provide for, abandonment, child under 12 years who has killed or seriously injured another person or property or child's parent is unable to care for the child and child is before the court on consent.

At the outset of the research project, the onus of responsibility for child protection in the England fell within the portfolio of the Department of Health within their remit of Social Care Services. Responsibility for delivery and improvement of service provision, as well as for the training of child protection workers, was shared with a number of organisational bodies: the local county government councils, the General Social Care Council (a derivative of the former Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work), TOPSS (the Training Organisation for the Personal Social Services) and most recently the DfES (the Department for Education and Skills). Voluntary and private sector agencies such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and Parents and Children Together, also have played a role, along with physicians, police, teachers, health visitors, amongst others. The result has been a fragmentation of services that has contributed to failures of the **system** to

protect vulnerable children. Most recently, the government has sought to remedy this. "Since 1945, there have been no fewer than 70 public inquiries into child abuse…[in response] the Government [has] created a Minister for Children, who would draw together a disparate range of responsibilities with the sole aim of protecting children" (The Independent, 2004, p38).

It is hoped by many that the new design and delivery of integrated child services and the 2004 Children Act, will address many of the lessons learned from fatal child abuse inquires and research.

> The consultation on the Green Paper showed broad support for the proposals, in particular the intention to concentrate on outcomes that children and young people themselves have said are important, rather than prescribing organisational change…produced in the light of this consultation [the Act] gives effect to legislative proposals…to create clear accountability for children's services, to enable better joint working and to secure a better focus on safeguarding children. (DfES, 2004d)

1.6 CHILD PROTECTION IN ONTARIO:

At the onset of this project, child protection services in Ontario were legislated under the Child and Family Services Act (Ontario Ministry for Community & Social Services 1984) and delivered through a network of regionally located Children's Aid Societies. Although funded by and accountable to the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, each Children's Aid Society is governed by a local, voluntary Board of Directors.

The recent history of reform of Ontario child protection services echoes that of the England. In 1996, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and the Office of the Chief Coroner established the **Ontario Child Mortality Task Force** to review the circumstances of the deaths of one hundred children (between January 1994 and December 1995) who were known to Children's Aid Societies. (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 1997; Hatton et al 1998; Leschied et al 2003). A further eight deaths were identified for individual inquests.

Recommendations from the 1997 Shanay Johnson Coroner's Inquest included: "…a major overhaul of Ontario's child protection system…(with) better training for Children's Aid Society workers, funding for programs preventing child abuse, and a revamped law that would put the safety of children above the rights of abusive parents" (Freed 1997). Other recommendations included the principle of paramountcy of children's interests in all funding, legislative, policy and court decisions, budgetary allocations for prevention and family support programmes, a government Minister dedicated to Child Welfare and Protection, and training initiatives for all professions engaged in child protection work inclusive of physicians, police, and judges, amongst others.

The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services then conducted a compliance review, an accountability review and a review of the Child and Family Services Act. **The Child Welfare Reform Agenda 1998** (Ontario Ministry of

Community & Social Services 1998) was the government initiative under which a post-qualification training programme for social workers - the Ontario Child Protection Worker Training Programme, was instigated. Reform of child protection services in Ontario has continued (Trocme, et al. 2002; King, et al 2003), however, that discussion is outside the remit of this paper.

1.7 IMPACT OF PUBLIC OPINION & THE MEDIA:

The professional culture of social work, which includes respect for client confidentiality, limits public awareness of the **successful outcomes**, which characterise the vast majority of this work. However, whenever there is a perceived failure of the system or the profession to protect a vulnerable member of society, the press (especially the tabloid media), public opinion and government response is outspoken, if not shrill (Aldridge 1994) in its ferocity to "…name, shame and blame" (Sieghart 2001, p.7). The emotional sensitivity of child protection matters, along with the high profile visibility of **mistakes** or uncontrollable events often results in these social workers feeling they are "…damned if you do and damned if you don't" (Cuffe, 2003).

Following each highly publicised death and inquiry, (Buchanan 2000, Sheldon & Chilvers 2000, Macdonald 2001, Munro 2002) there has been a flurry of reactive policy development in an attempt to learn from the errors, hopefully prevent a reoccurrence, and to publicly demonstrate that something is being done. Many of

these government agendas and initiatives have made significant inroads into improving the structure and delivery of child protection services. Currently, children's services and child protection are central cogs in a massive government campaign to modernise, reform and increase the professionalism of social work.

Evaluation of these initiatives (such as the subject of this research project) is a positive step as it will ensure that "…the expenditure of money and effort is worthwhile" (Clarke-Cabot 1939, p.vi) and, hopefully provide the structure for methodical and thoughtful, rather than **knee-jerk** policy development and reform. Buchanan (2000, p.6) observes that "…one of the enduring characteristics of child protection in England is how often policy is formed on the back of a major scandal". Sheldon & Chilvers (2000, p.5) caution against reactive policy development, arguing that "…hard cases make bad laws".

1.8 SOCIAL WORK AND EVALUATION:

Recently, social work literature has seen a growing body of publications devoted to research (Powell 2002; Shaw 2003); however, for the most part it is primarily small sample research employing predominantly qualitative methodology and therefore primarily of a descriptive nature (Lyons & Manion 2003). The exceptions to this trend have been the larger policy-relevant research projects commissioned by the Government (Fisher, 1999).

In general, social work does not have a strong history or reputation for evaluative research (Fischer 1973; Gabor et al 1998; Sheldon & Chilvers 2000). On a micro level, practitioners are trained to set clearly defined goals for, and repeatedly measure, client progress (Gambrill 1983; Gambrill, Leever et al 2002). Unfortunately, this practice has not been uniformly transferable to the systematic collection, collation and evaluation of data that would inform on social problems, effectiveness of interventions and educational modalities (Shaw & Lishman, 2003). Weber and Polansky (1975, p.182) suggest that this may be due to a combination of job stress and evaluation phobia. "Evaluative research in social work addresses itself to a brusque and fundamental question: Are you doing any good? The question is simple and direct, but answering it may prove complex and difficult. It is not a comfortable issue to contemplate when one is already working hard."

Bloom & Fischer (1982, p.10) argue that enthusiasm for evaluative research in social work has been further dampened since "…to a great extent, classical studies of effectiveness have produced negative results… While this in itself can be extremely beneficial in telling us what not to do, such studies often don't give us a positive direction for what we should do."

Research methodology and statistics are not well integrated into the academic curricula, and students frequently dread those subjects most. (Miller 1975; Bloom & Fischer 1999; Marsh & Triseliotis 1996; Russell 1990; Brown, Karley & Vitali 2002). Incentives for practitioners to conduct research (such as research grants,

workload relief, and time off in lieu) have been minimal (Beebe 1995; Lyons & Manion 2003).

Macdonald, Sheldon & Gillespie (1992, p.625) warn social workers that these excuses are insufficient:

> …the difficulty with a 'methods looking for a problem' attitude is that it may not be a consciously thought out or regularly revised position. Our own intuitive ideas on how best to help people quickly becomes imbued with a feeling of self-evident and permanent appropriateness which has little connection with the changing research literature on outcomes In a developing profession such as ours there should be nothing sacrosanct about established routines…(which) may simply represent a lowest common denominator form of practice resulting from organisational pressure, failure to keep abreast of research, therapeutic tunnel vision or professional comfort.

The recent global popularity of Evidence Based Practice (EBP) (Hudson 1998, Buchanan 2000) has sparked numerous initiatives, which are beginning to address this gap – The Exeter Centre for Evidence Based Social Services, Research WebPages such as Research in Practice, Making Research Count, the Campbell Collaboration, The Social Care Institute, and Barnardo's What Works? The Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre) is part of the Social Science Research Unit (SSRU), Institute of Education, at the University of London. The University of Oxford has retired its social work qualification course in favour of a Master's Degree in Evidence Based Social Work. Similar initiatives can be mapped in a number of parallel disciplines such as education, nursing, physiotherapy and occupational therapy (Shaw & Lishman 2003; Trinder 2003).

Many social workers agree with Clark & Arkava (1979, p.27) that "…unless [social work education] can demonstrate that its graduates are competent in the performance of their professional tasks, the basis for professional autonomy will be eroded seriously". Since 1994, academic social work programmes accredited by the American Council on Social Work Education have been required to include practice evaluation as a core curriculum item. Bloom, Fischer & Orme (1999 p.4) argue that "…the twenty-first century will likely see evaluation of practice in field settings just as integral to professional helping as were communication skills in the twentieth century."

Despite this increased enthusiasm for social work to become proficient in evaluation, philosophical tension continues to exist within the profession regarding the value and role of social work research. There continues to be support for the argument that the delivery of social work service may be too complex to be adequately captured and measured (Parsloe1981; Gabor et al 1998; Darlington & Scott 2002). The vulnerabilities of human behaviour to a myriad of intervening and transitory variables pose formidable obstacles in the way of simple and clear-cut studies of outcomes (Macdonald, Sheldon & Gillespie 1992; Sheldon & Chilver 2000; Macdonald 2001).

Darlington & Scott (2002, p.47) argue that this position is indefensible, stating that:

> …no research is without risks…and the risks must be balanced against the possible gains from conducting such research…It can be argued that it may be unethical not to do research in the human services in which the community invests scarce resources and where professional practice is itself often an untested social experiment with the potential to hurt as well as help individuals and their families.

Macdonald (1997; 2001) encourages social work to adopt medicine's **gold standard** evaluation method (Scott & Usher 1999; Sheldon & Chilver 2000) **- randomised controlled trials (RCTs)** and employ them as the "…cornerstones to an evidence based approach" (Macdonald 2001, p.6). Macdonald argues that randomised controlled trials are appropriate for measuring the complexity of social work intervention as the design allows control for selection bias and bias from the influence of extraneous variables. The ethical dilemmas of randomisation into non-treatment groups are dismissed by Munro (2002) with the reminder that we have no evidence as to what actually does work. Macdonald (2001) concedes that randomised controlled trials may not be feasible in fields of service such as child protection, however she argues that systematic evaluation must begin. Buchanan (2000, p.83) also endorses the employment of randomised controlled trials to augment "…broad sweep and process evaluation", but points that the RCT research model is very expensive if it is to produce reliable results.

Although randomised controlled trials may be held as **gold standard**; it is not the only method whereby intervention can be measured. Until money and logistics allow for large well-designed and analysed RCTs focusing on interventions with social problems, evaluation can proceed with other models. Single system designs have been long proposed in social work practice as they adapt nicely to single cases, larger samples and multiple baselines, have a built in control group (themselves) and sidestep the ethical dilemmas related to withholding treatment. (Sheldon & Baird

1978; Bloom, Fischer & Orme 1999; Bradshaw 2003). In reality, single-system designs are an expansion of accountable social work casework that is taught and expected of every social work student and practitioner. The fundamental difference is a demand for rigour and the use of instruments to measure client(s) baselines and changes following interventions, rather than reliance on the subjectivity of practitioner intuition or client reporting. A recently emerging paradigm – **Realist White Box Evaluation** (Kazi, 2003) demonstrates how single system designs can effectively overcome the limitations of empirical practice, interpretivist approaches and pragmatic methodological-pluralist approaches.

It is heartening that modern social work researchers finally appear to be accepting Galileo's dictum that *the chief cause of poverty in science is imaginary wealth. The chief aim of science is not to open the door to infinite wisdom, but to set a limit to infinite error.*

This position echoes the opinion of medical researchers Ebers & Chalmers (2003) who argue that although the randomised controlled trial has become the gold standard for evidence, it remains true to this day, that most medical decisions must be made in the absence of evidence. However, randomised controlled trials have accomplished a dramatic change in the mindset of medical practitioners who have witnessed successive startling and counter intuitive results demonstrating that long cherished opinions could have been utterly wrong. Indeed, it probably has indirectly engendered some needed humility and an increasing caution in opinion. As Michael Pierce (1988) posited "…the purpose of science is to surprise…it argues against previous common

assumptions." Where evidence is unavailable, the best choice is often made by an experienced thoughtful practitioner who is continually evaluating outcomes as they become available to them, and has an open mind. Manton (2004) reminds us “the experienced [practitioner] knows what they see, whereas the inexperienced … sees what they know”. In child protection, intervention in the absence of evidence is most dangerous with inexperienced practitioners, who rely on "risk assessment schedules …that have not been empirically tested" (Munro 2002, p. 25).

Ironically, pervasive resistance against systematic evaluation and randomised clinical trials, may have roots in social work's pioneering 1936 Cambridge-Sommerville Youth Study by Cabot-Clarke, which eventually demonstrated that the group of juvenile delinquents who received the social work intervention actually fared worse than the control group. (Powers & Witmer 1951; Maynard & Chalmers, 1997). In 1973 Fischer (p.19) revisited the question of social work intervention and concluded that"…lack of effectiveness appears to be the rule rather than the exception across several categories of clients, problems situations, and types of casework". Evidence-based social work needs a few successes, which, like in medicine, are capable of demonstrating to the sceptical that the methodology can substantiate common wisdom and occasionally show it to be in grievous error.

The arguments against evaluating social work intervention have been frequently levied in the service field of child protection. The statutory mandate of protecting children is so emotionally driven, and the magnitude and complexity of the task so

great, that conventional evaluation methods seem inadequate. However, a review of the literature, (professional and lay) reveals global concern with the inability of child welfare workers to consistently meet the primary, and sometimes internally conflicted, mandates of keeping children safe, with minimal disruption to family units. The literature is rife with debates around the complexities of attempting to evaluate **improvement** in child protection services (Pritchard 1992 & 1993; Creighton 1993, Pritchard & Stroud 2002). How do we set a baseline for unpreventable (and often unpredictable) deaths? Should the goal be a reduction of children brought into care, or an increase in the children brought into care? This becomes even more difficult when the thresholds for entry and the risk assessment tools shift, as has been the experience in North America. Recent studies from Ontario (Trocme, et al. 2002; Leschied, et al. 2003) have sought to fully explore these substantial increases in admissions to care (as much as seventy percent), and have produced fascinating counterintuitive findings.

Service user satisfaction, although important, is even more problematic as an outcome measure (Freeman, et al. 1999; Aldgate, Stein & Carey 1989; Wilkins 2000). Currently, research optimism is vested in the belief that meta-analysis of large longitudinal cohort studies such as the **Looked After Children** (Jackson 1998, Bell Canada 1998) will provide answers, and findings are beginning to emerge into the literature. However, these large cohort longitudinal studies require extensive use of technology (and therefore fiscal investment) to adequately track and collate the data.

As Barth et al (1994, p.268) note, "Child welfare service providers are attempting to round the corner and move from the record keeping age to the information age."

Although these arguments around complexity may be valid, they are an insufficient defence in the climate of evidence informed decision-making and interventions. Reviews such as Newman's 2002 **Promoting Resilience: A Review of Effective Strategies for Child Care Services,** are increasingly available for practitioners to make informed and justifiable decisions about their practice choices. Macdonald, Sheldon & Gillespie (1992, p.638) posit this should also apply to educational interventions; "… (it) is entirely reasonable that the proposers of a new training course…be asked to explain why a particular approach has been chosen and whether there is any evidence to back it" Gabor et al (1998, p.1) argue that "…the profession…has never been under greater pressure". The reality is that social work must begin to evaluate itself or accept the fact that others will evaluate it (Sheldon & Macdonald 1999).

This climate of challenge for social work to increase in its professionalism, particularly through evaluating the effectiveness and impact of its interventions, has served as a stimulus for this researcher. Integrating a user-friendly programme evaluation into an educational initiative for social workers presented a tempting research challenge.

1.9 RECENT TRENDS IN SOCIAL WORK & CHILD PROTECTION:

Globally, a number of trends have combined to have a significant impact on education, training and research in social work, and child protection. Managerialism (Healy 2002; Tsui & Cheung 2004), and competition for public resources have accelerated demands for accountability, efficiency and effectiveness. "The audit explosion is to do with the need to install a publicly auditable self-inspecting capacity with attempts to link ideals of accountability to those of self-learning" (Power 1997 p.67). Darlington & Scott (2002, p.5) note that the:

> …extension of evidence based practice from medicine to the rest of the health field, as well as to education and social welfare, [has given] empiricist approaches a new rigour in a context of resource scarcity in which effectiveness and efficiency were dominant concerns for government.

As well as collection of data, the enthusiasm for evidence based practice (Sheldon & Chilvers 2000, Trinder 2000) or what Aldgate labels **evidence informed practice** demands "research mindedness (where)…the ability to read interpret and use findings from research are key ways of understanding which practice interventions are likely to be most beneficial and most effective" (Barns & Harrison 1995, p.20).

Attainment of this objective demanded reform of the social services, re-education of the existing workforce, and professionalisation of social work (Department of Health 1998a; 1998b; 1999a; 1999b; 1999c; 2000a; 2000b; 2000c; 2000d; 2002a; 2003; Department of Health – Social Services Inspectorate 1995; 2000a; 2000b; 2001/2002; 2002; 2003b General Social Care Council 2002). The high profile nature of child

protection 'failures' prioritised it for attention (Department of Health 1988a; 1998b; 1991b; 1994b; 1995a; 1995b; 1995c; 1999a; 1999d; 1999e; 2000e; 2000f; 2000g; 2001; 2002b; 2002c; 2002d; Department of Health & Social Security 1982; 1985; 1988).

> Increasingly and appropriately, communities are searching for means by which to evaluate the competency of caseworkers…Throughout the country, courts, and legislatures are moving toward requiring accountability of child protective services in concrete, measurable terms.
>
> (Monit, Cheung, Stevenson & Leung 1991, p. 425)

Although a global phenomenon, the demand for social work accountability and reform has been particularly notable in England, propelled along by a number of Public Inquiries (Department of Health & Social Security 1982) and resultant Government Agendas and Initiatives (Doyle 1996; Parton 1998). Macdonald (2001, p.xx) notes: "…in the past two decades the UK government has invested vast resources in reviewing and reordering the legislative framework in which child protection takes place".

The death of Maria Colwell in 1973 (Department of Health & Social Security, 1974b), at the hand of her stepfather coincided with similar child fatalities internationally, and led to public awareness and demand for a better understanding and recognition of child neglect and abuse (Munro 2002). The establishment of a Child Abuse Register was a primary recommendation of the inquiry (Gibbons & Bell 1994). Improved communication and cooperation amongst professionals were also recommended, as they have been during each subsequent inquiry in the intervening three decades. Today these objectives are official government initiatives under the

banners of **joined up services** and **partnerships in practice** imbedded in national frameworks and have resulted in the appointment of a Joint Minister for Children and Families (Ten Downing Street, 2003).

In the intervening years, further public inquiries identified significant concerns and stimulated remedial initiatives. The Beckford Inquiry of 1984, which explored the death of Jasmine Beckford following her return to her mother and stepfather, demanded that a child's safety and right to protection should be viewed as paramount to the rights of the parents and family integrity (Levin 1987). The publication of Social Work Decisions in Child Care followed in 1985 (Department of Health & Social Security). The Cleveland Inquiry of 1987 (chaired by Lady Justice Butler-Schloss) forced public recognition of sexual abuse, physical maltreatment and neglect, yet also queried the possibility of over zealous removal of children and inadequate respect for parental rights. The report identified that there were gaps in the knowledge base around the definition and diagnosis of child maltreatment and the most effective forms of intervention. Recommendations were made to clarify and make consistent the response of protection agencies when suspected abuse was identified.

The multitude of documents published by the Department of Health, The Department of Heath and Social Security, and the Department of Health – Social Services Inspectorate including; **Protecting Children: A Guide for Social Workers undertaking a Comprehensive Assessment**, (DoHSS, 1988**, Working Together** (DoHSS, 1988 & revised 1991), **the Children Act 1989** (implemented in 1991),

Protecting Children (DoH 1988), **Modernising Social Services** (DoH 1998a; 1998b, 1999), **The Children Act Principles & Practice** (1990), **Patterns & Outcomes in Child Placement** 1991, and especially **the Children Act Now: Messages from Research** (2001), These documents are historical evidence of the time, effort and thought that was being invested into improving social work in general, and specifically child protection/welfare services.

Modernising Social Services was a hugely ambitious agenda with multiple goals to: protect the vulnerable, coordinate services, clarify roles, improve consistency, reduce inflexibility and inefficiency, raise standards so that everyone can be "…assured of high quality social services…the implementation, (including the development of the General Social Care Council) came with a budget of £1.3 billion over three years" (Department of Health 1998b, p.7).

A commitment to utilising research to inform practice and policy began in earnest in 1995, when the Department of Health (1995c, pp. 45-46) commissioned **Child Protection: Messages from Research** with the expressed "… aim to inform everyone working in the child protection field and ultimately to enhance the welfare of children." The meta- synthesis of twenty research studies:

> …identified five pre-conditions of effective practice to protect children and promote their welfare: sensitive and informed professional/client relationships, an appropriate balance of power between participants, a wide perspective on child protection, effective supervision and training of social workers, services which enhance children's general quality of life…However, poor outcomes should not necessarily be taken as evidence of professional failure. Important as it is, a skilled intervention can be outweighed by the

> nature and severity of the case; even the best practice may be unable to alter the course of events.

The introduction, penned by John Bowis OBE, MP Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, provides insight into the motivation, commitment and intent.

> Well publicised cases of tragic suffering inflicted on children in the seventies and eighties raised public awareness of the issue of child protection. Public concern about the safety of children placed heavy responsibilities on the agencies in the front line. The way those agencies have discharged their responsibilities has itself sometimes given rise to public anxieties. A suspicion that child abuse has occurred has a traumatic effect on a family. The overriding need to protect the child while minimising damaging consequences for the family can involve agonising decisions for those working in child protection. A number of inquiries raised questions about the way agencies arrived at decisions on when to act, the nature of the interventions and when to start and to stop providing services. The Government took heed of these questions and commissioned a programme of research into child protection … predominant themes…the way we as a society, define abuse. The effects of the child protection process on children and the families that experience it… the side effects of interventions by child protection agencies…the effectiveness of that process…We must not pretend that actions taken by child protection agencies can ever guarantee that parents will not harm their children…A major theme is the importance of training and supervision of social workers in child protection. Professionals must be experienced, knowledgeable and skilled and no amount of central or local guidance material can substitute for this. Common sense, professional judgement and good back-up for front-line staff are vital if thresholds are to be correctly judged, if parents and the wider family are to play an effective part and if extremely difficult situations are to be handled sensitively.

The election of New Labour in 1997 brought further interest and investment of government money into improvement of social work and child protection. **The Utting Report: People Like Us** (Utting, 1997), **The Supporting Families Consultation Document 1998** (Department of the Home Office 1997), lead to a pivotal piece of legislation **The Children Act – 1998** The subsequent **Lost in Care Report (**Waterhouse 2000), **Learning the Lessons** (DoH 2000h) and the **Consultation**

Reports of New Guidance on Children's Services Planning (January 2000) brought together all these initiatives under the umbrella of Quality Protects with a budget of £375 million enhanced funding. "The Quality Protects Programme (1998) was intended to make 'explicit' what was 'implicit' in the Children Act 1989" (Buchanan 2000, p.69).

The **Best Value and Performance Assessment Framework** placed these responsibilities under the Social Services Inspectorate whereby they were charged to: '...improve and extend post-qualification training for social workers in child care and amongst domiciliary staff'[5]

1.10 THE IMPACT OF GLOBAL INFORMATION DISSEMINATION:

Despite political and philosophical differences in social work, there has always been a global exchange of information. Historically, the social services of North America (and especially Canada) were modelled on the early pioneering work of the England design of a welfare state. There has been a tendency to adopt and transplant programmes (such as Sure Start/Head Start) and intervention modalities (such as brief therapy), and yet each location tailors the programmes and interventions to suit the realities of resources and philosophies of their own locale. Although initially information sharing was primarily among the United Kingdom, North America and the Scandinavian countries, Australia and New Zealand have become very strong contributors to the theory and practice base of social work.

Information technology has exponentially accelerated the exchange of information, whilst international conferences and collaborative research (such as the Looked After Children Project) have enhanced the cooperation. This trend is primarily of benefit for increasing the professionalism of social work; however, caution must be exerted to avoid a tendency towards **groupthink** or inappropriate transferring of interventions.

1.11 COMPETENCY BASED EDUCATION, TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

A global trend of primary importance in social work education, training and assessment has been the rediscovery and espousal of **competency based education and training (CBET).** From the Latin word '*competens'*, COMPETENCE means to "…be fit, proper or qualified" (The Oxford Library of Words and Phrases 1998*).* Freeman & Lewis (1998, p.314) define a competent learner as "…one who has reached a defined standard of performance". O'Hagan (1996) traces the origins of competency based education and training to 1960's and 1970's popular theoretical fields of behaviourism and functional analysis.

McClelland (1973), an early advocate of competency based education and training, argued that standard intelligence tests and aptitude tests had limited validity in their ability to predict job performance and he suggested competency-based testing be utilized instead.

[5] Unfortunately, the deaths, Public Inquiries and concomitant government agenda and initiatives have continued at an accelerating pace. However, as the educational programme under consideration is a product of this policy initiative, further legislation will be reviewed only in reference to the conclusions.

By 1979, entire textbooks were dedicated to competency-based education. Gerald Grant's (1979) **On Competence: A Critical Analysis of Competence-Based Reforms in Higher Education**, defined the early terminology, and assessment tools for competency-based education. Some of these initial assessment techniques such as the In-Tray, Work Simulations, and Interview Rating Scales are still widely utilized in industrial and managerial competency based training and evaluations.

Hyland (1994, 1995a) argued that early attempts at implementation of competency based education were hampered by the "…plethora of opinions about competence…" even its definitions caused "…considerable confusion and equivocation". However, proponents continued their attempts to refine the problematic definitions of competency, and thereby increase its applicability. As a result, competency based education and training has enjoyed a gradual global reincarnation and resurgence of popularity.

In 1992, The Northern Ireland Post-Qualifying Education and Training Partnership (NIPQETP 1992) succinctly defined professional competence as "…the demonstration of knowledge, skills and values in the workplace to agreed standards". This definition illustrates the fundamental components of competency based education and training. Competence has to do with an amalgam of knowledge, skills and values that must be demonstrated, and are measured against a benchmark of standards that have been agreed upon. Competency based education and training has

become extremely popular in occupations where the activities and standards of practice are easily defined, articulated and behaviourally measurable. Very much a market and government driven philosophy, competency based education and training attempts to ensure ability and accountability thereby enabling efficient and global recruiting of crucial segments of the workforce.

> The concept of competency focuses on workplace expectations rather than on the actual learning process. It refers to skills and knowledge that can be transferred and applied to new situations and environments. Competency Based Training is concerned with what a person can do as a result of training rather than time spent in training. It focuses on the skills and knowledge an individual has, rather than how they attained them…(and) can result in a qualification which is recognizable, portable, and consistent across the country.
>
> Toohey, Ryan, McLean & Hughes (1995, p. 89)

Despite the acceptance and implementation of competency based education and training, there is a great deal of literature, which is highly critical of the approach and its weaknesses. This is especially true in social work. There are many arguments of a philosophical nature that condemn competency based education and assessment for to its inability to capture the essence of the **organic whole** of the individual who provides human services of a complex nature (Dominelli 1996).

Hyland (1995b) challenges the ability of competency based education and training to capture and measure this complex process and labels it "…viciously reductionist". Collin (1991 p.45) agrees that competency based education and training is a "…narrow technicist approach to education which defines knowledge in the light of bureaucratic and corporate needs". Hyland (1995b) goes on to argue that behaviourist

base of competency based education is an out-dated "…minimalist and impoverished conception of human thought and action… (which does not) account adequately for key aspects of human reasoning, understanding, and learning." Gambrill (1983) Erault, (1994) and Lishman (1998) embrace the concept of professional competency, but remind us that high levels of professional decision-making are necessary for the delicate and complicated work required in child protection. Furthermore, they express concern about the transferability of skills, the nature of complex critical thinking and the role that professional values and attitudes play in the delivery of child protection services.

In 1991, the **Statement of Requirements for Qualification in Social Work (Paper 30**) suggested that

> …qualifying social workers…must take a rigorous approach to the acquisition of knowledge and must be able to select and apply it to practice. They must be able to conceptualise, reflect, analyse and critically evaluate both underpinning knowledge and their own practice. They must be strategic thinkers, able to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of proposals and consequences of decisions and action (CETSW, 1991)

This philosophy drew criticism from social work trainers such as O'Hagan (1996, p.3) who viewed the approach as simplistic. "How competency led training was supposed to prevent such tragedies is not a question the media is likely to be concerned about, nor would they be interested in the multiplicity or complex underlying causes behind the actions of individual workers".

Early attempts to articulate social work competencies were actually very broad guiding principles without validated measuring instruments, and the approach fell into disfavour. The concept did gain popularity in other disciplines such as nursing, teaching and psychology. As such, these disciplines, and their educational programmes are being utilized as role models in current programme development. Gradually competency based education has been reconciled to social work (Hills & Child, 2000), and definitions and designs have been refined, precipitating global acceptance and implementation. A large proportion of the drive behind this came from governments such as that of Margaret Thatcher who "…perceived the welfare state and the professionals and administrators who ran it as un-enterprising and incompetent" (O'Hagan 1996, p. 7).

In 1993 Kemshall (p.41) predicted that; "…competence would be the watchword of the nineties in social work training". This prediction has held especially true here in the UK, where it coincided with national reform of social care/social work in response to the Modernizing Initiative (DoH 1998a; 1998b; 1999a; 1999b; 1999c).

Worldwide, the regulators of child-protection services have been extremely attracted to the concept of competency based education and training. An abundance of literature regarding many programmes in the England, Australia and New Zealand, the United States of America and Canada where competency based education and training has been explored and implemented. Interestingly, in every country, the introduction of the competency based education and training model in child

protection has been a response to highly publicized deaths of children. Obviously, political and public pressure has led the government authorities to search for a method by which they could ensure adequate training and competence of child protection workers.

A simple analogy to the competency based model of education training and assessment is the means by which a driver's license is attained. Specific knowledge and skills, which are believed to be essential, are defined along with the required level of performance. The individual then acquires the knowledge and skills through a variety of sources and methods. Finally, the candidate must demonstrate the required benchmark. If they fail to attain the benchmark in any area, they have the option of re-acquiring the knowledge/skill and practicing performance until they are able to demonstrate attainment of the benchmark. There is no penalty for barely reaching adequacy, neither is there any reward in excelling. There is simply a license to legally perform a specific activity in society. Furthermore, the license holder can be subject to disciplinary measures upon infractions, and the license may be revoked should the misdemeanour be significant enough.

To some, this is in direct conflict with some of the encapsulated philosophies of the initiative such as life-long commitment to education, the use of research to inform practice, and a desire for increased professionalism in social work; however, it is consistent with New Labour's (and global neo-conservatism's) compression of higher education downward towards a vocational model of higher education.

Social work has not yet wholly embraced the concept of, or commitment to, outcome-based evaluation of practice intervention (Trinder 1996, 2003). However, gradually, the model of evidence-based practice is permeating social care policy and service delivery, as evidenced by trends in the literature, goals articulated by local authorities, Social Care Institute for Excellence, the Campbell Collaboration, the establishment of academic/research centres such as the Exeter Centre for Evidence Based Social Services and the Research Matters, Research in Practice webpage and newsletters (to name a few). As in any new process, there are many errors to be made and lessons to be learned before it can be a foundational approach to social work. Furthermore, the inculcation of existing and new staff, and the resources required to institute this approach are inconsistent with current fiscal restraint and shrinkage.

Regardless of these criticisms and weaknesses, competency-based education is certainly the current model of choice for training and **certifying** social workers or other professionals as child protection agents. The definition of the term – **Competency Based Education and Training** (although not necessarily a belief in its validity) has gained worldwide acceptance. Gambrill, Leever et al (2002, p.75) state

> competence means the professional has the requisite ability to carry out his or her professional responsibilities…which for child welfare professionals [demands they]…provide services only within the boundaries of their competence based on their education, training, supervised experience, and professional experience and [they] should be aware of current professional information and take advantage of continuing professional education in order to maintain a high level of competence.

Inferior inadequate education and training of front line social workers is **assumed** to be the aetiology of inferior inadequate child protection services. The simplicity and consequences of this presumption has significant implications for the design and delivery of this type of initiative (Munro 2002; 2003).

As the global village shrinks with advances in communication technologies, the sharing of philosophies, trends and models of intervention frequently leapfrog to be rapidly adopted and parachuted into other countries. However, the goodness of fit, let alone effectiveness may not have been fully considered. The brevity of government tenures, robust media reporting and societal damnation whenever there is a **failure to protect a vulnerable child** intensifies the tendency to immediacy in adopting others' solutions. Given the global influence of England's leadership in this field, further scrutiny of the recent Government's initiative is warranted in order to learn valuable lessons, before the model is exported and adopted elsewhere.

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Chapter Two: Two Competency Based Educational Programmes

2.1 INTRODUCTION:

The **Post Qualification Award in Child Care (England)** was developed and designed around a foundation of competency-based education/training and demonstrated competency assessment. It was driven by the energy and guidance of Quality Protects, The Children's Act (1989), Modernising Social Care, and Evidence Based Practice. As such, it provided an ideal opportunity for the researcher to attempt to evaluate a social work education and training intervention.

As has been discussed in **Chapter One**, a parallel training programme in Ontario will be used as a backdrop against which to view the research and the findings. A preliminary discussion of the Ontario Capacity Building Project and the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme provides the context from which the author began the research project.

2.2 THE ONTARIO CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT & ONTARIO CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING PROGRAMME (OCPTP):

2.2.1 POLITICAL CONTEXT – ONTARIO:

Child Welfare Services in Ontario in the mid 1970's favoured removal of children from situations where they were judged to be in **need of protection** from neglect or harm. Over the next two decades, this philosophy was challenged by authorities such as child psychiatrist Paul Steinhauer (1983) who suggested that many foster care situations actually resulted in more damage than good. The introduction of the Child & Family Services Act in 1984 "…sought to balance the principles of 'protection' and 'best interests' with the principle of seeking, where possible, the 'least intrusive intervention'." (Trocme, Fallone et al 2002, p.2). The belief in the paramountcy of preservation of family integrity resulted in primarily family centred support services.

This policy focus came under severe criticism when 100 children died within a twelve-month period, sparking a series of high profile **Coroner's Inquests** and the establishment of the **Ontario Mortality Task Force** (1997). In 1998 a **Panel of Experts** was formed and charged with the review and reform the legislation.

The resulting recommendations for the reform of Child Welfare in Ontario included many familiar themes:

> …need for amended legislation to place more emphasis on the primacy of child safety and well being... the need for better information sharing; lowering the threshold for court ordered intervention; strengthening court order; streamlining court procedures; adequate staffing and training for child

> protection service workers and affiliated professionals; and raising public and professional awareness through educational campaigns and information dissemination.
>
> (Trocme, et al 2002)

Of particular relevance to this research project was the 1998 introduction of two key initiatives. The first was the introduction of a standardised risk assessment procedure. A set of eligibility criteria were determined and a safety assessment tool and risk assessment tool were developed in order to ensure provincial standardisation of determinations of the need for child protection intervention. Subsequently, child protection social workers were trained and tested in the application of this model to ensure validity and reliability (Trocme et al 1999).

Secondly, a **Three-Year Enhanced Funding Framework** was introduced which sought to address the inequality of regional funding. Under this framework, Agency funding became linked to the volume of service demanded. This allowed for the collection of systematic data and benchmarked regional service averages. An infusion of pump-priming funding enabled the hiring of additional child protection staff, supervisors and child in care workers to address understaffing. Within the framework, staff training and the introduction of progressive information and communication technology were highly prioritised.[1] This Funding Framework laid the foundation for the Ontario Capacity Building Initiative and the Child Protection Training Programme.

[1] Trocme et al (2002) document Child Welfare Expenditures at C$408.3 million (1998-1999), C$552.9 million (1999-2000) and C$749.9million (2000-2001)

2.2.2 MANDATE & MISSION – ONTARIO CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING PROGRAMME:

The Ontario Child Protection Training Programme grew out of an identified need for enhanced and standardised training for all social workers engaged in child protection. Recognising that the front-line social worker is only one member of the **child protection team**, a coordinated training system was devised. The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies began to offer "province-wide, competency-based, in-service training for child welfare agency staff, caregivers, volunteers, and board members". A primary focus of this initiative was to set and maintain "…provincially defined and agreed on standards, competencies and core curricula for managers/supervisors, front-line staff and foster parents" (OACAS web page).

In 2000, the Government of Ontario - Ministry of Community & Social Services introduced a requirement of **mandatory demonstration** of **minimum competencies** by all newly hired protection workers prior to their **authorisation** to assume that role. The initiative was piloted in the first quarter of 2000 with a gradual implementation of the programme for different constituencies, beginning with newly qualified social workers, followed by training for current workers and specialised training for child protection supervisors (line managers). The initiative also included a Government commitment to work in partnership with Universities and Colleges to encourage the provision of increased electives and post-degree courses in child welfare.[2]

[2] For more detail please see Csernick, Vitali & Gordon 2000.

2.2.3 PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT & DESIGN – ONTARIO CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING PROGRAMME:

The development of the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme began with a commissioned literature review of **Competency Based Education in Social Work**, and **Competency Based Training Programmes for Child Welfare Workers**, which was conducted by the author of this thesis. The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and several key child protection social worker educators consulted on identifying the key minimum competencies and measurement indicators for each competency.

These conclusions were then processed through a series of focus groups populated by several levels of **experts;** Agency Directors, Front Line Supervisors, Academics, etc. until consensus was reached regarding the minimum through to the optimum collection of competencies that child protection workers should be able to demonstrate, at each level of authority (i.e.: beginning worker to supervisor). Consensus was also sought on the measurement indicators (components) for each competency. Curricula were then developed to provide the knowledge, skills, attitudes and concepts necessary for each competency and appropriate methods of assessment devised. These materials can be viewed in **Appendix D**

2.2.4 PROGRAMME DELIVERY – ONTARIO CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING PROGRAMME:

The original programme was piloted with a cohort of students in their final year of a four year Honours BA in Social Work who were engaged in a Child Protection Practicum. Student involvement was entirely optional. Csernick, Vitali & Gordon (2000), discusses the experience of one group of field instructors and students who engaged in the pilot.

The programme was then introduced provincially through a centrally managed, de-centralised model of delivery. A number of underpinning principles guided the development and delivery of the programme. There was recognition that the trainees were adult-learners who would have competing demands on their time and energies. Accordingly, the programme was designed to be developmental in the presentation and consolidation of knowledge. It clearly followed a philosophy of adult-learner centred education, allowing for the individual needs of the trainees. A strong commitment to the principle of best practice[3] is evident throughout the entire programme and trainees are actively encouraged to adopt this approach in their work. It was recognised that competency based training requires a period of professional field practice to consolidate the learning which has occurred in the classroom or on computer. As such, the training modules are followed by sessions of return to fieldwork within which trainees apply their new knowledge and practice skills.

[3] "…best practice is grounded in current outcome research, emphasizes the need to address the developmental needs of children and their families as part of the child protection task, is child and child-safety focused, and balances the need for forensic child protection work with clinically effective intervention". (OACAS 2004)

The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies recognised that there were many very knowledgeable and experienced workers already employed across the Province. They sought to value and utilise these local agency-based practice-experts in the Programme. These individuals are actively engaged in training and supporting both colleagues and new workers, thereby disseminating their knowledge and skills and ensuring their continuing professional development.

The designers of the Programme noted that optimal training would not be achieved without the involvement and commitment of the Agencies. A great deal energy and resources were expended in developing **learning cultures** in the Agencies where the actual transfer of learning to practice would occur. As all levels of workers were required to be involved in ongoing professional development within the programme, the learning cultures were reinforced and collaborative education ensued. Other key features included the ongoing development and refinement of a centralised curriculum, quality assurance mechanisms, centralised tracking of the participant's involvement and performance, and ensuring the adequacy of information communication technology (I.C.T) hardware, software and blended media training.

The prescribed curricula were and continue to be presented through both centralised and de-centralised delivery (classroom based, agency based and blended media), and geographic, cultural and resource differences are addressed by extensive use of technologically based learning (e-learning) opportunities. Trainers are selected,

prepared and monitored by the central organisation to ensure standards and consistency.

A continuum of modules is provided. For the New Worker Training eleven curricula are presented over a total of twenty-two (22) days of classroom days, or thirteen (13) days in the blended media (using e-technology). An **Authorised Worker** is then eligible for Advanced Child Protection Curricula (6 topics/10 classroom days), Risk Related Curricula (5 topics/10 classroom days) and Speciality Curricula (5 topics/15 classroom days).

One of the Speciality Curricula focuses on training to support New Workers in their Training, thereby encouraging the use of practice acquired knowledge and skills, whilst ensuring the content and quality of the training. Finally, the Manager/Supervisor Series has 10 modules/averaging 2 days each) which focuses on coaching and mentoring, the development of supervisory skills and the development of management skills. Specialised idiosyncratic topics in training and clinical supervision are also available. Further detail can be viewed in **Appendix D**.

2.3 THE POST QUALIFICATION CHILD CARE AWARD IN ENGLAND (PQCCA):

2.3.1 POLITICAL CONTEXT – ENGLAND:

Since their election in 1997 the Labour Government has invested "…vast resources to reviewing and re-ordering the legislative framework in which child protection takes place" (Macdonald 2001 p.xx.). Within an agenda for the improvement of social care was a commitment to provide **joined up services** for children and families with improved standards and quality (O'Hagan 1996). A myriad of associated research projects, public consultations, changes to legislation, revised policies and practices, and educational/training initiatives for social workers resulted. Twenty-two (22) million pounds has been spent training social workers already in post (Sheldon & Chilvers 2000).

One of these initiatives, The Post Qualifying Child Care Award (PQCCA), was designed to address concerns that childcare social workers were poorly educated and trained (Buchanan 1996). "Professional development, education and training (were) considered central to the development of improvements in the way that children and families services are delivered." (CCETSW 2000, p.3), and a post-qualification educational award was viewed as an effective method to improve childcare standards. A Post-Qualifying Framework was first introduced in 1991 to provide for continuous professional development (CPD) of social workers. It was revised and re-implemented in 1998 with the aim "…to promote education, training, and

qualifications for social workers that support high standards of service and care in the personal social services" (CCESTW 1997, p.9). The Post Qualification Child Care Award was introduced into the Post Qualification Framework in 1999. It was conceptualised and designed in response to a number of different forces: inquiries which identified gaps in knowledge and practice contributory to **failures**, reviews of the national and international literature, legislation, guidance and consultation reports, best practice, relevant theory, and research attempting to identify effective interventions and specify situations for usage.

A budget of eleven (11) million pounds over three (3) years was committed for training qualified social workers already working with families and children.

> It is designed for qualified child care social workers from statutory, voluntary and private agencies, who work in residential, field or day-care settings The award is intended to ensure that education and training produces child care social workers who are analytical and reflective and whose practice is child centred.
>
> (TVPQCCP 2001a, p. 3)

2.3.2 GOVERNMENT EXPECTATIONS – PQCCA:

The government clearly articulated its expectations of the PQCCA:

> … (as) part of the wider comprehensive initiative to improve outcomes for services to children, young people, their parents and carer and to raise the standards of childcare social work practice… (t)he aim of the Post Qualifying Child Care Award is to ensure the development, education and training of critically reflective social workers whose practice is child centred and focuses on the following:

(1)The developmental needs of children and young people
(2)The capacity of parents or care-givers to respond to these needs and
(3)The impact of the wider family and environmental factors on parenting capacity and the child or young person.

(CCETSW 2000, p. 3)

This is consistent with Seden (2003, p.121) who argues that Post Qualification training is "…designed to build on qualifying training and to enable candidates to reappraise their abilities in relation to complex work". The original intent of the initiative was mandatory completion of the Post Qualification Child Care Award by all social workers working with children and families by 2005.[4]

2.3.3 PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN - PQCCA:

The following summary of the programme's development and design was collated by the researcher from reading available documents. Any errors in interpretation or fact are unintentional.

In 1999, Jane Aldgate and Richard Colman were commissioned by the Department of Health and the Central Council for Educating and Training Social Workers. They were asked to bring together a contemporary body of knowledge pertaining to good child care practice, to address the identified gaps in knowledge skills and values of current workers and to incorporate philosophical shifts in the reform of social work (i.e. evidence based reflective practice). This massive task resulted in two linked documents. The first document was a **conceptual framework to underpin** the Post

[4] This has subsequently been withdrawn, and the entire PQ Framework is under review and consultation.

Qualification Award in Child Care, which focused on nine (9) areas and subsumed thirty-five (35) objectives deemed as appropriate levels of practice for social workers at the post qualified level.

> The authors recognised and built upon the work CCETSW had already accomplished in '…changing the nature of social work education and training', and argued that 'the Award will be foundation for coherence between vocational, occupational and academic standards'.
>
> (Aldgate & Colman, 1999, p. 1)

Linkage to the Children Act of 1989 and other relevant legislation in the areas education, health & juvenile justice are clearly outlined. Government commitment to policy informed by research findings are demonstrated by the inclusion of documents such as: **Social Work Decisions in Child Care (1985), Patterns and Outcomes in Child Placement** (The Department of Health 1991b**), Child Protection: Messages from Research** (Department of Health, 1995c), **Focus on Teenagers** (Cleaver, 1996), **Caring for Children Away from Home: Messages from Research** (Department of Health 1998c)**.** Government reports including **Looking After Children: Assessment and Action Records of Outcomes** (Department of Health 1995d)**, Sir William Utting's Report: People Like Us** (Utting 1997), **Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Health in Relation to Children Looked After by the Local Authority** (House of Commons 1998), and the **Quality Protects Programme** (Department of Health 1998d).

As well as these government documents and reports, the "…framework built on several decades of accepted theories of how children develop. Most of these theories have been well tested by research which adds credibility to their application in practice." (Aldgate & Colman 1999, p.1). Finally, an overarching philosophical position was identified. "Children and families social work is best framed within a philosophy that every child should have the opportunity of achieving optimal outcomes in his or her development" (Aldgate & Colman 1999, p.3). This philosophy recognised that multiple influences affect child development. Consequently, an ecological approach to child welfare was instituted in the PQCCA (England), as detailed in **Section 2.3.2.** The second part of the document is the Curriculum Guidance that defines key concepts, learning outcomes, curriculum elements and indicative references for the nine areas, plus another unit that looked at specialist settings.

The Training Organisation for the Personal Social Services (TOPSS) generated congruent National Occupational Standards for Child Care at a Post Qualifying Level. These eleven (11) elements of competence for childcare (also called Evidence Indicators) provided the competency based assessment framework for the award. The **Assuring Quality for Child Care Programmes** (AQCCP) Working Copy was released in September 1999 (CCETSW 1999), outlining the requirements for the award. Scott (in Darlington & Scott 2002) points out that outcome measures or elements of competency reflect standards of **best practice** for child protection social workers.

In the spring of 1999, the Department of Health selected eight partnerships to pilot the programme. The design of the initiative included second stage programme development in response to the experience of the pilots. **The PQ Childcare Award: Implementing the PQ Child Care Award: The Experiences of the Pilot Programmes in England** reported, "The pilots have individually and collectively demonstrated an enthusiasm for and commitment to the development of the Child Care Award". The experience of the pilots was shared in meetings and publications so that "…future staff developments and training strategies can learn from them and build on them" (CCETSW 2000, p. 4).

Eight PQ Child Care Award Programmes were approved late in 1999 to begin offering the Award in early 2000. The programme under review was one of this tranche. A further nine programmes were approved in the following year. There are seventeen (17) Post-Qualifying Consortia in England, all operating "…within the same overall remit [with]…significant variations in individual focus and activity" (GSCC, 2002b), resulting in geographic variance in the programme design and delivery. The Department of Health set an initial goal of seven thousand social workers attaining the Post Qualification Child Care Award by 2006-7.

2.3.4 PROGRAMME DELIVERY – POST QUALIFICATION CHILD CARE AWARD:

2.3.5 THE LOCAL PARTNERSHIP & PROGRAMME:

A public consortium in Southern England incorporating three Universities (HEI), ten unitary and local authorities, two voluntary agencies and two training agencies was forged to "design, deliver, manage and monitor the New Post Qualifying Award in Child Care" (TVPC 2000a, p.5).

The tutors from the Higher Educational Institutions developed the curriculum in a four-module format, loosely framed around the **Children's World** Schemata:

Module 1) Working Directly with Children and Young People
Module 2) Working with Parents and those with Parental Responsibilities
Module 3) Working with the Family and the Wider Environment.
Module 4) Completion of the Practice Portfolio.

Learning Outcomes and **Evidence Indicators** were mapped against each module; resulting in thirty-eight (38) Learning Outcomes for which changes in levels of competency could be measured. Although the programme adopted much of the language and philosophies of competency based education and training, it did not adhere to a primary tenant. Outcome and competency based education requires a **backward** educational process (Aviles, 2000 p.1) which employs the "…terminal objectives the student must achieve" to develop the curriculum, teaching materials and assessment tools (Baer & Frederico, 1978). The Post Qualification Child Care Award, limited by time-pressure, transposed a competency based assessment model

onto a conventional pedagogy of instruction and assessment. This is consistent with many of its international counterparts.

The curriculum and assessment methodology of the initiative demanded a considerable amount of work and cooperation as the tutors and assessors needed to amalgamate, standardise and creatively integrate documents and requirements from a large number of individual sources including the Department of Health, CCETSW, and TOPPS. Furthermore, they needed to negotiate the often-conflicting requirements of their host academic institution, the agencies involved in the consortium, and the labour unions. Given the time constraints, the result was impressive.

The Consortium recognised the **Modernising Social Services Agenda** (Department of Health 1998b) as the primary motivation for the development of the Post Qualification Child Care Award, which "Focused…the need for ensuring a competent and qualified workforce" (TVPQ 2000b, p. 11). The consortium undertook to design and deliver an educational award that would "…support the quest for confident, qualified practitioners in all child care services supporting the Quality Protects Agenda" (TVPQ 2000b, p.11).

The inaugural offering was designed as a mixture of dyadic and tutorial education (driven primarily by Department of Health and CCETSW), with a binary (graded adequate or inadequate) competency based assessment methodology (driven by the

Department of Health, TOPPS and CCETSW), inclusive of formal formative and summative assignments as well as practice observations and a practice portfolio.

The course was designed to be one calendar year in duration consisting of three (3) ten (10) week modules. Participants were released from their place of employment for a day a week to attend a local University where the formal teaching was provided. Each module was written and delivered by one peripatetic tutor who delivered the module at all three sites each week. Guest lecturers were invited in for specialised topics. The practice assessors were assigned to observe the candidates in their place of employment and evaluate their portfolios.

Following the guidance of Gabor, Unrau & Grinnell Jr. (1998 p.19) that "…professional practice rests upon the foundation that practice activities must be linked to the client's objectives, which are linked to the programme's objectives, which are linked to the project's goals, which are linked to the agency's goals, which represent the reason the programme exists in the first place", the researcher sought to trace the goals and objectives of the programme, before undertaking the design of the research. This is the focus of Chapter Three.

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Chapter Three: The Research Project

3.1 RATIONALE FOR THE PROJECT:

As the Post Qualification Child Care Award (PQCCA-England) closely paralleled the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme (OCPTP), which the researcher had helped develop, it presented an interesting opportunity for an evaluative research project with an international comparative view.

As has been discussed, the Post Qualification Child Care Award was designed to meet an **assumed** gap in the standards for knowledge and skill in front line protection workers. In keeping with the intent to attempt to evaluate an intervention, the researcher chose to explore the impact of this educational intervention on the participants and most importantly ask the question ***did it work?*** The objective of the training programme was to "***…improve the standards of childcare practice"*** (Brandon & Thompson in CCETSW 2000), therefore, changes in participants' level of competency in each of the delineated learning objectives became the benchmark for measuring attainment of that objective.

The Pilot Experience Report (CCETSW 2000) suggested that "… further evaluation of the effectiveness of the Award in improving practice" be conducted. The author viewed this as a suitable and interesting D.Phil project and negotiated

entry into the Thames Valley Consortium, which was tendering to run the Programme the following year.

3.2 PRIMARY GOALS OF THE RESEARCH:

The following goals were determined for the research project.

(1) To design, develop and administer a prospective integrated model of programme evaluation to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

(2) To collect formative and summative evaluation data in order to enable both immediate and longer-term programme revision and re-design.

(3) To develop instruments and methodology in order to quantify and measure changes in the candidates' levels of competency on the learning outcomes selected by the programme.

(4) To determine if the Post Qualification Child Care Award could demonstrate efficacy and effectiveness[1] in increasing participants' levels of competency.

[1] Definition of these terms is reviewed in 3.4

3.3 Concomitant Goals of the Project:

(1) To determine the impact (intended or unintended) on the participants.

(2) To elicit what could be learned from the project to provide guidance for present and future design and delivery of this and other programmes[2].

(3) To attempt to mitigate, or possibly overcome the vulnerabilities of evaluation based solely on self-perception, through **triangulation** of data.

(4) To provide the participants with the experienced a **parallel process** through inclusion in an action or participant research process, thereby reinforcing their professional commitment to maintaining the service user as central in policy and intervention development.

(5) To determine specificity and clarity about what participants and line managers felt was necessary, what was useful, etc in the programme in order to make broader suggestions on curricula and delivery models for this genre of training professionals.

[2] This refers to the Action Research component of the project whereby ongoing feedback provided an opportunity for immediate changes to the course, thereby benefiting the participants.

3.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS FOR THE PROJECT: EFFECTIVENESS & EFFICACY:

The literature of randomised control trials (RCT's) and evidence based practice (EBP) presents two terms commonly used when answering the question ***does it work?*** – **efficacy** and **effectiveness**. Although frequently confused as synonymous, these words have distinct definitions, which have relevance for this project.

EFFICACY is the demonstration of significant benefit on a short-term outcome measure in a condition where there are long-term goals (Felson, Anderson & Meenan 1990; Last 1995; Pincus & Stein 1995). For this project, **efficacy** of the educational intervention would be substantiated by **evidence of an increase in the levels of competency in the identified learning outcomes.**

EFFECTIVENESS, on the other hand is the demonstration of significant benefit on the key long term goals of intervention (Felson, Anderson & Meenan 1990; Last 1995; Pincus & Stein 1995). Therefore, for this project, **effectiveness** of the educational intervention would be substantiated by **evidence that the levels of competency on the prescribed learning outcomes not only increased at the point of participation, but were also sustained.**

At first glance, only the similarity of these terms might be noted. However, their distinctive differences illustrate the dilemma of this model of evaluation. **Efficacy** is much easier to demonstrate but as Foster and Huber (1999, p.83) caution "… a surprisingly large fraction of scientific reports are wrong…the much praised

reliability of science occurs only in the long term; in the short term, science is as flawed, as error prone, and subject to manipulations and intellectual passions as any other human activities." A finding of efficacy only implies, but does NOT demonstrate effectiveness. Furthermore, the use of surrogate markers while we await data that could be evidence of long-term sustained effectiveness is seductive and dangerous. We must remain mindful that the use of surrogate markers is valid only if they reliably predict the true outcomes. Finally, Argyris & Schon (1974, p.24) remind us that "…long run effectiveness requires achieving governing variables in a way that makes their future achievement increasingly likely (but) does not necessarily mean that action becomes easier".

This research project addressed these issues by collating and analysing data collected at a number of different intervals, including six-month post programme.

Having identified the opportunity for a programme evaluation, the researcher approached the consortium who eventually agreed to allow her entry as a participant-observer. The project methodology was developed within these parameters. This is described fully in Chapter Four.

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Chapter Four: The Methodology

4.1 THE RESEARCH QUESTION:

As discussed in **Chapter Three**, the research project sought to ask:

> (1) Did the Post Qualification Child Care Award meet the original goal of improving "the standards of childcare practice", as evidenced by changes in the levels of competency of participants? (Brandon & Thompson in CCETSW Evaluation of pilots 2000) Further detailed discussion can be found in **Chapter Two**.
>
> (2) Is it possible to **quantify** and **measure** changes in the levels of **competency** acquired on the learning outcomes of the programme?
>
> (3) Is it possible to demonstrate **effectiveness** and **efficacy** of the Post Qualification Child Care Award in increasing participants' levels of competency?
>
> (4) What was the **impact** (intended or unintended) on the participants?

(5) What can be learned from the project to provide guidance for present and future design and delivery of this programme? [1]

(6) What can be learned from the project that would provide guidance for the future design and delivery of similar education and training programmes?

4.2 DESIGNING THE PROJECT – CHALLENGES & STRATEGIES FOR EVALUATION:

Beginning with the goal of developing an integrated programme evaluation, potential methodologies were reviewed in order to select the most appropriate, to identify weaknesses and wherever possible to construct compensatory and supplementary methodology. A number of significant challenges demanded attention and resolution before an optimal model could be developed. These challenges included:

(1) The lack of experience and variable enthusiasm for research in social work
(2) The relative polarisation between quantitative and qualitative methods and their acceptance
(3) Developing a mixed method model
(4) The case for 'ipsative'[2] evaluation
(5) The development of composite evaluation (data triangulation)

[1] This refers to the Action Research component of the project whereby ongoing feedback provided an opportunity for immediate changes to the course, thereby benefiting the participants.
[2] IPSATIVE ASSESSMENT is the evaluation of how well a student has performed as compared to their own previous efforts (Rowntree 1987, p 187)

(6) The multiplicity of stakeholders with differing and conflicting goals

(7) Determining outcome criteria and measurement

(8) Instrument development

(9) Entry & compliance

(10) Ethical Considerations

This Chapter explains how the strands of each challenge were unpicked, strategies that were explored and selected, and how the final methodology evolved.

4.2.1. THE LACK OF EXPERIENCE AND VARIABLE ENTHUSIASM FOR RESEARCH IN SOCIAL WORK:

As alluded to in **Chapter One**, social work is responding to demands for increased measurable accountability and professionalism. Efforts are underway to embed a commitment to research and continuous evaluation into the knowledge and practice base of professional intervention. Changes to academic curriculum are aimed at preparing new practitioners to approach their work with a well-integrated philosophical commitment to critical thinking and reliance on evidence from research to inform their practice decisions. It may, however, be somewhat more onerous for the experienced practitioner who may "…know more than they can say" (Schon 1983, p.7) and are "…often intimidated and alienated by the very notion of 'research'" (Darlington & Scott 2002, pg.4). Government interventions such as the Post Qualification Child Care Award (England) initiative are designed to address the needs of these practitioners, by assisting them in attainment of the mind set and skill base for this transition.

Adopting the social work principle of parallel process (Darlington & Scott 2002) and respecting the **expert** opinion of clients, philosophical congruence was attained by choosing to evaluate the effectiveness of this educational intervention and its impact on the **service users**, (front-line child protection workers).

> Client opinion or 'service user' studies give us valuable insights into what service providers in welfare, health and education are trying to achieve; what it feels like to be on the receiving end of someone else's professional good intent; what side effects are produced; and why and how clients attribute patterns of change, no difference, or determination to the actions of staff.
>
> (Macdonald 2001, pp.12-13)

This overarching principle is embodied in the title of this project **Lessons from the Front-Line** and is derived from this premise. It was hoped that involvement in a research process that demonstrated a commitment to principles of evidence-based practice (EBP) and an appreciation of the input and empowerment of the service users (Lishman 1998; Shaw 1999) would provide the participants with a unique educational experience of parallel process.

4.2.2 THE DEBATE BETWEEN QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE METHODS:

Although the concept of evaluation underpins all research, there is considerable disagreement about how and by whom evaluation should be undertaken. Additionally, the value of findings elicited by different methodologies is well short of consensus.

Historically there has been a dichotomous approach to research whereby the

proponents of quantitative and qualitative data each held to their belief of superiority of their methodology. Robottom & Colquhoun (1992) define the different approaches as positivist research, which is done on other people, interpretative and enlightening research completed for the benefit of others and collaborative/action research, which is done with other people.

A recent discussion on EVALUCHAT (the Discussion List of the UK Evaluation Society) reiterated the widely held perception that except for exploratory research, qualitative research is of minimal value in the evaluation of efficacy. Meanwhile qualitative researchers argue that the application of purely quantitative evaluation techniques can be dangerous in its tendency to distort reality into overly simplistic analysis of data. (Susman & Evered 1978; Macdonald, Sheldon & Gillispie 1992; Hart & Bond 1998; Gabor P, Unrau Y, Grinnell R. Jr. 1998; Aviles 2000).

Positivist epistemologists (Darlington & Scott 2002) argue that only **empirical** evaluation ensures objectivity and validity (Sheppard 1998) and fundamental/pure positivists assert that whilst "… science makes knowledge, practice uses it" (Rein & White 1981, p.36). Ing & Gabor (2002) dismiss these arguments in which **pure** and **applied** research vie for supremacy. Medawar (1979, p. 46) is critical of the "…snobismus" between the two groups and admonishes that in 1667, Thomas Sprat cut to the heart of the argument when he stated simply "…power rests on knowledge".

Action researchers (Susman & Evered 1978 pp. 589-90) argue: "…the researcher ought to be sceptical of the usefulness of positivist science when research is for

the purposes of problem-solving or when it concerns individuals whose relationships with others are influenced in the way they define the situation". They believe that this approach has effectively and artificially removed the practitioner from the process of evaluating interventions.

In social work, where the locus of intervention tends to be extremely complex, chaotic and ever changing (Sheldon & Chilvers 2000; Darlington & Scott 2002; Munro 2002) practitioners are notoriously reluctant to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. Gabor & Ing (1997) label this **evaluation phobia**. Criticism has been levelled at the costly yet simplistic approach of the research (Reid & Zettergren 1999), the delays in the reporting of findings and the lack of obvious relevance to their practice (Richardson et al 1990; Darlington & Scott 2002). As argued by Schon (1983, pp. 42-3):

> In the varied topography of professional practice, there is a high, hard ground where practitioners can make effective use of research-based theory and technique, and there is a swampy lowland where situations are confusing 'messes' incapable of a technical solution. The difficulty is that the problems of the high ground, however great their technical interest, are often relatively unimportant to clients of the larger society while in the swamp are the problems of the greatest human concern.

These debates were well documented in the 1970's when the **paradigm wars** monopolised (Bazeley, 2002) the literature (Hersen & Barlow, 1976). With a voice of reason Medawar (1979, p.18) attempted some reconciliation:

> …the art of research is that of making a problem soluble by finding out ways of getting at it. Very often a solution turns on devising some means of quantifying phenomena or states that have hitherto been assessed in terms of 'rather more' or 'rather less'….Quantification as such has no merit except insofar as it helps to solve problems.

In 1981 Kyte & Bostwick (p. 177) argued that the “subtleties of human nature and interaction will cease to be a problem once devised measurement rules can be shown to have a rational and empirical correspondence to reality.” Over the next decade, rigid boundaries began to relax as qualitative research (especially focus groups) crept into the private sector realm of marketing research. The availability of personal computers (Bazeley, 2003) and software packages which allowed for transformation of data from qualitative to quantitative and vice versa accelerated the process. The upshot has been gradual recognition and acceptance of mixed methods research protocols (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and the valuing of practice wisdom (Darlington & Scott 2002).

There is a resurgence of support for **action research** (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott 1993, p. 299) which ‘”…addresses the power imbalance between the researcher and the researched and to allow the voice of the ‘subject’ to be heard.” These shifts have coincided with the movement towards evidence based practice and service user involvement in social work.

It was decided that the proper evaluation of the Post Qualification Child Care Award (England) would require an amalgamation of research modalities to address the softness of social science research, whilst still collecting useful and meaningful data. Preference was given to quantitative data collection. However, given the nature of the programme, a qualitative component was also desired to provide "…a bifocal depth of field" (Kushner, 2003).

4.2.3 DEVELOPING A MIXED METHODS MODEL:

Macdonald (2001, p.3) argues that qualitative and mixed methodologies are particularly appropriate for research in the area of child protection, stating "…qualitative studies shed light on how those with whom we work understand their social milieu". This argument is equally applicable to this research project, as one of the primary goals of the project was to better understand the impact of the programme on the participants.

Marsh and Triseliotis (1996) effectively employed a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data analysis conducting research to inform the development of the Diploma in Social Work. Darlington & Scott (2002 pp. 6-7 & 119) promote mixed methods research suggesting that "…a broad repertoire of research approaches [need to be employed when seeking]…feedback from those using services…to tap both dimensions…may require a combination of questionnaire items with predetermined response categories as well as a number of open-ended questions." Hills and Child (2000) found a mixed methods research model very useful in their study of training for residential social workers.

Sydenstriker-Neto (1997) argues that mixed methods provide:

> …creative alternatives to traditional or more monolithic ways to conceive and implement evaluation….are a genuine effort to be more reflexive and more critical of the evaluation practice…and are more useful and accountable to broader audiences…and [by] adding qualitative flesh to the quantitative bones …produce better results in terms of quality and scope.

A review of the research literature conducted by Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989, p.259) identified five ways in which a mixed methods evaluation design can enhance evaluation. Through **triangulation**, different instruments are used to collect the data allowing the testing of the consistency of the findings, and some control of the multiple causes influencing the results. This is discussed more fully in Section 4.2.5. **Complementarity** occurs when we can clarify or illustrate the results from one method with the results from another method. Therefore, the quantitative data scores may tell us which competency outcomes improved the most; however, the qualitative data will provide insight as to what in the curriculum or its delivery contributed to the improvement. **Development** results when one method (i.e. the baseline pre-tests) suggests further methods of steps in the project (such as instrument revisions). New research questions were **initiated** by some of the early findings and the Post Qualification Child Care Award Programme, and the research project experienced **expansion** at each evaluation and feedback point. The action research philosophy and the expansion, kept the project relevant and current, for all involved.

4.2.4 THE CASE FOR IPSATIVE (INDIVIDUAL & SELF) GOAL SETTING AND EVALUATION:

Adult education argues the case for the **ipsative (or self) model of assessment** where a student's performance is evaluated against the baseline of their own previous performance. Rowntree (1987) and Freeman & Lewis (1998) argue this model is especially suitable for situations where the learner is involved in setting their own goals, as in the case of continuing professional development.

Gambrill, Leever et al (2002, p.83) suggest a series of questions that a competent professional should ask her/him self:

> What skills would I like to acquire? What value would these skills have for my clients? What exactly would I do (and not do) if I had this skill? What steps take me closer to my goal? What criteria would most accurately reflect mastery of skills? Is this skill of value in other situations? What training programs would be most effective in helping me learn this skill?

This philosophy aligns well with the General Social Care Council's goals for candidates viz. to develop a life-long commitment to professional learning and the requirement to demonstrate **continuing professional development** (CPD) to be eligible for on-going professional accreditation and registration. Seden (2003) argues that the traditional pedagogical approach of normative assessment is in conflict with the development of self-reflective critically thinking professionals. "It is crucial for social workers to demonstrate their ability to take responsibility for their own learning and professional development" (Seden 2003, p.120).

Conversely, the principles of **androgogy** (Harris, 1983) from adult education complement the competency based assessment model adopted by the General Social Care Council.[3] Similar to attaining a license to drive, the practitioner is assessed on the basis of demonstrated competencies and deemed as competent and to provide that service, or not yet competent. Amongst the candidates, there will be some natural ranking in accordance with intellect, motivation and skill, which will likely correlate with future career advancements and academic achievement, however, that is outside of the parameters of the intent of the intervention.

[3] Competency based education, training and assessment are discussed more fully in Chapter One

Guided by these principles the following research questions were incorporated into the project:

(1) Did involvement in the programme increase the competency levels of the participants? (Measured ipsatively, and validated in a method of triangulation. Please see section 4.2.5 below for further detail.)

(2) Which of the competencies prescribed by the curriculum were identified by the candidates and their line managers as needing further improvement? (Anonymised ipsative information should reveal de-facto knowledge and skill gaps that might not otherwise be acknowledged. Identification of these areas should be informative in curriculum development for work force retraining, and education of new practitioners.)

(3) Which competencies improved the most in accordance with participation in the training programme? (This should provide information on the curriculum and delivery of the course).

Collecting this information required both quantitative and qualitative methods. A model was formulated[4] where the baseline pre-testing step required candidates to rate their own levels of competency/deficits, set goals for improvement, and determine outcome measures within the prescribed competencies/outcome

[4] This exercise was previously developed and employed for several years by the researcher in her role as the practice education coordinator of social work students at King's University College London (University of Western Ontario - Canada).

measurements. By engaging in this exercise, candidates were forced into a reflective process and their answers helped them structure a personal learning contract for the duration of the programme. Candidates re-evaluated their levels of competency and knowledge/skill acquisition at each stage of the programme. Utilisation of parallel instruments allowed for comparisons between the perceptions of the candidates and their line managers at each stage. This increased objectivity and validity of the findings, and identified potentially interesting discrepancies in perspectives.

4.2.5 DATA TRIANGULATION TO OVERCOME SUBJECTIVITY:

This outlined research strategy is open to criticism around its subjective nature and vulnerability to personal bias (such as charisma of the lecturer or satisfaction with grades attained). To ensure more robust and objective evaluation, the researcher employed a compensatory triangulation method of data collection. (Gibbs, Habeshaw & Habeshaw 1988; Jacob 1990; Wiggins 1998) Thus, the validity of the candidates' self (ipsative) evaluation of their own competency (utilizing the competency outcomes selected by the General Social Care Council, the Training Organisation for Personal Social Services and the Department of Health) was verified by collecting parallel evaluations from the line managers (who should be in the best position to evaluate the candidate's competency in the work environment).

This information was then triangulated against the evaluations of the lecturers/tutors for academic achievement of the same competencies (every assignment was blinded and double marked). It was also triangulated against evaluations of the candidate's ability to demonstrate the knowledge skills and values associated with the competencies. Practice Assessors were trained to observe interactions with service recipients and assess practice portfolios, in order to evaluate this demonstration of competency.

Finally, the academic, and practice components were submitted to external examiners who assured consistency and identified any concerns for further evaluation, before presenting the materials to the examinations board, where the materials were all evaluated once more. (It is not surprising that many candidates and line managers complained that the programme was over assessed, as the Consortium was committed to robust and consistent evaluation).

Collecting and collating multiple sources of information on the same item enabled triangulation and enhanced overall objectivity, as well as enabling broader, systematic analysis of the programme and its impact. Engaging all constituents (candidates, line managers, practice assessors, tutors, and training directors) and allowing them to set their own goals and measures provided a comprehensive and inclusive perspective. It is likely that this approach contributed to the excellent compliance by all participants. The process was very time and energy consuming, both in data collection and in coding.

4.2.6 THE MULTIPLICITY OF STAKEHOLDERS WITH DIFFERING AND CONFLICTING GOALS:

The current milieu in health and social care recognises and values the role and input of multiple stakeholders in the provision of service. Although the trend and nomenclature is global, it is of particular import in the United Kingdom at the present time, in response to the numerous government initiatives and directives which emphasise the important of communication and cooperation across the professions and agencies. The need for this cooperation is obvious given the complexity of child protection services, and therefore paralleled in the multiplicity of stakeholders invested in the Post Qualification Child Care Award.

The involvement of multiple stakeholders is philosophically attractive, but logistically difficult for a research project. An inclusive research design was required which ensured that the multiple stakeholders had sufficient input both in determining goals and identifying the means by which to measure the achievement of those goals.

> A critical aspect of programme outcome evaluation is that we must have a clear sense of what expected changes (the programme's outcomes) we hope to see; …programme objectives are developed by giving consideration to views of stakeholders, as well as knowledge gained from the existing literature, practice wisdom, and the current political climate.
>
> (Gabor P, Unrau Y, Grinnell R. 1998 p.103)

In these situations, qualitative research methodologies and an action based philosophy of research are indicated (discussed more fully in 4.2.9) to ensure the

integrity of the multiple agendas of the numerous constituents. As illustrated in Figure 4.1, the stakeholders included: the Department of Health, the Training Organisation for the Personal Social Services (TOPPS), the Higher Educational Institutions, the Local Authorities, the Training and Voluntary Agencies, the Line Managers, the Practice Assessors, the candidates themselves, and, of course, the service users.[5]

Figure 4.1

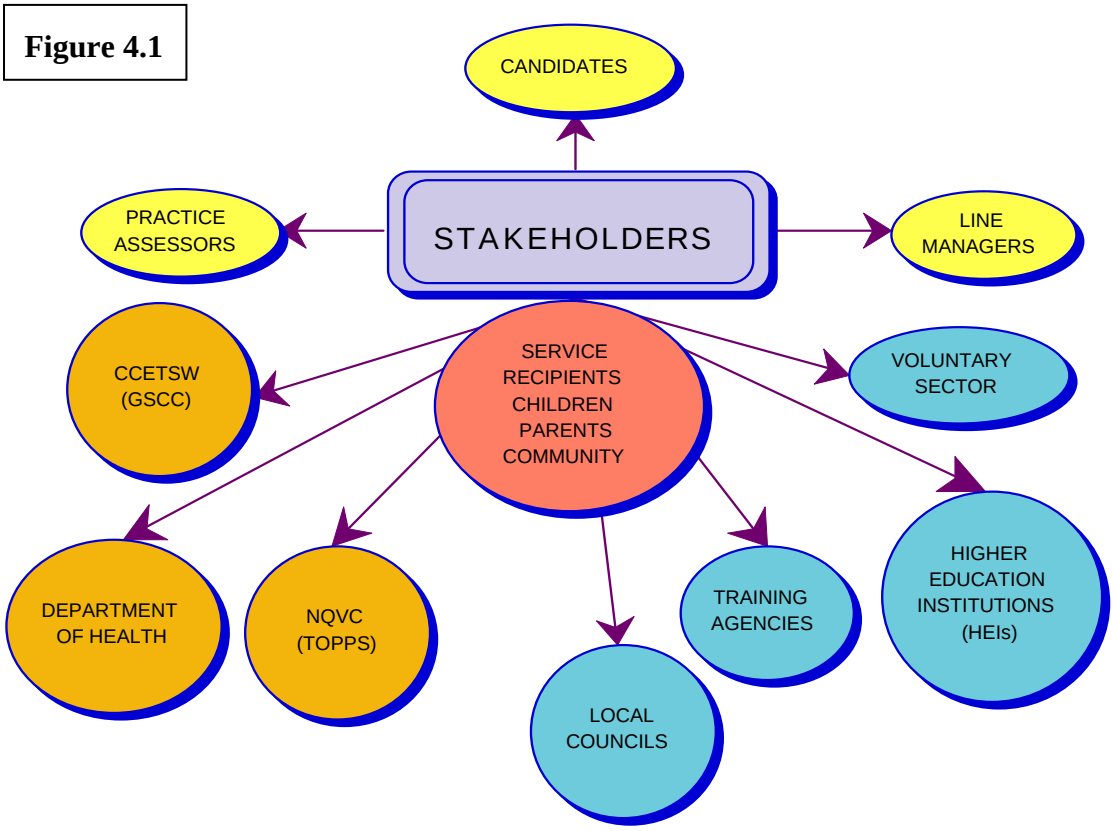


Figure 4.1 - Multiple Stakeholders

Regardless of the multiple mandates and agendas of these constituents, the programme itself had an overarching goal to improve the quality of service provided by front line child protection social workers. How this goal was to be

[5] The use of the term service 'user' remains uncomfortable for the researcher whose North American background would view the term as pejorative. Hart & Bond pp 11 also challenge this nomenclature when used to discuss 'involuntary clients'. Furthermore, the nature of the contract with these clients imposes complexity and limitations on the input collectable.

attained and measured was far less prescribed. Accordingly, the initial phase of the evaluation project required facilitating the stakeholders within a process of clarifying and focusing articulated goals for their programme and identifying the criteria and method of measuring outcomes (Kumar 1996). The 'hermeneutic dialectic[6]' model proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1989) enabled a dynamic integration of the views of numerous stakeholders. (Gabor, Unrau, & Grinnell Jr., 1998). This process was further enabled by the researcher's participant-observer status, which enabled access to, and credibility with the stakeholders. This is discussed in further detail in 4.2.9 below.

4.2.7 DETERMINING OUTCOME CRITERIA AND MEASUREMENT:

The first challenge was to determine measurable, robust, appropriate and valid outcome criteria for measuring the outcomes (York 1998). New policies, procedures or initiatives are usually accompanied by general philosophical statements about the desired objective; but lack a clearly prescribed method of evaluation (Sheldon & Chilvers 2000).

> The program outcomes we eventually evaluate are nothing more than the operationalization of our program objectives. If we have not succinctly stated a program's objectives…any efforts at outcome evaluation are futile, at best …This places some social service programs in a bind because of the difficulty they face in defining concepts for social problems
>
> (Gabor P, Unrau Y, Grinnell R. 1998 p.104)

A clear description of how things will be different if the goal is achieved is

[6]Hermenutic dialectic model refers to phenomenological interpretations of content and form, such that the participants discuss and define the meanings of each from their own perspective, thereby redefining the entirety (Guba & Lincoln 1989)

necessary in order to determine appropriate and valid outcome measures. However, when the intent is broadly described it is often difficult if not impossible to articulate measurable criteria. Clearly delineated outcomes measures needed to be extracted from the:

> …aim of the [Post Qualification Child Care Award was] to ensure the development, education and training of critically reflective social workers whose practice is child centred and focuses on…the developmental needs of children and young people;…the capacity of parents or caregivers to respond to these need and the impact of the wider family and environmental factors on parenting capacity and the child or young person
>
> (Noakes & Jones in CCETSW 2000, p.3)

Figure 4.2

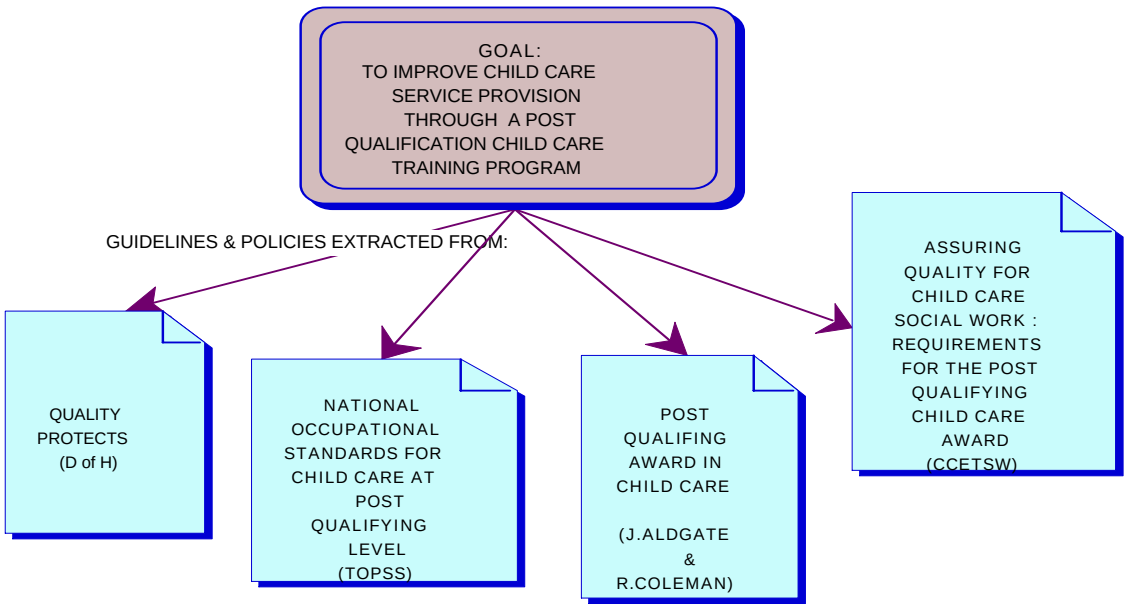


Figure 4.2 - Delineating the Goal

The goal of improving childcare service provision was clearly appropriate, given the mandate of child protection services, the history of failures and the identification of inadequacy in the standards and education of workers. Measuring the accomplishment of that goal was rather more challenging, particularly given the number of stakeholders who may interpret and envisage this goal in differing ways. To this end, the researcher asked a variety of different stakeholders to articulate their interpretation of the goal and how it could be measured. The respondents were well versed in the philosophical intent of the goal, but less able to suggest measurable criteria. Evaluation criteria are often very elusive in situations of complexity and multiple agendas.

> To demonstrate effectiveness the government has invested heavily in the new management strategies to 'manage' change: action plans, performance targets, standards, indicators…indicators, however, are not the whole story…,without the 'process' evaluation…you can never really be sure that the indicators are really measuring what they intended to.
>
> (Buchanan 2000, p. 82)

To achieve the goal of an integrated programme evaluation to measure effectiveness and impact of the educational initiative would require a diverse spectrum of evaluation methods and measurement criteria. Methods of evaluating change in worker skills, knowledge and attitude were explored. The most desirable: direct access to workers in situ, service users and client files (Macdonald 2001) to evaluate changes in case assessments, risk assessments and case planning before and after participation in the programme were explored. However, the researcher was understandably denied access due to issues of confidentiality and data protection.

The researcher decided to seek guidance from the literature of disciplines more experienced in evaluation, exploring the use of **surrogate markers**, which are correlated with actual outcome markers. Remaining mindful of the cautions that surrogate markers have misled the best of researchers, and that correlations are not proof of causality and are particularly vulnerable to intervening variables, this approach, ubiquitous in education, suggested a tentative means of measuring the impact of the programme.

Level of worker competency was selected as the most viable surrogate outcome measure, and one with **face validity**. At first glance, the use of the term **competency** may seem confusing in this discussion as it describes both a gradient and a category of outcome.[7]

Prior to the development of the Post Qualification Child Care Award curriculum, the professional role of the child care (protection) social worker was analysed and dissected into delineated competencies (knowledge, skills, and values) deemed necessary for effectively fulfilling the responsibilities and duties of the position. The competencies were clearly classified and articulated within the Training Organisation for Personal Social Services template, and formed the framework around which Aldgate and Colman structured the curriculum theory base. Finally, the outcome measures for each competency were well defined, providing a consistent and integrated evaluation framework. **Construct validity** was thus achieved.

[7] For further clarification on Competency and Social Work Training please refer back to the discussion of competency based education and assessment in Chapter One

Globally, (albeit, in culturally homologous countries) the competencies identified are remarkably similar, giving credence to the argument that competency based education and training /competency based assessment are effective employment strategies for a global economy where a **job passport** would enable transferability and recognition of skills from one region or country to another (Bennett, 1993).

As has been discussed in more detail in Chapter Two, the primary research question sought to determine if the data collected would allow the Post Qualification Child Care Award Programme (England) to demonstrate **efficacy** (short term) and **effectiveness** (long term) as measured by increasing competency levels of the participants in the prescribed learning objectives. It must be noted, however, that these are surrogate markers, which assume that the absence of these competencies is the root of inadequate child protection service delivery, and that conversely; attainment of these competencies will improve the standards of childcare practice. Although this argument is logical and links the measurable competencies with the curriculum, it is difficult, if not impossible to find proof of causality linkages in the literature.

If we accept the assumption that there is a relationship between improved competency and improved standards of child protection services, then we can claim **conclusion validity**. However, **internal validity** (of a causal relationship between the curriculum, the competencies and the standard of child protection services) will require long-term data collection. Furthermore, we cannot claim that the attainment of improved levels of competency will influence the desired goal of **improved outcomes for children** or on other as yet, undefined goals to measure

improved child protection service delivery. Again, this will require complicated research designs, which will link evaluation of worker levels of competency with the longitudinal data being collected through the **Looked After Children Studies** (Trocme 2003)[8]. Finally, the **external validity** (generalisability to other groups, places and times) of this outcome measure will be significantly limited by the narrow confines of the sample in terms of size discipline, educational intervention and the short-term nature of the outcome.

In keeping with the full spectrum and mixed methods of the project, a number of other outcome measures were identified including levels of **enthusiasm** and **distress**. Finally, qualitative data collection sought to determine demographic features of the participants, motivation for participation, sources of stress, competencies most in need of improvement, expectations of the programme, impact on personal and work lives, most relevant learning, most effective learning exercises, time costing of participation, and a variety of other facets which are discussed more fully in the findings and the conclusions.

4.2.8 INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT:

The researcher transplanted the Post Qualification Child Care Award competencies and their outcomes measures onto quantitative data collection instruments, which had been piloted in a parallel Canada project.[9] (Csiernick, Gordon, & Vitali, 2000). Loosely structured around Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of

[8] Please refer to Chapter One for a further discussion of the difficulties in measuring improvement in this field.
[9]Recognising that '…the same thing may be described differently in different places and sometimes the same terminology means rather different things in different places' (Darlington & Scott 2002 p.19), possible cultural bias and confusion (given that the researcher is a Canadian) was eliminated by generous proof reading and re-phrasing by Mrs. Barbara Hudson (Research Supervisor at Barnett House University of Oxford),

classification of learning outcomes, a 5-point Lickert scale defined levels of competency. (Instruments can be viewed in Appendix A). The scale ranged from no competency to a benchmark (Matheson et al, 1995) for adequate competency, through to a higher level to encourage higher levels of skill and challenge.

These bespoke instruments were then used to collect data from candidates and line managers at each stage of the project. Further complementary and comprehensive instruments were designed to collect programme specific feedback whilst opened ended questions elicited qualitative data. Table 4.1 (below) outlines the schedule for administration of instruments. All instruments were alpha-numerically coded to identify the respondent, timing and cross-referencing, and can be viewed in Appendix A.

Table 4.1

Table 4.1 Data Collection Schedule

Date	Candidate	Line Manager	External Assessment
Nov 2000	A1 Application (demographics and qualitative information on motivation)	A2 Application (demographics and qualitative information on motivation)	
Jan 2001	Baseline Pre-Tests C1 Levels of Competency B1 Motivations for Involvement Levels of Anxiety/Distress	Baseline Pre-Tests B3 Levels of Competency B2 Motivations for Involvement Levels of Anxiety/Distress	
Feb 01			C5 Formative Assignment
April 2001	Post-Test of Module One: C2 Levels of Competency C3 Motivations for Involvement C4 Evaluation of Module		
April 01			C6Summative Assignment
April 2001	Pre-Test of Module Two: D1 Levels of Competency		
May 01			D5 Formative Assignment
July	Post-Test of Module Two:		

2001	D2 Levels of Competency D3 Motivations for Involvement Levels of Anxiety/Distress D4 Evaluation of Module		
July 01			D6Summative Assignment
Sept 2001	Pre-Test of Module Three: E1 Levels of Competency		
Oct 01			E5 Law Exam
Nov 2001	Post-Test of Module Three: E2 Levels of Competency E3 Motivations for Involvement Levels of Anxiety/Distress E4 Evaluation of Module		
Dec 01			E6Summative Assignment
Jan 2002			Module Four: (practice assessment & portfolio) Practice, value, knowledge requirements
Jan 2002	Post Programme Tests: F5 Levels of Competency F1 Benefits of Involvement Levels of Anxieties/Distress F3 Demographics	Post Programme Tests: F6 Levels of Competency F2 Benefits of Involvement Levels of Anxieties/Distress F4 Demographics	
July 2002	Six Month Post Programme Tests: G5 Levels of Competency Areas Most Improved	Six Month Post Programme Tests: G6 Levels of Competency Areas Most Improved	

4.2.9 ENTRY & COMPLIANCE:

As has already been discussed, social work is a discipline which has historically had limited involvement in and a degree of aversion to research. This resistance, combined with the onerous amount of paperwork required in the delivery of social work, can constitute barriers to enthusiasm and cooperation in research projects. Issues of confidentiality and a natural discomfort with being observed and evaluated (especially whilst developing a new programme in new partnerships

under time and fiscal restraints) also contributed to the difficulty the researcher encountered in pursuing the project.

Negotiating entry into the community of the research group and sample is often the greatest hurdle a researcher encounters, particularly for students (Hart & Bond 1995; Coleman 2001; Darlington & Scott 2002). In this situation, the researcher was further handicapped by her lack of professional networks and reputation due to the move from another country. Despite many global trends in social work, the structure and language of social work in the UK is significantly different to that of Canada, thereby slowing and hampering the researcher's progress. Finally, the fiscal status of a D.Phil. student does not allow for much leniency in determining methods of access or incentive. To overcome these challenges, the researcher had to determine an entry that would capitalise on the benefits of her involvement for to the Consortium and the participants.

As cost-free external programme evaluator (with previous experience in a parallel Canadian project), the local Consortium[10] was willing to accept the researcher in a ***participant-observer role*** (Blalock 1970; Adler & Adler 1987; Scott 1989) from the early stages of the development of the programme to the completion of first cohort. The researcher attended every meeting of all committees, gave presentations to candidate groups, the General Social Care Council, the Consortium Board and conference workshop as well as meeting with the practice assessors and engaging in reciprocal communication about goals and measurement. This was a unique opportunity to be party to the many dynamics

[10] For more detail please see Chapter Two

and facets of this type of programme. More importantly, it enabled the identification and synthesis of shared goals as well as input and direction to the structuring of the curriculum and assessment methods such that robust and meaningful evaluation could be achieved. [11]

Data collection in this type of research is often limited by poor compliance in the completion and/or the return of the numerous (and repetitive) questionnaires. Employing an **action based research model** (Cunningham, 1993) enhanced compliance. Hart & Bond (1998, p.52) argue that "…action research (is) attractive to participants as it is geared to their problems and promotes their active participation in its resolution". Ninety-six point five percent **96.5% (28/29)** of the candidates who finished the programme in the first year completed and returned **all** the instruments, whilst eight-two point seven **82.7%** of their line managers also completed the essential instruments.

Although the original model of **action research** was developed by Lewin in the 1940's as a method for **rational social management**, (Lewin 1946, p.206) it has subsequently experienced significant evolution and numerous reincarnations including collaborative research and action inquiries (Wilkins 2000; Evans & Fischer 2002). Hart & Bond (1995, pp. 21 & 30) argue that modern models of action research are especially appropriate in the current milieu of health and social care which embraces evidence based practice and service user involvement:

[11] For example, the original programme delivery model had three different lecturers providing each of the educational modules at different sites. The researcher suggested a peripatetic lecturer for each module at all three sites, thereby controlling for possible effect of the intervening variable of the quality of the lecturer.

> ...modern day action researchers do not seek to find universal laws of human behaviour through which behaviour can be measured and social change engineered….The emphasis is much more upon awareness-raising and empowerment and upon finding ways for researchers and practitioners to work collaboratively and for practitioners to become action researchers in their own right….Critical reflection, grounded in everyday practice, and a problem-focused approach laid the basis for a rediscovery of action research. (Hart & Bond 1995, pp. 21& 30)

Reason (1988, p.1) suggests that the strength of Action Research is the loss of distinction between researcher and subject, whereby "...all who participate are both co-researchers and co-subjects". Meyer (1993, p.1069) argues it is one of the only research methodologies that fully address the power inequity in research in that it "…does not treat those who are the focus of the research as passive subjects but seeks to empower them to act on their own behalf as active participants in change". Hart and Bond's (1998) **Participatory Action Research (PAR)** employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches, making it philosophically congruent with this research project.

Owen & Rodgers (1999), hold the position that action based research has become the **standard** model for evaluating human service programmes. The researcher believed there was merit in adopting the philosophical position of modern action research as it fit well with the both the traditional and the newly evolving values of social work. Usefully, it was in consistent with her own value base, and belief in parallel process.

The Consortium was very receptive to an action-based model, as it provided them with the opportunity to have an immediate formative loop of feedback to refine and adapt the programme in situ. An unpaid, **arms length** external evaluator

ensured confidentiality and objectivity. Regular anonymous feedback was provided to the Consortium and its working committees to facilitate quality assurance and immediate programme reform/revision. Candidate representatives on these committees then looped back to the other candidates the assurances that their feedback was indeed anonymous and, furthermore, had immediate impact on programme revision and refinement, forming a **virtuous circle**, which cascaded into further compliance and fullness of questionnaire completion.

Attendance at the beginning and end of each module to enable instrument completion, allowed the researcher to become very familiar to and with the candidates. This led to candour in comments, observations and emails. Participants commented that the researcher's previous experience in a parallel Canadian project and credibility as a child protection worker was valued whilst her status as a **fellow mature student** generated empathy and contributed to their compliance.

Confidentiality and objectivity were maintained by procedures whereby the candidates and line managers completed the questionnaires independently of each other. There was no referencing back to pre-tests, (with a one year interim for line managers) thereby reducing the tendency towards incremental ranking against reference point and ensuring maximum objectivity of these responses. The subsequent six-month post-test was totally unexpected thereby increasing the objectivity of the results reported. (Unfortunately, the response rate fell to 69% for candidates, mostly due to occupational moves and/or a lack of line manager). As candidates and managers were assured that neither had access to the other's

comments, and the candidates were assured that their comments were anonymised before being presented to lecturers, tutors, practice assessors, their training managers, or the Board, the result was significant candour in the qualitative input.

The General Social Care Council required that a **programme evaluation** and a **quality assurance mechanism** be instituted as part of the programme delivery. These tasks were integrated into the research project, and freed the Consortium members to focus on the programme development and delivery. After the first intake, (January 2001) a pre-test report was submitted to the Programme Management Committee to ensure immediacy of feedback for changes that could be instituted in the programme delivery and within partner agencies. Subsequent to the completion of each module, a full evaluation report was provided to the Curriculum Development Committee and Assessment Committee who then actioned changes that addressed concerns and complaints of the candidates. This report also collected information needed by the three institutions of higher education for their own Quality Assurance Audits.

At each Programme Management Committee Meeting, a report was provided, although any matters of more urgency were relayed directly to the Programme Director for response. On completion of the first year of the programme, the Management Committee was provided with a presentation of the evaluation report, which was also submitted to the General Social Care Council. A detailed analysis and suggestions for further action was collated into reports specific to each Committee, which was empowered with the responsibility for the area under discussion. Finally, modified instruments were developed and provided to the

Consortium for ease of on-going quality assurance.[12]

4.2.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Darlington & Scott (2002 p.24) identify **informed consent, intrusiveness** and **confidentiality** as key ethical considerations in research in the human services and provide guidance which was followed in the design and management of the project.

Prior to participation, all candidates received full disclosure around the goals and methodology of the study through a verbal presentation delivered by the researcher, and supplemental written information (Please see Appendix B). Explicit in this **informed consent**, was the reassurance that participants were under no obligation to be involved, and could withdraw at any stage of the study without professional or personal repercussions. Line manager involvement was also fully informed and voluntary.

Candidates were assured of full **confidentiality** and **anonymity** through several mechanisms. Alpha-numeric identifiers were assigned and used throughout. The respondents returned completed instruments directly to the researcher (usually via self addressed and stamped envelope). Input from each source (i.e. candidate, line manager, instructor) was kept completely discrete. All feedback to the Consortium and the General Social Care Council was reported anonymously and in aggregate, thereby ensuring the **privacy** of participants. The researcher processed all

[12] Some of these Reports are discussed in Chapter Five, and original Reports & Documents can be viewed in Appendix C.

instruments personally. Data was numerically coded and entered in SPSS for quantitative analysis, whilst purely qualitative data was collated, and analysed manually for thematic concentration. The researcher's preliminary analysis employed frequencies, distributions and cross tabulations. Further analysis for significance levels employed paired samples t-test and eta squared values.

4.3 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT DESIGN:

A pre-test post-test, also called a **before and after design** (Gabor, Unrau, Grinnell 1998); was selected. Kumar (1999, p.83) argues:

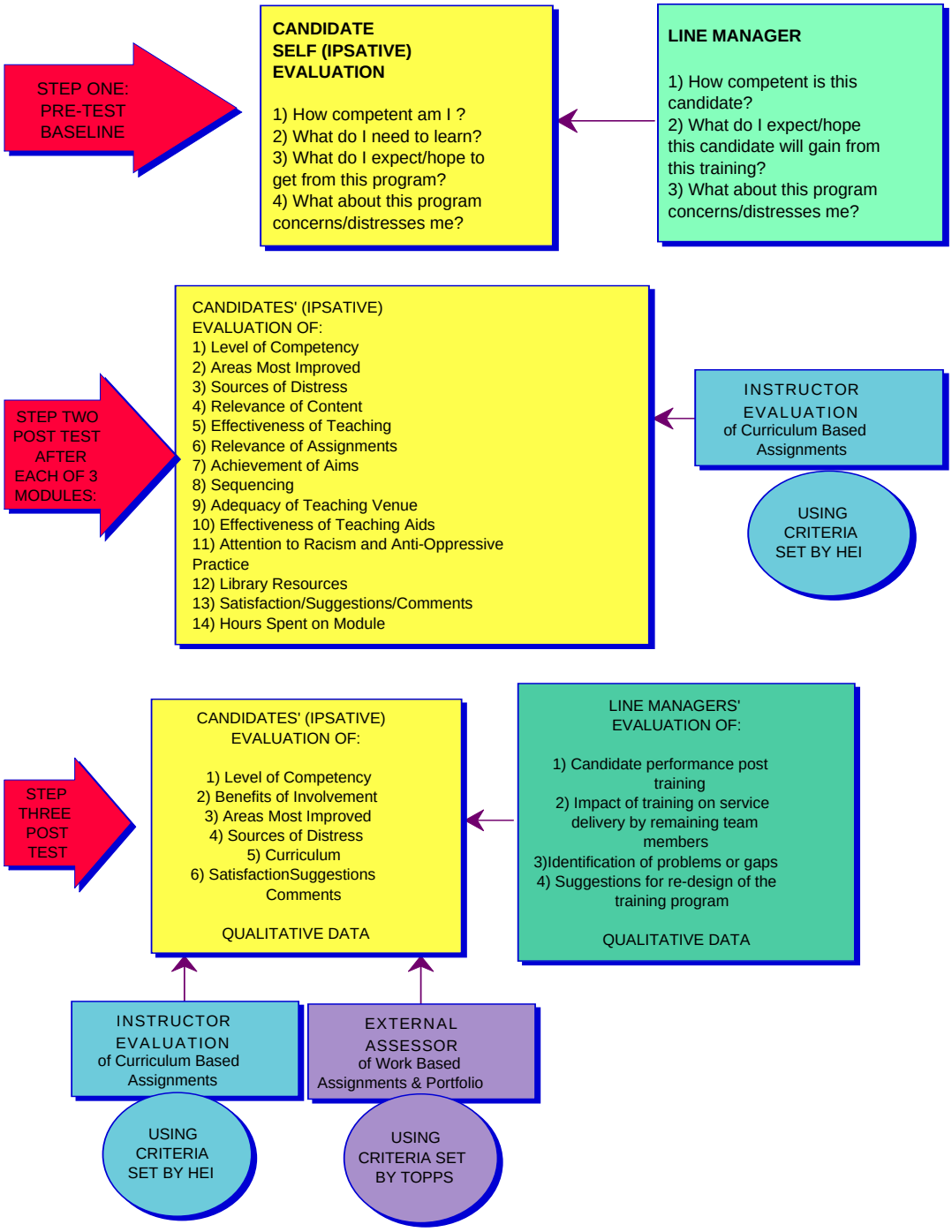
> It is the most appropriate design for measuring the impact or effectiveness of a programme. Two sets of cross sectional observations on the same population to find out the change in the variable(s) between points in time...it can measure change in a situation, phenomenon, issue, problem or attitude.

Kumar also points out, however, that because of the repeated collection of data, it is expensive and is vulnerable to attrition of the sample. In addition, it only measures total change, with no quantification, and has no ability to determine if independent or extraneous variables are responsible for any change. These latter weaknesses were addressed by designing the instruments with competence specificity, and collating the data by specific categories before aggregating it. Kumar (1999) also warns about the risk of regression effect when using the same instrument more than once. The researcher attempted to mitigate this possibility by denying respondents access to previously completed questionnaires.

Figure 4.3, below illustrates the final study design. The colour coding synchronises with Table 4.1- Data Collection Schedule.

Figure 4.3

Figure 4.3 - Study Design



Instruments can be located in Appendix A. Correspondence to the Participants is located in Appendix B, whilst all reports and documents generated for the Consortium and the General Social Care Council are located in Appendix C.

Summary:

A public consortium in Southern England incorporating three Universities (HEI), ten unitary and local authorities, two voluntary agencies and two training agencies was forged to "...design, deliver, manage and monitor the New Post Qualifying Award in Child Care" (TVPQC 2000). The members of the Consortium have cooperated in a number of different partnerships over 15 years, and have extensive experience in collaborating in order to provide education and training.

The first tranche of thirty-six (36) child-care workers were invited to participate in an evaluation of the one-year Post Qualification Child Care Award Programme. The childcare workers represented the full spectrum of previous education and experience levels. As well, they held a variety of different roles and responsibilities. This enhanced the type of analysis, which can be performed to possibly demonstrate which candidates are best suited to benefit from this Award.

Adopting a ***participant observer role***, the researcher became fully involved throughout the development and delivery of the programme to the first (2001) cohort. Instrument design, modification and data collection methodology developed in congruence with programme design.

An ***action research philosophy*** ensured that the subjects of the research benefited from the findings on an immediate and ongoing basis, through anonymous participant feedback and a quality assurance mechanism.

A ***mixed methods model*** with a ***repeated measures*** design required candidates and their line managers to complete a battery of questionnaires that elicited quantitative and qualitative data at a number of intervals: ***Step One*** (pre-test baseline), ***Step Two*** (post-module) and ***Step Three*** (post-test). Supplemental data was collected from external evaluators - course instructors and practice assessors. A six-month post qualification post-test (***Step Four***) evaluated sustained impact as assessed by candidates and their line managers.

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Chapter Five: Micro Level Findings – The Sample & the Programme

5.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE:

Attendance on the Post Qualification Child Care Award was open to childcare social workers employed by the local authorities or voluntary sector organisations who were members of the Consortium. To be considered for participation, the candidate completed an application form[1] documenting the following:

- ✓ Employment details
- ✓ Confirmation of Approval and Support by Line Manager
- ✓ Financial Authorisation by Training Manager
- ✓ Description of Relevant Experience and Qualifications that would enable the Candidate to meet the assessment requirements (i.e. assignments, portfolio building, reflective practice)
- ✓ Documents confirming Social Work Qualifications
- ✓ A Personal Statement evidencing how completion of the Level One Post Qualification Award (a pre-requisite) had improved their practice and how they anticipated involvement in a Level Two Post Qualification Award, the Post Qualification Award in Child Care, would further that process

[1] Document can be viewed in Appendix A

- ✓ A personal statement regarding the choice of University site and rationale (i.e. transportation, child care issues, etc)
- ✓ A statement by the Line Manger outlining the Learning Opportunities and support the Agency could offer.

This was a fairly extensive application which the candidates needed to complete within a short time frame, possibly demonstrating high motivation but not immune to coercion[2]. Subsequently, these applications were considered by a selection committee of the Consortium. Allowances were made for candidates who were almost finished (but not yet awarded) their Level One Post Qualification Award Level.

Thirty-eight (38) candidates were accepted onto the course, however several withdrew immediately. Of the group which embarked on the programme, three were in attendance against their wishes and one was a manager who was approaching retirement but agreed to attend the course in order to provide feedback and guidance to the agency. Motivation for involvement is discussed more fully in Chapter Six.

5.2 EXTERNAL VALIDITY, COMPARABILITY AND GENERALISABILITY:

External Validity is a key concern in any research project, as it determines the transferability of the research paradigm and the findings to other groups of people, places and times. The researcher attempted to locate this type of comparison data from several sources.

[2] As the member agencies had committed time, money and candidates to the programme, there was some incentive to ensure that an adequate number of candidates came forth.

(1) In May 2000, the Central Council for Educating and Training Social Workers and the Department of Health conducted an evaluation of eight pilots of the Post Qualification Child Care Award. The researcher applied for, but was denied access to a conference dedicated to this topic. The published summary document **– CCETSW PQ Child Care Award – Implementing the PQ Child Care Award: the experiences of the Pilot Programmes in England (2000),** and the **Social Work Education and Training Annual Quality-Assurance Report 2001-02** (GSCC 2002a) unfortunately do not report any data of this nature.

(2) The researcher requested demographic data on the entire national cohort of the Post Qualification Child Care Award directly, by phone and email on a number of occasions from the Department of Health and the General Social Care Council; but met with limited success.

Accordingly, to determine comparability and the degree to which this sample was representative, parallel samples were sought. The following sources for comparators were located and considered most relevant:

- ✓ General Social Care Council social work education and training statistics - **Data Pack 2003** (512 students in the Post Qualification Child Care Award between April 2002 to March 2003)
- ✓ University of East London – School of Social Sciences **2001 Research Report on Newly Qualified Social Workers**
- ✓ Sheldon & Chilvers' (2000) **Evidence-Based Social Care** analysis of a

cohort of 1341 social workers, carefully selected to be a nationally representative sample.

- ✓ Marsh & Triseliotis' (1996) **Ready to Practice Study** of 714 social workers and probation officers in their first year of practice.

These parallel samples will be referred to for comparison, wherever appropriate.

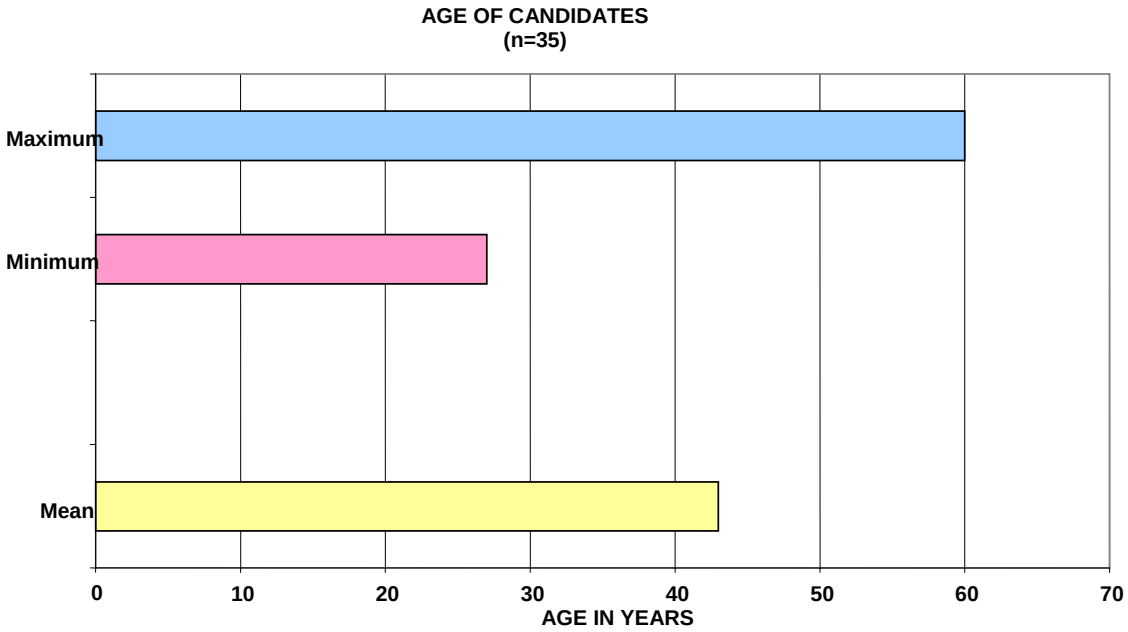
5.3 DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE STUDY RESPONDENTS:

There was an attempt to collect demographic information from ALL candidates, however, some chose not to respond to some sections of the questionnaires (as was their right), whilst others left the programme at different stages.

Of the **thirty-six (36)** childcare workers beginning the program in January 2001, **twenty-seven (27)** candidates **seventy-five percent (75%)** fully and successfully completed the program within the original timeframe. Three candidates withdrew completely during the program (two due to serious illness, and one due programme demands). Four other non-completers deferred during the final module (the portfolio completion and practice assessment), but re-submitted during the following calendar year. Two candidates failed their practice requirements **and their re-take of same**. Accordingly, sample sizes vary in accordance with these limitations.

5.3.1 AGE OF CANDIDATES:

Figure 5.1



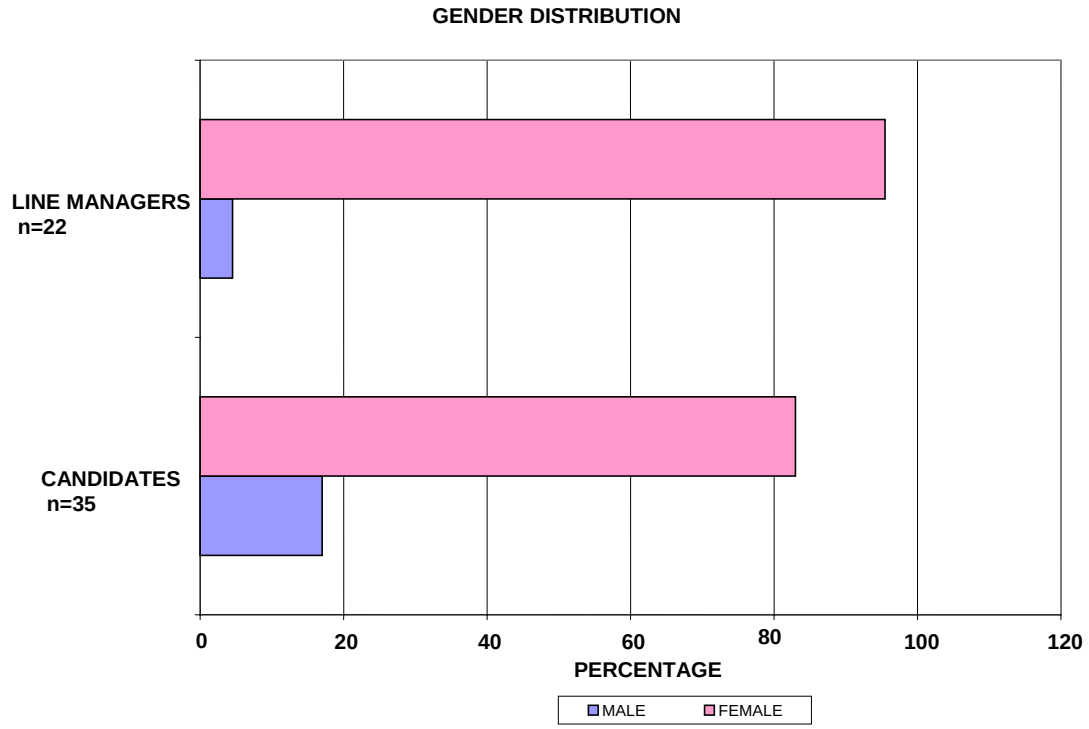
Ranging from **twenty-seven** to **sixty** (on the eve of retirement), the mean age of the candidate sample was **43.14** years (s.d. = 8.98).

The General Social Care Council Post Qualification Child Care Award (2002-2003) cohort reported the following: 3 participants between ages twenty to twenty four; 132 between twenty-five and thirty-four; 176 between thirty-five and forty-four and 201 over the age of forty-five.

Sheldon & Chilvers' (2000) cohort had a mean average age of forty-four (44) years (s.d. = 8.4) within an age range of twenty-one to sixty-four.

5.3.2 GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF CANDIDATES:

Figure 5.2



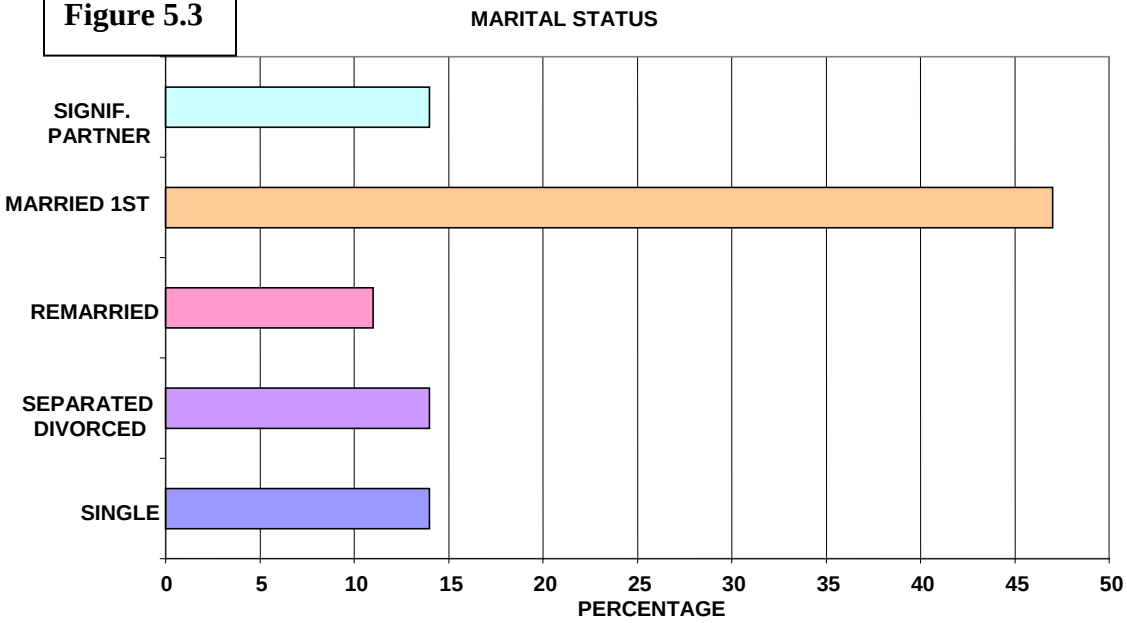
The sample reflects the gender bias of the profession. The candidate sample had a ratio of **twenty-nine** (**29)** females **(79.3%)** to **six (6)** males and the line manager sample ratio was **twenty-one (21)** females **(95.2%)** to **one** (**1)** male.

Eight-six percent (86%) of the General Social Care Council Post Qualification Child Care Award (2002-2003) cohort was female.

Seventy-two percent (72%) of Sheldon & Chilvers' (2000) cohort was female and seventy percent (70%) of Marsh & Tiseliotis' (1996) cohort was female.

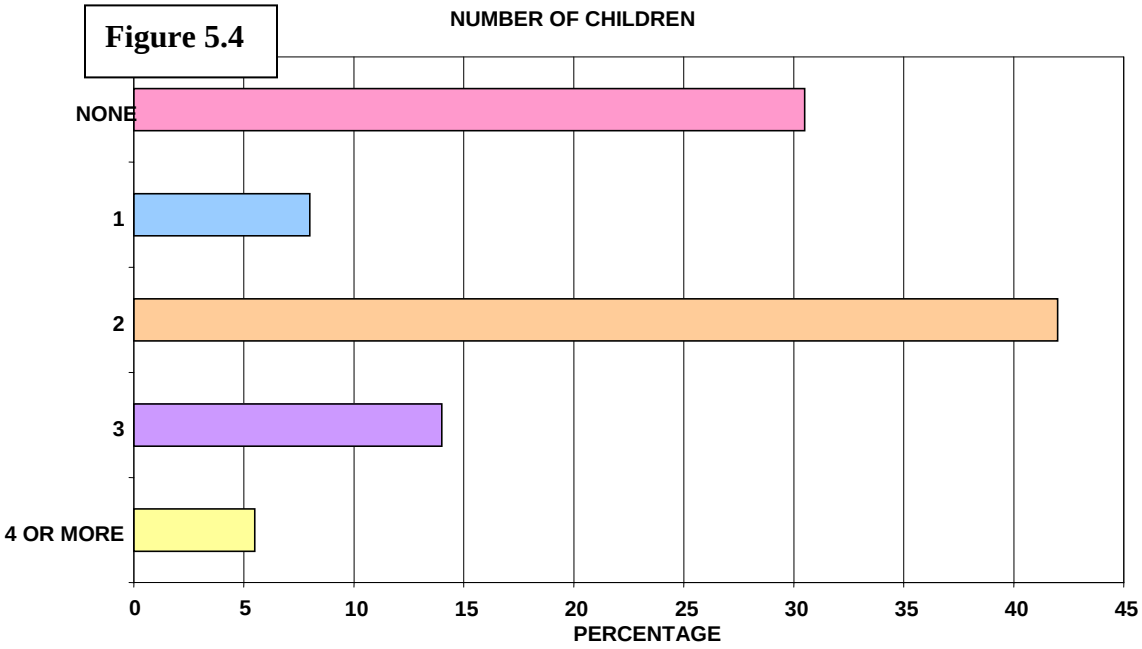
5.3.3 MARITAL STATUS & FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES OF CANDIDATES:

Figure 5.3



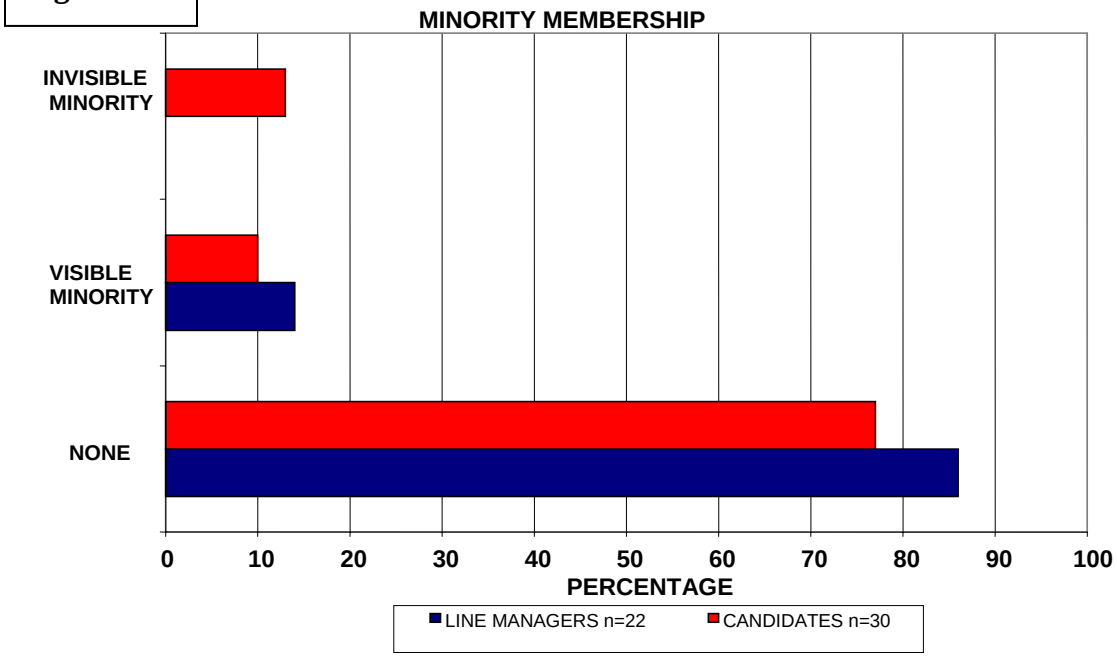
Fifty-five percent (55%) of the candidate sample (n=28) reported that they were in a steady relationship, with **forty-seven percent (47%) (13)** in their first marriage. **Sixty-eight percent** of candidates (n=28) reported having children, with a mean average of **1.6** children apiece (sd=1.26), distributed as below in **Figure 5.4.**

Figure 5.4



5.3.4 MEMBERSHIP IN MINORITY GROUP:

Figure 5.5

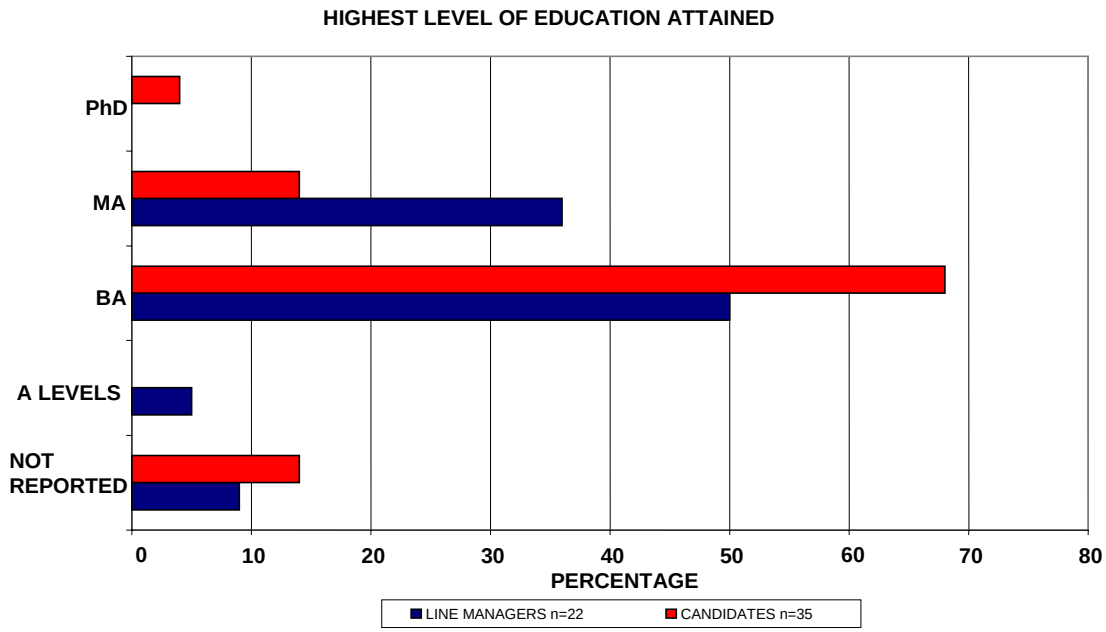


Membership in a minority group (visible or invisible) was reported by **twenty-three percent (23%) (7)** of candidates, and only **fourteen percent (14%) (3)** of line managers. Their self-definition of a membership in a minority group was very idiosyncratic, such as hearing impaired or Irish.

Fifteen percent (15%) of the General Social Care Council Post Qualification Child Care Award (2002-2003) cohort declared themselves as 'non-white', and nineteen percent (19%) declared themselves as disabled. The 'minority' distribution of the sample was monitored due to the recognition that some of the local authorities had significant over-representation of certain ethnic minorities in their client load versus the front line workers. Furthermore, there was concern about the implications for an ethnic minority candidate being assessed by a line manager or practice assessor who may not fully understand or appreciate the diversity.

5.3.5 HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED:

Figure 5.6



Most respondents held a University degree. **Fourteen percent (14%)** (4) of the candidates with Masters level degree (and one with a PhD) were front line workers, rather than line managers.

Marsh & Tiselotis (1996) noted that 96.1% of their cohort reported post-secondary education.

5.3.6. SOCIAL WORK QUALIFICATIONS:

Figure 5.7

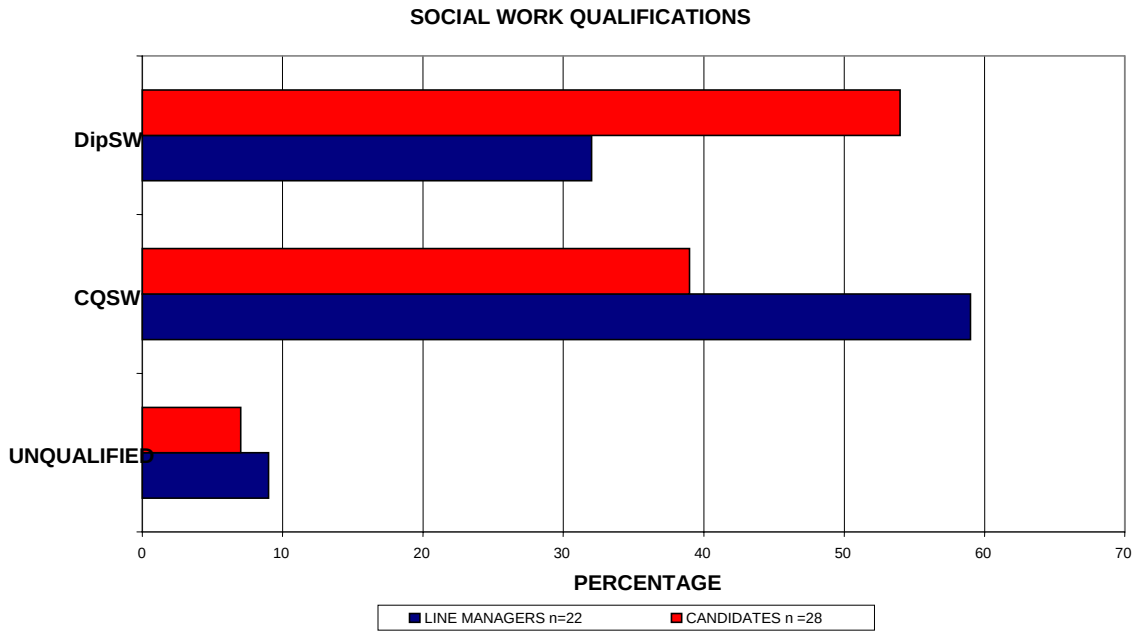
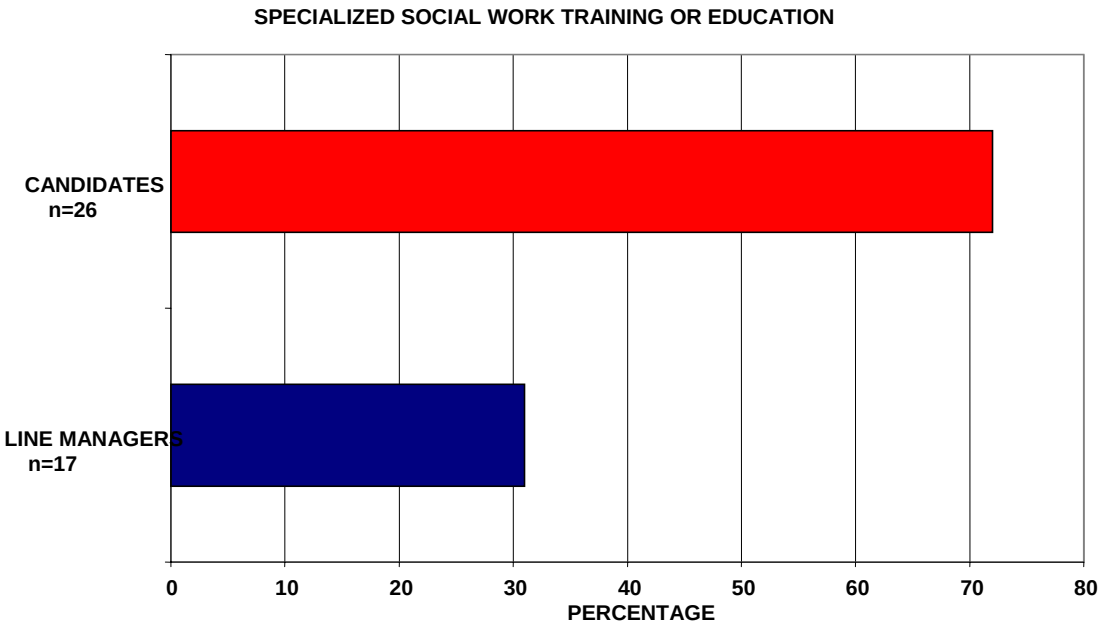


Figure 5.7 demonstrates the different routes by which candidates and line managers had qualified as a social worker. One candidate was supervised by a line manager with no social work education, training or qualifications. This candidate was openly dissatisfied with this arrangement, and the line manager expressed frustration and displeasure with the time required for the training and this research project. By the end of the program, several candidates were without line managers and in some circumstances, had moved into a line management position themselves.

In Sheldon & Chilvers' cohort 18.6% of sample held a Diploma in Social Work whilst 43.2% were qualified through CQSW.

5.3.7. SPECIALIZED SOCIAL WORK TRAINING OR EDUCATION:

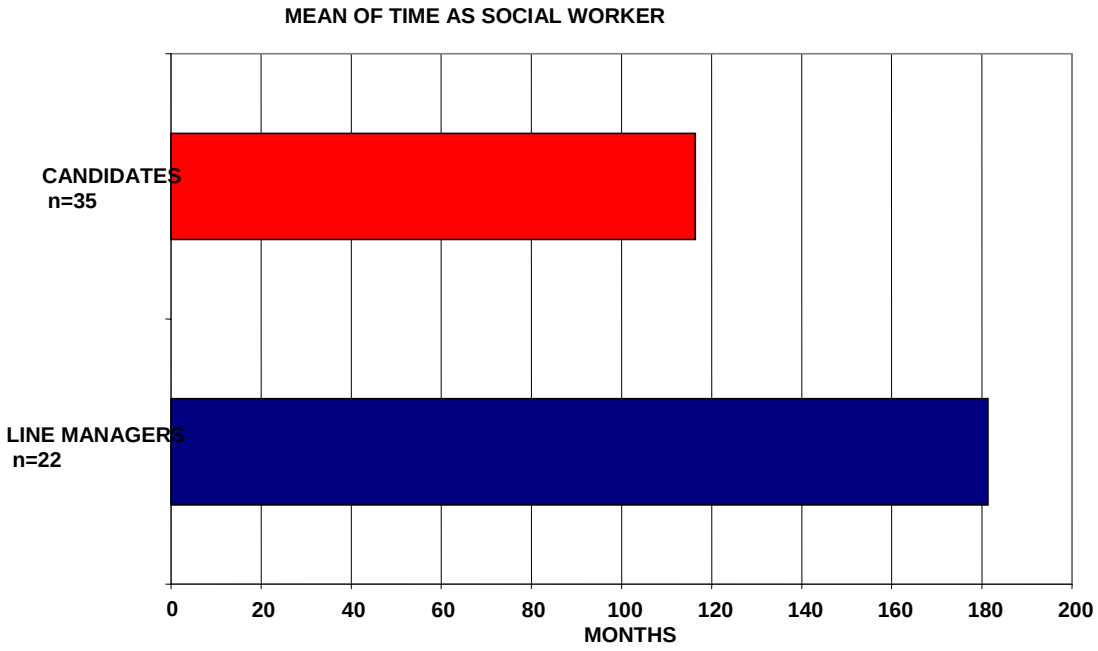
Figure 5.8



Successful completion of the Level One Post Qualification Award was a pre-requisite for the Post Qualification Child Care Award; thus the high participation rate of candidates in Specialized Training. Although all candidates had taken the Level One Post Qualification Award, some were waiting for their portfolios to be fully assessed or their success validated. This delay did cause some difficulties at the time of the examinations board. The variety of workshops, courses and training sessions reported by the candidates was impressive. Line manager involvement in similar training was significantly less and a source of stress between the two constituencies, as candidates felt their line managers were not adequately sensitive to the stress of further training and education.

5.3.8 TIME EMPLOYED AS SOCIAL WORKER:

Figure 5.9



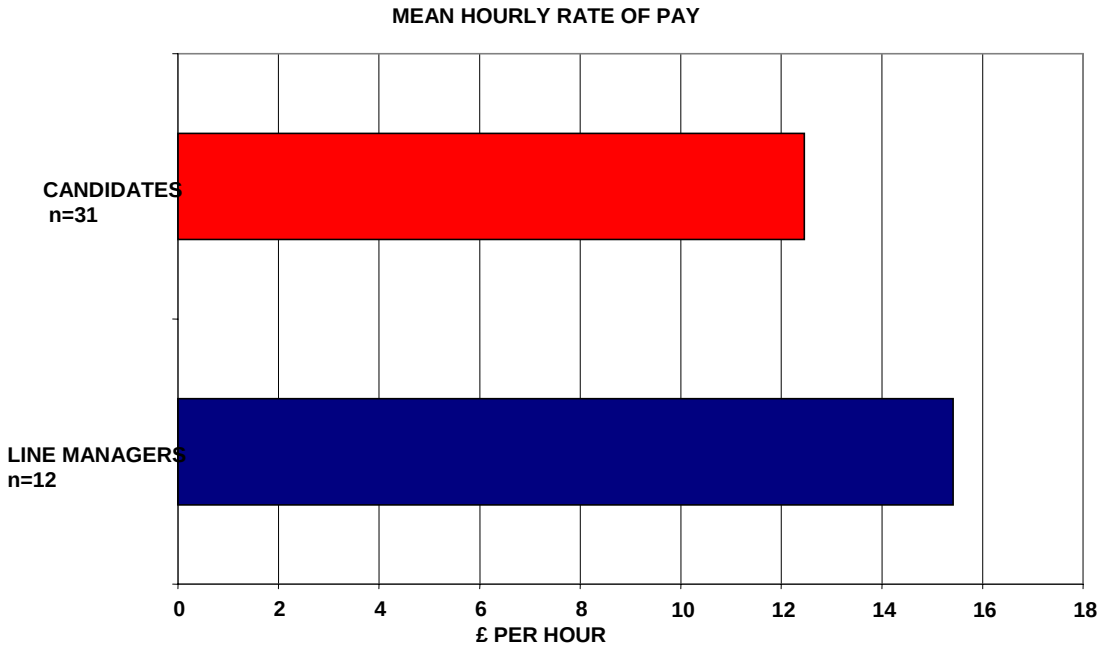
All the candidates in the first tranche had been employed as social workers for a significant length of time, with a minimum of **41** to a maximum of **400** months (mean of **116.4** months, sd = 84.08). Line managers ranged from **42** to **324** months, with a mean of **181.4** months (sd=101.08).

Sheldon & Chilvers' cohort had range of duration of employment from 12 months to 396 months (mean 156 months, sd= 7.4). Marsh and Triseliotis reported the following spectrum of employment history for their cohort**:**

<12 months	**12 to 24 month**	**24 to 60 months**	**60 to 120 months**	**> 120 months**
16.3%	30.8%	34.6%	15.4%	2.9%

5.3.9 RATE OF PAY:

Figure 5.10



The mean hourly rate of pay for candidates was **£12.45** (range **£11.00** to **£16.00/hour,** sd=1.29), whilst line managers earned an average of **£15.42** (range **£13.00 to £20.00/hour,** sd=2.47). Remuneration was inconsistent due to variance paid to independent social workers (Guardian ad litem) and special premiums paid to attract workers to areas with high rates of underemployment or high cost of living.

5.4 FORMATIVE REPORTS FOR PROGRAMME RE-DESIGN:

The original format of the programme was outlined in Chapter Two. The researcher and the Consortium were highly committed to an action research philosophy. Owen and Rodgers (1999) argue that the intent of action research is not just that the information be disseminated, but that the information used. This was a guiding principle in this research. To this end, the researcher compiled a series of formative reports to inform and guide the Consortium in the delivery of the programme. Some of the recommendations were used to effect immediate revision of the programme or feedback to the candidates; others were used to re-design the course for the following cohort. This information loop also ensured Quality Assurance for the Programme.

For the purposes of this thesis, some of this material will be presented in the body of the text, whilst further detailed reports can be located in Appendix C.

5.4.1 THE BASELINE REPORT:

The researcher met with all candidates and wherever possible, line managers, during the induction week of the course. The purpose and format of the research was presented and questions and concerns addressed. Instruments administered included a demographic information sheet, a candidate pre-test to ascertain their expectations and anxieties, and a parallel line manager pre-test. Baseline competencies were

evaluated by the line managers and candidates (independently), including specification of the competencies perceived to be most in need of improvement.

To increase compliance and ease data collection, the line managers' baseline test included all of the competencies to be addressed throughout the yearlong programme. The candidates were tested only on the competencies to be addressed in the first module, as a means of assisting them in setting their own specific learning goals, and ensuring that the Module Tutor was aware of their primary learning needs. (These instruments can be viewed in Appendix A).

This data was then coded and analysed. An initial baseline report was delivered within the first month of the programme. This report informed the Consortium of competency baselines for the candidates, expectations of the course, anxieties, difficulties they had encountered in the enrolment and induction phases. Of particular importance was the feedback related to the competencies perceived to be most in need of improvement as this information guided the tutors in focusing on the important areas of the curriculum. The report was reviewed and responded to by both the consortium management committee, and the curriculum committee.

The baseline report revealed that the candidates were quite receptive to being involved in the external evaluation that the author was conducting. This was consistent with the high level of compliance in completing the first set of data collection instruments. There was evidence of respondent fatigue by the end of the

second questionnaire (missed responses, misunderstanding of instructions, etc). These findings were instructive, and used by the researcher to re-design the instruments, and ensure that the next set was more user-friendly, concise and succinct.

Some candidates expressed concern that they were being used as **guinea pigs**, and were re-assured that they were under no obligation to engage in the evaluation project. The vast majority of candidates expressed their satisfaction at having an **anonymous** channel for them to express their concerns, as they were concerned about the power differential between themselves and the providers/examiners of the Award.

The vast majority of respondents complained that the learning outcomes were articulated in **academic** language, which was unfamiliar and confusing to them. These outcomes were extracted directly from the official documents, used to guide the development of the curriculum and the assessment of performance on the Post Qualification Child Care Award. As such, this confusion illustrates the potential for further difficulties as the front line workers and line managers attempt to interpret, demonstrate and evidence the associated knowledge and skills.

Candidates expressed frustration with confusion generated by conflicting guidelines in the handbooks and printed resource materials. Some of this contradiction was likely a result of the hurried preparation required to get the programme initiated quickly. The Consortium attempted to respond to this concern immediately with

further clarification being provided to candidates, and revision of the handbooks for the next cohort.

Both candidates and line managers were very dissatisfied when candidates from a single team or Agency were distributed across different University sites. This procedure was undertaken to ensure that each University had a critical mass of candidates to make the delivery of the Programme cost-effective, but it resulted in tension between the Agencies, the Higher Education Institutions and the Consortium.

An unfortunate amount of energy was invested in attempting to resolve logistical difficulties associated with delayed payment of tuition fees. Where Agencies did not pay the student fees in advance, candidates were faced with numerous obstacles, such as an inability to access the libraries, computer resources and parking.

Sixty percent (60%) of the candidates reported they were attending because their line manager had advised them to enrol, whilst the remaining **forty percent (40%)** stated they were attending at the direction of their employing agency. A great deal of resentment was expressed by candidates who were attending under duress, especially those who were advised at the **last minute**. The Agency representatives on the Consortium were cautioned to consider the potential for negative staff morale with this cohort and potential future candidates engendered by this type of programme recruitment.

Despite the expressed frustration and confusion, the candidates also reported significant enthusiasm for the learning opportunity the Programme afforded them, and were clear in delineating their educational goals.

All candidates reported being highly motivated by the **opportunity for intellectual stimulation**, with **sixty-three percent (63%)** [3]reported they were strongly motivated. **Eighty percent (80%)** were strongly motivated to **update their knowledge of theory**.

All candidates began the programme with a strong **commitment to increasing their general social work skills** with **sixty-three percent (63%)** reporting they were strongly motivated. **Seventy-three percent (73%)** reported that they were strongly motivated in **improving their childcare skills**. Pragmatically, **seventy-three percent (73%)** of the candidates were motivated by the **impending government requirement** of earning the Post Qualification Child Care Award in order to remain in their current occupation.

Ninety percent (90%) of the cohort was strongly motivated to **improve their assessment skills** and **seventy (70%)** reported being strongly motivated in their **desire to learn how to use research to inform practice**. **Ninety-three percent (93%)** indicated they were motivated **to learn how to evaluate their own practice**, and **eighty percent (80%)** were strongly motivated to **increase their skills in**

[3] All rating was done on a 5 point likert scale of: I strongly agree, I agree, I am neutral, I disagree, I strongly disagree.

applying scales and instruments, including the risk assessment framework. **Sixty percent (60%)** indicated a motivation to **increase the skills and knowledge needed in court work**, and **fifty-six percent (56%)** were motivated to **improve their use of reflective practice**. All of these motivations were highly congruent with the objectives identified by the government in the development of this post qualification educational initiative.

Almost all candidates were looking to improve their general and specific confidence in meeting their employment duties, and **seventy-three percent (73%)** reported a **desire to learn something that would help them deal with complex families**. **Eighty percent (80%)** of the cohort expressed a desire **to increase their awareness of their own value base and prejudices.**

A large proportion, **seventy-three percent (73%)** of the cohort were highly motivated to **increase their skills as a supervisor/mentor/trainer** and **sixty percent (60%)** were hoping to use the award toward **attain further academic qualifications**. **Seventy-three percent (73%)** of the candidates hoped that the Programme would **increase their chances for promotion**, and **seventy-three percent (73%)** hoped the qualification would make them **more marketable**.

One very important finding was outside the remit of the project. **Sixty percent (60%)** of the cohort **reported that their experience of the Level One Post Qualification Award had an adverse impact** on their motivation for engaging in a Level Two Post

Qualification Award. This was reported back to the Consortium, which included providers of the Level One Post Qualification Award.

TABLE 5.1

Baseline Test -Strongest Motivations & Expectations (in order of importance)

- ☑ Increase child care skills
- ☑ Learn how to utilize research to inform practice
- ☑ Increase knowledge of current theory
- ☑ Prepare for future government requirements
- ☑ Increase general social work skills
- ☑ Increase attractiveness on the job market
- ☑ Intellectual stimulation
- ☑ Increase confidence in assessments
- ☑ Increase ability as a trainer/supervisor
- ☑ Earn credit towards an academic degree
- ☑ Have protected time for structured learning
- ☑ Improve ability to evaluate own practice
- ☑ Time away from the stress of work
- ☑ Increase self-awareness of value and prejudicial biases
- ☑ Increase ability and use of reflective practice

This excitement and anticipation was matched by a great deal of anxiety and frustration expressed by the candidates. Much of the negative sentiments were expressed in narrative, outside of the structured quantitative questions. There was significant concern that the management, the line managers, other team members, the government, and Central Council for Educating and Training Social Workers did not fully appreciate the amount of work that the programme was going to demand of them. Candidates asked that the Universities educate the Line Managers about what was being expected of them, to give their work relief requests credence.

Most candidates were very concerned that there was not sufficient protected time at the work place (due to current understaffing, lack of adequate resources provided to hire in replacement staff). Some candidates expressed concern about the resentment their teammates might feel if extra work was imposed upon them as a result of the candidate being involved in the programme.

Eighty percent (80%) of the candidates expressed significant **concern about stress levels** related to the juggling the demands of work, home, and the programme.

Twenty-eight percent (28%) expressed concern about **transportation issues**, and this was particularly the case where candidates from the same agency were split into different University sites, or candidates were managing other time demands such as childcare.

Candidates expressed a number of natural anxieties about returning to the role of a student. **Eighty-three percent (83%)** were concerned about **finding the time** to manage the amount of reading required. For **seventy-five percent (75%)** the task of **researching, structuring and producing written assignments** was extremely anxiety producing. **Sixty-two percent (62%)** were very anxious about taking **exams**, especially structured, comprehensive unseen papers. Take home assignments and previously seen exams were far less threatening. **Fifty-five percent (55%)** expressed anxiety about having their **practice evaluated**. **Forty-five percent (45%)** were very concerned about their ability to **present in front of a group** of their peers, and **forty-five percent (45%)** expressed anxiety about the **tutors' opinions of them**. A small

number of candidates were anxious about using the library, using computers, and being a mature student on campus. These concerns were relayed to the Consortium and the Tutors, so that they might address these issues immediately, and more fully.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of the group were anxious about the **possibility of failing**, and **thirty-four (34%)** were concerned about subsequent **job security** if they failed the programme. The researcher identified this as an ethical policy dilemma that the Consortium needed to address urgently. Globally, line managers have referred employees to post-qualification programmes in order to identify, evaluate and document levels of incompetence with the objective of worker termination.

A great deal of spontaneous anxiety was expressed about the requirement of producing a practice portfolio. These concerns were related to identifying and producing the evidence required for the competencies, as well as the amount of time and work required for this component. This anxiety was likely compounded by the confusion around the articulation of the learning outcomes, and the contradictions in the handbooks. Furthermore, the negative experience of the Level One Post Qualification Award may have been reflected in these comments.

A few candidates were concerned that they would be bored with the content of the programme, and/or wished they could be taking a more specialized curriculum. All of the issues identified are common concerns of front line staff who undertake post qualification training, especially if they have been out of the academic environment for some time, or have had a previous negative academic experience.

TABLE 5.2

Baseline Test -Strongest Anxieties and Frustrations (in order of importance)

- ☑ Impact of combined stress of work and the programme
- ☑ Getting enough protected time from work
- ☑ Completing written assignments
- ☑ Amount of reading required
- ☑ Possibly failing
- ☑ Exams
- ☑ Speaking in front of peers
- ☑ Possible stress at home as a result of the programme demands
- ☑ Having practice evaluated

The researcher continued to meet with the Programme Management, Programme Curriculum and Programme Development Committees to address these concerns. Individual time was spent with the three tutors who were developing the modules, to ensure that they were aware of the competencies identified as **most in need of improvement.**

5.4.2 MODULE ONE FORMATIVE REPORT:

Pre-programme baselines for motivations for involvement in the programme (from candidate and line managers' perspectives), levels of enthusiasm and anxiety (for both candidates and line managers), levels of competency (as evaluated by candidates and line managers) and specifications of competencies most in need of improvement (as identified by candidates and line managers) were ascertained.

At the completion of Module One, the researcher again met with the cohort at each of the three University sites, and administered another set of data collection instruments. Each candidate completed the following:

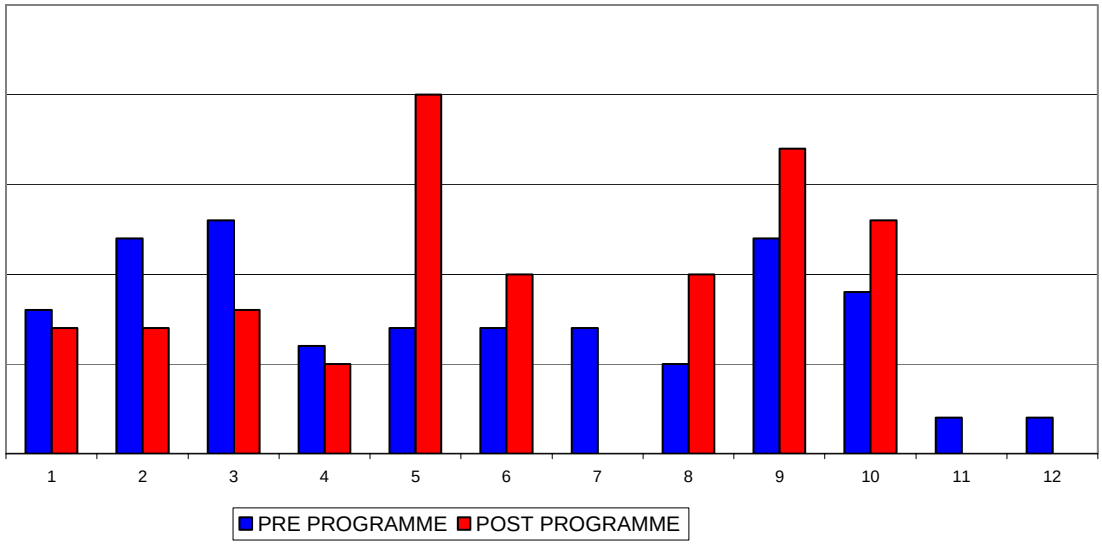
- ✓ a post-test on their current level of competency for each of the learning outcomes associated with Module One
- ✓ a post-test which identified and ranked which of the learning outcomes they felt had been addressed most fully in Module One
- ✓ a post-test of their level and sources of distress (changed from stress at the request of several candidates who felt that the term distress was more inclusive)
- ✓ a module audit tool which addressed candidate satisfaction with; attainment of the module goals, effectiveness of the teaching format, relevance of the teaching content, adequacy of library resources, relevance of assignments, effectiveness of teaching aides (videos, workbooks, etc), sufficiency of attention to racism and anti-oppressive practice, adequacy of the teaching venue, suggestions for changes to the module, and advice for future students. This tool was developed to be inclusive of the Quality Assurance Audits required by each of the three Universities in order to avoid duplication of data collection, and candidate frustration.
- ✓ Data was collected about the amount of structured and unstructured time the candidate had invested in completing the work associated with Module One. This was combined with rate of pay to enable 'de facto' programme costing if so desired.
- ✓ Open ended questions solicited any other concerns or suggestions related to the Programme

On the same visit, the researcher administered the competency pre-test for Module Two, which forced candidates to consider the leaning outcomes for the next module, and to set their individual learning goals, by identifying the competencies they felt they most needed to improve.

These findings were then coded and analysed, including comparisons to the baselines taken pre-programme. This formed the basis of a report presented back to the Consortium and the researcher continued to attend and participate in the curriculum development committee.

Figure 5.11

CANDIDATE RANKING OF COMPETENCIES- MODULE ONE



Objective	Competency Descriptor
1	Able to identify and articulate the main dimensions of human growth and development required for optimal development.
2	Able to identify and critically evaluate the impact of factors which prevent or enable optimum development.
3	Able to critically analyse research which informs practitioners about the development of identity
4	Able to critically evaluate the impact that group or substitute care has on child development
5	Able to apply a model of child observation or assessment.
6	Able to assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved.
7	Able to identify and evaluate the influence of communities of interest and geographic communities on child development.
8	Able to engage with children and young people, ensuring their appropriate participation in decisions that affect their lives.
9	Able to identify and assess the developmental progress of children and young people, taking into account all the main dimensions of development
10	Able to assess, plan, and implement direct work with children and young people and review the outcomes
11	Able to take responsibility for own professional responsibility.
12	Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training.

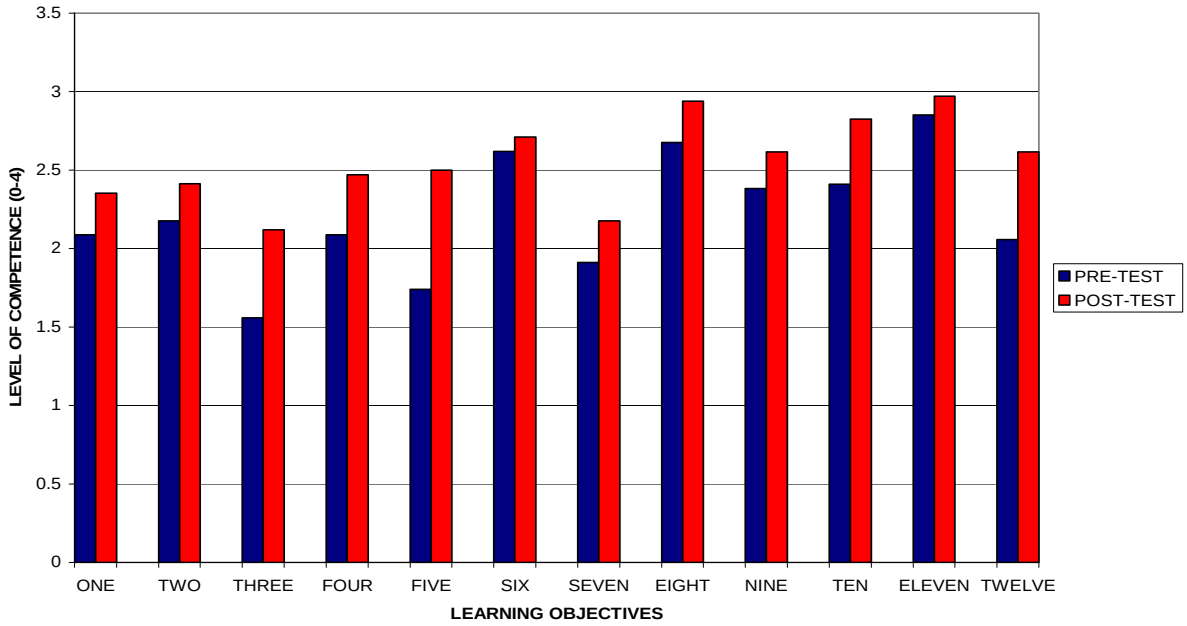
Figure 5.11 (above) illustrates in **blue bars** which learning outcomes the candidates reported they most needed to work on **prior** to commencing Module One. The **red bars** indicate which learning outcomes they felt they had improved in the most as a result of engaging in Module One.

Figure 5.12 (below) illustrates the mean average change in competency scores was for each Learning Objective. These scores were calculated using aggregated scores from the ratings that candidates gave themselves for each Module One learning objective, pre-programme (**blue bars)** and can be compared to their post-programme scores **(red bars).** To avoid contamination of data, and simple score inflation, candidates were not allowed to keep a copy of any of the competency evaluation tools.

The mean of the aggregated scores allows identification of the Learning Objectives where the competency levels were the lowest on the baseline test, and which were most improved as a result of involvement in the course. This information was analysed and used to inform revisions and improvements to the curriculum of Module One for the next cohort. This figure also demonstrates that as a group, the candidates scored themselves as being more competent in each of these learning objectives, after having completed the programme

Figure 5.12

MEAN AVERAGE CHANGE IN COMPETENCY
MODULE ONE (N=34)

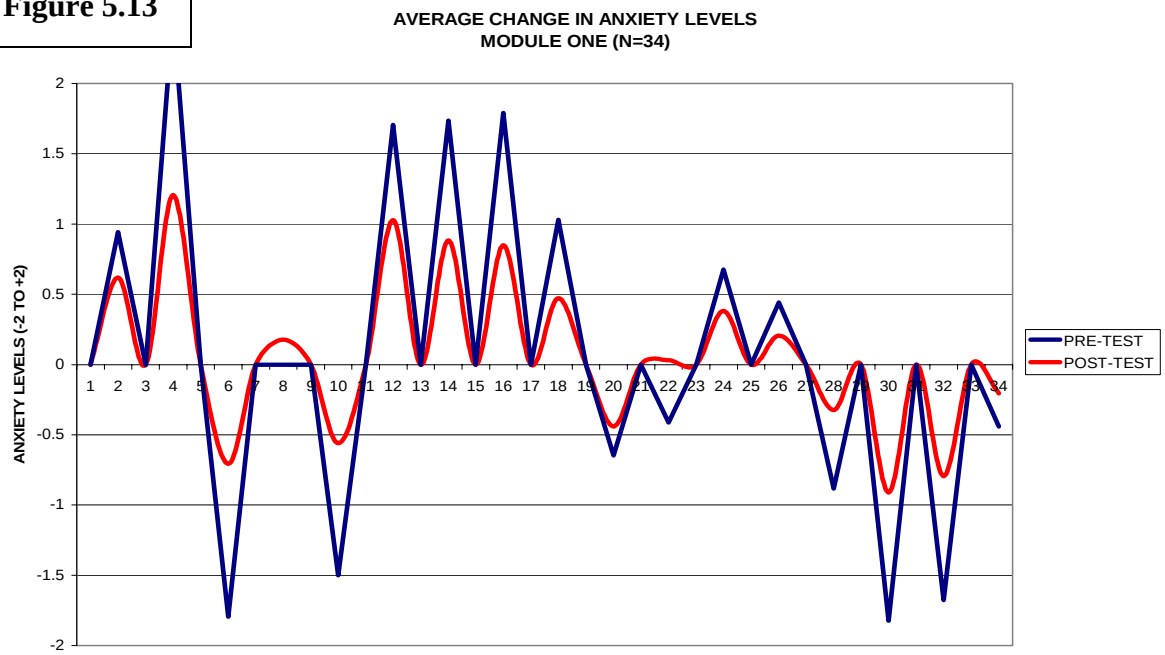


Objective	Competency Descriptor
1	Able to identify and articulate the main dimensions of human growth and development required for optimal development.
2	Able to identify and critically evaluate the impact of factors which prevent or enable optimum development.
3	Able to critically analyse research which informs practitioners about the development of identity
4	Able to critically evaluate the impact that group or substitute care has on child development
5	Able to apply a model of child observation or assessment.
6	Able to assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved.
7	Able to identify and evaluate the influence of communities of interest and geographic communities on child development.
8	Able to engage with children and young people, ensuring their appropriate participation in decisions that affect their lives.
9	Able to identify and assess the developmental progress of children and young people, taking into account all the main dimensions of development
10	Able to assess, plan, and implement direct work with children and young people and review the outcomes
11	Able to take responsibility for own professional responsibility.
12	Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training.

Individual test results were even more interesting as the ipsative (scoring oneself against one's previous scores) technique teases out where respondents have over-scored themselves on their baseline. This occurred most often when a candidate was not fully aware of the entire body of knowledge and skills associated with a learning outcome, and felt that their years of experience were sufficient for them to be fully competent. This instrument can be used extremely well for guidance and discussion in supervisory or training relationships, particularly in post qualification education.

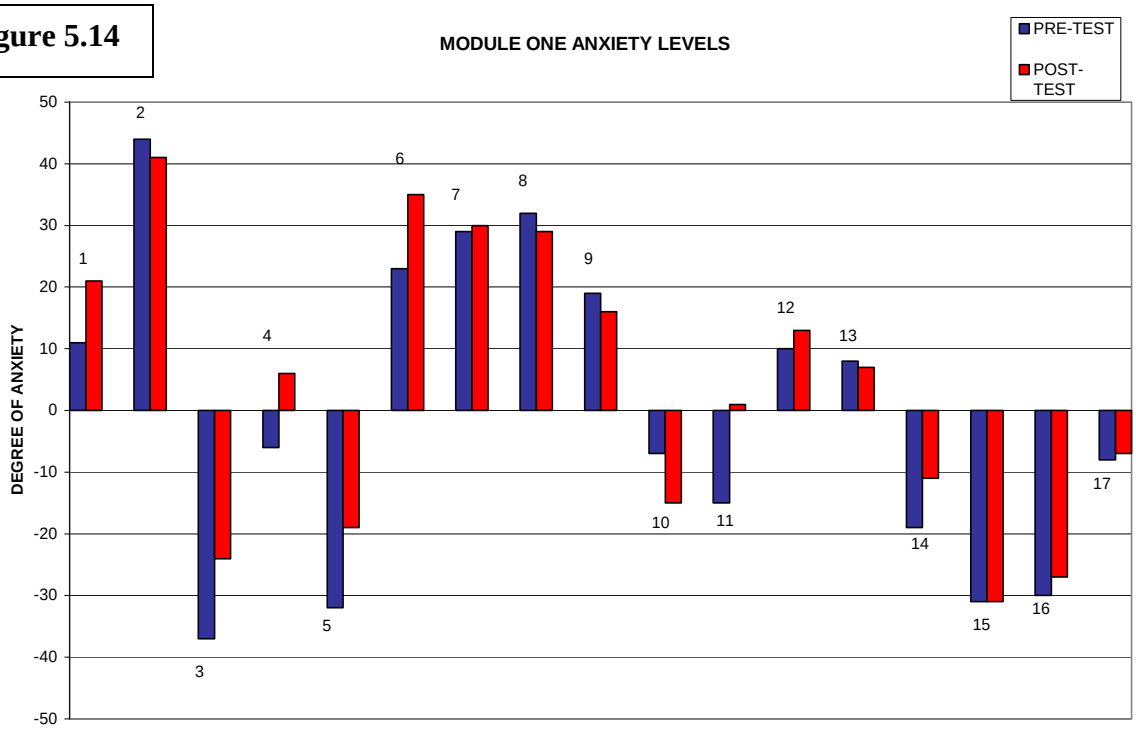
In **Figure 5.13** (below) the candidates' individual baseline and post module one anxiety (distress) scores are compared. It is interesting that most of the candidates who were highly anxious had become more re-assured during Module One, whilst those who expressed negative levels of anxiety on baseline testing, reported more anxiety as they engaged in the Programme (candidates 6, 8, 10, 20, 22, 28, 30, 32, 34)

Figure 5.13



The distress levels of the entire cohort were aggregated and analysed to identify which **sources** of distress were decreasing or increasing. This information was used by the Management Committee, the Curriculum Design Committee and the Tutors to formulate immediate interventions, and longer term programme revisions. (Note items 1, 4 and 6).

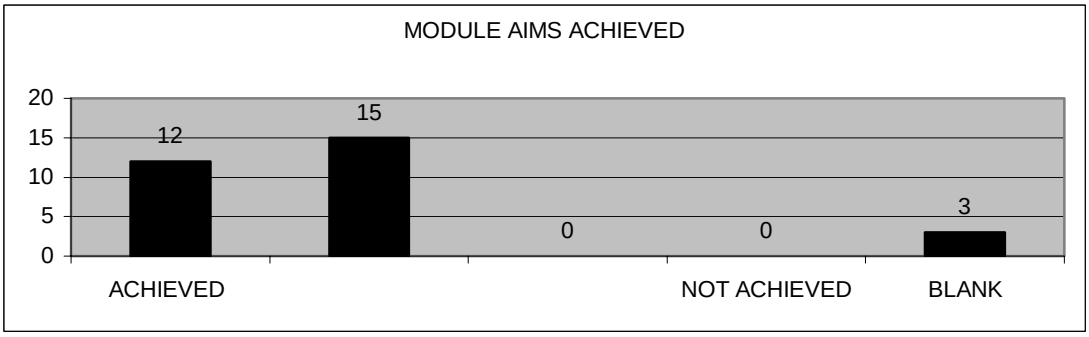
Figure 5.14



# on Chart	Descriptor of Source of Distress
1	taking exams
2	the combined stress of work and the programme
3	getting bored in the lectures
4	having my practice evaluated
5	transportation difficulties
6	getting enough protected time from work
7	completing written assignments
8	the amount of reading required
9	possibly failing
10	having to use the library system
11	having to speak/present in front of my peers
12	stress at home caused by the programme
13	what the tutors might think about my knowledge/skills
14	job security
15	discomfort at being a 'mature' student
16	having to use a computer
17	my team mates resenting my absence(s)

As described above, very comprehensive data was collected regarding candidate satisfaction with Module One, and relayed back to the Consortium and each of the Higher Educational Institutions in individualised formats to meet their Quality Assurance Protocols. For the purpose of confidentiality, the data in this report has been masked.

Figure 5.15 **To what extent have the aims of the module been achieved?**



Ninety percent (90%) of the candidates felt that the module had either somewhat achieved or fully achieved its objectives,

- ✓ I have gained really useful knowledge on child development and attachment
- ✓ Lots of theories to absorb…stimulating
- ✓ I have become much more child focused and theory based
- ✓ I have developed greater understanding and knowledge of development and attachment theory and related it to my area of work
- ✓ Learnt more about attachment theories/issues and impact on carer(s). Learnt about development, interview techniques/tools/skills AND analysis of responses
- ✓ Good teaching hand-outs appreciated
- ✓ Appropriate lecture topics, room for discussion
- ✓ A working knowledge of attachment theory with the opportunity to test out lecture subjects has been welcome

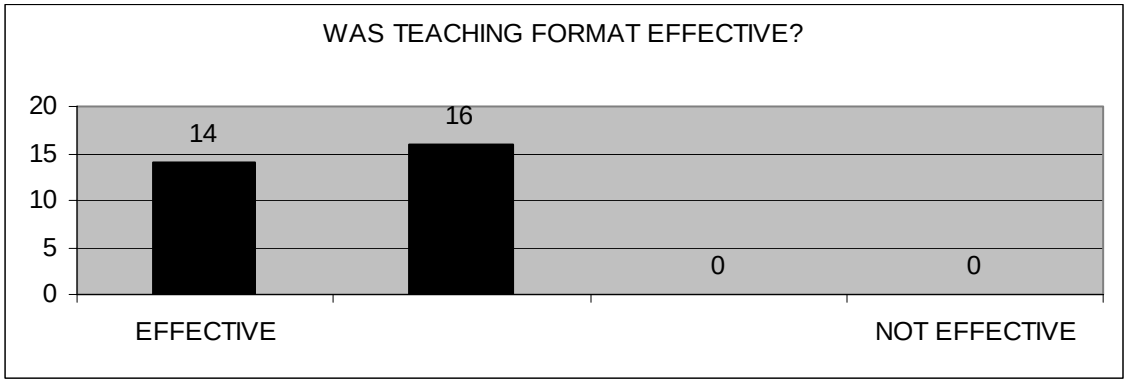
Approximately a third of the respondents commented that the time frame was too limited.

- ✓ Aims have been achieved within the great constraints of time that have applied. Timescales have been very tight
- ✓ We discussed many areas… but some briefly
- ✓ Most areas have been touched on – issues of race need more discussion as does mental health and teenagers
- ✓ Very interesting – however far too fleeting on too many areas and not enough time on any one topic
- ✓ Achieved, although more time was needed
- ✓ Would have liked more time to fully embrace the topics. Superb module

Almost one fifth of the group commented that they unsure of the aims of the module

- ✓ Cannot remember what the aims of the module are
- ✓ Can't comment on specific aims without reference to the written materials
- ✓ Not too sure of the aims
- ✓ I am unclear whether achieved or not. I thought I had gained greater understanding, but assignment mark has made me question this!
- ✓ Can't remember what the aims were

Figure 5.16 **Was the teaching format effective?**



All of the candidates registered satisfaction with the teaching format, and praised the tutor's teaching.

- ✓ Extremely, I enjoyed the balance of relaxed humour, encouragement, and presentation of theory
- ✓ Format was participative and informative. Relaxed and enjoyable learning environment established
- ✓ Handouts were good, but brief
- ✓ Brought to life by 'real' examples – both tutor and student provided
- ✓ Effective style and format of presentation material
- ✓ Tutor was excellent, his style, approachability, knowledge, etc.
- ✓ Enjoyable
- ✓ Subject brought alive by lecturer
- ✓ Interactive – flexible, felt able to contribute
- ✓ Excellent teaching format. Delivery was appropriate and thought provoking

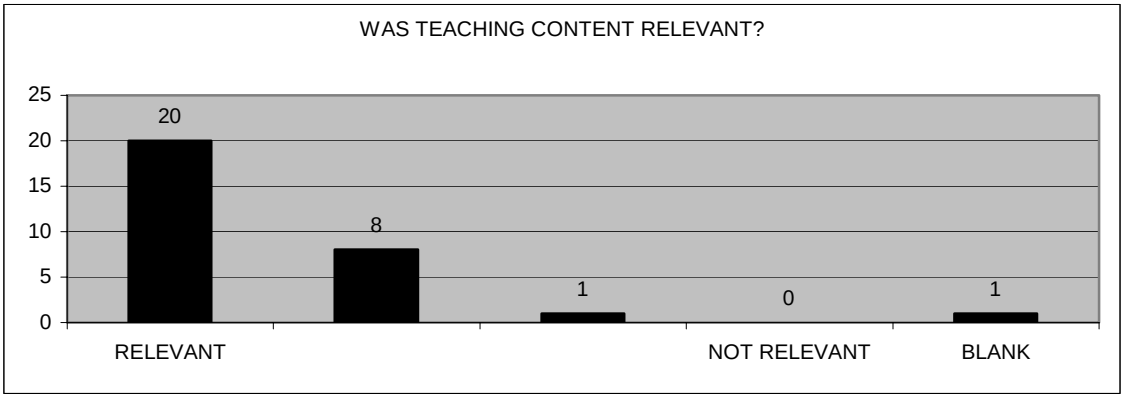
There were some candidates, however, who expressed discomfort with the tutor's teaching style.

- ✓ Found Tutor's style of jumping around areas un-nerving until I understood his method
- ✓ Casual style took some getting used to
- ✓ Would say yes…if it had been followed all the time
- ✓ Fairly effective, however, often erratic and unstructured which made it difficult to follow topics and link to handouts
- ✓ I felt this was effective and could transfer it into practice, but as I failed the assignment, I wonder!

Again, candidates expressed frustration with the length of the module

- ✓ Excellent, would have preferred longer period of time
- ✓ On occasion it was a bit like Island Hopping, but good content and lots of discussion
- ✓ Yes, but more time needed to go over areas needing more explanation
- ✓ Module could have been longer to undertake more case studies
- ✓ Rushed at times, but enjoyable

Figure 5.17 **Was the teaching content relevant?**



The vast majority **(84%)** felt that the content of the teaching in Module One was highly relevant to their work.

- ✓ Nice mix of cognitive, behavioural and psycho-dynamic theory
- ✓ Reading material and hand-out very useful
- ✓ Course content has been directly applicable to practice
- ✓ All relevant to daily work with children & families
- ✓ Majority of it
- ✓ Content was relevant, simply needed to be more focused and structured
- ✓ More so to some students than others
- ✓ Very relevant
- ✓ I have used all of it in my practice
- ✓ Spot on. I was left with a desire to go away and incorporate newly learned skills into practice

Several candidates observed that the content did not transfer back to line managers or team members. This raises some questions about the mechanisms needed to foster **learning cultures** as is discussed more fully in Chapter 7

- ✓ A pity the rest of the SSD hasn't got a clue about what we are learning, so they don't understand when we discuss things
- ✓ Yes, although not what my daily work would be
- ✓ Very interesting, needed longer on my current job

Figure 5.18 **Have you found the library resources for this module satisfactory?**



The logistical challenges of accessing learning resources were a source of frustration and dissatisfaction for almost the entire cohort. The individualised feedback was provided to each of the University sites, to ensure that they responded to their own library resources.

- ✓ Getting access to the library was delayed at the start of the course. I have found few of the recommended books in the library
- ✓ 4-5 weeks before library card was issued. Limited range of books
- ✓ OK Have not used the library a great deal
- ✓ It took 4-5 weeks to get (temporary) library card issued
- ✓ I did not use the library for this module. I relied on personal and work resources.
- ✓ Books available but very old! Newer books on list…library do not have.
- ✓ Many books outdated
- ✓ No real range of books available or resources – on order/on loan…etc.! Also, did not have valid library cards until week 7/8
- ✓ I haven't had time to use the library!
- ✓ Too far from home, so I do not use the library, struggle having to carry them and ensuring they are returned on time.
- ✓ Very hard to access primarily research. Some recent publications not available.
- ✓ Delay in issue of library card
- ✓ Lots of limited books not in the library
- ✓ Difficulty in finding enough time to make effective use of library
- ✓ Okay, however, being in for one day only made access to certain material impossible

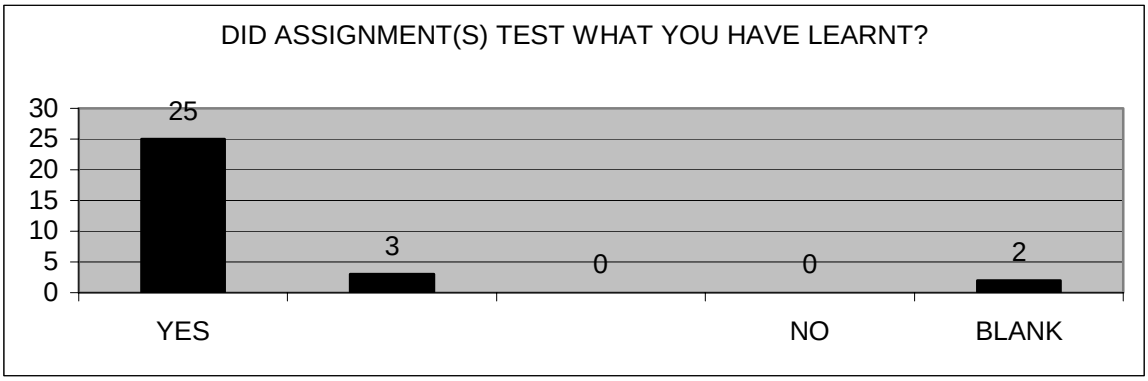
Several candidates had not yet used the library, despite having completed a formative assignment, and having a summative assignment due.

- ✓ Great to have access to the library
- ✓ Didn't use the library so far
- ✓ A resource not as yet used

The most satisfied candidates were those who worked for the Agency, which had prospectively procured copies of the resources, so that candidates could use these materials at their place of employment. This strategy is simple yet very effective in considering post-qualification training.

- ✓ We have a supply of relevant books at the office

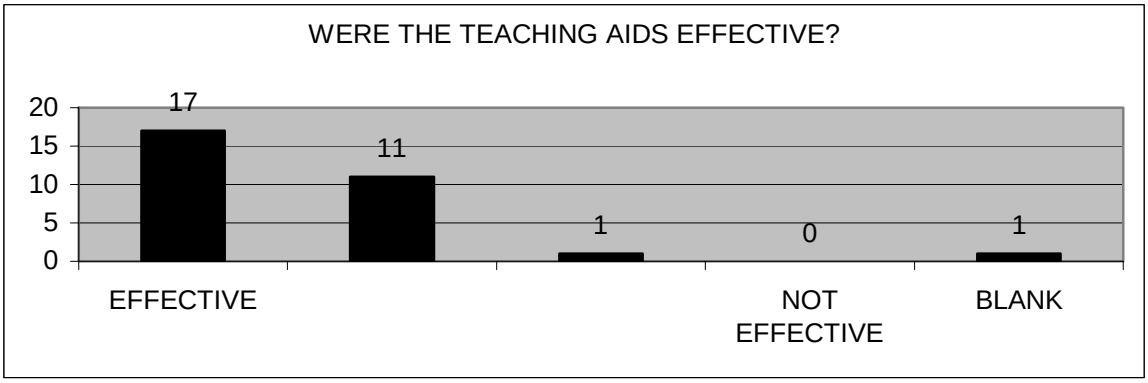
Figure 5.19 **Did the assignment(s) test what you have learnt?**



For most candidates, the first assignment was quite uncomfortable as they had limited or distant experience with academic format and style. Many candidates found it difficult to present their material in a concise and succinct fashion

- ✓ Useful to do to show guidance of what was learned
- ✓ Assignments related closely to course content
- ✓ Although 500 words for assignment was short to express what we had learned
- ✓ Required a lot of focus and did test knowledge – Sometimes difficult to pick out relevant bit from wealth of information presented
- ✓ Yes, but only first assignment completed so far
- ✓ Useful procedures, but very stress provoking
- ✓ Very relevant
- ✓ I could have written much more than 500 words
- ✓ Especially re: attachment theory
- ✓ Cannot comment on this…too early…not enough feedback as yet
- ✓ Format cannot fail to do this

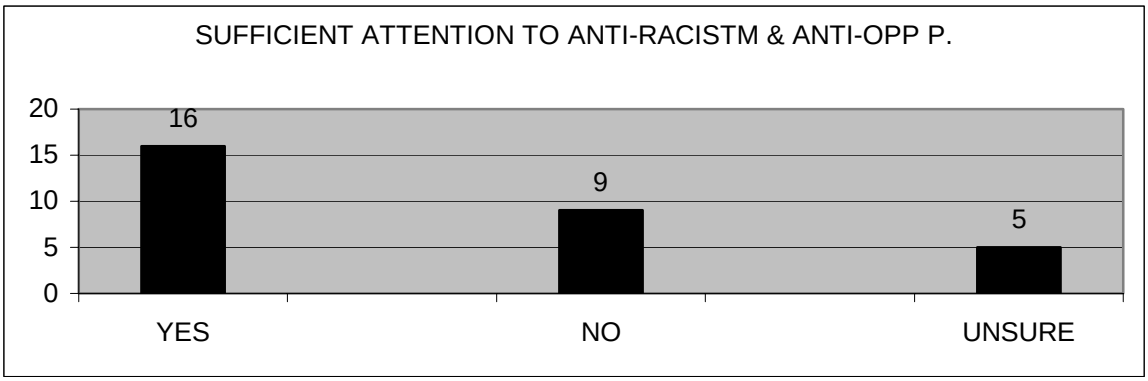
Figure 5.20 **Were the teaching aides (videos, audiotapes, workbooks, readings, etc.) effective?**



Over **ninety-three percent (93%)** of the candidates expressed satisfaction with the teaching materials utilised.

- ✓ Good mix and balance
- ✓ Relevant videos/audio material
- ✓ On the whole – very good sometimes it felt narrative stems a bit overdone
- ✓ Access to material the problem
- ✓ Very appropriate for the course
- ✓ Just the right amount

Figure 5.21 **Did the module pay sufficient attention to racism and anti-oppressive practice issues? If No...which areas needed more attention?**



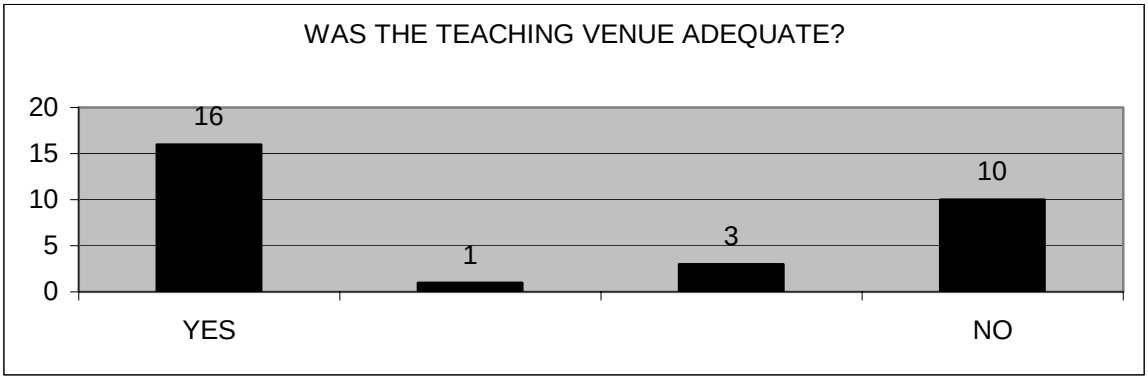
Although **fifty-three percent (53%)** of candidates felt there was sufficient attention paid to anti-racism and anti-oppressive practice, the remainder felt this was deficient.

- ✓ NO…Not covered at all
- ✓ Impact of racism on child development/identity/self-esteem needs to be covered
- ✓ No—neither
- ✓ Culture/race barely touched on
- ✓ Appropriate attention paid throughout course

Many candidates suggested that this was likely due to the limited time available, while one blamed it on the new government frameworks.

- ✓ Like most of the course content, we could have spent more times, esp with regard to statistics on mixed race children in care
- ✓ Just sufficient…having the time, this could have been extended
- ✓ Limited time to go into depth, adequate, but could have done more with more time
- ✓ Both aspects touched on but brief on ALL aspects
- ✓ Brief….but OK given time limit
- ✓ Not really...but I think this is a criticism of the new assessment framework

Figure 5.22 **Was the teaching venue adequate?**



As always, the teaching venue can colour the experience dramatically. Almost **fifty percent (50%)** of the group expressed dissatisfaction with the teaching venue**. Sixty-eight percent (68%)** of that group were from one Higher Educational Institution. This was addressed with that University, in order to make immediate changes. One candidate indicated that the quality of the module allowed them to overcome their physical discomfort

✓ Poor, but interest in the course content soon overtook this

The three best things about this module were:

The vast majority of positive feedback about the module focused on the tutor, the teaching material, the style of teaching, the acquisition of new information or skills and learning how to access resources such as research findings.

- ✓ Tutor was excellent…his style, approachability, knowledge, etc.
- ✓ New and innovative teaching methods
- ✓ Learning new techniques
- ✓ Working model of attachment as an assessment tool
- ✓ Seminar discussions
- ✓ Stimulation of new material
- ✓ Many case discussions
- ✓ Learnt new skills / insight
- ✓ New information on narrative stems – Tutor's expertise
- ✓ Encouraging relaxed informative teaching style
- ✓ Interesting and varied topical content
- ✓ Course content esp. story stems ….Tutor!
- ✓ Actual theoretical evidence/studies
- ✓ Teaching methods
- ✓ Support systems/tutor
- ✓ Reference to further learning to improve practice
- ✓ Interactive learning approach
- ✓ Learning in more depth about attachment
- ✓ Tools for direct work..eg. story stems, etc. and analysis
- ✓ Learning to do skilled direct work with children
- ✓ Learning about the development of personality
- ✓ Learning about the child's inner world
- ✓ Mutual stimulus – lecture style
- ✓ Attachment theory
- ✓ Back to basics – and detailed
- ✓ Group discussion and live examples
- ✓ Good range of materials to use
- ✓ Learning new relevant issues
- ✓ Learning about attachment theory
- ✓ Excellent tutor !!!!
- ✓ The subject – children really being the focus for change
- ✓ Informative
- ✓ Enabled me to reflect more on how I work with children
- ✓ Crittenden & Bion
- ✓ Discussion on working tools/assessment packs
- ✓ Story stem analysis
- ✓ Good group environment (eg. learning environment)
- ✓ Interesting care studies
- ✓ Learning more about attachment theory
- ✓ I learned a new method of working
- ✓ Very relevant to my work
- ✓ I enjoyed the discussion of case material
- ✓ The chance to look at some current research and literature
- ✓ Taking time out to do some reading (note enough)
- ✓ Crittenden paper
- ✓ Learning on attachment, generally

- ✓ New skills learnt re: narrative stems, flow charts, tools generally
- ✓ Tutor is very knowledgeable
- ✓ In depth look at attachment theory
- ✓ Learning more about attachment theory esp. Critterdon paper
- ✓ Having ideas of where to go to get more information
- ✓ The learning that has taken place
- ✓ Interesting information
- ✓ Up to date research
- ✓ Learning
- ✓ Teaching method – tutor
- ✓ Opportunity to look in depth at attachment theory and what it means for children's well being
- ✓ Knowledge gained
- ✓ Tutor
- ✓ Examining current research

Further positive feedback reflected their pleasure at connecting with a network of other professionals

- ✓ Mixing with other professionals
- ✓ Good group – able to share with others
- ✓ Discussion with fellow colleagues – support and shared experiences
- ✓ Group sharing/support/learning
- ✓ Meeting other professionals
- ✓ The group size, dynamics
- ✓ An accepting and good group to work in (very well established and facilitated by Tutor)
- ✓ The group's dynamic/size
- ✓ Group
- ✓ Talking about practice with the other social workers
- ✓ Getting to meet others and hear about other jobs
- ✓ The group

There were a large number of comments which indicated that the candidates were very pleased with the opportunity to have some **protected time** away from the stress and complexity of their daily work to take on new information, become more reflexive as practitioners and link together theory and practice to improve their job

performance. As this was a primary goal motivating the introduction of the Post Qualification Child Care Award, it was heartening for the consortium to see this type of positive feedback after the delivery of only the first module.

- ✓ Ability to have time to reflect on practice
- ✓ The impact that the learning has had on practice
- ✓ Being able to apply knowledge to practice
- ✓ Immediately applying theory to practice
- ✓ Having time to reflect on practice
- ✓ Being away from the office and using new skills
- ✓ Reflection
- ✓ The Tuesday sessions at college
- ✓ Away from the stress of workplace
- ✓ Time out of work to reflect
- ✓ A day a week away from the office
- ✓ Opportunity to put theory into practice
- ✓ Time to reflect upon practice

Three things I would like changed in this module are:

The candidate criticisms of Module One focused primarily on organisational matters and logistics.

- ✓ Recognition of time needed must be acknowledged
- ✓ Admin. arrangements better in place at the start
- ✓ Quicker and clearer information about the possibility of achieving linked academic awards
- ✓ Practice assessors not to have any direct input into session as happened on one occasion during this module
- ✓ Distribution of notes/papers for reading the week prior to teaching
- ✓ Quicker access to student ID card (took 6 weeks to get – B)
- ✓ Not having folio (?) start yet
- ✓ A more structured day
- ✓ More IT info…ie: better prepared with regard to ID and library

- ✓ The room
- ✓ The difficulty in accessing reference material
- ✓ A better stocked library
- ✓ Shorter break – one hour rather than two
- ✓ Less reading materials/ more books in library
- ✓ Bombardment of source material with the time framework
- ✓ Audio-visual tapes…more examples of these and for candidates to contribute with prior warning and preparation
- ✓ Shorter lunch
- ✓ Help with accessing reading from the Library
- ✓ Change in word count for assignment. too short.
- ✓ Expectations about accessing primary research
- ✓ Better access to library
- ✓ Two hour lunch break is too long
- ✓ Afternoon sessions more structured
- ✓ More focused reading time (possibly in afternoon)
- ✓ More lecture time
- ✓ Afternoons a bit unstructured – more teaching time needed
- ✓ Better access to resources eg. more relevant books in library
- ✓ More time on attachment theory to gather with other child development theories
- ✓ More help with internet learning
- ✓ More library books – esp. gov't publications
- ✓ A reading week in middle to catch up
- ✓ Longer teaching day
- ✓ I think it would have been better if we had been given 6 months away from the workplace to do the course
- ✓ More time looking at candidates prepared…videos or listening to audio cassettes. This way not really possible as candidates did not begin preparing them until the end of the course
- ✓ Longer lectures and less tutorial time
- ✓ Afternoon sessions
- ✓ Some small group work needed
- ✓ Lectures to be more structured and less waffly
- ✓ More clarity re expectations
- ✓ Fewer assignments
- ✓ More reading time associated
- ✓ Less material
- ✓ Not having to choose cases..esp for course work
- ✓ Better use of time

Again, there was a pervasive theme of time pressure and a suggestion that candidates would have liked more time to engage more fully and deeply in the topics presented

- ✓ Less subject areas/more depth of those covered
- ✓ Cover fewer subjects in more depth
- ✓ More time – module feels very compressed
- ✓ More time to cover the material
- ✓ A reading week half way through
- ✓ Fewer subjects to cover
- ✓ More time to reflect
- ✓ More information on child development
- ✓ A structured reading week built into the course
- ✓ Not enough space in module for completion of two assignments – we are doing the second one in the holidays.
- ✓ More time for interventions
- ✓ Longer teaching day (ie: 6 hours per day)
- ✓ Reading week
- ✓ More time so that I could actually enjoy the course
- ✓ More info/time on 16+ years
- ✓ To be less rushed
- ✓ A reading day
- ✓ Do 2 assignments have to be the same??!!!
- ✓ Less reading material due to time
- ✓ Only one assignment
- ✓ Reading time
- ✓ Concentrate more on particular areas
- ✓ A reading week
- ✓ More time to look in-depth at specific ages
- ✓ More time to look at interventions
- ✓ More time and only one assignment!
- ✓ More time..more time..more time !!!

A number of the comments suggested that candidates were already beginning to feel stress related to balancing the demands of school and work.

- ✓ Block teaching away from the workplace (ie: 6 months)
- ✓ Make sure that there is support for people who may have personal issues come up
- ✓ Greater communication with managers

Suggestions for future candidates:

- ✓ Meet assessors much earlier
- ✓ More input into portfolio
- ✓ Get things in place well before module

- ✓ Provide primary source materials so that hours are not wasted in getting resources
- ✓ Allow more time for reading, preparation, assignments
- ✓ Locum coverage
- ✓ Knowledge of how hard it will be to balance course plus full time employment
- ✓ Course in a block NOT on days !
- ✓ DON'T PANIC!!!!!
- ✓ Negotiate study time/tutorials/mentoring early on.
- ✓ Preparation time – advance warning of readings
- ✓ More efficient registration to access library…time was lost!
- ✓ Planning with relation to work to be established prior to course
- ✓ More preparation for the course…eg. example of the papers for reading
- ✓ Induction prior to onset of PQ1
- ✓ Preparation of work base/colleagues in order that candidates feel supported
- ✓ This course is fascinating, but difficult
- ✓ Maybe it should be taught later in the course…it is quite specialized
- ✓ Plan time
- ✓ Start early in portfolios straight away
- ✓ Get a book grant…purchase lay texts
- ✓ Be prepared to work hard
- ✓ Think about how this well benefit your practice
- ✓ Get clear guidance and support from colleagues and managers
- ✓ Relax and enjoy the course!
- ✓ Make sure that you get work load relief
- ✓ Don't panic….enjoy it !!
- ✓ Talk to tutor and group about any worries
- ✓ Prepare to enjoy!
- ✓ Learning agreements sorted out before start of course
- ✓ Registration at University should take place before start
- ✓ Parking space
- ✓ Don't take it on until the work load – v- assessment of course argument is resolved
- ✓ Plan, plan, plan.
- ✓ Don't do it without a really supportive line manger – mine is!
- ✓ Ensure agencies are aware of the PQ
- ✓ That agencies are more sensitive to candidates needs and include them in planning
- ✓ Read suggested books before course
- ✓ Meet practice assessor earlier
- ✓ Sort out esp. for Guardian ad litems how, if the course will be funded in terms of loss of earnings
- ✓ Think twice before coming on the course
- ✓ Keep up with the reading
- ✓ Be prepared to stand your ground with management
- ✓ More warning re: workload implications
- ✓ Realistic awareness of personal time to be committed
- ✓ Reading week to be incorporated into module
- ✓ Work load relief to be arranged by workplace

- ✓ One assignment each module
- ✓ Line managers more aware of content
- ✓ Greater preparation
- ✓ Recognition of time limits
- ✓ Know expectations
- ✓ DON'T BOTHER ..ITS EASIER TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER JOB !!!!
- ✓ Direct lead in from PQ1…reading list, assessor meeting
- ✓ Money available for work replacement immediately at start of course
- ✓ Given tape recorders, dolls, video, 2 way mirror info in advance please
- ✓ Need better availability of library/other materials
- ✓ Need refined reading list…focused info
- ✓ Work relief….REDUCE CONFLICTS!!!

Other suggestions/comments:

- ✓ Reading list sent out prior to course
- ✓ A well taught module
- ✓ Tutor has brought it alive!
- ✓ I hope another module on this could build on what we have begun to learn
- ✓ I have found tutor's teaching style excellent.
- ✓ I have enjoyed the course and gained a great deal from it.
- ✓ The course has taken 2 to 2 ½ days per week of my time, which is more than I had anticipated at the outset.
- ✓ More time to submit portfolios
- ✓ Line managers need to be more informed re: the course …managers given a general book, etc.
- ✓ The agencies must be aware and sympathetic to the level of work/time required
- ✓ This is an important course, which all child care workers must take – this therefore needs to be presented in a more positive way to future candidates. They need to be encouraged that this is a career enhancement and should be financially rewarded on completion
- ✓ Has been useful to meet and learn about other aspects of work in the field and how different services operate within the same agency.
- ✓ How there appear to be constant 'battles' to demonstrate and use the results of this course
- ✓ I am quite angry that the course is over assessed !
- ✓ Module was very interesting and enjoyable, however, everything else was a major headache
- ✓ Agency totally unaware of what PQ involves…hopefully this will change
- ✓ More specific info as to what loss of earnings can be allowed – the local Authority are given money for us – what happens to this if your agency isn't social services?

- ✓ Get rid of the portfolio. We did one for PQ1 and to have to do one for PQ2 is excessive.
- ✓ The achievement in passing the course (if we do) should be recognize in some way by our employers
- ✓ I've really enjoyed the module, but the combined stress of work and the course has at times proved impossible
- ✓ Employers to recognise and accommodate amount of work, how individuals will be given workload relief
- ✓ Get rid of exams and portfolio
- ✓ IF YOU WANT TO KEEP SOCIAL WORKERS STOP PUTTING THEM UNDER MORE STRESS!!!

A thorough exploration of this feedback provided ample advice on areas for improvement.

5.4.3 MODULE TWO FORMATIVE REPORT:

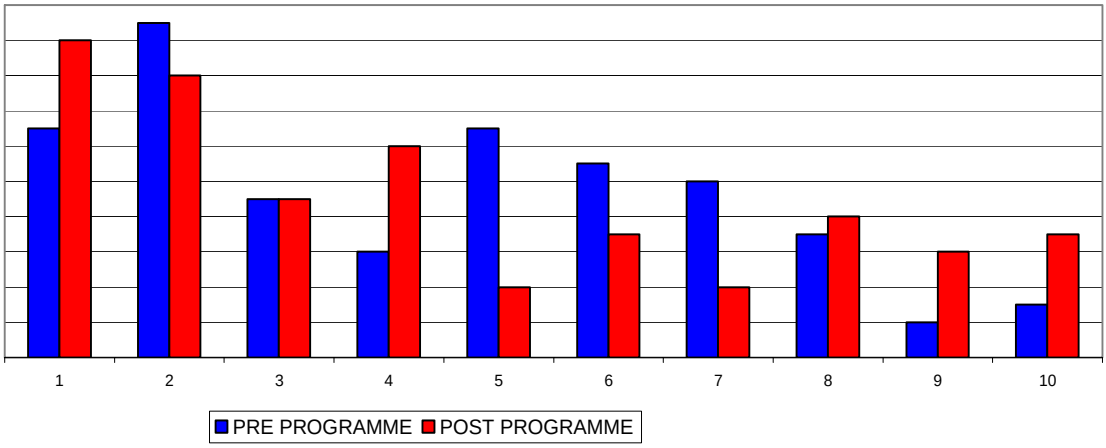
This pattern of post-testing was repeated for Module Two, with the pre-test for Module Three being completed at the same time. Another series of reports were collated and presented to the Consortium Committees, with suggestions for modifications and re-design.[4]

Figure 5.23 (below) illustrates the Learning Outcomes addressed in Module Two which the Candidates felt they most needed improvement in **(Pre-programme in Blue)** and those they felt they had improved in the most as a result of engaging in the Module **(Post Programme in Red).**

[4]To achieve brevity and clarity in this thesis, only the Module One Formative Report is inclusive of all the qualitative data collected and analysed. Formative Reports for Modules Two and Three are more concise. Entire reports can be viewed in Appendix C.

Figure 5.23

CANDIDATE RANKING OF COMPETENCIES
MODULE TWO



Objective	Competency Descriptor
1	Able to critically analyse the macro and micro elements of good parenting which lead to optimal outcomes
2	Able to identify and critically evaluate the range of factors which promote or diminish parental functioning.
3	Able to use risk assessment frameworks.
4	Able to critically evaluate the influence of environmental, economic, and social factors on the lives of children, young people and families.
5	Able to articulate the rationale for corporate parenting and critically evaluate its effectiveness.
6	Able to assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved.
7	Able to articulate and evaluate strategies for managing conflict and violence
8	Able to assess, plan, implement and review the delivery of services to support the parenting task.
9	Able to take responsibility for own professional responsibility.
10	Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training.

Figure 5.24

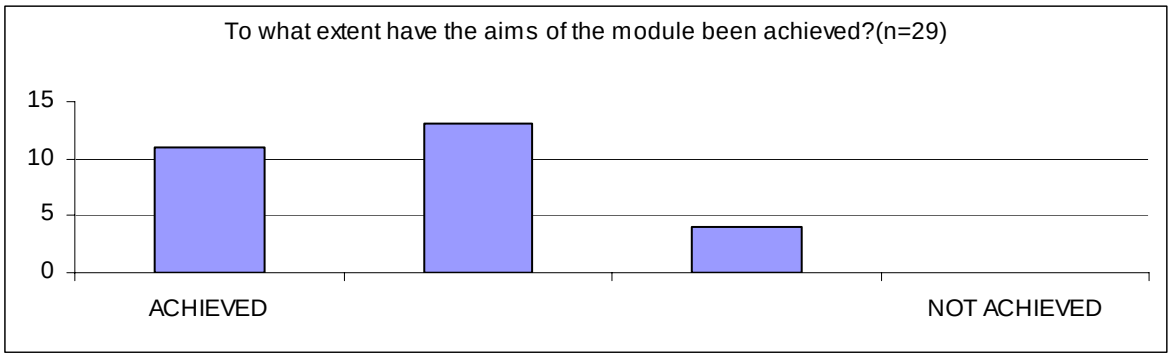


Figure 5.25

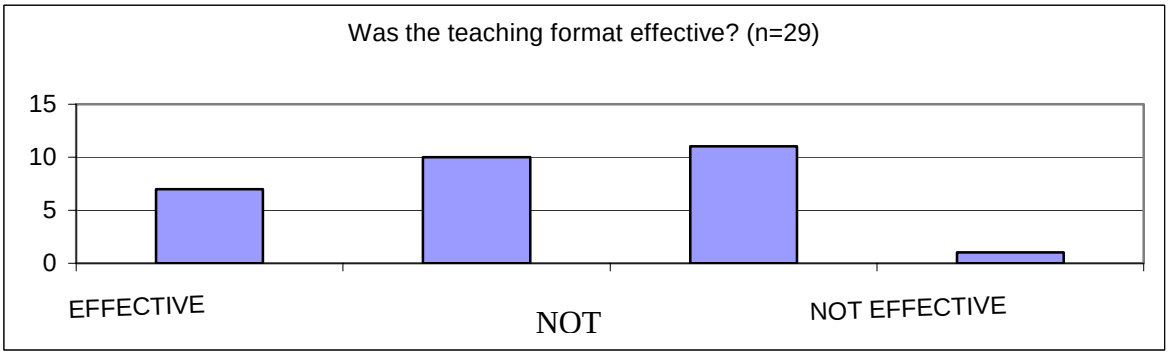


Figure 5.26

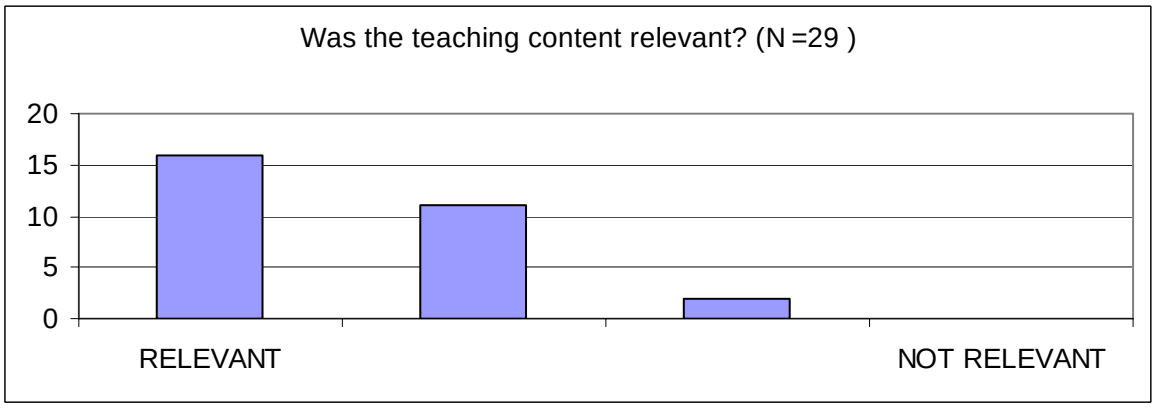


Figure 5.27

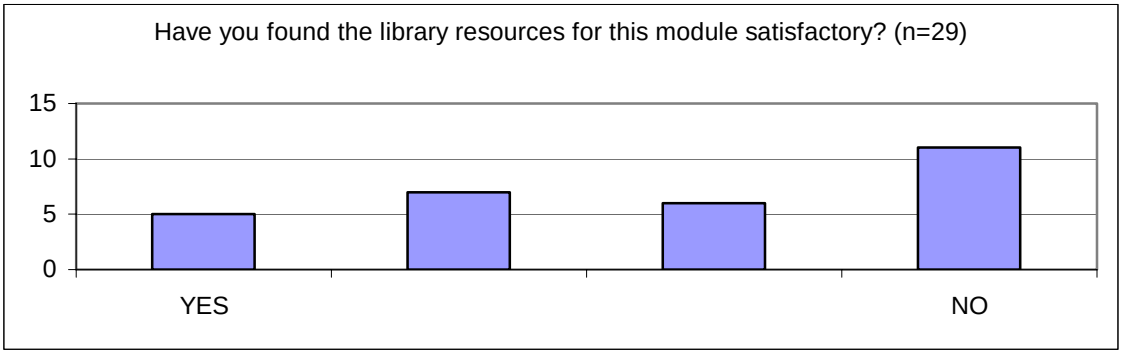


Figure 5.28

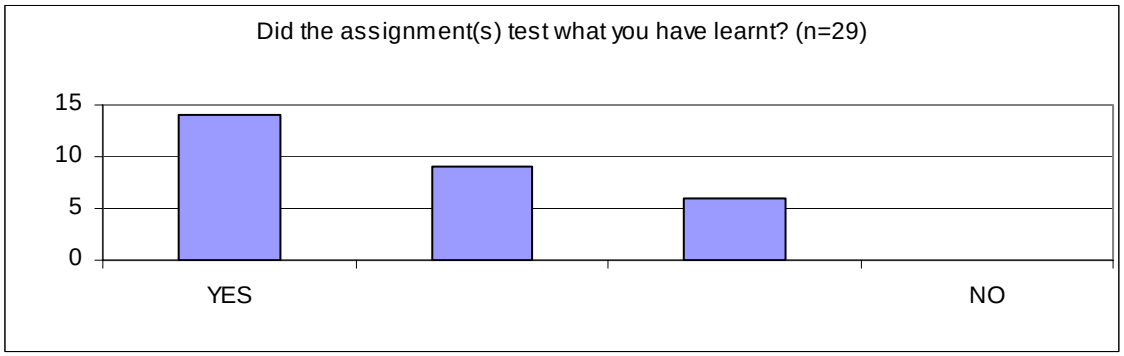


Figure 5.29

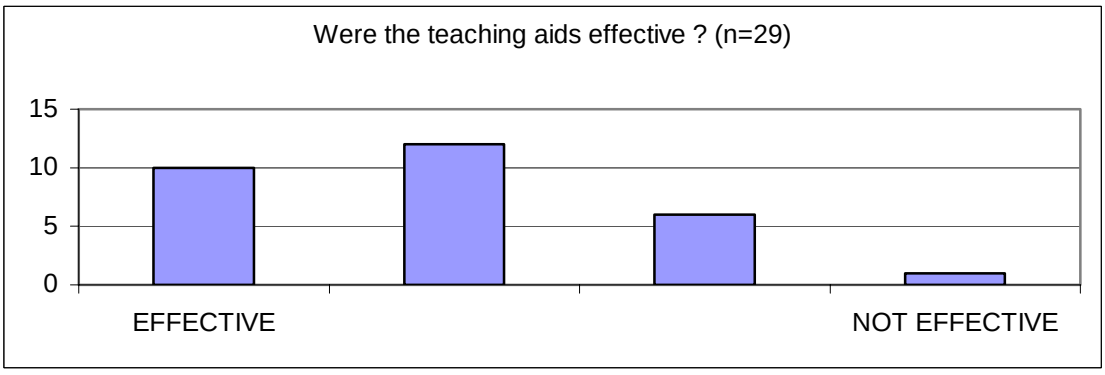


Figure 5.30

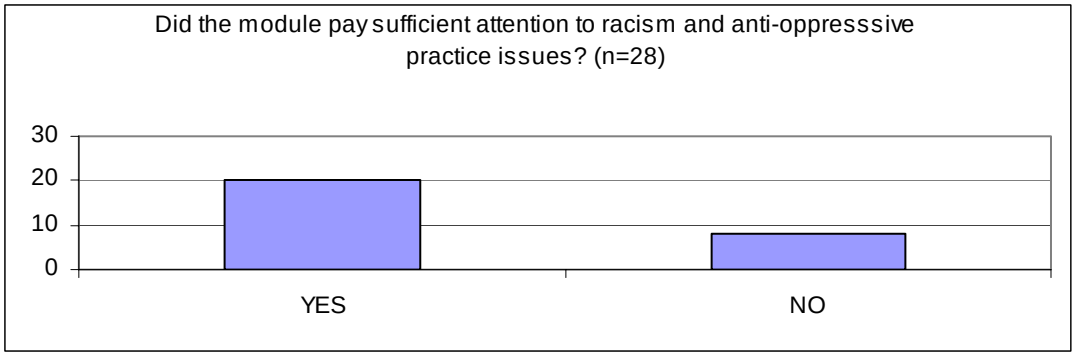


Figure 5.31

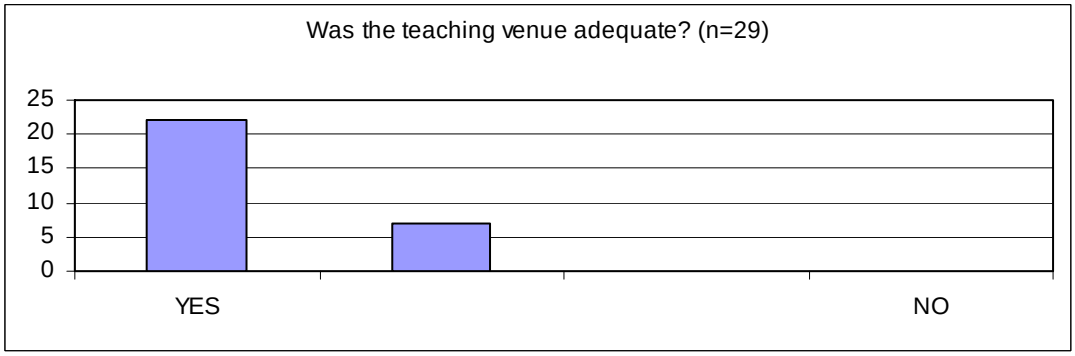
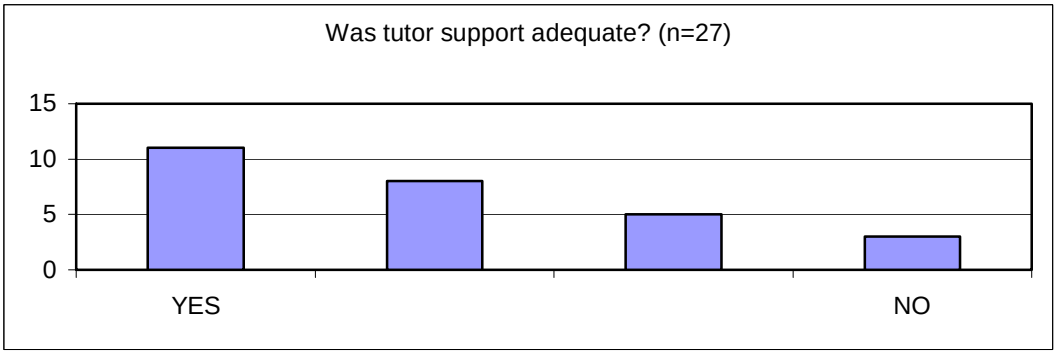


Figure 5.32



The Three Best Things About This Module Were:

- ✓ Linked well into framework for assessment
- ✓ Good practice in other countries touched on
- ✓ Strategies for working with resistant and reluctant parents
- ✓ Opportunity to reflect upon practice
- ✓ Work on Assessments.
- ✓ Work on contracts.
- ✓ Greater understanding on parental capacity.
- ✓ Structured – clear sense of format
- ✓ Handbook was great
- ✓ Learning about new framework
- ✓ The handbook
- ✓ Clarity
- ✓ Discussing ecological approaches to assessment.
- ✓ Revisiting theoretical perspectives.
- ✓ It was more structured than the first module.
- ✓ Over-view of framework
- ✓ Clear presentation and references.
- ✓ Intervention work
- ✓ Assessment framework
- ✓ Reluctance/ resistance
- ✓ Effective intervention.
- ✓ Sessions have been fully focused on linking objectives to learning outcomes.
- ✓ Aiding vs. analysis and decision making – assessments
- ✓ Sharing examples and cases of work with others.
- ✓ Research information
- ✓ Clarity
- ✓ More relaxed teaching style
- ✓ Handouts/ lectures met the program well
- ✓ Learning new skills and putting into practice
- ✓ Support of other students and tutor
- ✓ Pitched at the right level
- ✓ Time out from work
- ✓ Tutor very approachable and nice
- ✓ Learning sets
- ✓ Looking in a detailed structured way at parenting
- ✓ Being given help with essays e.g. Concentrating on answering a question
- ✓ Opportunity to update information
- ✓ Finding out about new research
- ✓ The teaching was good
- ✓ Interesting and informative
- ✓ Tutor kept to right level

- ✓ Support from other candidates
- ✓ Clearly presented theories, concepts and up to date research.
- ✓ Stimulation of a positive learning group environment.
- ✓ Good humour and sense of debate promoted.
- ✓ Time out of work to reflect but this would be better integrated into work place.
- ✓ Candidate's own presentations.
- ✓ Application to DOH framework
- ✓ Opportunity to listen to colleague's presentations
- ✓ Opportunity to learn about the perspectives of colleges
- ✓ Learning set/ individual presentations
- ✓ Group discussions
- ✓ Enjoyed writing the assignments
- ✓ Encouraged reading
- ✓ Encouraged reflection on practice and had an impact on practice.
- ✓ Structural factors contributing to abuse and neglect.
- ✓ Learning sets
- ✓ Focus on parenting capacity
- ✓ Clarity of info presented
- ✓ Links with research

Three things I would like changed in this module:

- ✓ More discussion in relation to work scenarios
- ✓ More interactive style
- ✓ Needs to be made more interesting – discussion/groups
- ✓ Greater use of alternative teaching aids
- ✓ New books in library
- ✓ Greater focus on fewer theories to gain better understanding
- ✓ More books in library
- ✓ Teaching methods creating more enthusiasm
- ✓ Make it more exciting –sorry not sure how
- ✓ Less lecture format…more video extracts or other teaching methods
- ✓ Lack of support and general disorganization of the course as a whole ensued
- ✓ I felt undervalued
- ✓ Newer videos
- ✓ Nothing
- ✓ Use of course handbooks helpful and examples of relevant practice
- ✓ Use of other teaching methods to get info across
- ✓ More discussion
- ✓ Time it takes to mark assignments
- ✓ More time to do summative assignment
- ✓ More time to visit library and do group work

- ✓ No changes!
- ✓ Less spoon-fed lessons
- ✓ Get assignments and feedback earlier
- ✓ No particular changes necessary
- ✓ I would have preferred slightly more definite built in breaks although these were introduced more in the second half of the module
- ✓ Only one essay 3,000 words necc.
- ✓ Tutor spend day at work place and aware of work pressure
- ✓ Line manager to attend intro
- ✓ More student input
- ✓ Less direct teaching
- ✓ Reduce 'lectured' at times
- ✓ Reformat learning sets/student input
- ✓ More interactive lectures
- ✓ More use of case studies
- ✓ More lively-interviews like last term..interviews with parents and families
- ✓ More recent videos
- ✓ Extension of workshops – ie; case discussion
- ✓ More intensive content over shorter time period
- ✓ More use of student input
- ✓ More advanced preparation time for learning sets
- ✓ Focus more on particular areas..research evidence based p[practice
- ✓ More attention to children with disability
- ✓ Evidence from practice in other countries
- ✓ More learning sets
- ✓ The case discussion focus

Suggestions for future candidates:

- ✓ Try and access resources before beginning of course
- ✓ Make sure assignments are clear
- ✓ Don't panic
- ✓ Use colleagues as support 'academically'
- ✓ Make sure you have computer to use
- ✓ Make sure you negotiate to have books provided by work
- ✓ Get basic books at beginning of module
- ✓ Get hold of reading list before module starts
- ✓ Get your own computer
- ✓ Negotiate study time with line manager
- ✓ Buy your own books prior to course as library and bookshop lacking in material

- ✓ ***** I FEEL VERY DESPONDENT ABOUT SOCIAL WORK AS A RESULT OF THIS COURSE
- ✓ Make time for reading
- ✓ Get clear agreements from work
- ✓ Sort out resource bay for books
- ✓ None
- ✓ Try and get hold of books before module begins
- ✓ Read and digest as much as possible
- ✓ Pace yourself
- ✓ More reflection on practice
- ✓ Earlier involvement of assessors
- ✓ Prepare work to fit into learning sets
- ✓ Keep up reading
- ✓ **THINK DEEPLY ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS ON YOUR WORK AND PERSONAL LIFE, THEY ARE QUITE EARTH SHATTERING AT TIMES
- ✓ Read
- ✓ Amount of reading required is more realistic than the first module

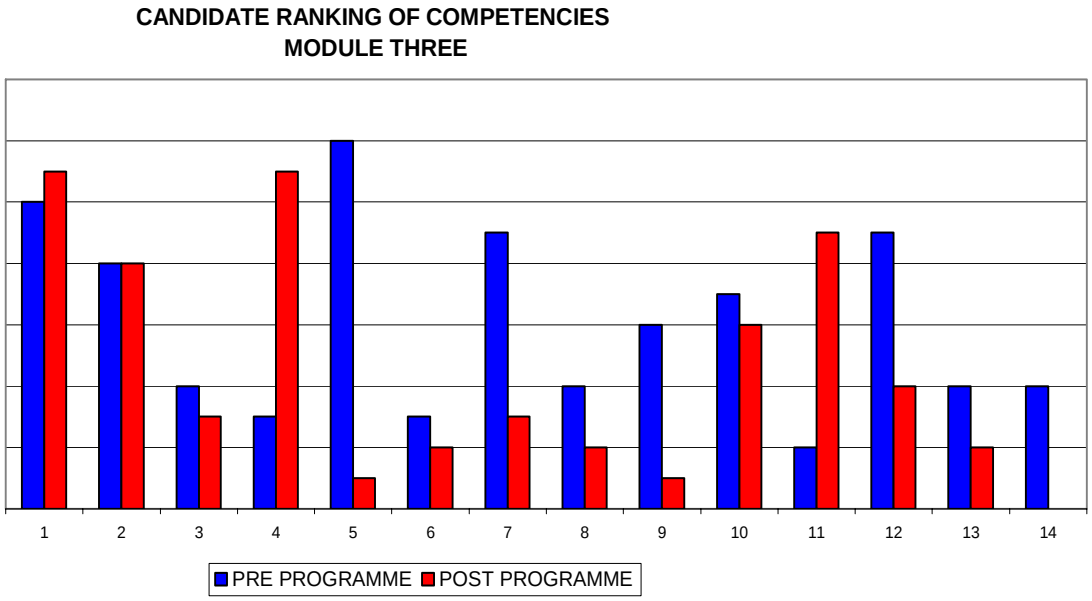
Other suggestions/comments:

- ✓ Was difficult to get motivated for second essay and tired of fighting for management support
- ✓ Fed up with general disorganization
- ✓ Wish course ended September not December (work pressure)
- ✓ Content is good
- ✓ Found it difficult to become involved in sessions….lack of enthusiasm
- ✓ I was not so enthused by this module, …not sure if it was because this module was more repetitive of things we knew
- ✓ Excellent Content!
- ✓ The module was well paced
- ✓ Being given library classification system with reading list to know where books are and that they are actually in the library
- ✓ QUESTIONS REGARDING DEGREE
- ✓ Very difficult to sustain motivation
- ✓ Suggest three-month college block out of work – easier to get work replacement
- ✓ Module one was a hard act to follow

5.4.4 MODULE THREE FORMATIVE REPORT:

The post-test for Module Three was conducted on the last day of the course. **Figure 5.33** below illustrates the Learning Outcomes addressed in Module Three which the Candidates felt they most needed improvement in **(Pre-programme in Blue)** and those they felt they had improved in the most as a result of engaging in the Module **(Post Programme in Red).**

Figure 5.33

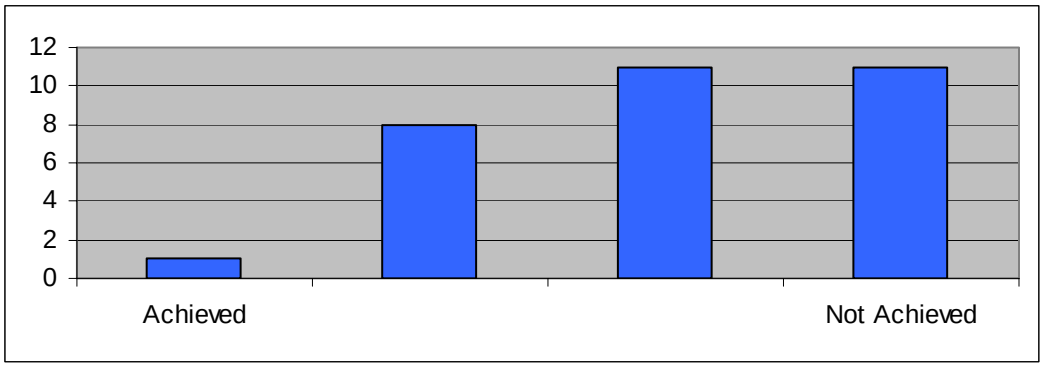


Objective	Competency Descriptor
1	Able to explain the philosophy, rationale and scope of child care policy, local procedures and legislation which underpins work with children, young people and their families.
2	Able to critically analyse the impact these policies, procedures and legislation have on children, young people and their families.
3	Able to articulate the roles and responsibilities of other professionals and agencies and the contribution they make to achieving optimal options.
4	Able to identify and analyse the legal responsibility and accountability of social workers in

	relation to legislation and their employing agency.
5	Able to demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive repertoire of theories for practice, social work methods, and current child care research which can be used to achieve optimum outcomes for children, young people and their families.
6	Able to evaluate the use of self in social work practice and the influences of personal beliefs and attitudes on judgement.
7	Able to formulate needs led assessments which take full account of potential strengths and weaknesses of the child or young person's networks and communities, acknowledging diversity and the role of oppression.
8	Able to contribute to effective inter agency working within the areas of planning, managing, delivering and reviewing services, in order to provide an integrated service and range of resources
9	Able to work with neighbourhoods, communities, family networks and locale to identify service needs
10	Able to identify needs and gaps in services, and contribute appropriately to corporate and strategic planning processes.
11	Able to work effectively within the legal framework.
12	Able to work within and critically evaluate national and agency structures, policy and procedures.
13	Able to take responsibility for own professional development.
14	Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training

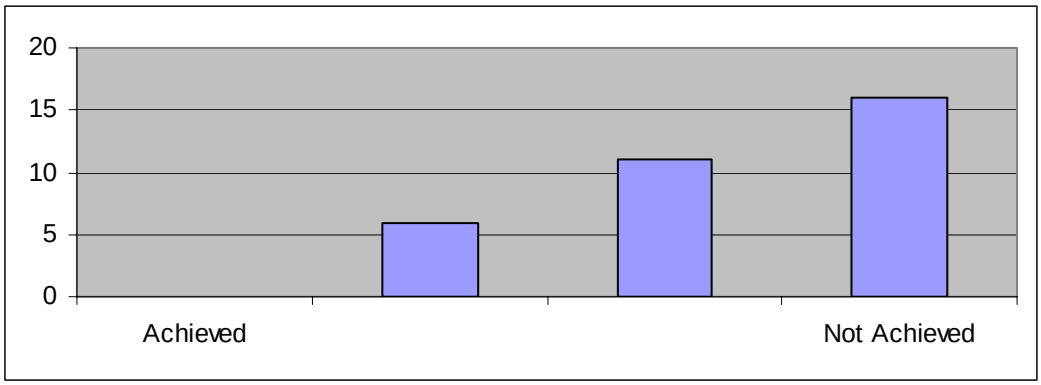
Unfortunately, the Consortium encountered some difficulties with Programme delivery when the Tutor for Module Three was unable to complete the development of the curriculum, or the delivery of the module. Attempts were made to address these difficulties; however, the feedback reports from this Module reflect the candidate dissatisfaction.

Figure 5.34 **To what extent have the aims of the module been achieved?**



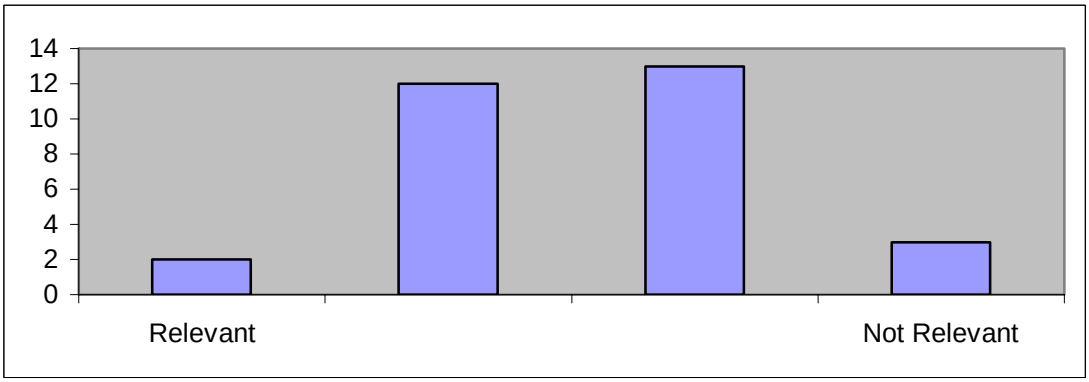
n=31

Figure 5.35 **Was the teaching format effective?**



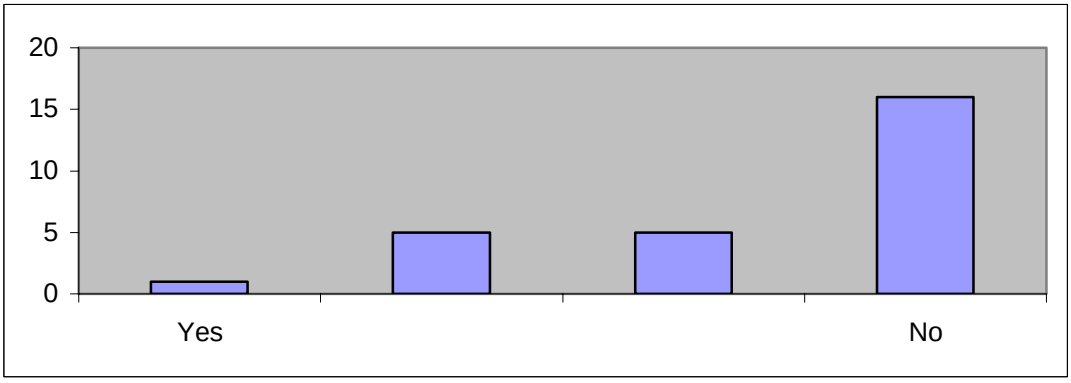
n=33

Figure 5.36 **Was the teaching content relevant?**



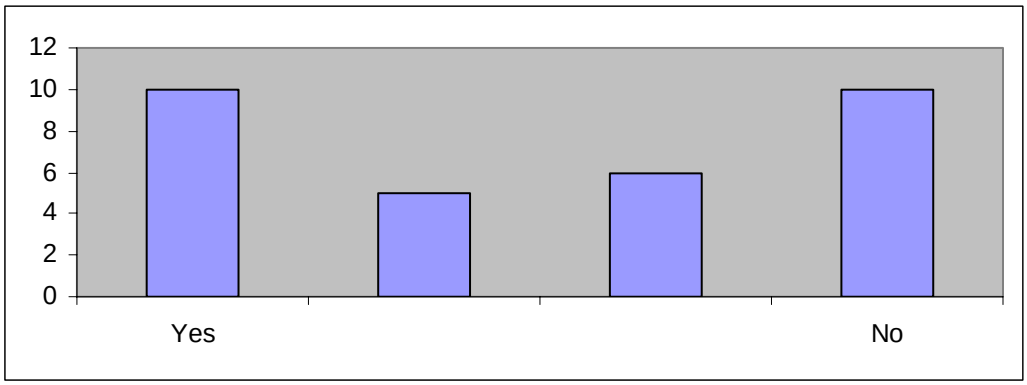
n=30

Figure 5.37 **Have you found the library resources for this module satisfactory?**



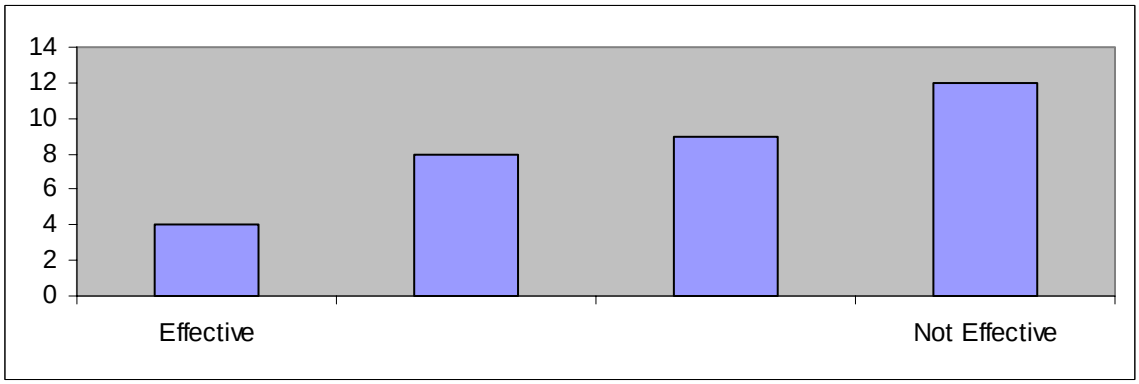
n=27

Figure 5.38 **Did the assignment(s) test what you have learnt?**



n=31

Figure 5.39 **Were the teaching aides (videos, audiotapes, workbooks, readings, etc) effective?**



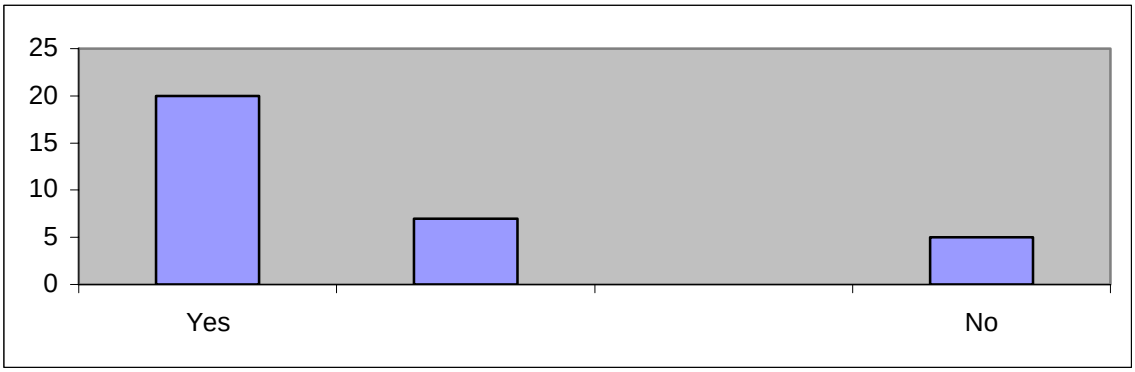
n=33

Figure 5.40 **Did the Module pay sufficient attention to racism and anti-oppressive practice issues?**



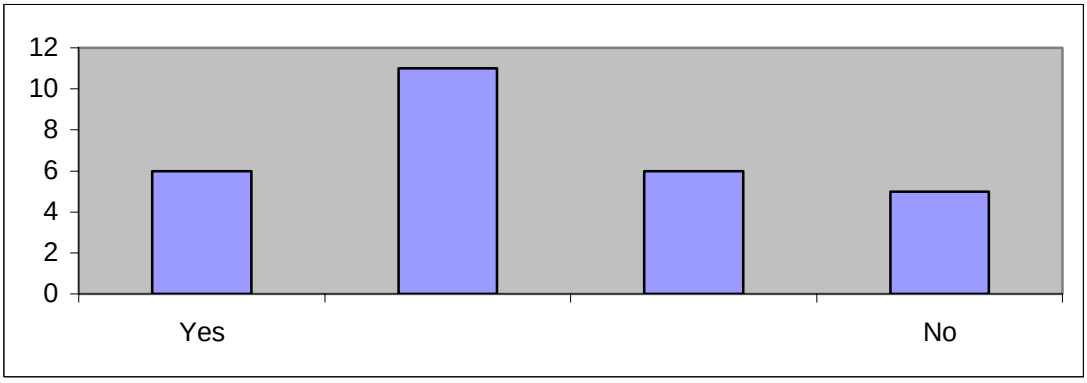
n=29

Figure 5.41 **Was the teaching venue adequate?**



n=32

Figure 5.42 **Was tutor support adequate?**



n =28

The three best things about this module were:

- ✓ There was a lot of information from tutor in handouts
- ✓ The law lectures were interesting
- ✓ Lectures & research – law exam
- ✓ Info on research
- ✓ Shown how to use website
- ✓ THE END!
- ✓ Handouts
- ✓ Discussion with peers
- ✓ Practice Assessor's advice re: portfolio
- ✓ Information on asylum seekers

- ✓ Revisiting law –although could have done a better/more thorough – Sharon that was the only good thing about the module, unless you want to indicate the fact that we didn't have a lot of reading to do.
- ✓ Spending time with other candidates
- ✓ Opportunity to revisit aspects of legislation, etc.
- ✓ More focus on specific bits of research, etc.
- ✓ Meeting colleagues
- ✓ Having lunch
- ✓ Time out from work
- ✓ THE END
- ✓ ADP input
- ✓ Flexibility to finish early and use time for study
- ✓ That it was the last
- ✓ Revisiting legislation/human rights legislation
- ✓ Hearing about research
- ✓ Legal section raised some interesting issues
- ✓ Practical input from visiting practitioners/informal structure/atmosphere
- ✓ The law section
- ✓ Reminding myself of legal issues
- ✓ Discussion on multi-agency working
- ✓ Some interesting parts – i.e.: law and asylum
- ✓ It is over!
- ✓ First two weeks on Law
- ✓ The end
- ✓ The friends I have made
- ✓ Going home
- ✓ Law exam prompted research and information gathering
- ✓ Other students' support
- ✓ Lunch
- ✓ Case discussions
- ✓ Finding the case law for my own case, which mentioned me by name very exciting!
- ✓ That it has ended
- ✓ I can complete my final assignments
- ✓ I will have some time to do other things
- ✓ Law issues
- ✓ Roles and responsibilities
- ✓ Self-evaluation
- ✓ Session on asylum – good – more sessions like this
- ✓ First two weeks
- ✓ Looking up case law
- ✓ Looking closely at the law
- ✓ Learning about the ecological approach
- ✓ Being in a positive group… in a relaxed facilitative atmosphere/environment
- ✓ Law lectures
- ✓ Conference was good

- ✓ Good handouts
- ✓ The other candidate's contributions

Three things I would like changed in this module are:

- ✓ Have it more focused on our practice – the afternoon sessions went somewhere!!!
- ✓ Not have people from other courses here
- ✓ Having a more varied teaching style
- ✓ To do more on policy and enquires – link to practice and teaching
- ✓ No more NA framework – too repetitive
- ✓ Better planning and organization of afternoon sessions
- ✓ The content – proper teaching about the law and social policy…look at some child care enquiry reports
- ✓ One lecturer for the whole module (must be qualified and know what they are talking about!)
- ✓ Get outside speakers who turn up
- ✓ Make the portfolio more of the module
- ✓ More challenge
- ✓ More structure
- ✓ Lecturer to stick to the syllabus
- ✓ Info on theory base, discussion/info on relevant research
- ✓ Info on definitions, etc
- ✓ Critical perspective / different perspectives – e.g.: sociological/ecological, etc.
- ✓ More in depth discussion on law – including housing, mental health…etc over more than two lectures
- ✓ The organisation – evidently not there – telling us we are having outside speaker, and then they cannot attend all three sites.
- ✓ Better teaching methods – reading word for word from a handout is not my way of being motivated to learn.
- ✓ Better organization
- ✓ More interactive teaching style
- ✓ A more comfortable teaching venue
- ✓ Structure
- ✓ Focus
- ✓ Consistency
- ✓ All of it so we don't end up wasting our time again
- ✓ Organisation
- ✓ This module should be the first one
- ✓ The law exam should be integrated into the essay
- ✓ More creative – e.g. student research into community
- ✓ Format & content
- ✓ Style of lectures
- ✓ Detail of topics (new info!)

- ✓ More creative/inspiring teaching methods
- ✓ Topics more specific to my area of work, e.g. fostering and adoption
- ✓ Higher academic level of reading
- ✓ Learning/lectures towards meeting the learning outcomes of the module.
- ✓ Academic lectures – not just notes/handouts
- ✓ Not to repeat Module Two – All based on the Child's World…may as well have read the book!
- ✓ More depth
- ✓ More research
- ✓ More analysis rather than reading from scripts
- ✓ Lecture structure
- ✓ Classroom layout
- ✓ This module should be first as an intro and then narrow in on family and then child third
- ✓ We had read a lot of the books relevant on previous modules
- ✓ More QUALITY outside speakers
- ✓ Teaching style
- ✓ More in-depth teaching
- ✓ Case discussion in the afternoon
- ✓ All of it!
- ✓ More focused on actual policy and legislation
- ✓ Better planning and organised afternoon sessions
- ✓ More variety and content in actual lectures
- ✓ Law exam
- ✓ Clarity between lecturers
- ✓ Outside speakers relevant to topic
- ✓ The structure and teaching of this module
- ✓ Law should be continued throughout the module incorporating mental health, asylum seekers, race relations, etc.
- ✓ This module lacks depth**,** its current teaching content has not been appropriate for mature practitioners
- ✓ The lecturer… a lovely lady, but NOT a teacher
- ✓ The style of teaching
- ✓ How the afternoons are spent/structured
- ✓ On site tutor (B)
- ✓ On site room (B)
- ✓ Seen exam better as an assignment
- ✓ More in depth about law –especially Human Rights Act
- ✓ Speakers that could actually turn up/have relevance
- ✓ Change seen exam format
- ✓ The structure of the module
- ✓ Law should have been more integrated
- ✓ Better standard of teaching
- ✓ More variation in teaching styles from session 4 onward
- ✓ More organisational structure in the afternoons
- ✓ I preferred the room we were in originally

- ✓ Assignments set a beginning of module and handed in before the end
- ✓ Use afternoon sessions better
- ✓ Better tutor support
- ✓ Too little content
- ✓ The exam didn't demonstrate my knowledge

Suggestions for future candidates:

- ✓ Have reading lists before course starts
- ✓ Clarify what the knowledge requirements mean
- ✓ Help for those who have been out of education for some time in writing essays – staying focused on what is wanted etc.
- ✓ Be clear about what you want from the course – knowledge requirements, etc
- ✓ Be assertive and stick together as a group (i.e.: support)
- ✓ Get login for computer/library earlier – at beginning of course
- ✓ Read the guardian
- ✓ Ask for library internet login at beginning of term
- ✓ Be assertive. Stick together with group
- ✓ Don't expect too much!!!
- ✓ Clear links made to assessment framework
- ✓ Possibly planning officer to look at policies
- ✓ Consistent speaker
- ✓ Read Child's World…. then you don't need to attend the module
- ✓ Never do the first year of a course
- ✓ The course is over assessed
- ✓ Beware of lack of consistency
- ✓ Not to panic about exam!
- ✓ Try for learning sets
- ✓ Module needs a bit of a revamp I'm not sure what advice I could give to future candidates
- ✓ Plan to do the learning on your own
- ✓ Ask for library Internet login before term starts! This never arrived, and internet needed for this module
- ✓ Be assertive about what you want and need
- ✓ Hang in there!!!
- ✓ Make sure you get support from agency
- ✓ Remember to renew library books as the fines are costly
- ✓ I have not found this module a great experience. I felt that tutors are floundering and not clear about what to do with us, the level has been too basic considering this is a post-qualified course and we are all experienced practitioners
- ✓ Follow up ideas raised by letter to curriculum committee!
- ✓ Change the law exam to an assignment
- ✓ Re-think structure and teaching of module

- ✓ The course needs visiting speakers who are really knowledgeable about their subject
- ✓ Do your own research and study
- ✓ Be more assertive in asking for what you need from lecturers
- ✓ Work as a group
- ✓ Prepare yourself for a certain amount of stress
- ✓ Ensure assessor has time to work with you and your relationship is conducive with course work, etc
- ✓ Ask for your library login (internet etc) at beginning of term
- ✓ Be assertive about own learning needs
- ✓ Think long and hard about the personal implications for health and family
- ✓ Do not agree to start course unless a locum has been identified to cover you
- ✓ Ensure you will have a high level of managerial support
- ✓ Begin work on Portfolio early
- ✓ Look ahead and 'pace' the work
- ✓ Keep details of relevant casework that could be used before the course begins
- ✓ Send out reading lists much earlier
- ✓ Use study time
- ✓ More tutor time available
- ✓ Start thinking about portfolio pieces even at PQ1 Stage
- ✓ Provide a format for portfolio – it would save students' time

5.5. SUMMATIVE EVALUATION REPORTS FOR PROGRAMME RE-DESIGN:

A comprehensive summative report was produced and presented to the Management Group of the Consortium. These findings are discussed more fully in Chapter Six. Further reports were generated for the Consortium and the General Social Care Council. One report was collated for the Programme and Curriculum Committte, which identified EVERY concern raised, by a candidate and a comment of the action, which had already, or should be taken. This Committee was charged with overseeing the implementation of those recommendations.

At the end of the Programme a decision was reached to ask the participants (candidates and their line managers) to engage in a six-month post course testing, to determine if there was retention of the gains they had achieved in their levels of competency. This was then administered, and the results are reported more fully in later Chapters.

All instruments can be viewed in Appendix A, correspondence to participants in Appendix B, and Reports for the Consortium and the General Social Care Council and Appendix C.

5.6 AUXILLARY DATA COLLECTION FOR PROGRAMME EVALUATION & RE-DESIGN:

For each module, the researcher was provided with the formative and summative assignments and the grades achieved by each candidate.

Mid programme, the Consortium held a Programme Conference, which the researcher attended and made a presentation on competency-based education and the research project. Involvement in the Conference also enabled informal meetings with line managers, candidates, practice assessors, tutors and presenters from other Post Qualification Child Care Award Programmes.

Following Module Four (submission of the Practice Portfolio), the candidates and their line managers were then administered a series of post-tests which included:

current level of competency (individually and with no access to earlier testing instruments), programme expectations, levels of distress, satisfaction/dissatisfaction, suggestions and best gains from programme involvement.

The researcher attended at a Practice Assessors training meeting, and collected some feedback from that constituency. The researcher then viewed all candidate practice portfolios, attended at the Practice Assessment Panel of the portfolios and then Examination Board.

At the conclusion of the data collection, all candidates received a handwritten personalised thank-you note with a brass bookmark engraved with an inspirational quote 'social workers are exceptional' as a token of appreciation.

This was a very labour and time intensive process; however, it was very productive. The researcher was ever mindful that,

> Where research participants have shared their experiences in good faith for the research to be used to create awareness of some issue or problem, or highlight implications for practice or policy, there is an added responsibility to report.
>
> (Darlington & Scott 2002, p. 158)

Candidate representatives attended all Committee meetings, and had access to all the reports. Candidates also had access to the researcher by email, at the conference and at each testing point.

The outcome of the action research was continuous evaluation, which was fed back to the Consortium committees to enable immediate improvements, and identification of possible changes for future offerings of the programme. Finally, the researcher developed a quality assurance instrument for the Consortium to collect future data in compliance with the General Social Care Council requirements.

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Chapter Six: Mezzo Level Findings:

6.1 INTRODUCTION:

Findings in this Chapter relate to the ***(intended*** and ***unintended[1])*** impact of the programme upon participants. A **series of repeated tests** (**pre/post programme** as well as **pre/post modules**) determined **baseline levels** and tracked **subsequent changes**, (as reported by candidates and their line managers).

As was discussed fully in Chapter Three, the data collection instruments were multi-dimensional, collecting preferences (i.e. your top three selections) and grading (on a five point likert scales) for each item. Overall numerical scores were generated from aggregating the grading on all items at each test point (pre, post or six month post). These repeated measures allowed for comparisons among candidates, between candidate and line manager, and when aggregated, amongst groups or test points. The reported findings attempt to present the most appropriate selection of these multiple formats available on each question.

[1] Foster and Huber (1999) point out the importance of unintended consequences arguing that the science of adverse effects is the actually the science of causality.

6.2 MOTIVATION FOR INVOLVEMENT:

Respondents (candidates and line managers) selected three (from a list of 33) primary motivations for enrolling in the Post Qualification Child Care Award.

Figure 6.1

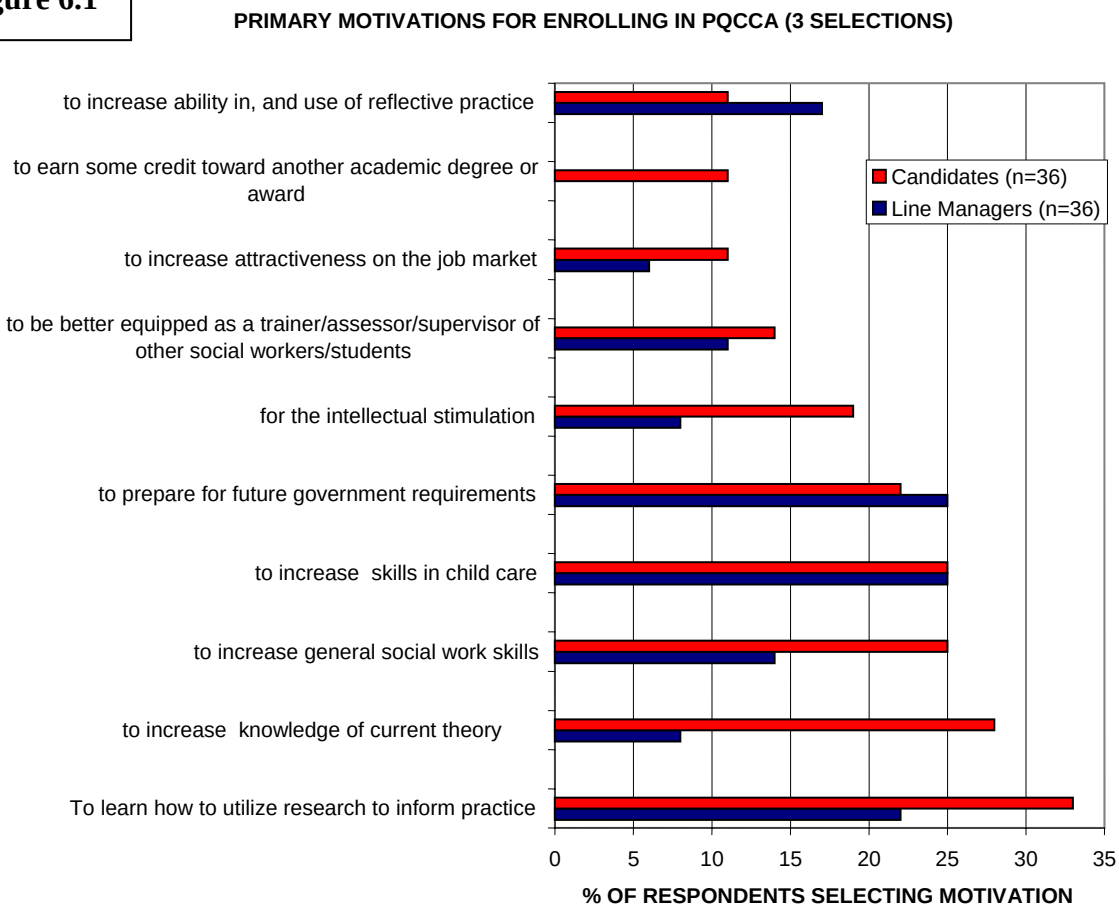


Figure 6.1 presents the primary motivations of candidates and line managers. There is evidence of some conflict between personal (i.e. earn academic credits) and corporate motivations (preparation of workforce for government requirements), **Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 (below)** lists all motivations, including those for which there was no interest. There is disparity between what the front line workers, their managers and the architects of the programme feel is important.

Table 6.1 **Candidates' Three Strongest Motivations for Taking the PQCCA:** (n=36)

Number of candidates who stated strongest motivation	Description
12	To learn how to utilize research to inform my practice
10	to increase my knowledge of current theory
9	to increase my general social work skills
9	to increase my skills in child care
8	to prepare for future government requirements
7	for the intellectual stimulation
5	to be better equipped as a trainer/assessor/supervisor of other social workers/students
4	to increase my attractiveness on the job market
4	to earn some credit toward another academic degree or award
4	to increase my ability in, and use of reflective practice
4	to have protected time for structured learning
4	to improve my ability to evaluate my own practice
3	to increase my confidence in assessments
2	for the time away from the demands of work
1	at the suggestion of my line manager/training officer
1	at the direction of my employing agency
1	to improve my skills in applying scales and instruments (ie risk assessment framework, psychometric testing)
1	to increase my confidence
1	to increase my self-awareness of my value and prejudicial biases
1	to develop my confidence in dealing with "hard to help families"
1	to reduce my anxiety about my lack of confidence
1	to improve my case planning
0	to increase my chances of promotion
0	to increase my confidence in court work
0	to make links with other social workers
0	to improve my writing skills
0	because I enjoyed the PQ 1
0	to earn more money (present or future)
0	to get more "hands-on" supervision/mentoring
0	to be able to use the sports facilities
0	to reduce my anxiety about my lack of skill
0	to reduce my anxiety about my lack of knowledge
0	to improve my portfolio

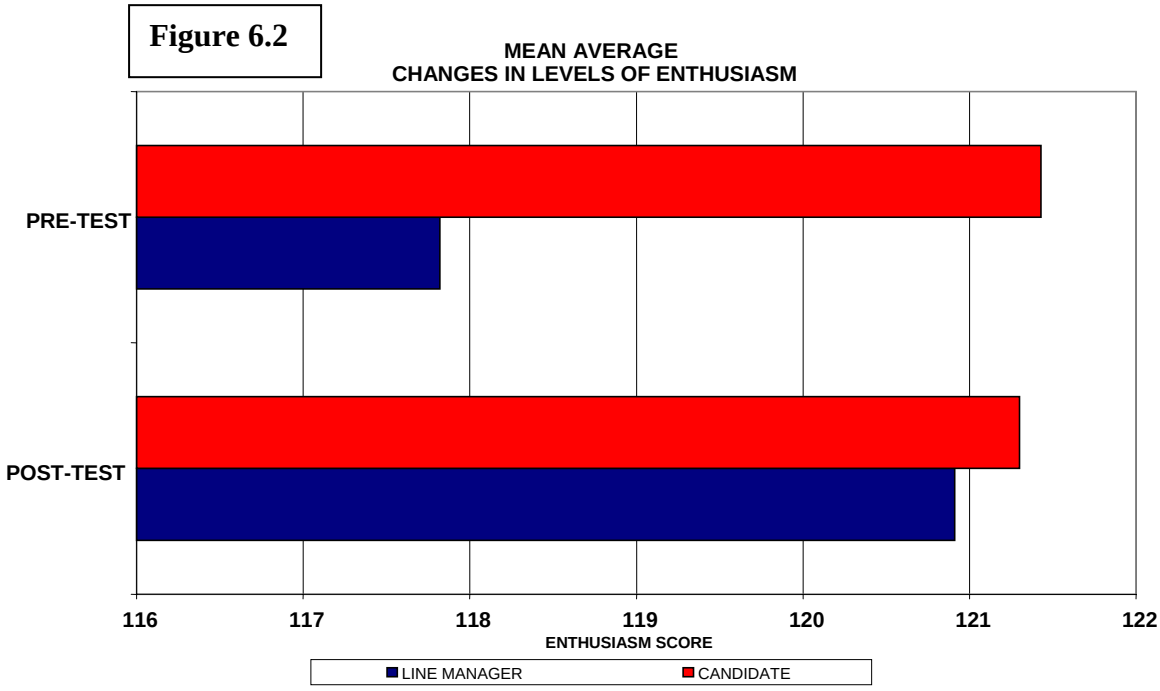
Table 6.2 **Line Managers' Three Strongest Motivations for Sending Candidates to take the PQCCA:** (n=36)

Number of line managers who stated strongest motivation	Description
9	To increase her/his skills in child care
9	To prepare for future government requirements
8	To learn how to utilize research to inform her/his practice
6	To increase her/his ability in, and use of reflective practice
5	To increase her/his general social work skills
5	At the direction of the employing agency
4	Because the candidate asked to
4	To be better equip her/him as a trainer/assessor/supervisor of other social workers/students
3	For the intellectual stimulation
3	To increase her/his knowledge of current theory
3	To give her/him some time away from the demands of work
3	To improve her/his ability to evaluate her/his own practice
2	To increase her/his attractiveness on the job market
2	To increase her/his confidence in assessments
2	To increase her/his self-awareness of her/his value and prejudicial biases
1	To increase her/his chances of promotion
1	To increase her/his confidence in court work
1	To increase her/his confidence
1	To earn more money (present or future)
1	To develop her/his confidence in dealing with "hard to help families"
1	To have protected time for structured learning
1	To improve her/his case planning
0	To make links with other social workers
0	To improve her/his writing skills
0	Because she/he enjoyed the PQ 1
0	To improve her/his skills in applying scales and instruments (ie risk assessment framework, psychometric testing)
0	To earn some credit toward another academic degree or award
0	To get more "hands-on" supervision/mentoring
0	To be able to use the sports facilities
0	To reduce her/his anxiety about her/his lack of skill
0	To reduce her/his anxiety about her/his lack of knowledge
0	To reduce her/his anxiety about her/his lack of confidence
0	To improve her/his portfolio

6.3 LEVELS OF ENTHUSIASM:

A 5 point Likert scale on the same instrument generated an overall numeric score of **enthusiasm.** Repeated tests enabled tracking of changes.

Figure 6.2

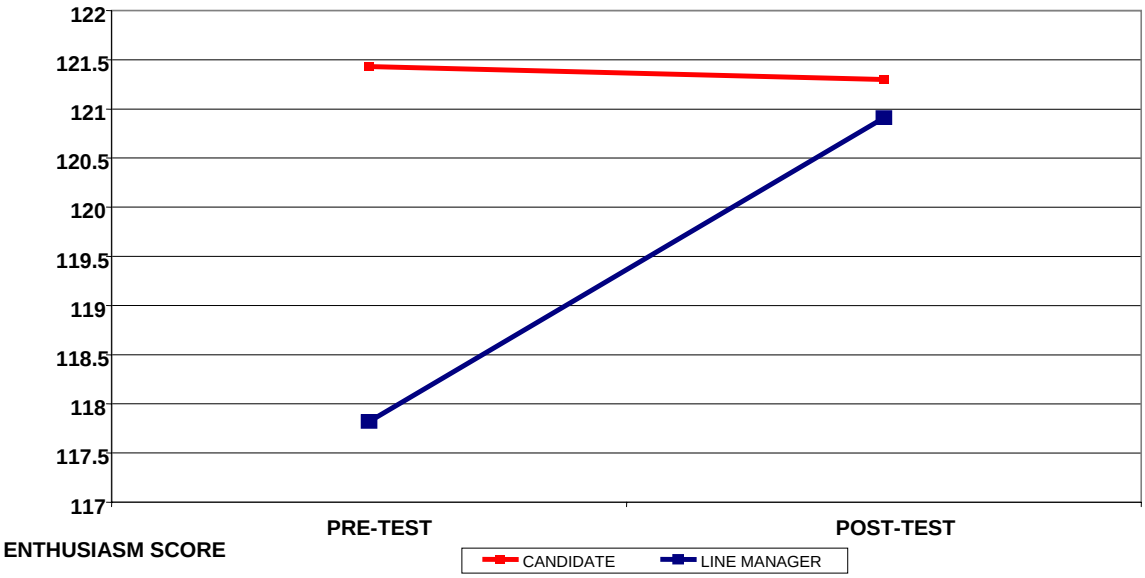


PRE-TEST LINE MANAGERS n=33 SD=18.68 CANDIDATES n=35 SD=17.52
POST-TEST LINE MANAGERS n=22 SD=24.76 CANDIDATES n=27 SD=11.73

Figures 6.2 and 6.3 illustrate the disparity between levels of enthusiasm for the programme as reported by the candidates and their line managers. By the end of the programme, candidate enthusiasm fell slightly whilst line managers were dramatically more enthusiastic. Candidate enthusiasm fluctuated throughout the programme, (as measured pre/post each module), but is not presented here as the line managers were only tested pre/post programme. It was not appropriate to test this component at the six-month post-test.

Figure 6.3

MEAN AVERAGE CHANGES IN LEVELS OF ENTHUSIASM



PRE-TEST LINE MANAGERS n=33 SD=18.68 CANDIDATES n=35 SD=17.52
POST-TEST LINE MANAGERS n=22 SD=24.76 CANDIDATES n=27 SD=11.73

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the impact of the candidate's involvement in the programme on the enthusiasm expressed by the candidates and the line managers. The **change in candidate level of enthusiasm** from pre-test (M=124.56 SD=17.04) to post-test (M=121.30 SD=11.73) with t(26)=1.133 p=.268 is not statistically significant. The eta squared statistic (.047) falls between a small and moderate effect (Cohen, 1988). Although the figures visually suggest significant change, in the **line managers' level of enthusiasm** from pre-test (M=120.05, SD=21.79) to post-test (M=120.91, SD=24.76) with t(22)= -.143, the p=.888 , and therefore not statistically significant. The eta square score of .00095 indicates no effect. This test is of limited value with a sample of this size.

6.4 SOURCES OF STRESS FOR CANDIDATES:

Candidates selected three major sources of stress (of 17) pre/post programme and pre/post each module. The label stress was used synonymously with anxiety and relabelled **distress** to incorporate all types of negative stress.

Figure 6.4

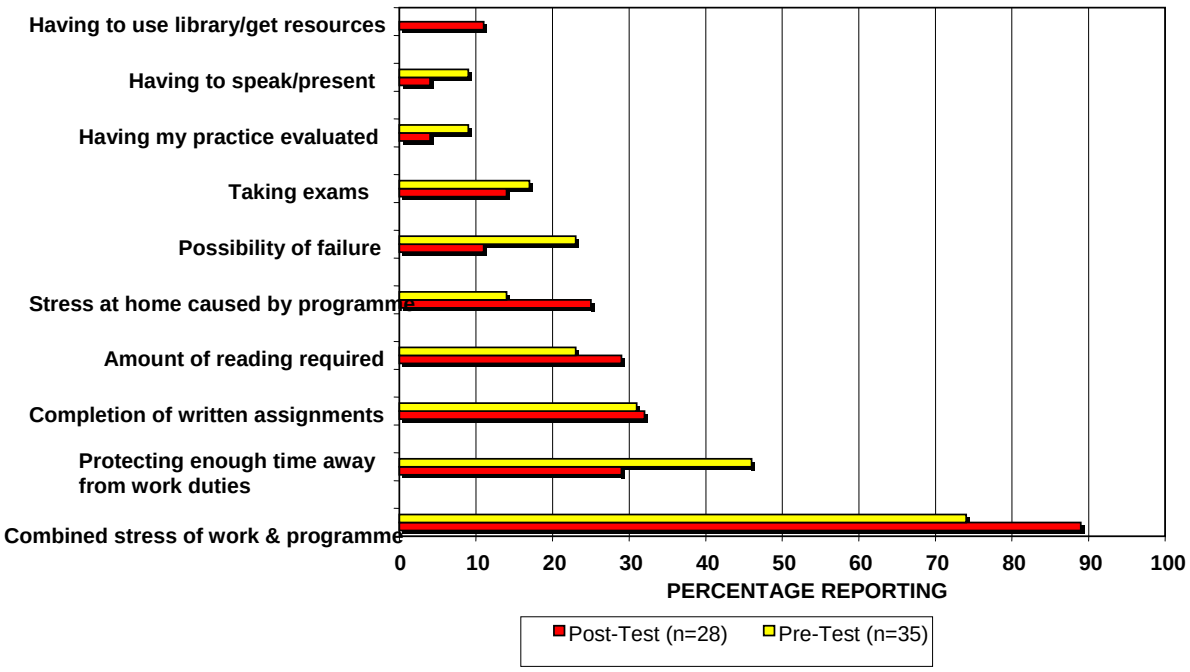


Figure 6.4 reveals that some sources of stress caused more anxiety before the programme began (i.e. possibility of failure), some remained high throughout (i.e. combined stress of work and programme), whilst others were not even anticipated (i.e. getting resources/use of library). Of note, **90%** of candidates experienced stress associated with the combined pressure of work and the programme. Utilization of these findings for refinement of the programme is discussed in Chapter Five.

Table 6.3 (below) summarises the anxieties and **Table 6.4** (below) summarises the stresses, identified by the candidates..

TABLE 6.3 Candidates' Three Greatest Anxieties Prior to Taking the PQCCA: (n=35)

Number of candidates who stated one of three greatest anxieties	Description
26	The combined stress of work and the programme
16	Whether I will get enough protected time from work
11	Completing written assignments
8	The amount of reading required
8	Possibly failing
6	Taking exams
5	Possible stress at home caused by the programme
3	Having my practice evaluated
3	Having to speak/present in front of my peers
2	What the tutors will think about my knowledge/skills
1	Getting bored in the lectures
1	Job security
1	Having to use a computer
1	My team mates resenting my absence(s)
0	Transportation difficulties
0	Having to use the library system
0	Discomfort at being a 'mature' student

TABLE 6.4 Candidates' Three Greatest Stressors in Taking the PQCCA: (n=28)

Number of candidates who stated one of three greatest stressors	Description
25	The combined demands of work and the programme
9	Completing written assignments
8	**G**etting enough protected time from work
8	The amount of reading required
7	Pressure/tension at home caused by the programme
4	Taking exams
3	Possibly failing
3	Having to use the library system /locate reading materials
2	Getting bored in the lectures
2	Having to use a computer
2	My team-mates resenting my absence(s)
1	Having my practice evaluated
1	Transportation difficulties
1	Having to speak/present in front of my peers
1	What the tutors thought about my knowledge/skills
1	Job security
0	Discomfort at being a 'mature' student

6.5 SOURCES OF STRESS FOR LINE MANAGERS:

A parallel instrument for line managers was modified slightly to capture the sources of stress unique to the line managers.

Figure 6.5

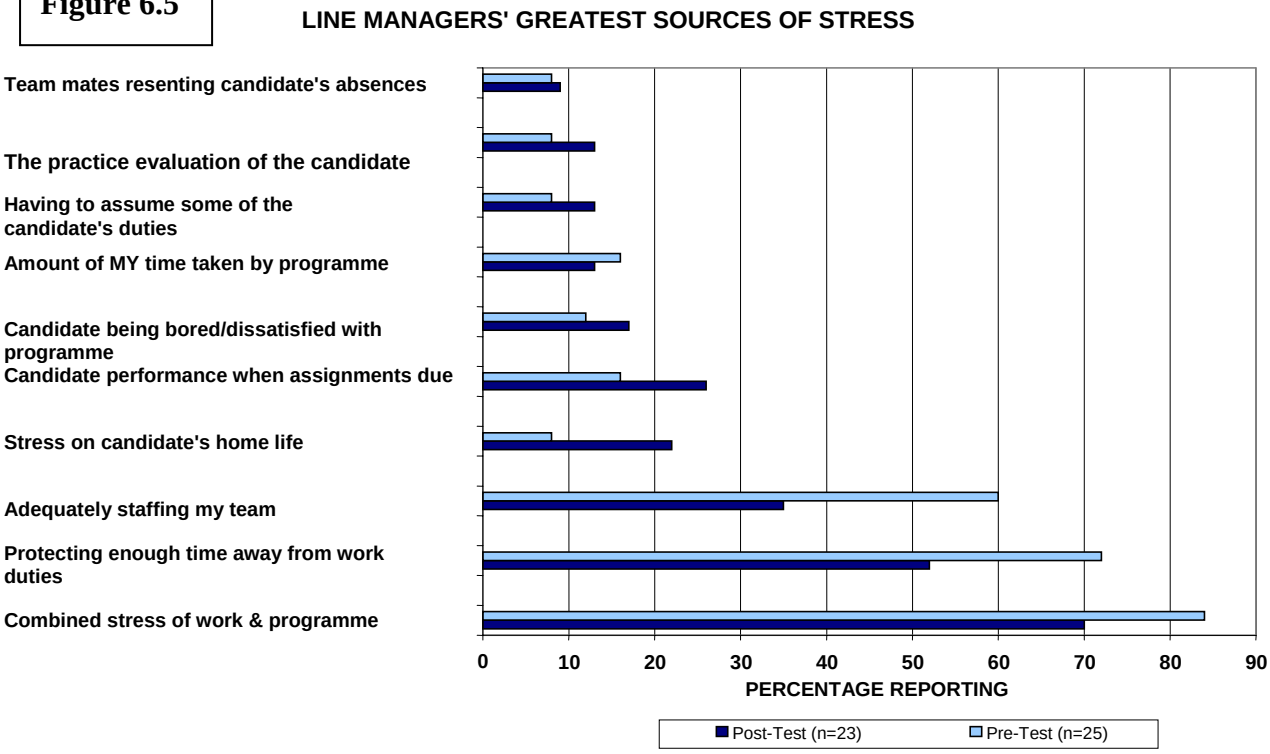


Figure 6.5 (especially when viewed in conjunction with **Figure 6.4**) illustrates the sources of stress (i.e. combined stress of work and programme, protecting time, etc.), that impacted on both candidates and managers, and some sources which exacerbated over the duration of the programme (i.e. second-hand stress when candidates where completing assignments or experiencing related stress in their home life). **Tables 6.5** and **6.6** below identify all the primary sources of anxiety and stress identified by line managers before and after the programme.

Table 6.5 **Line Managers' Three Greatest Anxieties Prior to the PQCCA:** (n=25)

Number of candidates who stated one of three greatest anxieties	Description
21	The impact of combined stress of work and the programme on the candidate
18	Whether I can protect enough time for the candidate away from work duties
15	Whether I can adequately staff my team
4	How much of my time the programme will demand (meetings, forms, etc)
4	When the candidate will complete written assignments
3	The candidate being bored/dissatisfied with the programme
2	The practice evaluation of the candidate
2	The impact on the candidate of possible stress at home caused by the programme
2	Whether I will have to assume some of the candidate's duties
2	Team mates resenting the candidate's absence(s)
1	The amount of reading required
1	The candidate wanting to use a computer
0	Transportation difficulties
0	The candidate possibly failing
0	The candidate knowing more than I do
0	The candidate commenting on me amongst their "classmates"/tutor(s)
0	What the tutors/assessors will think about my knowledge/skills

Table 6.6 **Line Managers' Three Greatest Stressors From the PQCCA:** (n=23)

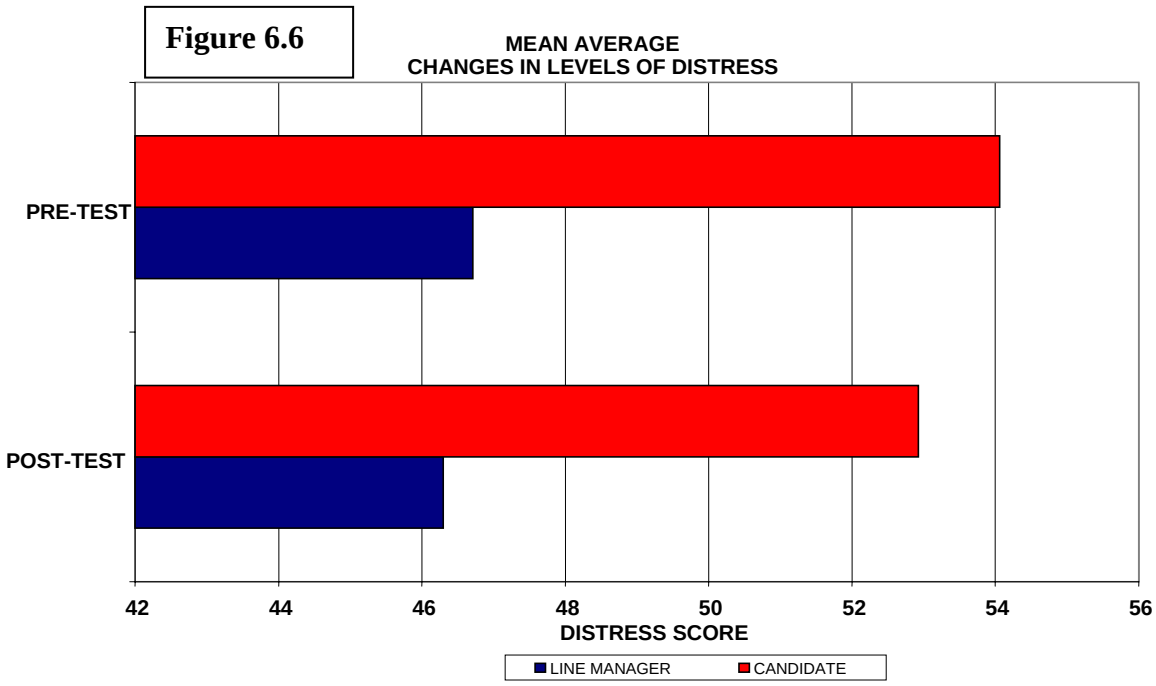
Number of line Managers who stated one of three greatest stressors	Description
16	The impact of the combined demands of work and the programme on the candidate
12	Protecting enough time for the candidate away from work duties
8	Adequately staffing my team
6	The candidate's attendance and work performance when written assignments were due
5	The impact on the candidate of pressure/tension at home caused by the programme
4	The candidate being bored/dissatisfied with the programme
3	How much of my time the programme demanded (meetings, forms, etc)
3	The practice evaluation of the candidate
3	Having to assume some of the candidate's duties
2	Team mates resenting the candidate's absence(s)

1	The candidate knowing more than I do
0	Transportation difficulties
0	The amount of reading required
0	The candidate possibly failing
0	The candidate commenting on me amongst their "classmates"/tutor(s)
0	What the tutors/assessors think about my knowledge/skills
0	The candidate wanting to use a computer

6.6 CHANGES IN LEVELS OF DISTRESS:

Using a 5 point likert scale, each component of stress was ranked at each phase of the research, and then translated into an overall numerical score.

Figure 6.6

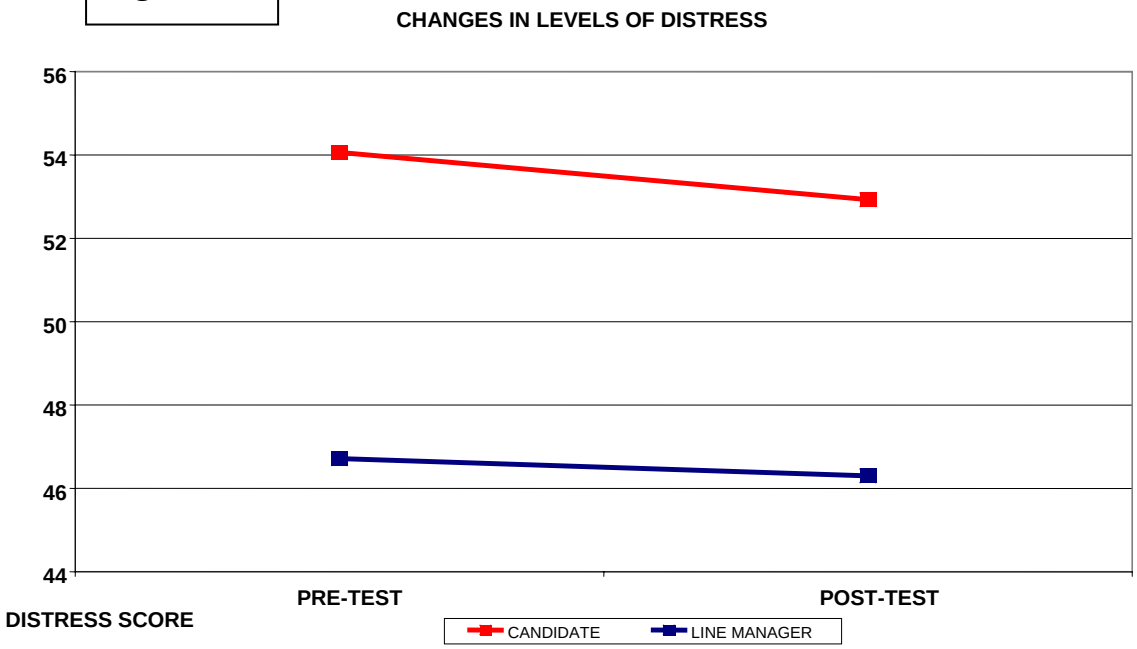


PRE-TEST LINE MANAGERS n=21 SD=7.57 CANDIDATES n=28 SD=9.82
POST-TEST LINE MANAGERS n=21 SD=10.57 CANDIDATES n=28 SD=7.68

Figures 6.6 and 6.7 demonstrate that the candidates were more distressed about their participation in the programme than were their line managers. The candidates' distress level at **Post Test** (the end of the programme) was lower than at the beginning, despite, the stress they reported around completion of papers and the portfolio. This will receive more discussion in Chapter Eight. Significant

fluctuations in candidate distress pre/post modules reflected intrinsic programme difficulties, and were addressed in the programme adjustments outlined in Chapter Five. It was not appropriate to test this component at the six-month post-test.

Figure 6.7



PRE-TEST **LINE MANAGERS n=21 SD=7.57** **CANDIDATES n=28 SD=9.82**
POST-TEST **LINE MANAGERS n=21 SD=10.57** **CANDIDATES n=28 SD=7.68**

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the impact of the candidate's involvement in the programme on the distress experienced by the candidates and the line managers. The **change in candidate level of distress** from pre-test (M=53.18 SD=9.82) to post-test (M=52.93 SD=7.68) with t(27)= .146 p=.885 is not significant. The eta squared statistic (.000788) indicates almost no effect (Cohen, 1988). The **change in line managers' level of distress** from pre-test (M=47.62, SD=7.57) to post-test (M=45.19, SD=10.57) with t(20)=.939 , the p=.359 , and therefore not statistically significant. The eta square score of .044 indicates an effect between small and moderate (Cohen, 1988). This test is of limited value with a sample of this size.

6.7 NON-COMPLETERS & ADVERSE EFFECTS:

Twenty-five percent (9) of the candidates **failed to complete** within the scheduled time frame. This is worthy of note and further discussion in Chapter Eight. One candidate withdrew very early in the programme due to diagnosis of a life-threatening illness. A second candidate withdrew after the first module citing too great a stress level, and another withdrew in the midst of the second module, requiring admission to a psychiatric hospital, (citing that the stress of the programme as the precipitant). Four candidates deferred due to incomplete portfolios, stating that the demands of the Christmas Season was in conflict with the demands of the programme and work. Two candidates failed their portfolios and were referred back for further portfolio development and re-assessments of their practice.

6.7.1 PROFILE OF NON-COMPLETERS:

Figure 6.8

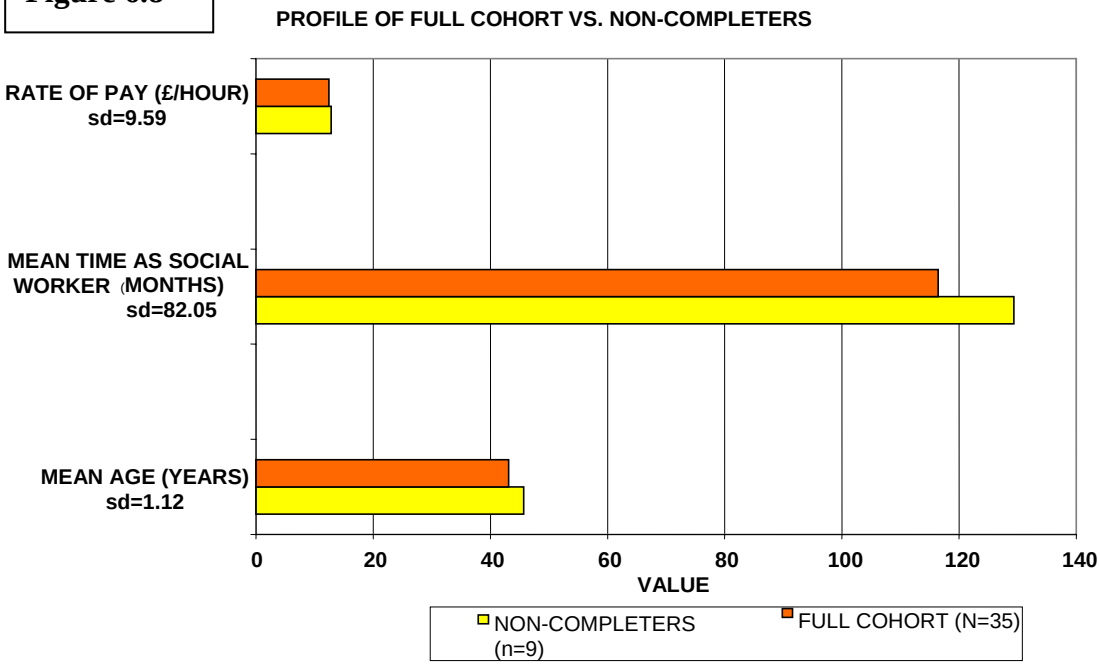


Figure 6.8 reveals no significant difference between the non-completers and the full cohort except for a slightly higher age and duration of time as a social worker. Due to the small sample size, few conclusions can be drawn from these findings. Further exploration of future cohorts might reveal a profile of candidates who are not suitable for this type of training, and this will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

6.7.2 GENDER OF NON-COMPLETERS:

Figure 6.9

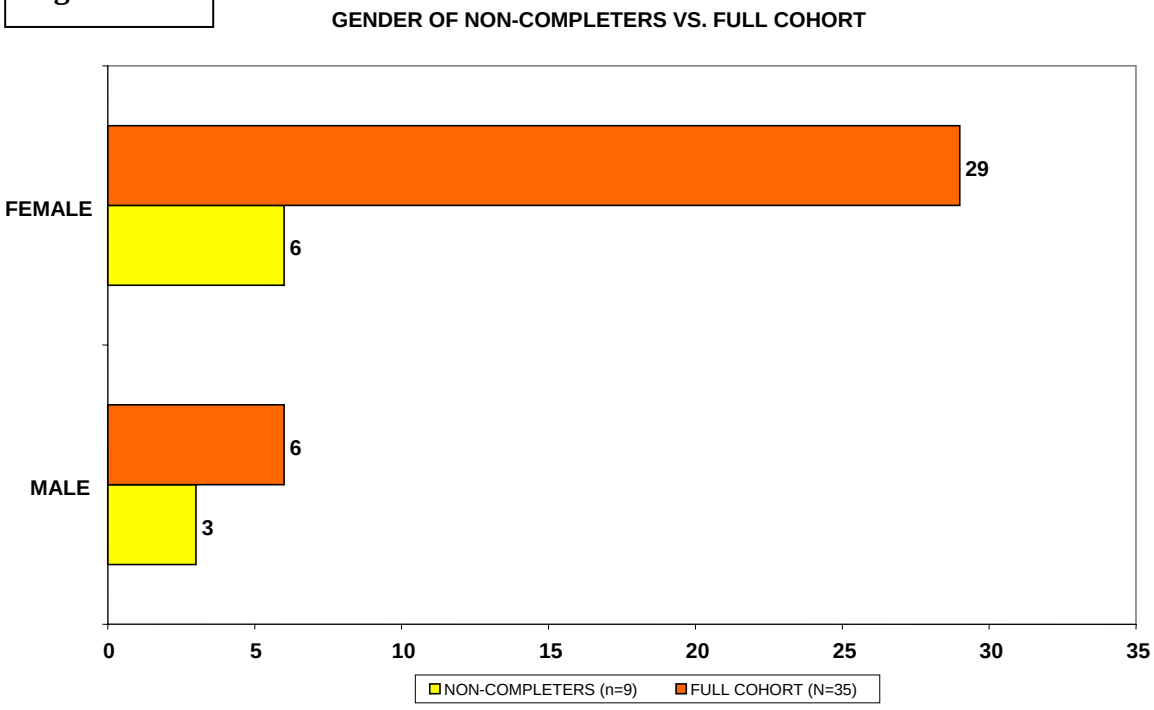
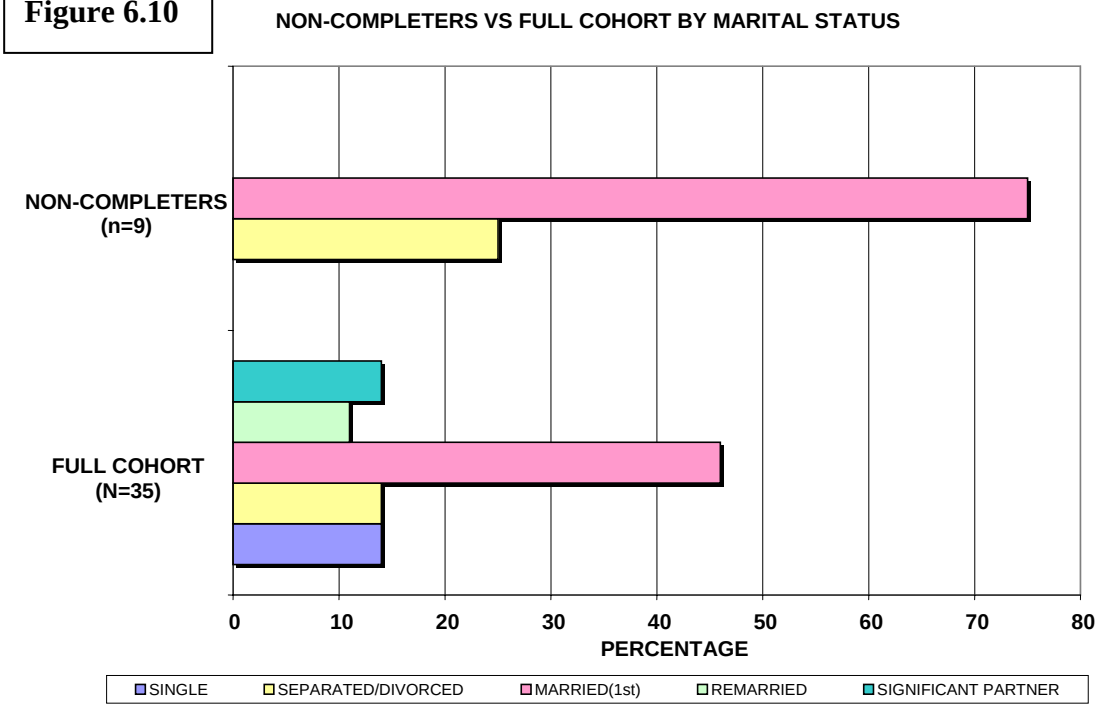


Figure 6.9 demonstrates that although the full cohort was predominately female (as per the gender bias of front line social work staff), only 50% (3) of the six males in the programme completed, and indeed make up 33% (3) of the non-completers.

6.7.3 MARITAL STATUS OF NON-COMPLETERS:

Figure 6.10



6.7.4 FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY OF NON-COMPLETERS:

Figure 6.11

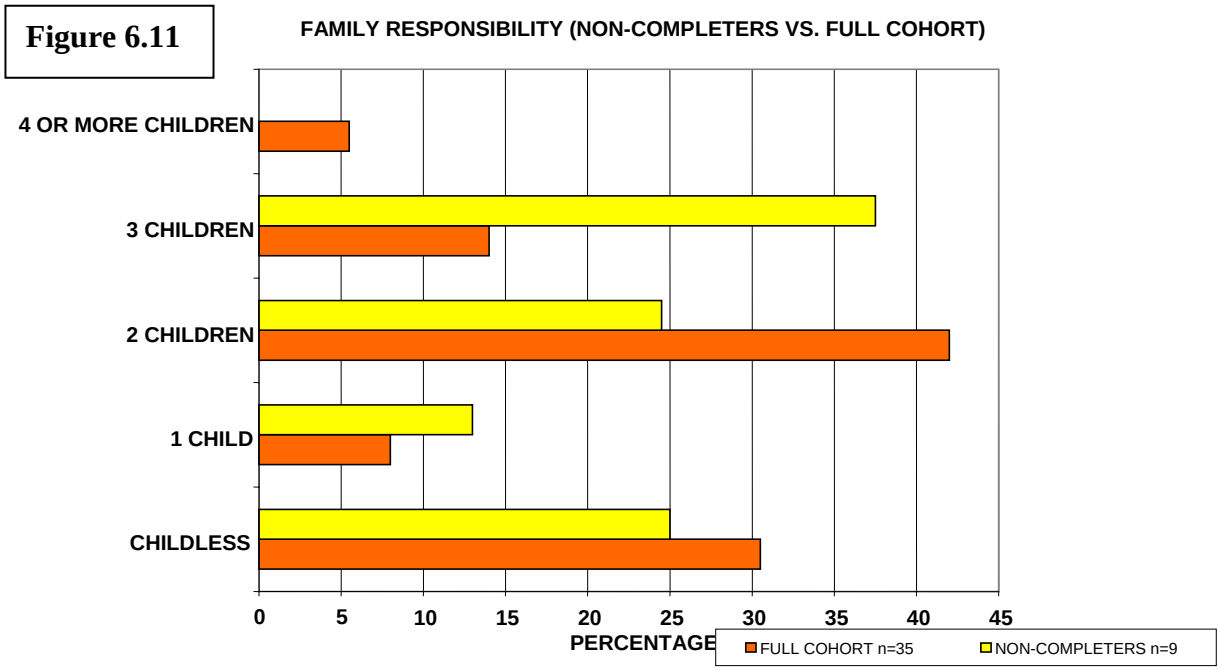


Figure 6.10 displays the marital status of these two groups whilst **Figure 6.11** reveals family responsibilities (i.e. number of children). One non-completer delivered a baby during Module Two, but returned to complete Module Three.

Finally, one candidate completed the programme within the time frame, despite the stress of being a de-facto *single parent* to several school age children while her husband was hospitalized in coma, and rehabilitation following a serious assault.

6.7.5 AREAS OF DIFFICULTY FOR NON-COMPLETERS

Figure 6.12

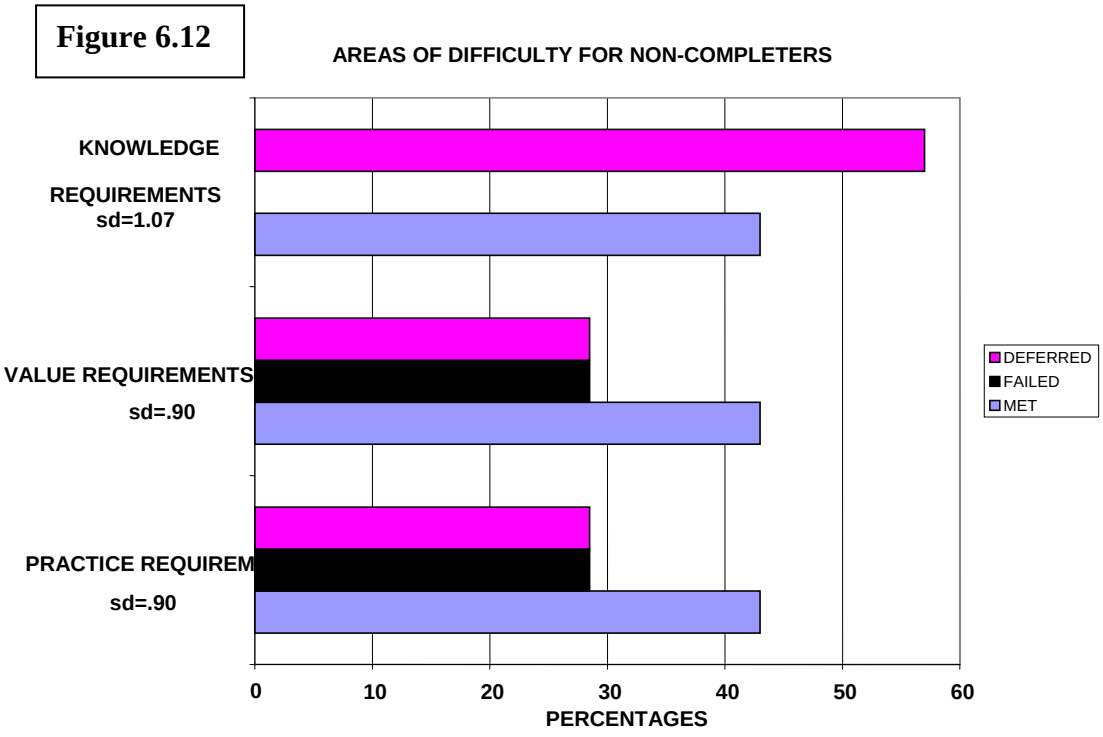


Figure 6.12 identifies the areas of the programmes where non-completers encountered difficulty. (A deferral means that the candidate either requested or was advised to request a later submission deadline as the work was incomplete or inadequate). This finding will receive further attention in Chapter Eight.

6.7.6 EXTRA HOURS REQUIRED:

Candidates were asked to report the amount of **extra time** the programme demanded of them.

Figure 6.13

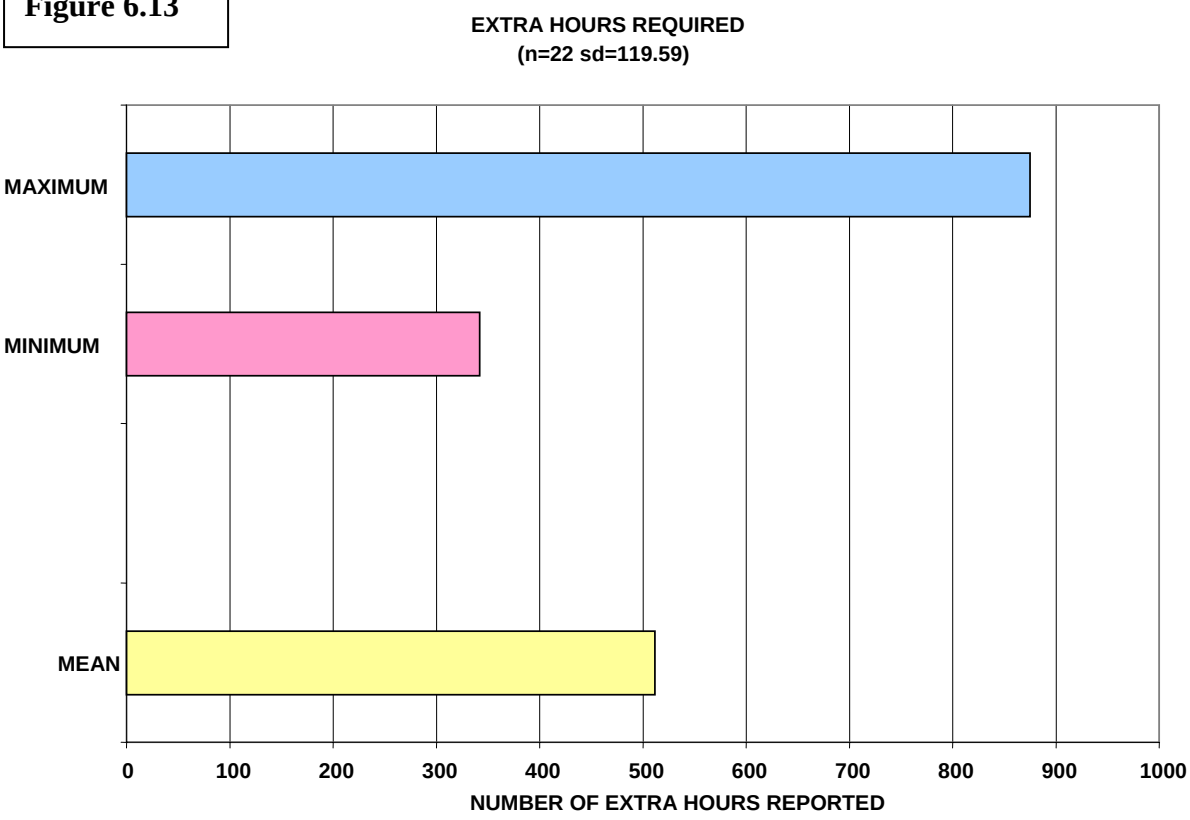


Figure 6.13 is a visual representation of the extra hours that candidates reported they needed to invest in order to manage the demands of the programme. These hours were in addition to the time proposed by the architects of the programme, and negotiated with the local authorities, as 'protected time'. At a mean average of **512** hours over the programme (**approximately 9 hours per week**); this likely contributed significantly to levels of distress and non-completion.

6.7.7 QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK FROM CANDIDATES:

Table 6.7 documents qualitative findings summarizing some of the spontaneous comments of the candidates. The comments which express extreme frustration or anger are particularly informative in that these failures, non-completions, and adverse events must be attended to when looking at the financial, personal and personnel costs of this type of training. More qualitative feedback is documented in Chapters Five and Seven.

Table 6.7: Qualitative Data Candidate Comments
☑ I enjoyed mixing with other professionals in interactive learning
☑ If you want to keep social workers don't put them under this ****** stress!
☑ I enjoyed learning how to apply knowledge to my practice
☑ I WILL TELL OTHER CANDIDATES …DON'T BOTHER....ITS EASIER TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER JOB!!!!
☑ I have enjoyed being away from the office and using new skills.
☑ **** I feel very despondent about social work as a result of this course.
☑ I Learned a great deal about new issues and techniques very relevant to my work
Advice to future candidates: ☑ Think twice before coming on the course!!! ☑ Think deeply about the implications on your work and personal life, they are quite earth shattering at times!!! ☑ Be prepared to work hard ☑ Be prepared to stand your ground with management for workload relief
☑ Recognition of time needed must be acknowledged. Allow more time for reading
☑ Actual theoretical evidence and studies most informative
☑ The organizers need to make sure that there is support for people who may have personal issues come up.
☑ New and innovative teaching methods

☑ Locum coverage essential!
☑ I learnt new skills and insights
☑ Line managers need to be more aware of content. ☑ Need to prepare work base/colleagues in order that candidates feel supported ☑ A pity the rest of my team hasn't got a clue about what we are learning, so they don't understand when we discuss things.
☑ Has stimulated me towards further learning to improve my practice
☑ Not enough space in module for completion of two assignments – we are doing the second one in the holidays. ☑ The summer break was a disaster – back to increased work caseload, impetus completely lost. ☑ I have lost my motivation and incentive to complete. ☑ Wish course ended September not December (work pressure) ☑ It was very difficult to sustain my motivation ☑ It was difficult to get motivated for the portfolio completion and I was tired of fighting for management support.
☑ I have benefited from the experience of applying theory to practice and having the time to reflect on practice
☑ Candidates should be warned about how hard it will be to balance course plus full time employment. I was not given a realistic estimate of personal time to be committed, nor the workload implications
☑ The course has been back to basics but with very detailed
☑ Sort out esp. for Guardian ad litems how, if the course will be funded in terms of loss of earnings.
☑ Module was very interesting and enjoyable; however, everything else was a major headache!
☑ Discussion on working tools/assessment packs very helpful
☑ I think it would have been better if we had been given 6 months away from the workplace to do the course ☑ Course should be in a block NOT on days ☑ I suggest three-month college block out of work – easier to get work replacement.
☑ It has been very useful to meet and learn about other aspects of work in the field and how different services operate within the same agency.

☑ I have achieved my learning objectives due to my ongoing workplace, rather than attendance at the lectures. I have wasted my time. I could have read some books instead of attending these lectures. It was an insult to the group's intelligence, experience and a terrific waste of our time.
☑ I felt undervalued….Don't insult the intelligence of professionals again by wasting our valuable time on something we already know. Teaching your grandma to suck eggs comes into mind…. Sorry about this Sharon, but you wanted the truth! Hopefully things will change dramatically for the next course!
☑ This is an important course, which all child care workers must take – this therefore needs to be presented in a more positive way to future candidates. They need to be encouraged that this is a career enhancement and should be financially rewarded on completion
☑ What I liked best was THE END!

6.8 OCCUPATIONAL GOALS:

The Post Qualification Child Care Award was originally designed as mandatory training that all child care workers would need to achieve by 2005[2]. However, data (both quantitative and qualitative) collected from the candidates and line managers suggest that their involvement in the Post Qualification Child Care Award impacted negatively on occupational aspirations. This is particularly significant as the sample was chosen for high levels of motivation and academic ability.

[2] Gradually the workforce discovered that the deadline and mandatory requirement were being reviewed, and it is currently under review and revision.

6.8.1 INTENTION TO STAY IN SOCIAL WORK:

Figure 6.14

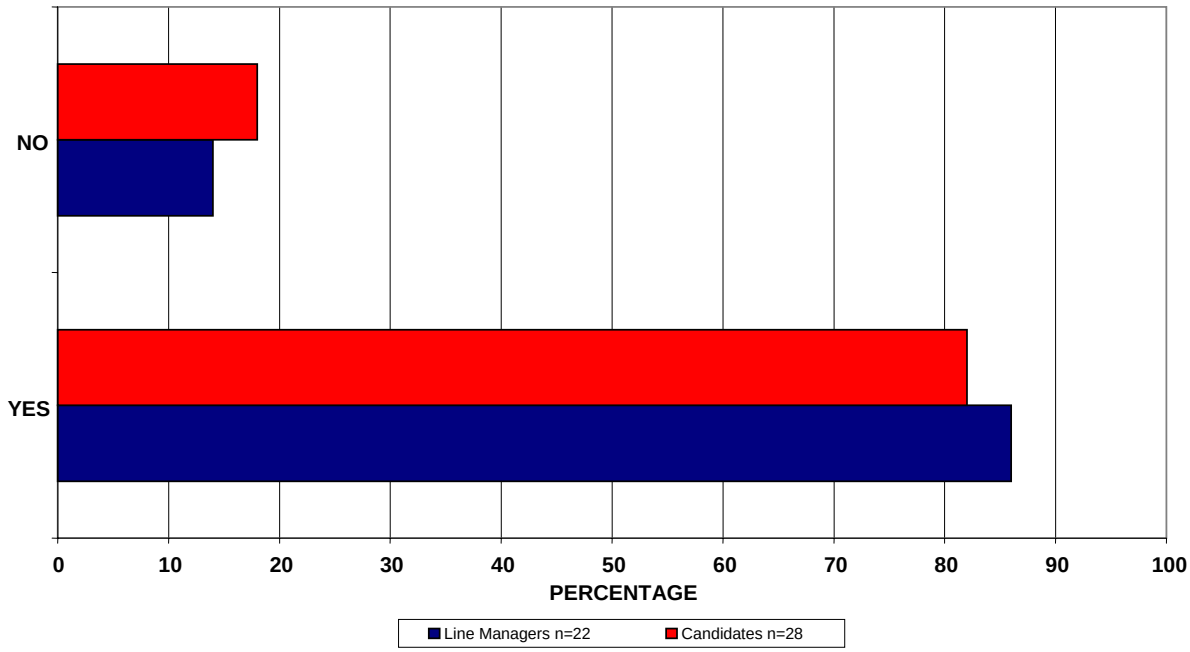


Figure 6.14 demonstrates that **14% (3/22)** of the line managers were intending to leave the field. This is consistent with the high turnover of line managers experienced during the short duration of the programme.

More concerning is the finding that by the end of the programme, **18% (5/28)** of these highly motivated and academically able candidates stated an intention to leave the profession. With the exception of one candidate who entered the programme immediately prior to retirement (to assist the agency in better understanding and meeting the needs of future candidates) all the others had originally entered the programme with an intention to stay in the field. This adverse impact was substantiated by qualitative comments cited by candidates

(**Table 6.7** above). Of the candidates who wished to stay in the field, one failed the practice requirements, one deferred in the knowledge requirements and one failed in the value requirements. None of those stating intent to leave social work failed any of these three groups of requirements. The implications of these findings will be discussed more fully in Chapter Seven .

6.8.2 ASPIRATION TO BE A LINE MANAGER:

Figure 6.15

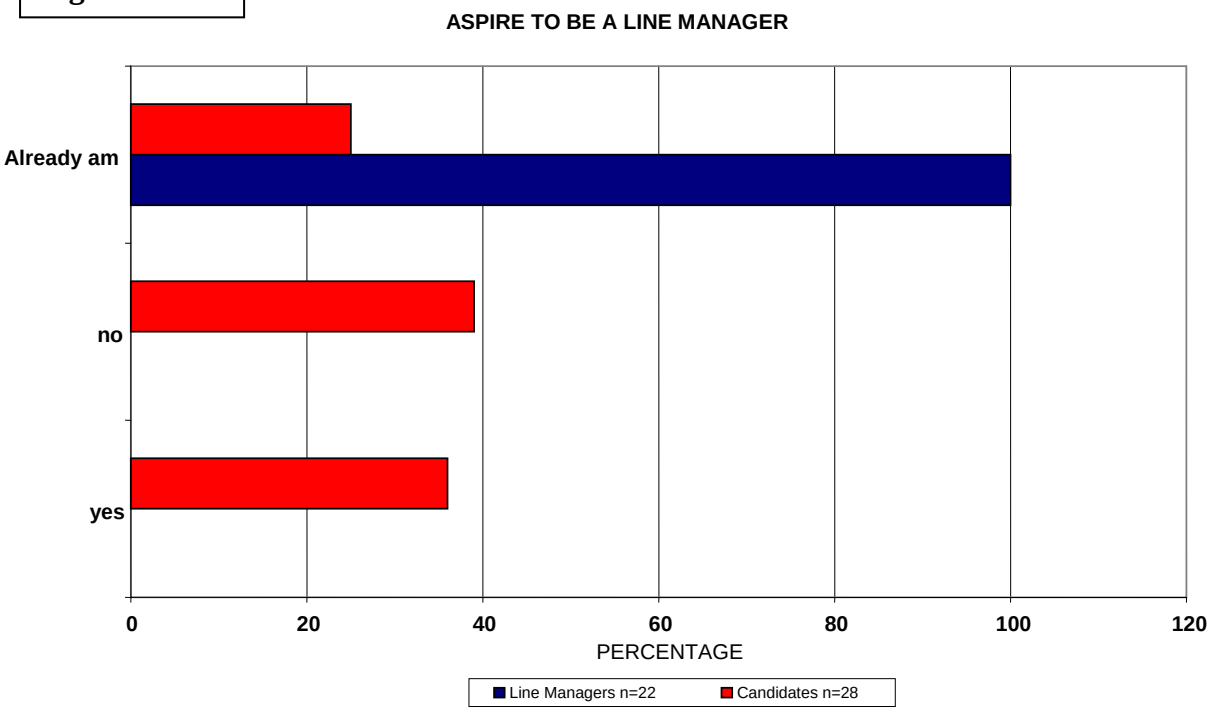


Figure 6.15 indicates the percentage of candidates who aspire to become a line manager. One candidate who failed on practice requirements, one who failed on value requirements and one that deferred on knowledge requirements had no aspirations to be line managers.

6.8.3 ASPIRATION TO BE A PRACTICE TEACHER:

Figure 6.16

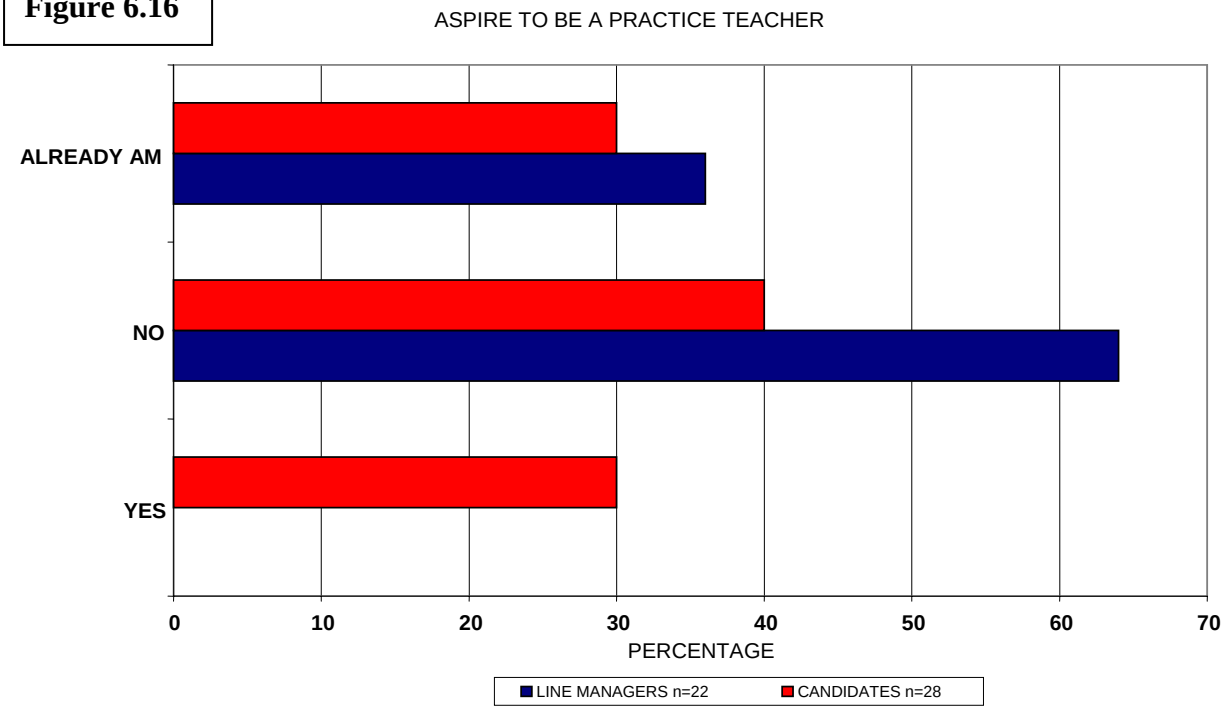


Figure 6.16 reveals the proportion of the respondents who aspired to, or already were a practice teacher. One candidate who failed the practice requirements, another who failed the value requirements and one who had deferred on knowledge requirements all aspired to be practice teachers.

6.8.4 ASPIRATION TO BE A PRACTICE ASSESSOR:

Figure 6.17

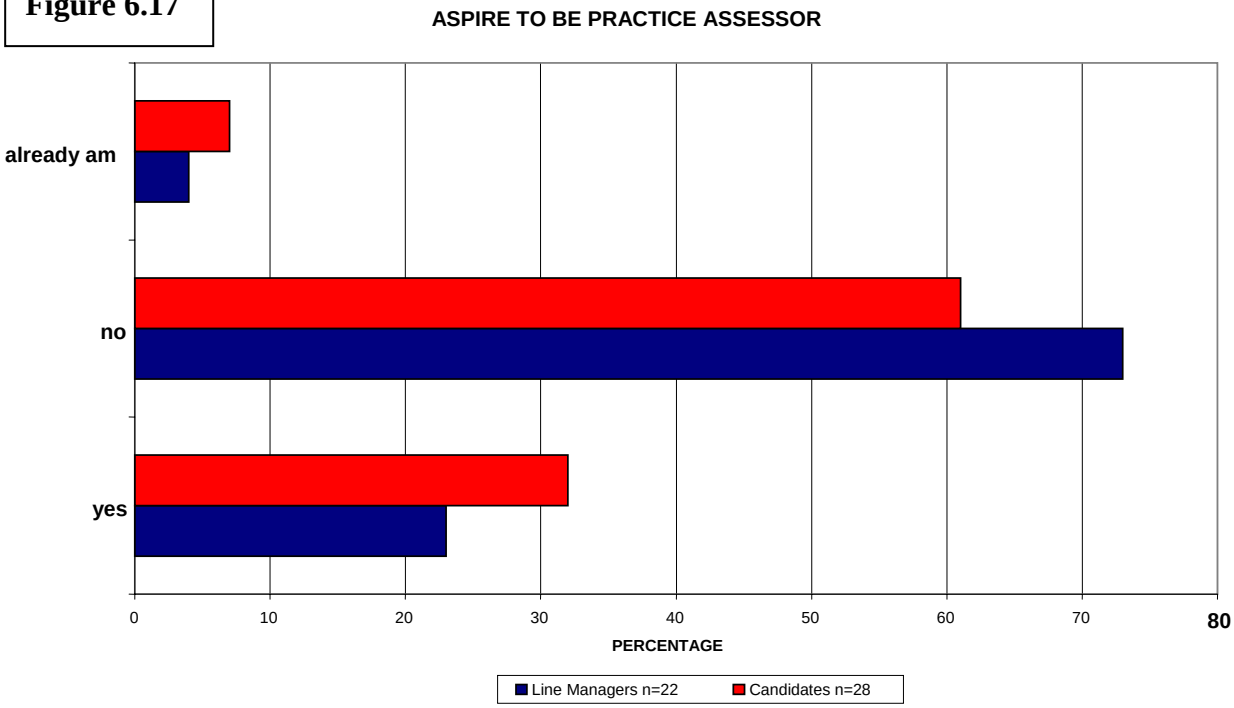


Figure 6.17 illustrates the low percentage of candidates and line managers who aspire to be practice assessors. Given the current emphasis on evaluating competencies, these individuals are in high demand, yet the amount of work and responsibility is not felt to be adequately remunerated to attract more professionals to engage in this work. The lack of practice assessors presented difficulties in running the first cohort of the Post Qualification Child Care Award, and the alternative of using line managers is fraught with complications of dual role responsibilities.

6.9 SUCCESS RATES IN PRACTICE COMPETENCIES:

As has been reported, of the initial cohort of thirty-six (36), three (3) candidates withdrew completely before the Examinations Board convened. Two candidates submitted their outstanding assignments (papers or portfolios) in time for the Board, despite earlier deferrals. Two deferred until the next meeting of the Examinations Board (every six months) and two (2) failed assessment of practice based competencies. One further candidate was not fully evaluated at the Examinations Board, as she requested an accommodation (for personal reasons) to be allowed to complete the assignments for one module, despite her minimal attendance at lectures during the module. This accommodation was eventually granted, although changes in the wording of the requirements for attendance would prevent this for future candidates.

Figure 6.18

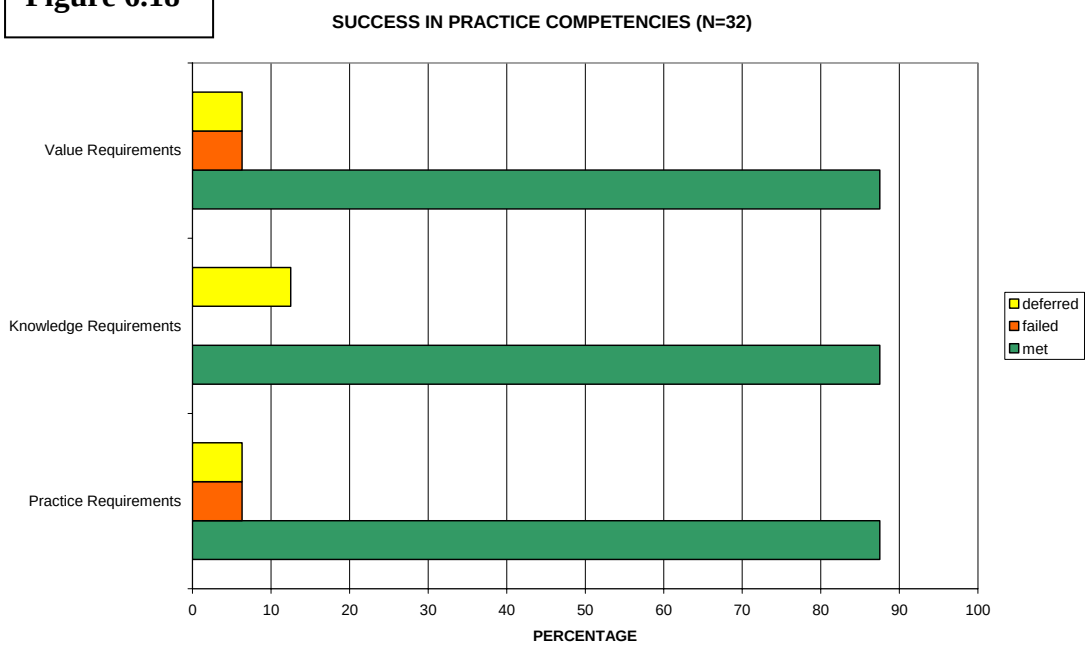


Figure 6.18 illustrates the proportional success rates of the candidates in their practice based competencies. Eighty-seven and a half percent (28) were fully successful on these competencies. The two candidates who failed were referred back, and failed a second time.

6.10 AVERAGE ACADEMIC GRADES:

Figure 6.19

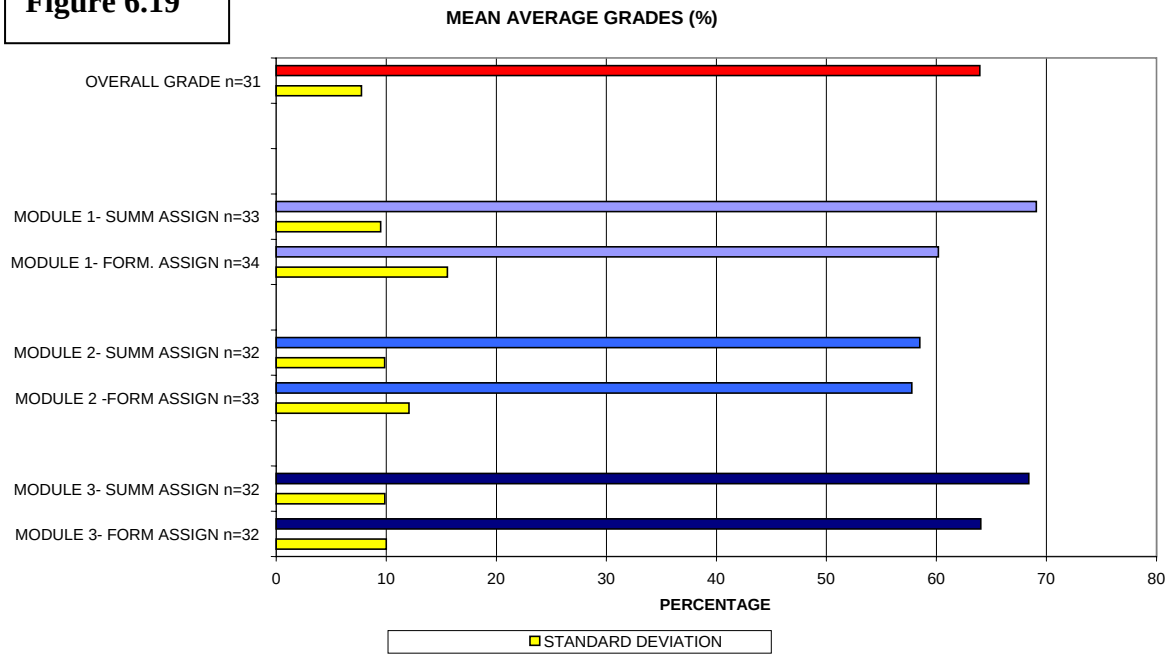


Figure 6.19 displays the mean academic grades candidates achieved in each assignment, and overall. The first assignment in each module was formative in order to give candidates academic feedback and guidance. As such it was not necessary to pass this assignment. The second assignment was summative, and a pass was required to qualify for competency and the programme. A number of candidates were using the Post Qualification Child Care Award credits to work towards an academic award at either an undergraduate (40% required for a pass) or post graduate level (50% required for a pass).

6.11 BEST GAINS FROM TAKING PQCCA:

Upon completion of the programme candidates and line managers were asked what they felt the greatest gains (for the candidate) were. These items were the same as the motivations to enable comparison.

Figure 6.20

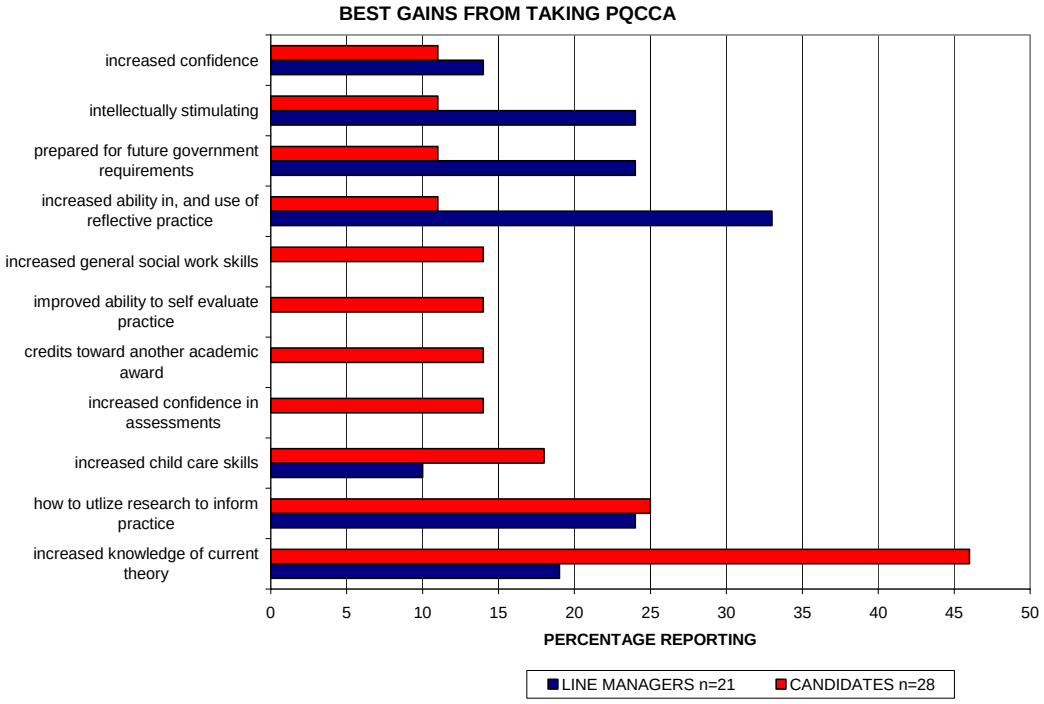


Figure 6.20 demonstrates the discrepancy between the opinions of the candidates and the line managers on this item.

6.12 PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

This component of the project attempted to discern which learning objectives (also called competencies) were identified by candidates and line managers as most in need of improvement. This would identify the areas where the majority of candidates had gaps or deficiencies in knowledge, skills or values.

Secondly, there was an attempt to determine which of the learning objectives/competencies were most improved by candidate involvement in the programme. This would indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the programme.

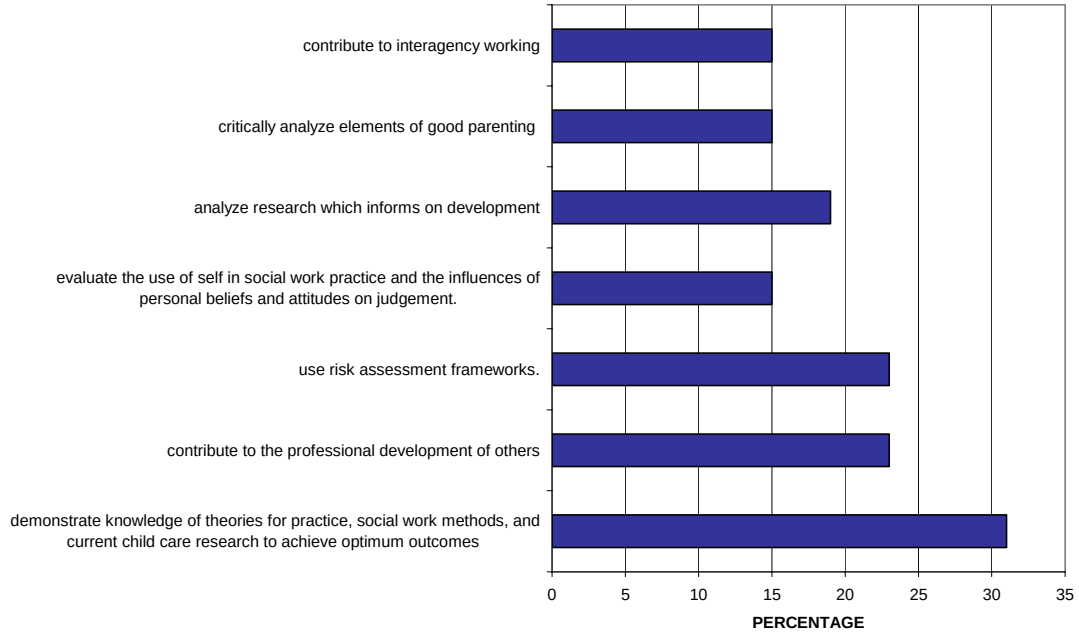
As line mangers and candidates were tested in somewhat different formats, the line managers were only tested on this item pre and post programme, while candidates had to complete the exercise pre and post **each** module, as well as post programme.

6.12.1 LINE MANAGERS' RANKING OF COMPETENCIES IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT:

Prior to the start of the programme, line managers selected three (out of 37) competencies (also called learning objectives) which they felt their candidate most needed to improve. Following the programme, they identified which three competencies they felt had improved the most. These selections were done without candidate knowledge or input.

Figure 6.21

LINE MANAGERS' SELECTION OF COMPETENCIES MOST NEEDING IMPROVEMENT n=26



Prior to the beginning of the programme, the line managers were highly motivated for their candidate to increase their competency in their theory base, their ability to use risk assessment frameworks and to contribute to the professional development of others.

6.12.2 CANDIDATES' RANKING OF COMPETENCIES IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT:

Candidates were asked to select three competencies (without communicating with their line manager) prior to each module, which were specifically addressed in that module. Immediately following each module they were asked which three competencies they believed had most improved as a result of their participation in that module. Again, this provided insight into where they felt they were deficient, and which components of the programme were most emphasized and/or effective.

Figure 6.22

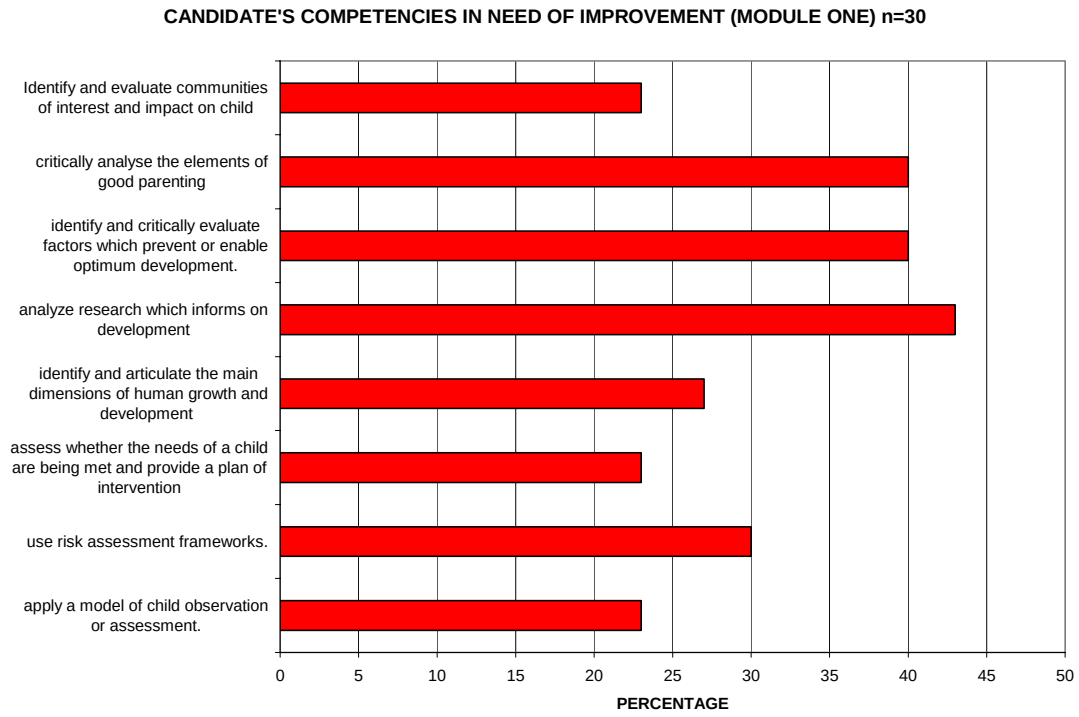


Figure 6.23

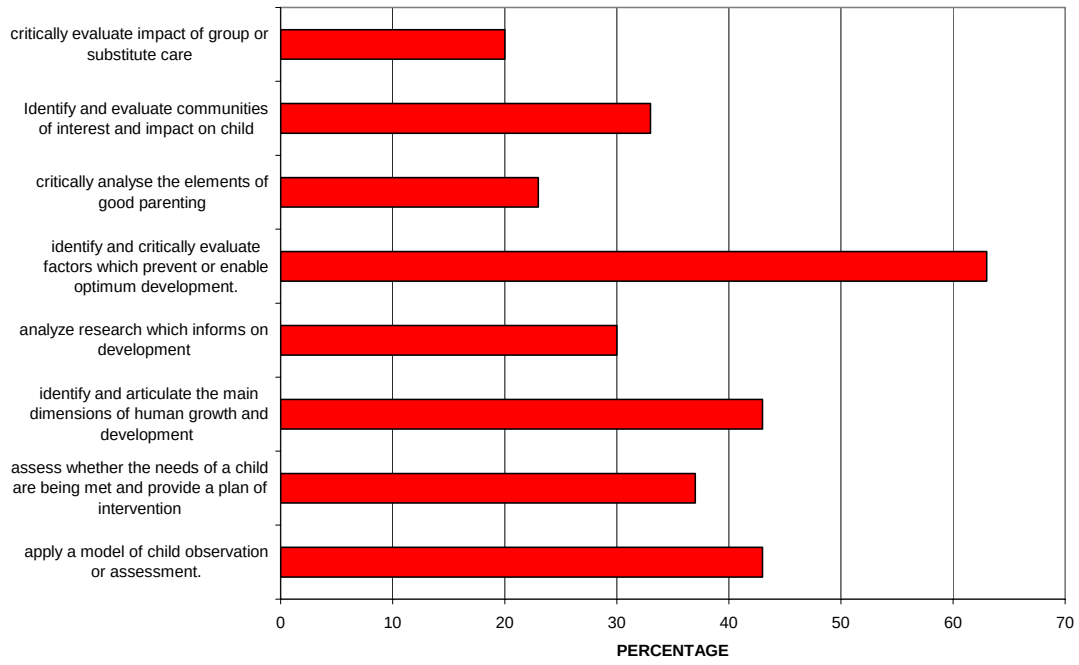
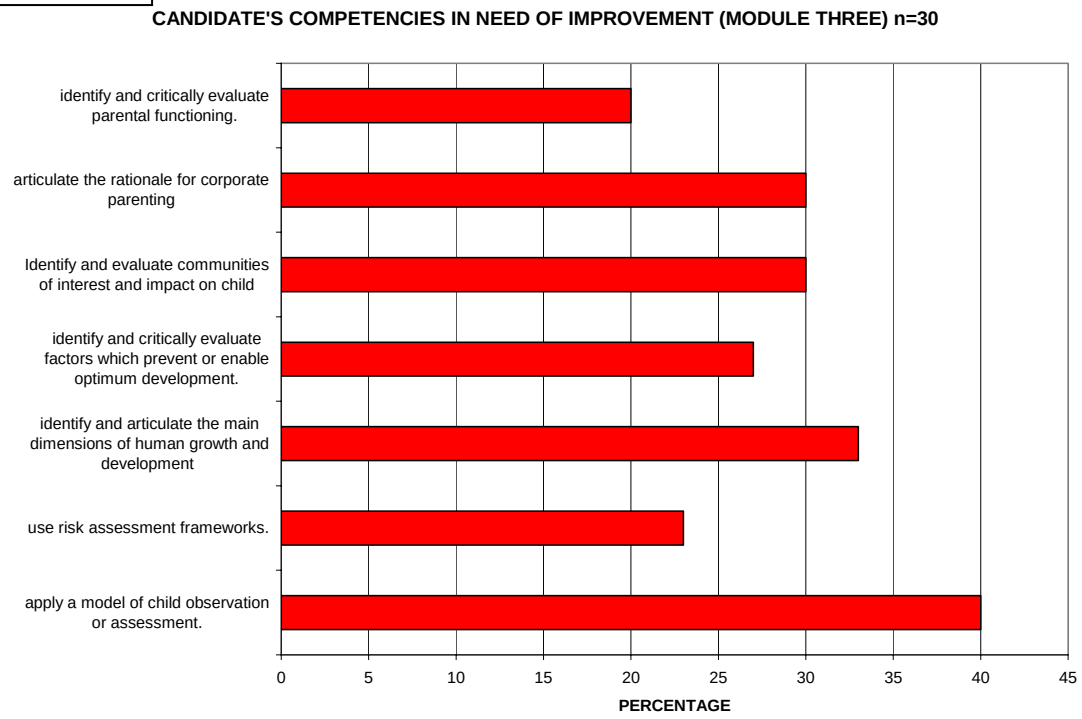


Figure 6.24



Figures 6.21, 6.22, 6.23 and **6.24** identify the competencies that line managers and candidates felt were most in need of improvement. As some of the competencies were covered in two or all three modules, there is evidence of overlap, and in some cases candidates changed their opinion of the importance of a specific competency over the duration of the programme. For example, the ability to apply a model of child observation or assessment became increasingly higher in ranking from 23% to 43% and identification and evaluation of the factors that prevent or enable optimum develop was identified by 40% in module one, and had risen to being identified by 63% in module two, and then dropped down to 27% in module three).

To fully appreciate the implications of these findings requires acknowledging the thematic overlap in the learning objectives (competencies). However, **Table 6.8 below** inclusive summary of all the learning objectives and the priority line

managers and candidates ascribed to them, demonstrates the remarkable consistency in the items selected. This should inform future revisions of the programmes.

Table 6.8 **Competencies Most In Need of Improvement**

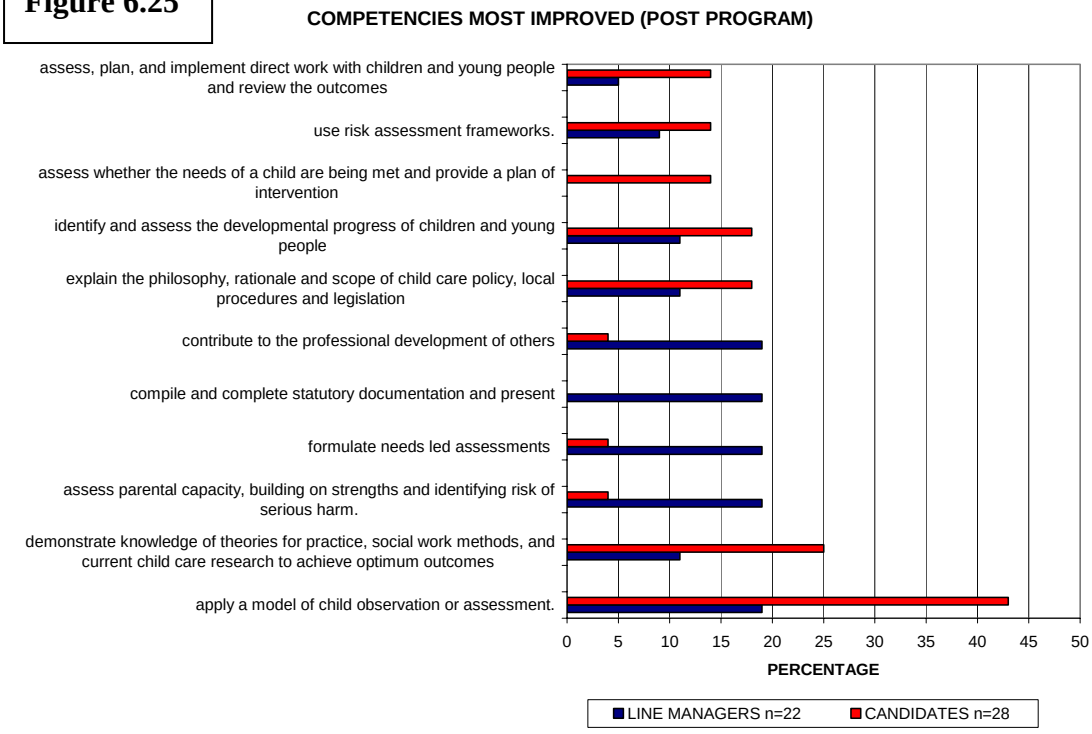
COMPETENCY (LEARNING OBJECTIVE)	**Line Mgs**	**Candidates**		
	N=26	MOD 1 N=30	MOD 2 N=30	MOD 3 N=30
Identify & articulate the main dimensions of human growth and development required for optimal development				
Identify & critically evaluate the impact of factors which prevent or enable optimum development	1	8	0	0
Critically analyse research which informs practitioners about the development of identity	2	12	0	0
Critically evaluate the impact that group or substitute care has on child development	5	13	0	0
Apply a model of child observation or assessment	1	6	0	0
Assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved	1	7	0	0
Identify and evaluate the influence of communities of interest and geographic communities on child development	0	7	11	0
Critically analyse the macro and micro elements of good parenting which lead to optimal outcomes	2	7	0	0
Identify and critically evaluate the range of factors which promote or diminish parental functioning	4	0	13	0
Use risk assessment frameworks	3	0	19	0
Articulate the rationale for corporate parenting and critically evaluate its effectiveness	6	0	9	0
Articulate and evaluate strategies for managing conflict and violence	2	0	13	0
Explain the philosophy, rationale and scope of child care policy, local procedures and legislation which underpins work with children, young people and their families	3	0	10	0
Critically analyse the impact these policies, procedures and legislation have on children, young people and their families	2	0	0	10
Articulate the roles and responsibilities of other professionals and agencies and the contribution they make to achieving optimal options	3	0	0	8
Identify and analyse the legal responsibility and accountability of social workers in relation to legislation and their employing agency	1	0	0	4
Demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive repertoire of theories for practice, social work methods, and current child care research which can be used to achieve optimum outcomes for children, young people and their families	0	0	0	3
Evaluate the use of self in social work practice and the influences of personal beliefs and attitudes on judgement	8	0	0	12

Engage with children and young people, ensuring their appropriate participation in decisions that affect their lives	4	0	0	3
Identify and assess the developmental progress of children and young people, taking into account all the main dimensions of development	2	5	0	0
Develop effective working partnerships with those with parental responsibility, carers and significant others in the life of the child/young person	0	12	0	0
Able to assess, plan, implement and review the delivery of services to support the parenting task	1	0	0	0
Assess parental capacity, building on strengths and identifying risk of serious harm	1	0	7	0
Identify, manage and mediate conflicts that impact upon the child or young person's life	2	0	0	0
Formulate needs led assessments which take full account of potential strengths and weaknesses of the child or young person's networks and communities, acknowledging diversity and the role of oppression	0	0	0	0
Contribute to effective inter agency working within the areas of planning, managing, delivering and reviewing services, in order to provide an integrated service and range of resources	0	0	0	9
Work with neighbourhoods, communities, family networks and locale to identify service needs	0	0	0	4
Identify needs and gaps in services, and contribute appropriately to corporate and strategic planning processes	0	0	0	6
Critically analyze and evaluate local child-care policy and contribute to the development of models of best practice	0	0	0	7
Work effectively within the legal framework	0	0	0	2
Work within and critically evaluate national and agency structures, policy and procedures	0	0	0	9
Compile and complete statutory documentation and present the issues to a formal hearing	3	0	0	0
Keep accurate records and provide reasoned verbal and written reports to promote effective decision-making and accountable practice	3	0	0	0
Take responsibility for own professional development	1	0	0	0
Contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training	1	2	2	4
	6	2	3	4

6.13 COMPETENCIES BELIEVED TO HAVE IMPROVED MOST BY PARTICIPATION IN PQCCA (BASED ON OPINIONS OF RESPONDENTS):

At the completion of the programme, candidates and line managers were asked (independently) to select three (from 37) competencies, which they believed, had improved the most as a result of participation in the Post Qualification Child Care Award.

Figure 6.25



When comparing the opinion of the candidates versus the line managers, it is evident that there is significant discrepancy, especially in a division that reflects corporate competencies (i.e. compile and complete a statutory document and present at a hearing) versus more personal professional competencies (i.e. apply a model of child observation). These findings also demonstrate the tension between the dual role of the child care/protection worker who would prefer to be intervening in a more therapeutic fashion versus the statutory requirements of policing and enforcing legislation. **Tables 6.9** and **6.10** below clarifies how many

of the candidates and the line managers identified which competencies they felt were most improved at the termination of the Programme.

Table 6.9 **Candidates' Three Best Competencies (Post Programme):** (n=28)

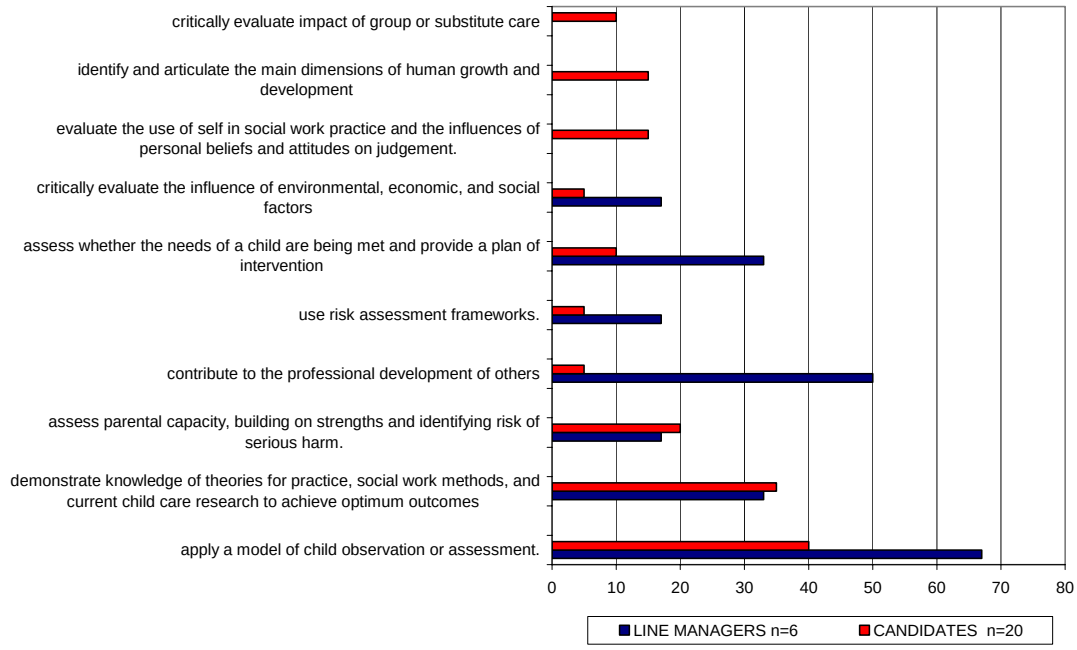
#	Description
12	Able to apply a model of child observation or assessment.
7	Able to demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive repertoire of theories for practice, social work methods, and current child care research which can be used to achieve optimum outcomes for children, young people and their families.
5	Able to explain the philosophy, rationale and scope of child care policy, local procedures and legislation which underpins work with children, young people and their families.
5	Able to identify and assess the developmental progress of children and young people, taking into account all the main dimensions of development.
4	Able to identify and critically evaluate the impact of factors which prevent or enable optimum development.
4	Able to assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved.
4	Able to use risk assessment frameworks.
4	Able to assess, plan, and implement direct work with children and young people and review the outcomes
3	Able to identify and articulate the main dimensions of human growth and development required for optimal development.
3	Able to identify and analyse the legal responsibility and accountability of social workers in relation to legislation and their employing agency.
3	Able to critically analyze and evaluate local child-care policy and contribute to the development of models of best practice.
2	Able to critically analyse research which informs practitioners about the development of identity.
2	Able to critically analyse the macro and micro elements of good parenting which lead to optimal outcomes.
2	Able to identify and critically evaluate the range of factors which promote or diminish parental functioning.
2	Able to critically evaluate the influence of environmental, economic, and social factors on the lives of children, young people and families.
2	Able to engage with children and young people, ensuring their appropriate participation in decisions that affect their lives.
2	Able to work within and critically evaluate national and agency structures, policy and procedures.
1	Able to critically analyse the impact these policies, procedures and legislation have on children, young people and their families.
1	Able to evaluate the use of self in social work practice and the influences of personal beliefs and attitudes on judgement.
1	Able to assess parental capacity, building on strengths and identifying risk of serious harm.
1	Able to formulate needs led assessments which take full account of potential strengths and weaknesses of the child or young person's networks and communities, acknowledging diversity and the role of oppression.
1	Able to identify needs and gaps in services, and contribute appropriately to corporate and strategic planning processes.
1	Able to work effectively within the legal framework.
1	Able to take responsibility for own professional development.
1	Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training.

Table 6.10 **Line Managers' Three Best Competencies (Post Programme):** (n=21)

#	Description
4	Able to apply a model of child observation or assessment.
4	Able to assess parental capacity, building on strengths and identifying risk of serious harm.
4	Able to formulate needs led assessments which take full account of potential strengths and weaknesses of the child or young person's networks and communities, acknowledging diversity and the role of oppression.
4	Able to compile and complete statutory documentation and present the issues to a formal hearing.
4	Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training.
3	Able to critically evaluate the influence of environmental, economic, and social factors on the lives of children, young people and families.
3	Able to explain the philosophy, rationale and scope of child care policy, local procedures and legislation which underpins work with children, young people and their families.
3	Able to demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive repertoire of theories for practice, social work methods, and current child care research which can be used to achieve optimum outcomes for children, young people and their families.
3	Able to engage with children and young people, ensuring their appropriate participation in decisions that affect their lives.
3	Able to identify and assess the developmental progress of children and young people, taking into account all the main dimensions of development.
3	Able to identify needs and gaps in services, and contribute appropriately to corporate and strategic planning processes.
2	Able to use risk assessment frameworks.
2	Able to identify and analyse the legal responsibility and accountability of social workers in relation to legislation and their employing agency.
2	Able to assess, plan, implement and review the delivery of services to support the parenting task.
2	Able to contribute to effective inter agency working within the areas of planning, managing, delivering and reviewing services, in order to provide an integrated service and range of resources.
2	Able to critically analyze and evaluate local child-care policy and contribute to the development of models of best practice.
1	Able to identify and articulate the main dimensions of human growth and development required for optimal development.
1	Able to critically analyse research which informs practitioners about the development of identity.
1	Able to critically evaluate the impact that group or substitute care has on child development.
1	Able to identify and evaluate the influence of communities of interest and geographic communities on child development.
1	Able to critically analyse the macro and micro elements of good parenting which lead to optimal outcomes.
1	Able to identify and critically evaluate the range of factors which promote or diminish parental functioning.
1	Able to articulate the roles and responsibilities of other professionals and agencies and the contribution they make to achieving optimal options.
1	Able to evaluate the use of self in social work practice and the influences of personal beliefs and attitudes on judgement.
1	Able to assess, plan, and implement direct work with children and young people and review the outcomes
1	Able to develop effective working partnerships with those with parental responsibility, carers and significant others in the life of the child/young person.
1	Able to work effectively within the legal framework.
1	Able to work within and critically evaluate national and agency structures, policy and procedures.

At six months post-programme, candidates and line managers received an unanticipated repeat request to identify which learning competencies had most improved as a result of involvement in the programme. Candidates and line managers did not have access to their earlier responses, thereby improving objectivity. The findings that resulted are somewhat limited due to a lower response rate; however, it was hoped they might indicate retention and consolidation of learning.

Figure 6.26 **COMPETENCIES MOST IMPROVED (SIX MONTHS POST PROGRAM)**



Again, there was discrepancy between the two constituencies. The candidates continued to feel very positive about their improved ability to apply a model of child observation, whilst line managers were also noting their improved competency in contributing to the professional development of others. This finding is consistent with the promotion of some of the candidates to higher levels in the organization (i.e. line manager positions). **Tables 6.11 and 6.12** (below)

clarifies how many of the candidates and the line managers identified which competencies they felt were most improved at the termination of the Programme.

Table 6.11 **Candidates' Three Best Competencies (six months Post Programme):** (n=20)

#	Description
8	Able to apply a model of child observation or assessment.
7	Able to demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive repertoire of theories for practice, social work methods, and current child care research which can be used to achieve optimum outcomes for children, young people and their families.
4	Able to assess parental capacity, building on strengths and identifying risk of serious harm.
3	Able to identify and articulate the main dimensions of human growth and development required for optimal development.
3	Able to evaluate the use of self in social work practice and the influences of personal beliefs and attitudes on judgement.
2	Able to critically evaluate the impact that group or substitute care has on child development.
2	Able to assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved.
2	Able to identify and critically evaluate the range of factors which promote or diminish parental functioning.
2	Able to explain the philosophy, rationale and scope of child care policy, local procedures and legislation which underpins work with children, young people and their families.
2	Able to identify and assess the developmental progress of children and young people, taking into account all the main dimensions of development.
2	Able to formulate needs led assessments which take full account of potential strengths and weaknesses of the child or young person's networks and communities, acknowledging diversity and the role of oppression.
2	Able to critically analyze and evaluate local child-care policy and contribute to the development of models of best practice.
2	Able to take responsibility for own professional development.
1	Able to identify and critically evaluate the impact of factors which prevent or enable optimum development.
1	Able to critically analyse research which informs practitioners about the development of identity.
1	Able to identify and evaluate the influence of communities of interest and geographic communities on child development.
1	Able to critically analyse the macro and micro elements of good parenting which lead to optimal outcomes.
1	Able to use risk assessment frameworks.
1	Able to critically evaluate the influence of environmental, economic, and social factors on the lives of children, young people and families.
1	Able to articulate the rationale for corporate parenting and critically evaluate its effectiveness.
1	Able to articulate and evaluate strategies for managing conflict and violence.
1	Able to identify and analyse the legal responsibility and accountability of social workers in relation to legislation and their employing agency.
1	Able to engage with children and young people, ensuring their appropriate participation in decisions that affect their lives.
1	Able to assess, plan, and implement direct work with children and young people and review the outcomes

1	Able to assess, plan, implement and review the delivery of services to support the parenting task.
1	Able to contribute to effective inter agency working within the areas of planning, managing, delivering and reviewing services, in order to provide an integrated service and range of resources.
1	Able to work effectively within the legal framework.
1	Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training.

Table 6.12 **Line Managers' Three Best Competencies (six months Post Programme):** (n=6)

#	Description
4	Able to apply a model of child observation or assessment.
3	Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training.
2	Able to assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved.
2	Able to demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive repertoire of theories for practice, social work methods, and current child care research which can be used to achieve optimum outcomes for children, young people and their families.
1	Able to use risk assessment frameworks.
1	Able to critically evaluate the influence of environmental, economic, and social factors on the lives of children, young people and families.
1	Able to articulate the roles and responsibilities of other professionals and agencies and the contribution they make to achieving optimal options.
1	Able to assess, plan, and implement direct work with children and young people and review the outcomes
1	Able to assess parental capacity, building on strengths and identifying risk of serious harm.
1	Able to formulate needs led assessments which take full account of potential strengths and weaknesses of the child or young person's networks and communities, acknowledging diversity and the role of oppression.
1	Able to critically analyze and evaluate local child-care policy and contribute to the development of models of best practice.
1	Able to take responsibility for own professional development.

6.14 CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY IN EACH LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Thirty-seven individual learning objectives (or competencies) guided the curriculum and assessment of the Post Qualification Child Care Award. Candidates and line managers were asked (independently) to rate the candidate's

level of competency in each learning objective on a scale of zero to four. A score of zero meant that the candidate could **not** produce any evidence of competence in the item. A score of one was used when a candidate understood the learning outcome, but could produce only **limited** or no evidence of appropriate attempts to put it into practice, and much more knowledge/practice was needed. Candidates received a score of two if they could demonstrate that they **understood**, and could offer evidence of **tentative** attempts to integrate the competency into their current knowledge/skill base. A three meant that the candidate demonstrated competence with **some regularity**, and the top score of four was reserved for those who demonstrated **consistent and appropriate** application of skill /knowledge as part of their personal style. In order to map this data, the numbers were transposed onto a one to five ranking. The line managers completed this ranking twice (pre and post programme).

The candidates completed this exercise differently, as they ranked their level of competency on each of the learning objectives covered in each module, (pre and post module). This schedule was purposefully designed to enhance their self-awareness and aid them in prioritising their individual learning goals for each module. Unfortunately, due to some confusion on the part of the designers of the different modules, some learning objectives were not assigned to a module (resulting in no candidate pre-test baseline) whilst others appeared in a number of modules. Candidates rated their level of competency in all learning objectives in a post-programme instrument.

6.14.1 MODULE ONE LEARNING OBJECTIVES/COMPETENCIES:

Figure 6.27 MODULE ONE Part A - CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY

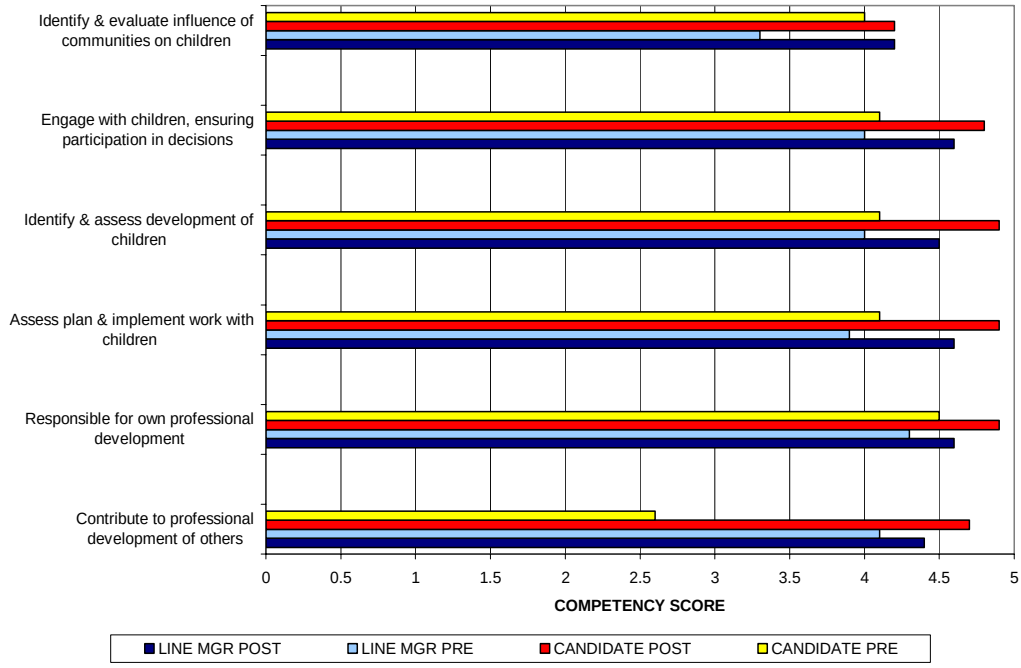
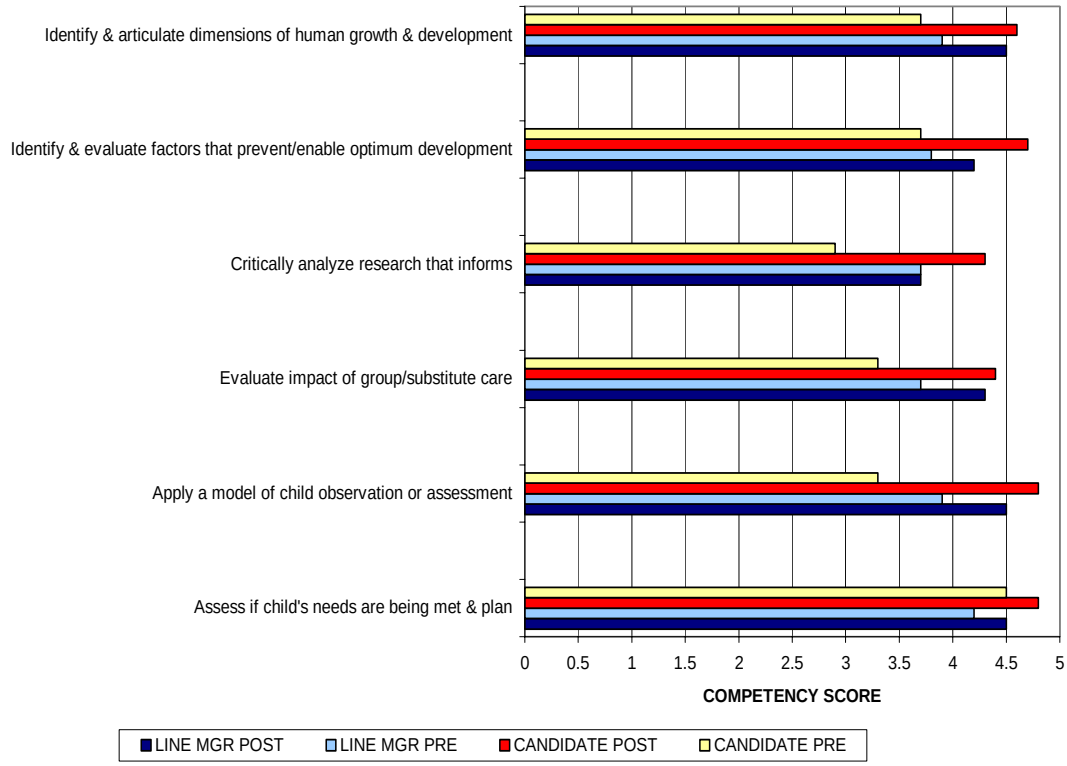


Figure 6.28 MODULE ONE - Part B - CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY



6.14.2 MODULE TWO LEARNING OBJECTIVES/COMPETENCIES:

Figure 6.29 MODULE TWO-Part A CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY

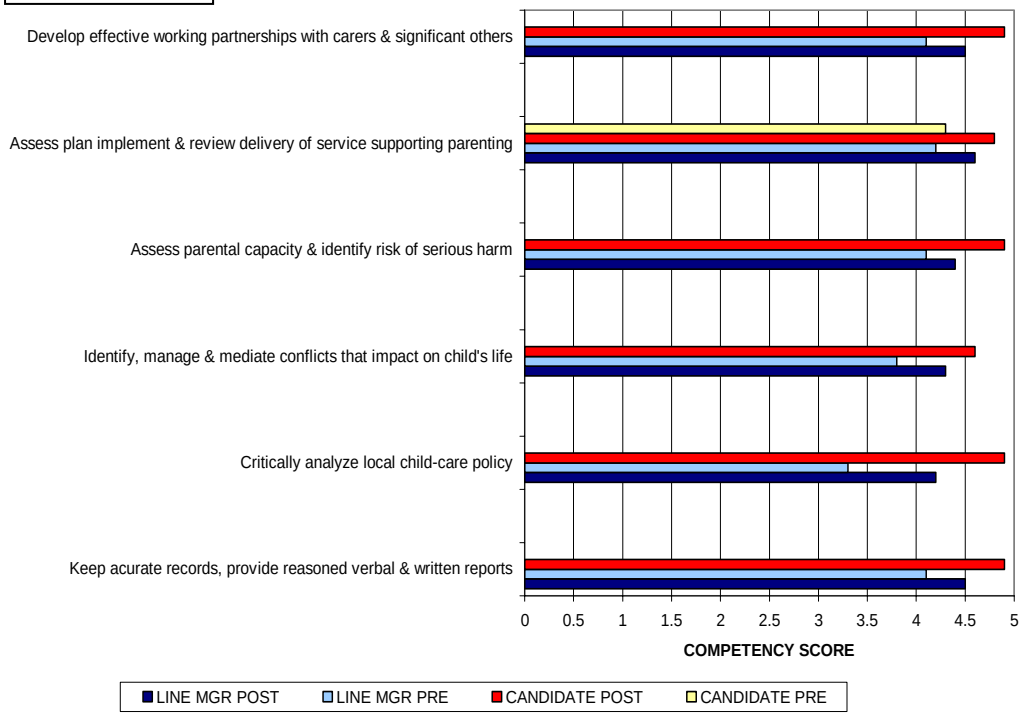
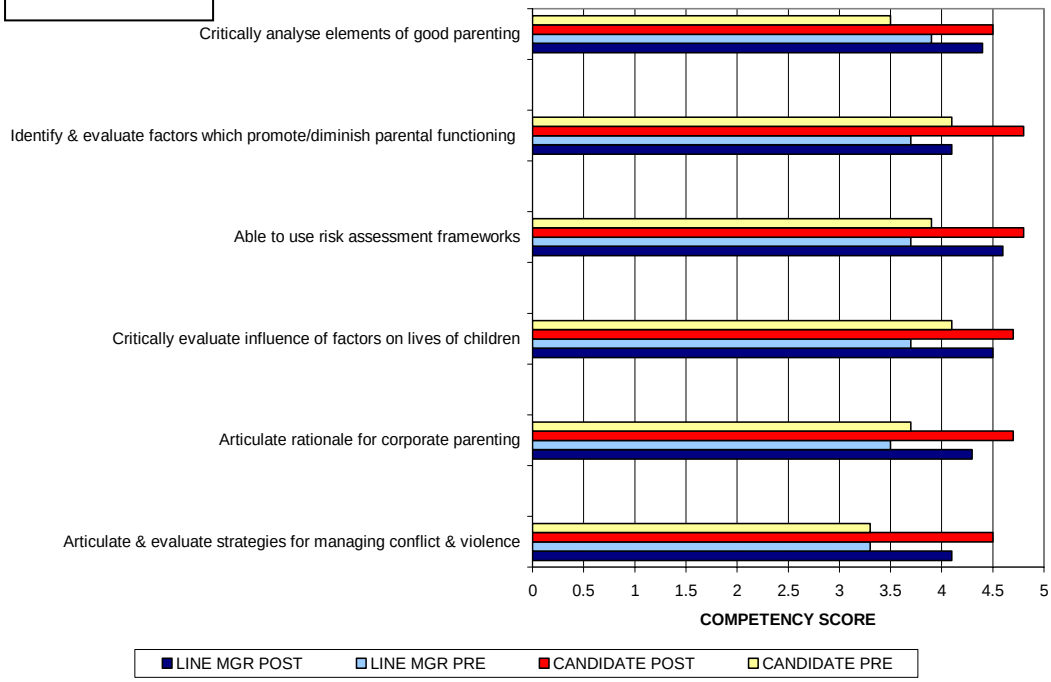


Figure 6.30 MODULE TWO-Part B CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY



6.14.3 MODULE THREE LEARNING OBJECTIVES/COMPETENCIES:

Figure 6.31

MODULE THREE -Part A - CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY

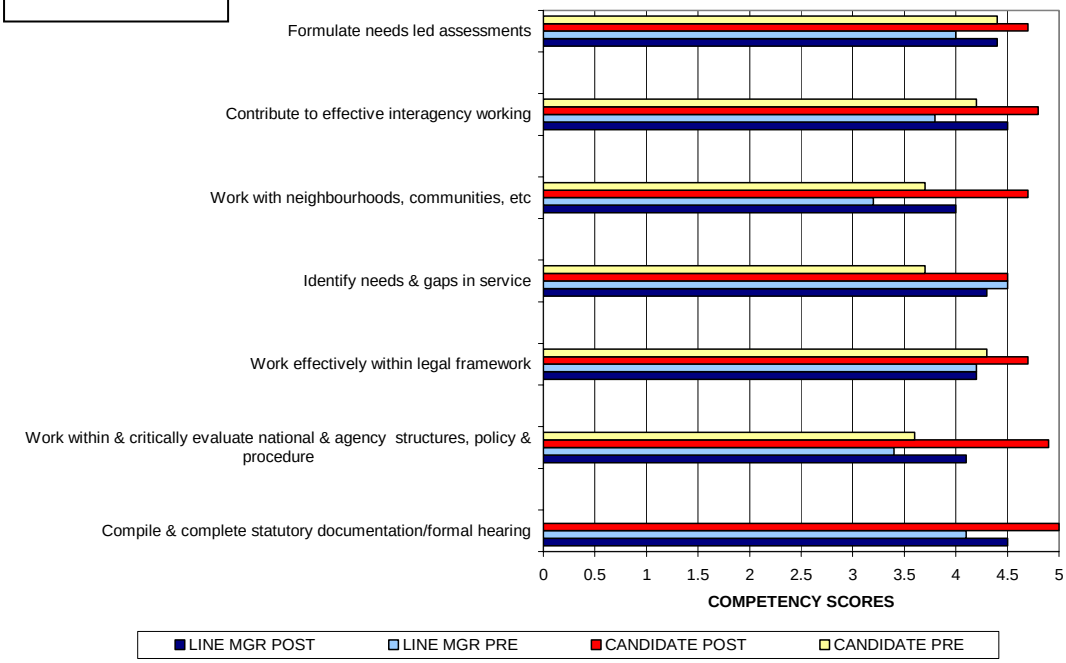
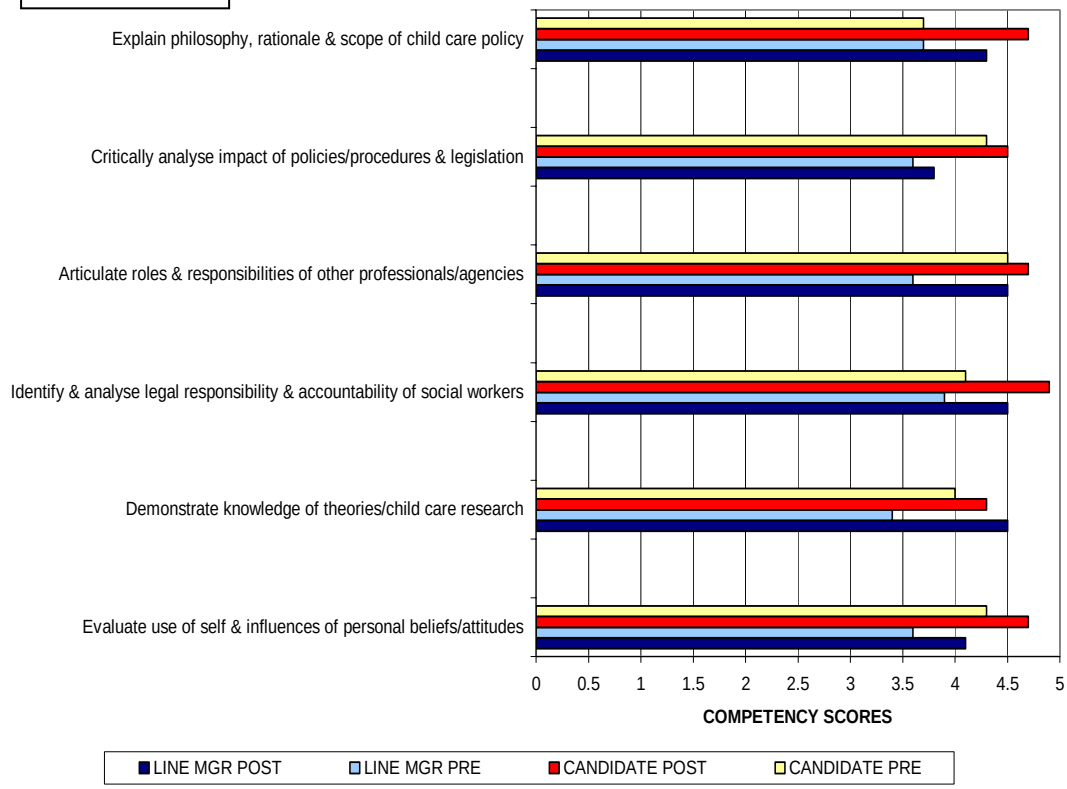


Figure 6.32

MODULE THREE- Part B - CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY



6.15. CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY IN INDIVIDUAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The quantification and changes in levels of competency were analysed for each individual learning objective, from the perspective of the candidate and the line manager. These graphs can be viewed in **Appendix E**. The high baseline scores likely reflect the exceptional experience level of this cohort. The charts were generated using the mean average of the entire cohort. Because of the small sample size, and assumption of normal curve (although skewed) the results may be somewhat distorted by extreme outliers. As aggregate data, these findings have limitations. However, there is evidence of congruency between the self (ipsative) ranking of the candidates and the more objective ranking by their line manager.

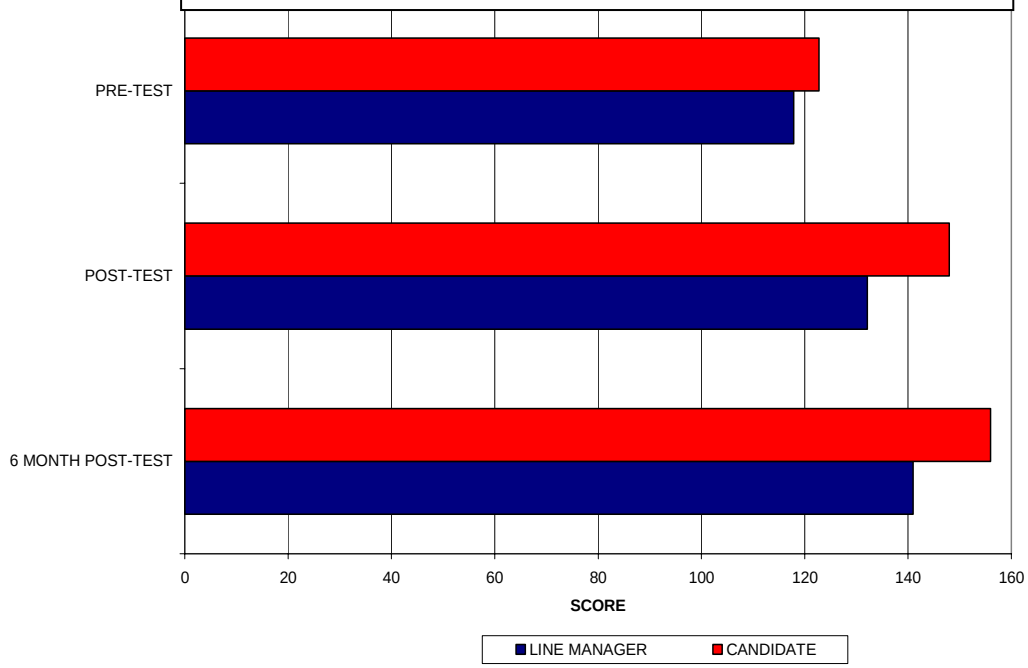
It could be argued that since the Line Managers perform more of an administrative rather than supervisory role, the Training Managers might have been better sources for scoring candidate competency levels.

As has been previously described, the data collection instruments were completed separately to prevent contamination of perspectives and to ensure there was no referencing back to earlier scores, in an attempt to prevent respondents incrementally increasing the score.

6.16. REPORTED AND SUSTAINED CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY (BASED ON COMPETENCY SCORES)

An overall numerical scale in the change of levels of competency was generated by aggregating the changes in individual competencies.

Figure 6.33
CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY



PRE-TEST	CANDIDATES n=28 SD=15.00	LINE MANAGERS n=33 SD=17.38
POST-TEST	CANDIDATES n=28 SD=10.29	LINE MANAGERS n=23 SD=20.85
6/12 POST-TEST	CANDIDATES n=20 SD=19.67	LINE MANAGERS n=12 SD=14.56

Changes in the levels of Competency were evaluated by first excluding all the non-completers from the sample, and then performing paired samples tests.

Candidates reported the change in their level of competency from pre-test (M=124.00, SD=14.20) to post-test (M=147.64, SD=10.29) with t(27)= -.8.911 the p=.000, and therefore highly statistically significant. The eta square score of 0.746 indicates a large effect (Cohen 1988), suggests that **74.6%** of the variance in the levels of competency is due to the course.

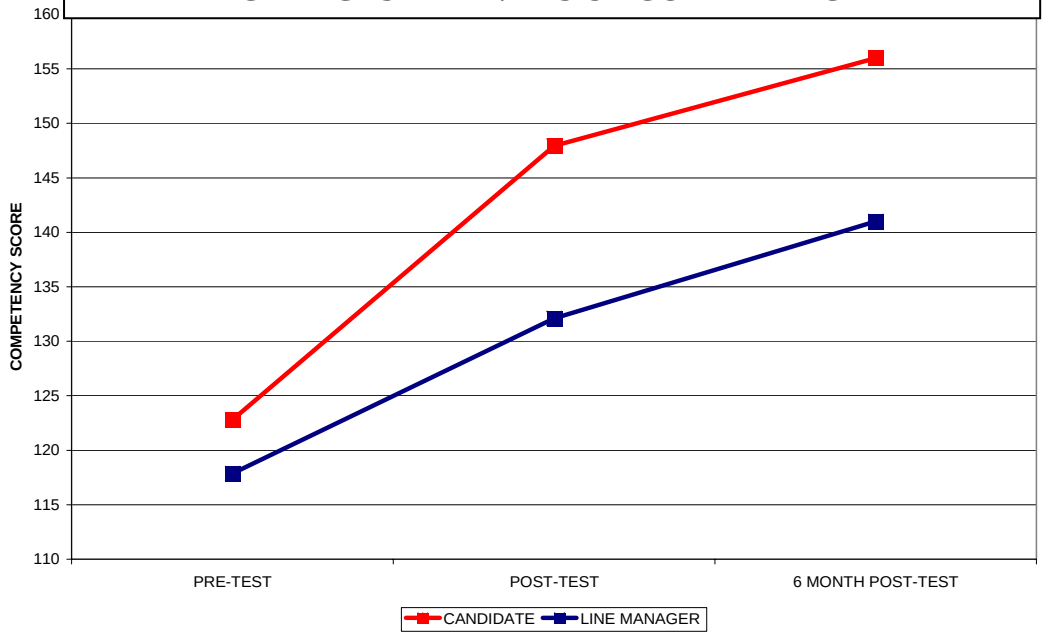
The variance from the post-test to the six month post-test was (M=149.10, SD=9.97) to (M=150.45, SD=19.67) t(19)= -0.373; with p=0.713 and therefore not significant.

However, the change from the pre-test (M=123.60, SD=15.41) to the six month post-test was (M=150.45, SD=19.67) t(19) = -5.219 p=.000 was highly statistically significant with an eta score of 0.589 with a large effect. For this calculation there was an adjusted mean due to a smaller sample size given the exclusion of the non-completers

Changes in the levels of competency as reported by the **line managers** went from a pre-test score (M=120.17, SD=19.62) to post-test score of (M=133.52, SD=20.85), t(22) =-2.571, p=.017 (significant) and an eta squared score of 0.23 (large effect).

The change from line manager pre-test (M=120.17, SD=19.62) to six month post-test (M=141.00, SD=14.56) t(11)= -3.164 was also very significant (p=.009). An eta squared value score of .476 indicates a large effect; however, the sample size is very small by this late analysis.

Figure 6.34
CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY



PRE-TEST	CANDIDATES n=28 SD=15.00	LINE MANAGERS n=33 SD=17.38
POST-TEST	CANDIDATES n=28 SD=10.29	LINE MANAGERS n=23 SD=20.85
6/12 POST-TEST	CANDIDATES n=20 SD=19.67	LINE MANAGERS n=12 SD=14.56

Figures 6.33 and **6.34** illustrate an increase in the levels of competency as reported by the candidates and their line managers. The pre-test to post-test analysis is a short-term outcome measure in an intervention where there is a long term goal, and therefore demonstrates **efficacy** (Felson, Anderson, & Meenan, 1990; Pincus, & Stein, 1995). As the levels of competency continued to increase even at the (unanticipated) 6 month post-test (possibly reflecting a consolidation of the knowledge, skills and values accrued) it suggests sustained improvement in competency thereby demonstrating benefit on the long-term goals of the intervention or **effectiveness** (Felson, Anderson, & Meenan, 1990; Pincus, & Stein, 1995)**.**

These charts were generated with aggregated data, taking the mean average of the cohort, and therefore do not adequately reveal the changes in individual

candidate's levels of competency. Some candidates' self-ranking of competency actually decreased from their baseline, perhaps reflecting an initial false confidence followed by a more realistic ranking once they realized that they previously **didn't know what they didn't know**. The aggregate data also does not reveal individual cases where there was significant discrepancy between candidate self-ranking and the scoring of the line manager. However, in general, there was significant congruence in these two scores.

In conclusion the findings suggest that the programme demonstrates both **effectiveness and efficacy** (Felson, Anderson, & Meenan, 1990; Pincus, & Stein,1995) in increasing the competency levels of candidates in the selected learning objectives. However, this is a very small sample and therefore the interpretation of the statistical findings must be limited.

A large proportion of the candidates **(25% 9/36)** did not complete the programme in the projected time frame (and budget); three of these candidates withdrawing completely. Other candidates reported their intent to leave the field of service as a result of participation in the programme. Reports of adverse effects were substantial in number and vehemence. The full exploration of these findings can be very instructive in refining this programme or developing similar initiatives. Further discussions regarding how well the programme attained its goals and/or the expectations of the participants will be discussed in Chapter Seven

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Chapter Seven: Macro Level Findings

7.1 IMPLICATIONS OF MACRO LEVEL FINDINGS:

This Chapter explores the lessons gleaned from this research, when viewed through a macro lens, by weaving in similarities and differences from a parallel Canadian programme. Observations and insights from the Post Qualification Child Care Award have relevance to education and training of social workers beyond the realm of child protection. This is particularly the case in England, given the recent introduction of an honours BA degree in social work, the reform of the post-qualification framework, and the registration and regulation (including continuing professional development) of social workers as professionals.

7.2 PROGRAMME GOALS:

As previously discussed, the myriad of stakeholders' agendas resulted in multiple goals and expectations of the Post Qualification Child Care Award. The simple goal of **raising the standards of childcare practice** (CCETSW, 2000) encapsulated a number of more specific goals.

The researcher sought to tease out these explicit and implicit goals, and ascertain concordance between the goals of the programme architects and the participants. Following completion of the award, candidates and their line managers completed a questionnaire (F3/F4 in Appendix A) which included the open-ended questions: "what do you think the goal of the programme was?" and "what do you think the goal of the programme should be?"

As the resultant qualitative data defied precise delineation, it is reported here in general themes and patterns. As suggested by Darlington & Scott (2000) themes were not pre-determined, and there was equity in the search for similarities and differences.

Twenty-nine (29) candidates and twenty-three (23) line managers completed the questionnaire. The majority of respondents identified **improvement of standards** as the goal of the programme; some further specifying standards in education, practice, use of research and training. Other recurrent themes included:

- ✓ Provision of continuing professional development
- ✓ Specialised training for current practitioners
- ✓ Ensuring standards for the regulation of social workers
- ✓ National consistency of standards
- ✓ Improvement of the public profile of social work.

The responses demonstrated knowledge of the government initiatives to reform social work. A small proportion of the respondents linked the **improved standards and training** with **improved quality of practice and outcomes for**

clients. Several respondents declined to answer the question, or stated that they did not know what the goal was.

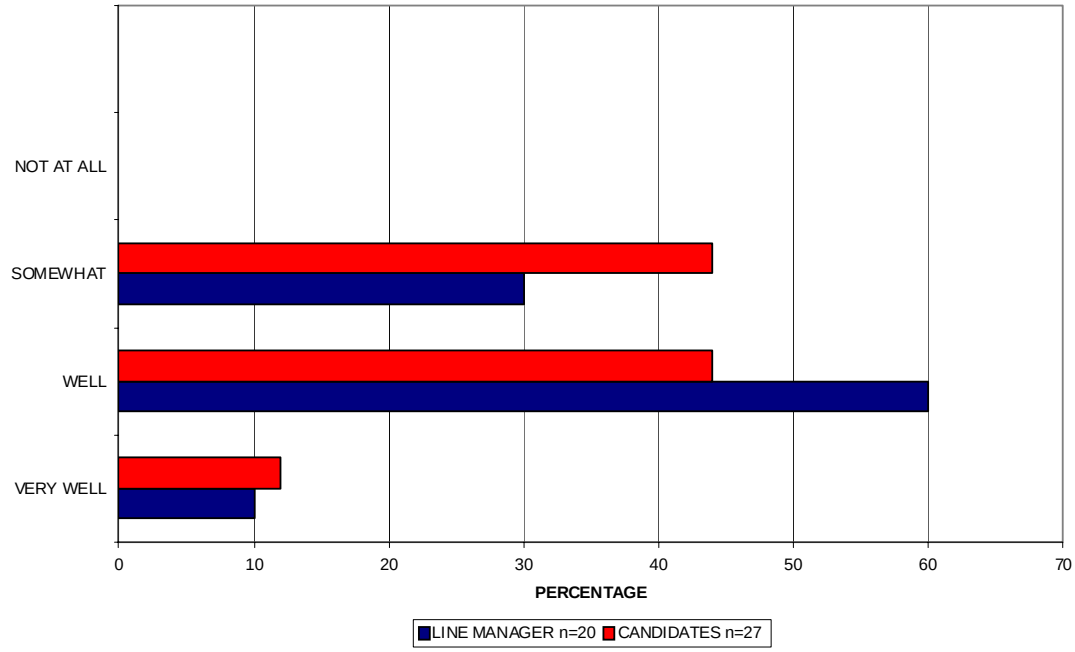
Most respondents agreed with the programme goal (as they defined it), and some suggested other desirable goals. These suggestions included:

- ✓ Recognition of and for the experience and knowledge needed by workers in this field of practice
- ✓ Government acknowledgement of 'substantial quantity of best practice currently taking place'
- ✓ Financial remuneration and recognition of advanced levels of education and skill
- ✓ Increased professional status
- ✓ Improved occupational opportunities
- ✓ Further optional opportunities for specialised and individualised training.

The frequency and tone of the comments regarding motivation and recognition indicated that respondents did not feel adequately appreciated or reimbursed for the difficult work they were engaged in. This observation has implications for a later discussion on motivation.

Respondents were asked to grade how well the programme attained its goals, on a graduated scale of: **Very Well**, **Well**, **Somewhat** or **Not at All**. As **Figure 7.1** below illustrates, the line managers were somewhat more enthusiastic. This possibly reflects the corporate objective of government requirements for staff training. All respondents agreed that the programme had met its goals at least somewhat.

Figure 7.1 HOW WELL PROGRAMME ATTAINED ITS GOALS



A comprehensive table summarising the qualitative data in more detail and can be viewed in Appendix E. The candidates and line managers were linked by identifier numbers to enable a comparison of their individual views.

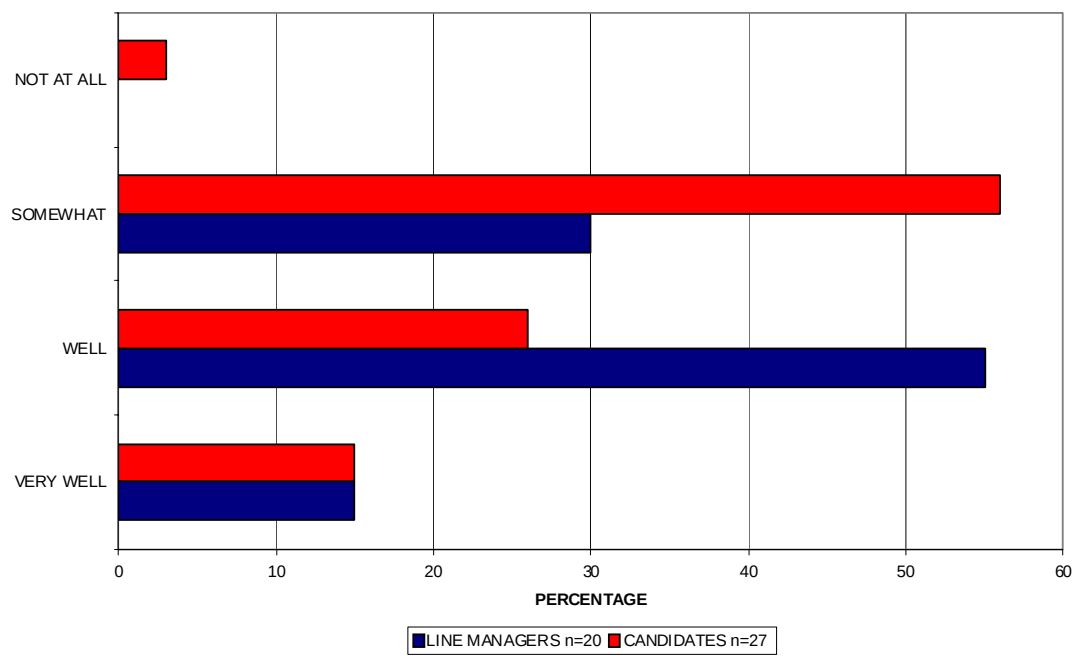
7.3 PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS:

Chapter Six discussed the pre-programme data collection, which explored **primary motivations** for involvement in the programme (Please see 6.2). This information was then re-captured post-test under the heading of **best gains** from taking the Post Qualification Child Care Award (please see 6.11). This data was primarily quantitative as respondents were asked to select from pre-determined

responses. There was a short open-ended section where they could list motivations or gains not covered. (Instruments B1/B2 and F1/F2 in Appendix A)

In this phase of the research, respondents were asked to rate how well the programme met their expectations, on a graduated scale of: **Very Well**, **Well**, **Somewhat** or **Not at All**. **Figure 7.2**, below, illustrates that line managers were much more satisfied than candidates were. Candidate dissatisfaction focused primarily on curriculum difficulties in one module and the experience of the practice assessments.

Figure 7.2



These instruments (F3/F4) also contained an opened ended component to collect qualitative data. The vast majority of respondents were motivated by the government requirement to complete the course. Upgrading social work knowledge, skills or occupational opportunities and attainment of academic awards were cited as additional motivations. Three candidates indicated they had

been forced to attend the course. Quantitative feedback was collected and collated. A thorough examination of the comments and suggestions is interesting and informative. A précis of the responses can be viewed in Appendix D. The candidates and line managers were linked by identifier numbers to enable a comparison of their individual views

7.4. GENERALISABILITY TO OTHER PQCCA PROGRAMMES:

The Central Council for Educating and Training Social Workers, and subsequently the General Social Care Council, conduct and collate comprehensive National Quality Assurance Reports on the educational programmes they approve and monitor. The author was unable to secure a copy of the 2000-2001 Annual Quality Assurance Report on the Post Qualification Awards, however, the 2001-2002 Report, provides some insight into the General Social Care Council's evaluation of the Post Qualification Child Care Award. The themes identified are consistent with the finding and observations of this research project[1], and therefore, provide some assurance of generalisability of the findings. As has been noted, the subsequent consultation and reform of the Post Qualification Framework will likely address and resolve many of these concerns.

The national report commented that the arrangements for the Consortiums who delivered the training courses were complex and challenging, but well organised and managed. It was noted that the Post Qualification Child Care Award was a

[1] It should be noted that prior to the publication of this document, the author had submitted reports to the GSCC regarding the PQCCA Programme, and this may have influenced these finding in some way. (These reports can be viewed in **Appendix C**).

very demanding course, especially due to the practice-based assessment component. There was general recognition that Agencies who were experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties struggled to provide workload relief and protected time for candidates and practice assessors. Protected study time was difficult for Agencies to guarantee, and there was a higher than expected proportion of requests for extensions on assignments. Concerned was raised about the academic ability and literacy levels of some candidates, and the extra workload this placed on tutors. Satisfaction was expressed about the rigour and consistency of practice assessments, although it was suggested that most programmes likely over assessed their first cohort. It was noted that there were difficulties associated with inclusion of candidates from voluntary agencies and service users. In general, there was a strong level of **commitment, enthusiasm and creativity** balanced against **healthy realism**.

Actual registrations on the programme were **fifty-seven percent (57%)** of the set target; the number of awards earned was 281. Most partnerships reported difficulties in recruiting the targeted number of candidates, due to workplace pressures. It was recognised that the initial goal of 7,000 awards by 2006-07 would not be attainable, and that the difficulty was systemic in nature as Agencies were unable to release and support staff.

In general, there was satisfaction with the calibre of the training being provided in the Post Qualification Child Care Award Programmes. Concern was expressed that the training placed very heavy demands on the front line staff, teams and

managers, especially when recruitment and retention of childcare social workers was difficult.

Of particular interest to the author was the following comment:

> Although anticipated at the development stage of the Child Care Award there has been no evaluation of the effectiveness of this major initiative in improving the quality of service provision. This is a priority. (GSCC 2002)

The author is scheduled to meet with the General Social Care Council in January 2005, to discuss the methodology and findings of this research.

7.5 LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE:

With a wealth of quantitative and qualitative data, the author sought to distil the findings that had relevance for improving the Post Qualification Child Care Award, as well as other facets of social work education and training. The following thematic discussions are not presented in any specific order and the themes themselves naturally dovetail and overlap.

7.5.1 STRESS, RECRUITMENT & RETENTION:

Rodgers (1979) argued that anxiety was normal and necessary when adults returned to the classroom for retraining/upgrading. However, there is a critical level beyond which, one enters the realm of the **law of diminishing returns.** Candidates were concerned about the amount of stress they experienced as a result of participating in the course. Ninety percent reported that the course demands

superimposed on their job responsibilities was a source of primary stress for them, and many felt course participation was at the expense of their personal/family life **(Section 6.4).** As discussed in Chapter Six, (**Section 6.7.6),** an average nine extra hours per week were spent on meeting the demands of the training course, which had a cumulative impact on stress and fatigue levels. Respondents commented on the difficulties associated with the seasonal timing of assignments, especially over the summer, school half term and Christmas.

The quantitative findings discussed in **Section 6.6**, indicated a slight decrease of stress levels from pre to post programme, however, this only explored the changes in stress levels over the course. In the absence of a baseline from a control group who were not engaged in the course, we must attend to the qualitative data, which was rife with expressions of distress. As the qualitative detail in Chapter Five and Appendices C and E illustrate, many of the sources of stress were logistical details which could be adjusted and therefore the stress levels could be mitigated. These are the types of details, which can be overlooked in large qualitative programme evaluations, and yet they contain the essential information for exemplary programme design. Again, this illustrates the necessity of a mixed methods approach to determine the full picture.

Over **eighty percent (80%)** of the line managers reported very high levels of stress associated with the programme **(Section 6.5)**. In general, this was related to staffing difficulties, and **second hand stress** from dealing with the candidates during times of programme-related pressure. The rapid turn-over of line managers,

lack of managers and proportion of staff **acting up** during the research is concerning, and likely warrants further separate investigation.

As has been discussed in Chapter One, child protection has long been recognised as one of the most stressful area of social work. (Maslach 1982; McMahon 2000; Smith, Nursten, & McMahon, 2004) In 2001, Jones documented widespread sickness and exhaustion in childcare workers. A more recent study by Coffey, Dugdill & Tattersall (2004, p. 744) documents that stress is the primary cause of public sector staff leaving their job. Within their sample of social workers from North West England, they found that "…staff working with children & families reported the highest levels of absenteeism, poorest well being, and highest levels of organisational constraints. Job satisfaction was low compared with established norms for various occupational groups."

This pervasive level of occupational stress must be considered when suggesting or requiring additional training. Although there was general satisfaction with the course, many respondents were of the opinion that the stress incurred was in excess of the value of the course. One candidate went so far as to advise prospective candidates to look for another job instead of undertaking the training programme. This has serious implications for a profession where there are major problems with retention and recruitment.

It must also be noted that this first cohort was selected for their high motivation and academic ability, and yet only 75% completed in the scheduled time frame.

Less able or motivated candidates would likely experience even greater levels of stress.

Mitigation of the stress associated with the training might be achieved through several strategies. The yearlong commitment of the programme is difficult for workers in this stage of life when they are already attempting to juggle the demands of work and home. The challenges to providing adequate work load relief compounds this difficulty.

Other delivery models, such as block attendance at a residential training centre with complete workload relief (as is managed during holiday leave) is one possibility. Larger authorities could hire regular relief staff that would rotate through the system providing locums for the workers on training. The ability to concentrate and attend to academic demands in a concentrated manner could be enhanced with more readily available resources (reference books, internet access, and quiet working space). One larger authority chose to support their candidates in this manner, thereby reducing time lost to travel and researching at the University. The demonstration of practice evidence could be delayed until return to the work setting.

The State of Florida, in the USA demands that prospective workers complete this type of training programme before they are considered for employment, and then are hired on a probationary status until they demonstrate the practice skills under a

regime of shadowing and close supervision, and mentoring. However, this model may not be very attractive in a climate of severe understaffing.

The author was involved in the early Ontario Capacity Building Initiatives in which the Government collaborated with local Universities to increase the number of students in their final year of study conducting their practicum in Child Welfare. These students would then engage on the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme prior to full qualification. Previously, these placement opportunities were limited, as overworked front-line social workers were reluctant to take on the extra burden of practice teaching. Extra government funding allowed an experienced line manager to be dedicated to the supervision/mentoring and evaluating of a large cohort of students who would be on placement in a variety of different teams. The Universities provided more child welfare modules, taught by front-line 'experts'. This initiative generated a large number of trained child protection workers very rapidly, and the hiring agencies could evaluate prospective employees whilst still on studentships.[2]

For qualified social workers, the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme employs a curriculum whereby modules are continuously provided on a rolling basis 'in situ', by 'expert' line managers trained to teach that module. The workers can take the modules in 'chunks' of time (1-3 days) attending sessions as their workload allows, without causing inordinate stress for the workers, their teammates, or line managers. The use of computer based training and assessment

[2] For more detail, please see Csernick Vitali & Gordon (2000b).

further enables an individualized timetable, especially for workers who may simply be revising and updating their knowledge base rather than engaging in new learning. The 'blended' media of (e-technology and classrooms) allows for flexibility in training candidates in geographically remote locations. (These materials can be viewed in Appendix D).

7.5.2 UNINTENDED PERVERSE OUTCOMES OF MAGNITUDE OF WORKFORCE RETRAINING:

The staffing complements of the local councils' partners in the consortium were severely deficient. Some authorities were struggling to meet their mandated duties despite an understaffing rate of 25% to 30%. The prerequisite requirement of having attained the Post Qualification Level One Award excluded a large proportion of staff from involvement in the training. In order to cope with these high rates of under staffing, local authorities were forced to hire unqualified staff members who were ineligible for the training. As was discussed in Chapter One, the unqualified, inexperienced workers are the most likely to make errors. The Post Qualification Child Care Award was designed to raise the standards, yet excluded a proportion of the front line workers, specifically those who are likely most in need of the training. The aggressive recruitment initiatives and the registration of qualified social workers will address some of this concern; however, a transitional strategy would appear indicated.

This issue demands a larger systemic analysis of the difficulties that social work faces in recruitment and retention of childcare social workers. Obviously, the

training course, in and of itself, is insufficient to address the identified deficit in standards of practice.

7.5.3 LACK OF RECOGNITION:

As is case around the world, many of the front line social workers felt that they were inadequately recognised and appreciated for the difficult duties they perform. The Ontario initiative included a **carrot and a stick** approach. Social workers were required to attain the training in order to be authorised to work in child protection. However, when the training requirement was introduced, so was a concomitant increase in salary scales and a public awareness campaign that elevated the attractiveness of the work, thereby enabling better recruitment and retention. For the first time, child protection became a preferred occupational path for newly qualified social workers.

Since this fieldwork was conducted, the Department of Health and the General Social Care Council has engaged in an aggressive and effective recruitment programme in an attempt to meet the shortage of qualified social workers. Generous bursaries, 'Golden Hellos', assistance in purchasing homes, training fellowships, and other incentives offered by local councils will address this issue to some extent. However, there may be a case to be made for a significant infusion of central funding to increase salaries of child protection workers. The sample population were earning an average of £12.45 per hour, but lived in a very expensive part of the country. Respondents reported dissatisfaction with the absence of a pay increase to recognise successful completion of the award. The

issuing of a 'carrot' to accompany the 'stick', is very effective, but demands extensive consideration of the fiscal implications.

7.5.4 PERCEIVED INADEQUACY OF DEDICATED RESOURCES:

The representatives of the Universities, along with the candidates, line managers and training managers for the local councils identified a deficit in the financial resources allotted to the programme. As has been noted, The Higher Educational Institutions found that provision of the programme generated a financial loss, and staffing stress. This caused further tension in the forced partnerships between the Local Authorities and the Universities. Despite a shared goal, there was natural tension between the differing mandates, milieus and guidelines of the organisations. The research exposed evidence that the candidates found themselves experiencing stress related to this tension and resultant lack of coordination.

Participating employers were able to apply for financial support of £4,000. per worker attending the programme, ostensibly for work-load relief or 'backfill'. There were many complaints from the candidates who indicated that these monies were NOT ring-fenced, and they experienced inconsistent and often inadequate workload relief and protected time.

Some candidates from the larger authorities, enjoyed a more positive experience, whereby they received workload relief and agency support through the provision of 'in house' resource materials (such as books, PCs and internet access) to reduce

the stress associated with having to research and complete their academic assignments.

In a field where understaffing is as high as twenty-five to thirty percent (25-30%) the hiring of primary staff, let alone workload relief staff is a continual difficulty. Not surprisingly, there was a transfer of stress (and resentment) to the teams where candidates had been released to attend the programme. Candidates commented that their line managers and teammates had very little understanding or sympathy for the challenges that they faced. Parallel stress was experienced by line managers and teammates, and warrant attention, when viewed against the staff recruitment and retention difficulties, let alone Lord Laming recommendations for improved teamwork and communication.

7.5.5 NATIONAL CURRICULUM:

Respondents queried the validity of the programme in ensuring a national standard. Many were aware of significant differences in the curriculum and delivery of the Post Qualification Child Care Award by other Consortiums. The programme was designed as a mandatory training exercise intended to raise the standards of knowledge and skill of front line protection workers. However, the England programme was intentionally designed to be flexible in curriculum and delivery, in order to encourage creativity, and enable consortiums to make the best use of available staffing. Freeman and Lewis (1998, p. 10) would argue that this " …this lack of consistency leaves it open to challenge if it is being used to confirm attainment of a particular standard"'. Furthermore, one might question the cost-

effectiveness of individual consortiums working up their own curriculum and evaluation tools. For some Higher Educational Institutions the delivery of the Post Qualification Child Care Award became an expensive drain on limited resources and a loss of income.

In contrast, the Ontario Government developed a consistent curriculum and assessment instruments, which they provide to individual agencies to train their staff to an agreed level. The costs of working up the initial and revised curricula, teaching materials, evaluation tools, and participant tracking systems were incurred at a central level, thus increasing cost efficiency. Training staff are also centrally developed and tested for consistency and effectiveness. Their deployment around the Province is augmented by making using of local expert practitioners and supervisors, who engage in the training process as part of their continuing professional development. The incremental training model (New Worker→Authorised Worker→Manager/Supervisor→Train the Trainer), exploits the experience and talent of existing staff, for the benefit of all.

7.5.6 INCLUSION OF LINE MANAGERS AND EXPERIENCED WORKERS:

Thompson, Osada & Anderson (1994, p. 1984) argue that "...education and training are not separate entities to be achieved in the educational establishment and workplace respectively". Many candidates reported frustration that their line managers appeared to have limited knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the stress they were under whilst attending the course. This was aggravated by the team stress when workers were unavailable.

Line managers also expressed a lack of knowledge and understanding of the course content, and the realities of the workload demands. This lack of integration interferes with the **'bridging'** Badger (1985) argues necessary for effective transfer of learning.

This lack of integration of line managers was recognized early during the first delivery of the course, ands attempts to remedy the situation were made, by inviting line managers to participate in a two day conference. Revisions to the programme included line manager involvement from the very first module.

The graduated (New Worker→Authorised Worker→Manager/Supervisor→Train the Trainer) design of the Ontario Child Protection Training Programme addresses this issue by requiring all participants in the child protection team to engage in training. This has a very wide remit including even members of the Board of Directors, and Foster Carers, thereby ensuring that the most current knowledge of best practice and evidence is widely disseminated. This inclusive approach reinforces the creation and support of **Agency Learning Cultures** to support the transfer of learning from the classroom into daily practice. (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2004).

This approach would also address the concerns expressed by some of the more experienced educated workers. They reported that the course was of an inadequate

level of knowledge dissemination and intellectual challenge; especially given the time and effort that they needed to invest to complete it.

As social work in the United Kingdom becomes a regulated profession, a commitment to life-long learning through required continuing professional development (CPD) can be incorporated into the re-deign of the Post-qualifying Framework, and reinforce the development of these **learning cultures.**

7.5.7 DEALING WITH CANDIDATES UNABLE TO MAKE THE GRADE & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST WITH PRACTICE ASSESSOR SELECTION:

The candidates in the first cohort were selected for high levels of motivation and ability to manage the academic demands of the course. Accordingly, later cohorts will likely include less able or motivated individuals. The political issue of what is to be done about an employee, who 'fails' an upgrading course, is fraught with difficulties. The costs associated with delivering a course with high non-completion rates, warrants close evaluation of the non-completers. Furthermore, staff shortages, population mobility and a lack standardised centralised issuing body, leaves the training programme open to manipulation and gratuitous expense.

The Ontario Child Protection Training Programme deals with part of this issue by explicitly declaring that candidates enter the training with full knowledge that their performance (or lack there of) can be considered grounds for termination.

One of the most controversial components of the programme was the selection, training and assignment of Practice Assessors for the candidates. The budget allotment was inadequate to cover the time costs for freelance practice assessors. Candidates complained that assigned Practice Assessors were insufficiently acquainted with the field of service, inadequately prepared, unavailable and vulnerable to personality conflicts. However, the alternative of using line-managers or in-house staff is fraught with complications of double roles and met with differing degrees of acceptance.

As this was the first cohort of the programme, these issues were likely resolved for subsequent cohorts; however, this topic warrants re-visiting as the Post Qualification Framework is redesigned.

7.5.8 KEEPING CURRENT:

The Post Qualification Child Care Award was introduced in response to recognition that the front-line child protection social workers were not sufficiently current in their knowledge and practice. In the post-Climbi⬟ climate of reform and change in social work and services to children and families, Reder and Duncan (2004, p.95) caution;

> There is a risk that this inquiry, like many others, will promote bureaucratic changes (i.e. at the level of organisational structures, written protocols, and staff monitoring procedures) that are distant from frontline staff's need to improve their understanding of complex cases and to acquire and apply appropriate skills.

The challenges of re-training, registering and monitoring continuing professional development in a large workforce, is compounded by the rapidly evolving and changing knowledge base available in a profession which has only recently committed to evidence based practice and **research mindedness**. As has already been discussed, social workers, as a profession, are not highly proficient in conducting or evaluating research studies and findings. The learning curve for these practitioners is extremely steep, particularly when the available research findings are inconclusive or discordant. This is certainly the case in childcare where, "In the last 30 years, research has, if anything, complicated rather than clarified the issues in protecting children" Buchanan (1996, p. 219).

One of the candidates on the Post Qualification Child Care Award, summed up her frustration saying…."They keep telling me I need to be sure my practice decisions are grounded in research evidence…how do I find this evidence, and how do I know it is any good?". As noted by Sheldon & Chilvers (2000, p. 78), "The problem is there is insufficient expertise and insufficient time on crowded timetables"

The amount of information rapidly available via the internet is remarkable, particularly with the recent advances WebPages, Newsgroups and virtual communities and portals dedicated to social work and social care. Information management and longitudinal research agendas such as the Looked After Children project, make increasing demands on the computer skills of the workforce. The argument may be made, however, that the money invested into research, WebPages, and electronic educational resources, is poorly spent, if the workforce

has limited access. In many local authorities, workers are **hot-desking** and sharing access to very few antiquated computers with poor internet service.

Part of the Ontario Capacity Building Initiative was committed to issuing front line staff with laptops, on which all documentation was done immediately after client contact. This has been followed up by a substantial investment into developing and updating software that is used for tracking information, efficiently producing all required administrative and court related documents, and collecting and collating data for quality assurance and research purposes.

A cost-benefit analysis of the issuing of laptops with wireless access to broadband internet access would be a worthwhile pilot project. Front line staff could be forced to complete small incremental updates of knowledge every day when they turned their laptops. This type of technology in education is already in use at many Higher Educational Intuitions to monitor student acquisition of knowledge and skills. Specialised simulation and training software could be available to staff identified with knowledge deficits, or undertaking training. This could be incorporated in the continuing professional development required of registered qualified social workers.

> Professional education is not a one-time activity, covering one or two years, but instead should represent a life-time commitment and an ongoing activity for every social worker. Even if everyone agreed that the social worker's present level of competence were adequate, there would be a need for continuing education in view of the constant and rapid change taking place in society
>
> (Loewenberg 1972, p. 39)

In assimilating these Lessons from the Front Line into improvement of the Post Qualification Award in Child Care, or other similar educational programmes, there is one abiding principle.

> Whatever **competence** means today, we can be sure its meaning will have changed by tomorrow. The foundation for future professional competence seems to be the capacity to learn how to learn.
>
> (Schein 1972).

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Chapter Eight: Discussion & Conclusions – The Way Forward

8.1. INTRODUCTION:

The introduction and implementation of significant change in social policies and programmes, has had enormous impact on the lives of service users, the work force and public finances. Historically, these changes have been introduced with good intentions, worthy goals, and have made intuitive sense.

Child protection is one of the most challenging areas of social policy areas. Here there is inherent conflict between the rights of parents, children and society. There is also a startling shortage of hard information to guide decision makers suitably anxious to do the best they can. Despite some resistance to the introduction of an evidence base as a key standard for social work policy and practice, it is precisely because of the importance of issues such as child protection that this approach is required.

Inadequate evaluation of policy initiatives, has limited the knowledge extracted from these expensive 'social experiments'. In the climate of evidence-based practice,

integrated programme evaluation and monitoring is fundamental to ensure the effectiveness and impact of new initiatives, and to allow their modification and improvement.

Early social work was founded on benevolence, rather than evidence and has therefore struggled to attain the attributes necessary to be recognised as a profession. In particular, since the duties performed by child protection social workers on behalf of the state are highly visible, their professionalism and decision-making are especially vulnerable to challenge. Initiatives to improve the standards, consistency and effectiveness of professional child protection services are warranted and welcomed. One facet of these reforms, competency based education and training of front-line child protection social workers, has been widely implemented.

The author's involvement in the development of one of these courses (The Ontario Child Protection Worker Training Programme) and intensive evaluation of another (The Post-Qualification Child Care Award for England) has permitted an uncommon perspective and formed the basis for this thesis.

8.2. STUDY GOALS:

The primary goals of the research project were:

(1) to design and apply an integrated model of evaluation providing qualitative and quantitative data that could test the efficacy and effectiveness of the training programme.

(2) to collect information, which could inform the improvement and re-design of this and perhaps other similar programmes

Concomitant research goals sought to quantify and measure:

(3) the acquisition of competency,

(4) the impact of the programme on the participants.

8.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The research questions can now be revisited:

(1) Is it possible to quantify and measure changes in the levels of competency acquired during the programme?

✓ **YES** - A user friendly, competency based instrument was designed and employed to collect and track changes in the acquisition of competency from the perspective of the candidates and their line managers. All candidates who completed the Post Qualification Child Care Award demonstrated increases in their level of competency on each of the thirty-seven outcomes (SECTION 6.14). Using this instrument, the timing and the amount of the change in level of each competency could be specified.

This method provided insight into the impact of each portion of the curricula, the teaching methods, and the assessment exercises. This data could also be analysed for each candidate, and could be used for personalised learning contracts. Variance between the candidate and their line manager's perceptions could also be noted, and this could be employed in supervisory sessions. Finally, over projections on initial self-ranking identified where engagement in the training helped candidates realise that their knowledge/skill was actually less than they had believed.

(2) Did the Post Qualification Child Care Award meet the original goal of improving "the standards of childcare practice", as evidenced by changes in the levels of competency of participants?

✓ **YES -** Aggregated data for the cohort of candidates who successfully completed the Post Qualification Child Care Award, showed a statistically significant increase in their level of demonstrated competency on paired samples testing. The attainment of this increased competency was triangulated using evidence collected from the candidates, their line managers, the tutors who taught the modules, and the practice assessors who evaluated the demonstrations of these competencies.

✓ The findings demonstrate evidence of programme **EFFICACY** (significant benefit on a short-term outcome measure in a condition where there are long-term goals (Felson, Anderson, & Meenan, 1990; Pincus & Stein 1995).

Candidates reported the change in their level of competency from pre-test (M=124.00, SD=14.20) to post-test (M=147.64, SD=10.29) with t(27)= -.8.911 the p=.000, and therefore highly statistically significant. The eta square score of 0.746 indicates a large effect (Cohen 1988), in fact that 74.6% of the variance in the levels of competency is due to the course.

Statistically this means that there is a significant change in the scores that are highly unlikely to have occurred by chance, and the intervention (the PQCCA) likely accounts for 74% of the change. However we cannot say which aspect(s) of the PQCCA is responsible, nor whether a confounding factor such as time plays a part.

Changes in the levels of competency as reported by the **line managers** were from pre-test (M=120.17, SD=19.62) to post-test (M=133.52, SD=20.85), t(22) = -2.571, p=.017 (significant) and an eta squared score of 0.23 (large effect).

Statistically this means that there is a significant change in the scores that are unlikely to have occurred by chance, and the intervention (the PQCCA) likely accounts for 23% of the change. Again, we cannot say which aspect(s) of the PQCCA is responsible, nor whether a confounding factor plays a part.

✓ The findings demonstrate evidence of programme **EFFECTIVENESS** (significant benefit on the key long-term goals of intervention (Felson, Anderson, & Meenan, 1990; Pincus & Stein 1995) six months after completion of the programme. The findings suggest that improved levels of competency were sustained, and actually continued to increase.

The change in **Candidate Scores** from the pre-test (M=123.60, SD=15.41) to the six month post-test was (M=150.45, SD=19.67) t(19) = -5.219 p=.000 was highly statistically significant with an eta score of 0.589 with a large effect. For this calculation there was an adjusted mean due to a smaller sample size given the exclusion of the non-completers

Statistically this means that there is a significant change in the scores that is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance, and the intervention (the PQCCA) likely accounts for 58% of the change. However, we cannot say which aspect(s) of the PQCCA is responsible, nor whether a confounding factor such as plays a part.

Line Managers Scores changed from pre-test (M=120.17, SD=19.62) to six month post-test (M=141.00, SD=14.56) t(11)= -3.164 was also very significant (p=.009). An eta squared value score of .476 indicates a large effect; however the sample size is very small by this late analysis.

Statistically this means that there is a significant change in the scores that is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance, and the intervention (the PQCCA) likely accounts for 47% of the change. Again, we cannot say which aspect(s) of the PQCCA is responsible, nor whether a confounding factor plays a part.

(3) What was the impact (intended or unintended) on the participants?

✓ Detailed information was gathered about the impact of the programme upon the participants. Of particular concern were the following findings:

✓ Twenty-five percent (9/36) of a very highly motivated and academically able group failed to complete in scheduled time frame.

✓ Eight percent (3/36) of the candidates withdrew completely.

✓ Six percent (2/36) of the candidates failed on their second attempt to meeting their practice requirements

✓ Candidates reported investing an average of 9 hours of personal time per week (mean average of an extra 512 hours) to manage the demands of the program. The cumulative impact of this demand over a full calendar year demands consideration.

✓ Eighteen percent (3/22) of the candidates who did finish the program indicated their intent to leave the field.

These findings bear attention and consideration during the re-design of the Post-Qualification Framework. They are especially concerning in a field already troubled by work related stress and illness, and facing severe recruitment and retention problems.

(4) What can be learned from the project to provide guidance for present and future design and delivery of this programme?

✓ This research frequently and regularly collected and collated feedback which was reported immediately to the Consortium for Quality Assurance purposes and, immediate or imminent programme improvement. These reports are located in Appendix C.

(5) What can be learned from the project that would provide guidance for the future design and delivery of similar education and training programmes?

✓ The findings from this research were compared against a parallel educational programme from Ontario, thereby providing a wealth of observations and suggestions. This is discussed more fully in Chapter Seven. Some of the lessons may be applicable to other programmes aimed at maintaining or improving competency.

8.4. STUDY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

This research project accomplished the following:

(1) The design and application of a prospective, integrated model of programme evaluation to provide formative and summative evaluation. Feedback enabled both immediate and longer-term programme revision and re-design. The evaluation model developed is cost effective, and easily transferable to any training course, which is built around a competency based education and assessment format (such as Nursing, Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy). As a 'pilot' study determining the feasibility of the application of the methodology, the high compliance rates suggest that the evaluation model is user-friendly. It is also easily translated onto a computerised format, thereby allowing for private, flexible collection and tracking of data.

Longitudinal computer-based evaluation of the acquisition of competencies was piloted in Autumn 2004.

(2) The vulnerabilities of evaluation based solely on self-perception were mitigated by data collection triangulation. This method of quantifying and measuring the acquisition of skills and knowledge could be used to examine and compare other educational programmes. **(Chapter Four)**

(3) **Increases in the participants' levels of competency** (on 37 learning outcomes) were found to be **statistically significant** at the end of the programme and at a 6-month follow-up suggesting programme **EFFICACY** and **EFFECTIVENESS (SECTION 6.15).**

(4) Specificity and clarity about the areas of competency that the participants and line managers felt were most in need of improvement and those most improved as a result of involvement, were used to make immediate changes in the programme and to suggest broader changes to curricula and programme delivery. **(SECTIONS 6.12, 6.13 & 6.14)**

(5) In-depth evaluation revealed conflict between the qualitative and quantitative data and demonstrated the importance of mixed methods evaluation. As noted by Bryman (1988, p. 134) "…discrepancies between findings deriving from research in which quantitative and qualitative research are combined are not in the least unusual…discrepancies may prompt the researcher to probe certain issues in greater depth, which may lead to fruitful areas of inquiry in their own right".

Qualitatively, participants expressed significant distress and dissatisfaction. Despite this, quantitatively, they registered no significant increase in stress levels throughout the course. The vast majority of line managers and candidates quantitatively indicated their satisfaction with the course and agreed that the programme was successful in attaining its goals and meeting their expectations. (**Chapter Seven**)

(6) Thorough and candid information and qualitative feedback was gathered to reveal and demonstrate perverse impacts of the programme, which need to be addressed because they may interfere with optimum learning**. (Chapters Five, Six & Seven)**

(7) The profile of non-completers was explored in order to identify who would best engage in and benefit from the training since these programmes are expensive and drop-outs and failures undermine cost-effectiveness. **(Chapters Five & Six)**

(8) Participants experienced a 'parallel process' by inclusion in an action or participant research process, which reinforced the importance of maintaining the service user as central in policy and intervention development.

8.5. PROGRAMME LIMITATIONS:

✓ Russell (1990, pp. 131-32) pointed out the danger in making assumptions…' that direct links between quality of education and quality of service exist …the difficulty in testing the assumed connection between education, worker and client outcome has been acknowledged, but little effort has been made to address it directly.' This research study demonstrated the efficacy and effectiveness of the training course in improving worker competency over an 18-month time frame.

However, adequately linking that positive finding with the desired goal of 'better outcomes for children' is far more complicated. It is assumed that CBET/CBA will improve the overall quality and consistency of child protection practice, and hopefully prevent further injury or loss of life. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of literature to justify this assumption and hypothesis

Internationally, large cohort studies, which are exploring outcomes for Looked after Children, should provide samples suitable for meta-analysis. The outcome indicators being explored include: recurrence of maltreatment, serious injuries and fatalities, cognitive functioning, child's behaviour, placement rate, placement history, permanence, parenting capacity, housing stability, and ethno-cultural placement matching with these children.

To collate changes in the training of front-line social workers with changes in client outcomes would require well-considered, longitudinal electronic data collection. Otherwise, reuniting the necessary components would be quite complex (if not impossible). In the interim, it must be hoped that the presumed link between changes in the knowledge and skill base of the child protection worker and the changes in the outcomes for the child are actually *causal,* and can be expected to in the goal of improved life opportunities for the child service recipients.

✓ The speed with which the programme was implemented resulted in the first cohort struggling with logistical challenges including inadequate resourcing for staff

coverage. These difficulties will likely have been addressed in the extensive consultations around the Re-Design of the Post Qualification Framework

✓ The programme was able to demonstrate increased competency, and the participants were, overall very satisfied with the programme. However, adverse effects on worker morale, stress levels, retention, and recruitment were concerning. A minimum these factors feed into an increased risk for worker error, at maximum undermine the parallel recruitment/retention initiatives.

✓ The Post Qualification Child Care Award was developed as a statutory requirement with national standards for outcomes. Regional development and design, however, was encouraged to allow for creativity and differential resourcing. During the reform of the Post Qualification Framework, this should be explored more fully. It is unlikely that regional curriculum development is cost-effective. The lack of uniformity in the curriculum and assessment methods gives rise to challenges regarding consistency and generalisability of the training. This is especially problematic if the award is to be a statutory requirement for employment in the field. Finally, the transferability of the award (nationally and internationally) is sabotaged by the lack of a national curriculum and registry.

✓ The author would speculate that the introduction of the evidence-based model for decision-making in social care, might itself engender a beneficial climate where the possession of knowledge can lead to the recognition of the gaps, which exist, and the

desirability of filling them in. However, other measures will undoubtedly be required to maintain any momentum developed from such programmes.

✓ The impact of the post-Climb⬟ policy shift change is outside the remit of this research project. New legislation, procedures and the reform of the Post Qualification Framework will address some of the concerns raised in the findings. However, this research project still provides suggestions for future improvements in training.

8.6 STUDY LIMITATIONS:

✓ Despite a limited time frame and sample size, the mixed methods design and intensive analysis produced many **lessons from the front line**, which can be used to inform and guide the development and delivery of training programmes of this genre.

✓ The sample size placed limits on the power of the study to show changes, however this was demonstrably compensated for by the very high compliance rate (**96%** percent for candidates and **82.7%** for line managers) and the frequency of data collection and analysis. In the end, there was sufficient power since statistically significant results were obtained. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the research learned a great deal about a small group of people. Although not randomised, when compared to a number of cohorts engaged in similar training the sample appears to be representative of the population of English social workers . **(Chapter Five)**.

✓ As the training programme was not nationally standardised, it was impossible to use a comparable sample. Therefore, this cohort served as its own control group in a repeated measures model of evaluation. The findings should be cautiously generalised.

✓ Although the research project took several years to design, complete the fieldwork, and analyse the data, the actual time-frame for data collection around the acquisition and sustained improvement of competency was limited to 18 months. Further post-testing would have be desirable; however, financial, time and sample access constraints precluded this.

8.7. THE WAY FORWARD:

Recently, several important forces have stimulated progress in the field of social work. These include; increased professionalism, client-centred reflective practice, evidence-based intervention and the serial evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of interventions. These changes are particularly welcome in child protection. This difficult, complex and emotional field of social work is especially vulnerable to criticism and requires continuous monitoring, modification and improvement in response to evolution of the global knowledge base.

✓ A rolling curriculum review and frequent educational updates is paramount for the continuous professional development of child protection workers. These updates

should be integrated into a systematic programme of maintenance of professional competence, or such initiatives are vulnerable to become sporadic and self-limited responses to satisfy political exigencies.

✓ It is important that the design and budgets of new initiatives in this field contain provision for embedded evaluation. Otherwise, there will be the continued hazard of being little wiser despite massive expenditure. Well-established baselines are an important pre-requisite for measuring the impact of future interventions.

✓ In order to measure the effectiveness and efficacy of initiatives, we must be able to clearly articulate and de-politicise the goals. A Rotating Board of Experts (inclusive of stakeholders and service users) guiding the Department for Education and Skills and the General Social Care Council, would assist this process and ensure ongoing commitment to overarching goals.

✓ The agenda for commitment to research must be multi-pronged. The resources invested into research studies, meta-analysis and research centres and web sites, needs to be matched by an investment in hardware, software, training, and high speed internet access. Research mindness and a commitment to evidence based practice is only feasible if practitioners can access the information quickly and easily.

✓ Equally important is training in critical-thinking and the interpretation of research findings. The prescient, H.G Wells predicted "Statistical thinking will one day be as

necessary for efficient citizenship as the ability to read and write" (Huff, 1954). The current endorsement of **evidence based practice** in a variety of professions demands that these practitioners (be they physician, nurses, social workers, etc) use research to inform their practice. Yet, despite education, intellect and professional skill, many professionals have a very limited (and usually rusty) understanding of basic statistical concepts. Furthermore, they are usually fearful of exposing that ignorance. These topics must be addressed in both initial training and on-going professional development.

✓ Training curriculum is best developed and revised when workers and line managers are able to identify the gaps in their knowledge/skills and how well these are addressed through the training.

✓ Learning cultures need to be developed and nourished in worksites or **virtual** internet environments, so that workers can share their knowledge of best practice, research findings, and support each other in this challenging work.

✓ Professional bodies (such as the General Social Care Council and the British Association of Social Workers) may need to reply to unfair public criticism when there are unfavourable outcomes in child protection. Although the merits of each individual case always warrant consideration, public expectation that favourable outcomes can be engineered or guaranteed must be seen as unreasonably high. Without an evidence base to justify what may have been correct but unsuccessful

interventions, the field and individual practitioners become scapegoated all too easily. It would be helpful to have greater public awareness that

> …child protection work inevitably involves uncertainty, ambiguity and fallibility. The knowledge base is limited, predictions about the child's future welfare are imperfect, and there is no definitive way of balancing the conflicting rights of the parents and children. The public rightly expect high standards from child protection workers in safeguarding children but achieving them is proving problematic
>
> (Munro 2002, p.1)

8.8. CONCLUDING REMARKS:

Changes in social policy and service delivery are frequent. What is infrequent is an evaluation of the impact of those changes, particularly in the absence of solid baseline measurements.

The Post Qualification Child Care Award for England represented a unique opportunity to evaluate an educational programme designed to increase the competency of the participants in actual practice as well as in their knowledge base.

Statistically significant evidence of programme effectiveness is rare in the social sciences. Despite abundance of negative qualitative feedback, and the scepticism of both participants and line managers, the programme achieved its goals of demonstrating effectiveness in increasing participants' levels of competency. However, this was not accomplished without adverse events, prominent among which

were increased stress levels, high course attrition rates, and participants choosing to leave the field of social work.

A great shake-up is promised in England with the Introduction of the Children Act, which promises to dramatically shifts the focus, design, and delivery of children's services. Notionally, one might argue that the relevance of this research project is limited as it was conducted prior to the significant policy, programme and service delivery changes, which have already occurred post-Climbie. On the contrary, the researcher would point out that the combination of the legislation reforms, and the very rapid changes in the knowledge base of how best to intervene with children and families, increases the need for effective post-qualification training of social workers.

The research can be used to improve not only this, but also other similar professional training programmes. It demonstrates that competency can be measured, improvements can be achieved, and that careful attention to the delivery models may result in further attainment of efficacy and effectiveness. It introduces a user-friendly cost-effective programme evaluation model that can be utilised to improve training programmes on an immediate and continuous basis. Finally, it provides a voice to the front-line workers and line managers whose commitment to their work is matched by their enthusiasm to learn and desire to optimal service. The authors of these **Lessons from the Front Line** have the knowledge and experience to provide advice to those who designer and deliver post-qualification training.

The paradox of social work's aspiration for professional recognition is that it is handicapped by the very same attributes, which are its unique strengths.

Committed to respecting the dignity and value of all, social work undertakes to intervene and assist in highly complex and difficult situations, without acknowledging the possibility or probability of intractability.

The centrality of the service user in decision-making shifts the locus of control away from the social worker; however, they continue to accept the conflicted binary roles of care and control on behalf of a society, which is rapacious in its criticism of overstepping the boundaries in either direction.

An eclectic theoretical base allows social workers to remain current and flexible in intervening with a wide variety of individuals and situations. However, this eclecticism combined with a pervasive commitment to intuition and 'practice wisdom' has resulted in practitioners who are unable to justify their decisions and interventions.

A commitment to evaluation of intervention is core to social work values, but has been limited to the sphere of singular client interventions. A more methodical process of self-observation, collection and publication of information to inform best practice across a spectrum of similar scenarios is long overdue.

This research study was undertaken (1999-2003) during an exciting, dynamic and demanding time for the discipline of social work in the United Kingdom. Responding to both external (political, societal and academic) as well as intra-profession pressure, social work was attempting to propel itself into the position of a profession recognised and respected by society.

In 1957 Ernest Greenwood argued that social work needed to demonstrate the following attributes in order to claim and gain recognition as a profession: (1) a culture of values, norms, and symbols, (2) regulation and control of members (3) a professional code of ethics, (4) A systematic body of knowledge and (5) professional authority and credibility.

This research snapshot, taken almost 50 years later, reveals that although the first attribute is well established nationally and internationally, it will require further elucidation to make it explicit and understandable by others. The second and third attributes have been achieved in a number of countries and are major initiatives in the current U.K. milieu of social work education, workforce retraining and recruitment. An attempt to select and disseminate a systemic body of knowledge (the fourth attribute) is a main theme of the educational programme under scrutiny. Finally, the fifth attribute of professional authority and credibility (through robust evaluation of interventions) was the topic and purpose of this research and thesis.

The researcher posits that social work can pursue the final steps necessary for professional recognition as it undertakes research whilst remaining faithful to those values which make social work unique and comprehensive.

The author sought to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of an educational programme designed to educate and train practitioners in one of the most complex and difficult in social work roles - childcare or child protection. Client dignity, self-determination and empowerment drove the ethics and philosophy, while eclecticism and a holistic perspective determined the research methodologies selected for the project. An overarching desire to increase professional recognition and credibility demanded a critical evaluation of the process and the findings, and was matched by a underpinning desire to furnish some practical suggestions.

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

SHARON VITALI

Bibliography

Aber, J. L. & Zigler, E. (1981) *Developmental considerations in the development of child maltreatment* IN Rizley, R. & Ciccheffi, D. eds. **Developmental Perspectives on Child Maltreatment: New Directions for Child Development No.11.** San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

Adler, P. & Adler, P. (1987) **Membership Roles in Field Research** California, Sage.

Aldgate, J. (1988) *Work with Children Experiencing Separation and Loss: A Theoretical Framework* in Aldgate, J. & Simmons, J. eds. **Direct Work with Children: A Guide for Social Work Practitioners (**The Child Care Policy & Practice Series). London, BT Batsford.

Aldgate, J. & Colman, R. (1999) **Post-Qualifying Award in Child Care: A Project for the Department of Health & CCETSW - Part A Conceptual Framework**

Aldgate, J. & Colman, R. (1999) **Post-Qualifying Award in Child Care: A Project for the Department of Health & CCETSW - Part B Curriculum Guidance.**

Aldgate, J. Stein, M. & Carey, K. (1989) IN Aldgate, J. Maluccio, A. & Reeves, C. eds **Adolescents in Foster Families** (The Child Care Policy & Practice Series), London, BT Batsford.

Aldgate J. & Bradley M (1999) **Supporting Families through Short Term Fostering** - Studies Evaluating The Children Act 1989. London: The Stationery Office

Aldgate, J. & Statham, J. (2001) **The Children's Act Now: Messages from Research.** London, The Stationery Office.

Aldgate J (2003) in Kroll B. & Taylor A. **Parental Substance Misuse and Child Welfare** London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.

Aldridge (1994) IN O'Hagan K. ed. **Competence in Social Work Practice: A Practical Guide for Professionals** London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Allport, G. (1951) IN Powers, E. & Witmer, H. **An Experiment in the Prevention of Delinquency: The Cambridge-Sommerville Youth Study** New York, Columbia University Press.

Ammons, P (1979) *In-Service Training in Social Work Values.* **Child Welfare LVIIII**

Anderson, G. & Arsenault, N. (1998) IN Goodson P. (ed) **Fundamentals of Educational Research.** Bristol: Falmer Press.

Argyris, C. & Schon, D (1982) **Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness,** San Fransisco, Jossey-Bass Inc.

Arkava, M. & Brennan, C. (eds.) (1976) **Competency-Based Education for Social Work Evaluation and Curriculum Issues** New York: Council on Social Work Education.

Ashcroft, K. & Palacio, D. (1996) **Researching Into Assessment & Evaluation in Colleges and Universities** London: Kogan Page Limited.

Ashford, D. (1981) IN Ashford D. & Pempe T (ed.) **Policy and Politics In Britain: The Limit of Consensus** Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publishers.

Aviles, C. B. (2000) **Creatively Adapting Mastery Learning and Outcome Based Education to the Social Work Classroom** Paper Presented Joint Conference of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work. Montreal, Quebec, IFSW.

Baer, B. & Frederico, R. (1978) eds. **Educating the Baccalaureate Social Worker** Cambridge MA, Ballinger.

Badger, D. (1985) *Building Bridges: The Transfer of Learning Between Field & Residential Social Work* IN Harris, R. ed. **Educating Social Workers** Leicester, Association of Teachers in Social Work Education.

Barns, R. & Harrison, C. (1995) **Keeping Research in Mind.** London, CCETSW.

Barnardos What Works? http://www.barnardos.org.uk/resources/researchpublications

Barker, R. (1995) **The Social Work Dictionary** Washington: NASW Press.

Barth, R. Courtney, M. Duerr Berrick, J. Albert, V. (1994) **From Child Abuse to Permanency Planning: Child Welfare Pathways & Placements - Modern Applications of Social Work** New York, Aldine de Gruyter.

Bazeley, P. (2002) **Mixed Methods: How to Combine Quantitative & Qualitative Methods**. Wirtschaftsuniversitat Web Page of the Department of Retailing & Marketing. http://www.wu-wien.ac.at/handel/mixed_methods.html

Beebe, L. ed. (1993) **Professional Writing for the Human Services.** Washington.

Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit (1998) **First Canadian Roundtable on Child Welfare Outcomes.** Toronto, University of Toronto.

BEB – Be Evidence Based – http://www.be-evidence-based.com

Benett, M. (1993).*The Validity and Reliability of Assessments and Self-Assessments of Work Based Learning.* **Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education (18).**

Blalock, H. (1970) **An Introduction to Social Research** New Jersey USA, Prentice Hall.

Bloom, B. ed. (1956) **Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook 1 Cognitive Domain.** London, Longman.

Bloom, M. & Fischer, J. (1982). **Evaluating Practice: Guidelines for the Accountable Professional.** New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Bloom, M. Fisher, J. & Orme, J. (1999) **Evaluating Practice: Guidelines for the Accountable Professional 3rd Edition** Boston: Allen & Bacon.

Bradshaw, W. (2003) *Use of Single-System Research to Evaluate the Effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioural Treatment of Schizophrenia* **British Journal of Social Work Volume 33**: pp.885-899.

Brandon & Thompson (2000) IN **CCETSW PQ Child Care Award: Implementing the PQ Child Care Award – the Experiences of the Pilot Programmes in England**

Brodie, I., Reeve, F. & Whittaker, R. (1995) *Delivering the Deal: Implementation of a Work Based Learning Program at a Degree Level* **The Vocational Aspect of Education Volume 47**

Brown, J. Karley, M & Vitali, S. (2002) *Building Bridges: Perspectives for the Field.* **Canadian Social Work l4 (1)** pp. 55-66.

Bryman A. (1988) **Quality & Quantity in Social Research** London: Unwin Hyman

Buchanan, A. (1996) **Cycles of Child Maltreatment: Facts, Fallacies and Interventions.** Chichester, John Wiley & Sons.

Buchanan, A. (2000) **Breaking the Patterns that lead to Child Abuse: Policy & Practice Issues for the Twenty-first Century.** (Unpublished review) – Oxford, University of Oxford.

Butler-Sloss, E. (1988) **Report of the Inquiry into Child Abuse in Cleveland – 1987.** London, HMSO.

CCETSW (1991) Statement of Requirements for Qualification in Social Work Paper 30.

CCETSW (December 1997) **Assuring Quality for Post-Qualifying Education & Training.**

CCETSW (Sept 1999) **Assuring Quality for Child Care Programmes: (1) Requirements for the Post Qualifying Child Care Award & (2) Approval, Review & Inspection of Child Care Programmes,** Wandsworth: The Chameleon Press.

CCETSW (May 2000) **PQ Childcare Award: Implementing the PQ Child Care Award: The Experiences of the Pilot Programmes in England**

Campbell Collaboration Website: **What Helps? What Harms? Based on What Evidence?** http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/

Canadian Libraries (Government of Canada) (2004) http://www.collectionscanada.ca/gateway

Carey J (1989) **A Cultural Approach To Communication**. New York: Routledge.

Cartwright, T. (1973*) Problems, Solutions and Strategies: A Contribution to Theory and Practice in Planning.* **Journal of the American Institute of Planners 39.** pp. 179-187.

Centre for Evidence-Based Social Services (Institute of Health & Social Care Research, in the Peninsula Medical School at the University of Exeter) - http://www.ex.ac.uk/cebss

Chalmers, I. (2003) Director - Cochrane Collaboration, Oxford. (Personal Conversation).

Chandler, R.G. (1986) *The Profession of Social Work* IN Turner, F. & Turner, J. eds. **Canadian Social Welfare** (2nd Edition) Toronto, Maxwell MacMillan.

Chappell, R. (1997) **Social Welfare in Canadian Society.** Toronto, International Thomson Nelson Publishing.

Children Act 1989 London, HMSO.

Children Act 2004 (c. 31) London, HMSO.

Chiodo D, Leschied A, Whitehead P, & Hurley D. (2003) **The Impact of Violence on Child Outcomes in a Child Protection Sample: Implications for Intervention.** London Ontario: University of Western Ontario.

Clark, F. Arkava, M. & Associates. (1979) **The Pursuit of Competence in Social Work** San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Cleaver, H. (1996) **Focus on Teenagers: *Research into Practice***. London, HMSO.

Coffey, M. Dugdill, L. Tattersall, A. (2004) *Stress in Social Services: Mental Well-being, Constraints and Job Satisfaction.* **British Journal of Social Work 34**, pp. 735-746.

Cohen, J. (1988) **Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioural Sciences** Hillsdale, Erlbaum.

Coleman A (2001) ***Five Star Motels: Spaces, Places and Homelessness in Fortitude Valley*** IN Darlington Y & Scott D. (2002) **Qualitative Research in Practice** Buckingham, Open University Press.

Collins, M. (1991) **Adult Education as Vocation** London, Routledge.

Creighton S. (1993) *Children's Homicide: An Exchange – Letter to the Editor* **British Journal of Social Work 23** pp. 643-644.

Creighton, S. & Gallagher, B. (1988) **Child Abuse Deaths – Information Briefing No 5**. London, NSPCC.

Crosson Tower, C. (1996) **Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect –Third Edition** London:, Allyn & Bacon.

Csernick, R. Gordon, K. & Vitali, S. (2000) ***The Practice of Field Work: What Social Work Interns Experience In the Field*** Paper Presented Joint Conference of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work. Montreal, Quebec, IFSW.

Csiernick, R., Vitali, S., and & Gordon, K. (2000b) *Student and Field Instructor Perceptions of a Child Welfare Competency-Based Education and Training Project* **Canadian Social Work 2(2)**, pp. 53-64.

Cuffe, J. (12 October 2003) **Social Work: the Pariah Profession**, BBC News.

Cunningham, J. (1993) **Action Research and Organisational Development**, London, Praeger.

D'Agostino (1975) IN Ebling, N. & Hill, D. eds **Child Abuse: Intervention and Treatment.** Action MA, Publishing Sciences Group Inc.

Darlington, Y. & Scott, D. (2002) **Qualitative Research in Practice: Stories from the Field.** Buckingham, Open University Press.

Davies, M. ed. (2000) **The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Social Work.** Oxford, Blackwell Publishers.

Davies M. ed (1997) **The Blackwell Companion To Social Work,** Oxford: Blackwell Publishers

Day, M. (1998) *Assessing the Competence of the Specialist Nurse Practitioner: A Portfolio Approach*. **Nursing Standards**

Debling, G. (1992) **Competence and Assessment: Compendium Two** Sheffield Employment Department.

Debling, G. & Stuart, D. *Analyzing and Minimizing the Costs of Assessment.* **Competence and Assessment 18** (1992).

Department for Education and Skills - DfES (2003) **Every Child Matters: Green Paper,** London**,** HMSO.

Department for Education & Skills - DfES (2004a) **Every Child Matters: Next Steps** London, HMSO.

Department for Skills and Education - DfES (2004b) **Services for Children in Need** London, HMSO.

Department for Skills & Education - DfES (2004c) **Children in Need in England: Results of a survey of activity and expenditure as reported by Local Authority Social Services' Children & Families Team for a Survey week in February 2003: Local Authority tables and further national analysis**. Issue No vweb01-2004.

Department for Education and Skills –DfES (2004d) **Explanatory Notes on the Children's Bill (HL)** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1988a) **Report of the Inquiry into Child Abuse in Cleveland, 1987** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1988b) **Protecting Children: A Guide for Social Workers Undertaking a Comprehensive Assessment** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1989) **An Introduction to the Children Act 1989** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1991a) **The Children Act (1989) Guidance and Regulations Volumes 1-10** London, HMSO

Department of Health (1991b) **Patterns and Outcomes in Child Placement** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1991) **Child Abuse: A Study of Inquiry Reports 1980-1989** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1992) **LAC (92)18: Children's Services Plans** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1994a) **Looking After Children Project. Assessment and Action Records** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1994b) **The Children Act Report 1993** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1995a) **Looking After Children: Trial Pack of Planning and Review Forms and Action Records (Revised)** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1995b) **Looking After Children: Good Parenting, Good Outcomes, Training Guide** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1995c) **Child Protection: Messages from Research.** London: HMSO.

Department of Health (1995d) **Looking After Children: Trial Pack of Planning and Review Forms and Assessment and Action Records** (revised) London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1998a) **National Priorities Guidance: A Commitment to Improve Modern Social Services** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1998b) **Modernising Social Services: Promoting Independence Improving Protection, Raising Standards** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1998c) **Caring for Children Away from Home: Messages from Research**. London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1998d) **Quality Protects—Objectives for Social Services for Children**. London, HMSO

Department of Health (1999a) **The Government's Objectives for Children's Social Services** London , HMSO.

Department of Health (1999b) **Modernising Health and Social Services: National Priorities Guidance.** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1999c) **Social Services Performances in 1998-99. The Personal Services Performance Assessment Framework** . London, HMSO.

Department of Health (1999d) **Children and Young People on Child Protection Registers, Year ending 31 March 1999. England** London: Government Statistical Service.

Department of Health (1999e) **Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide for Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children** London: Department of Health

Department of Health (2000a) **Towards Safer Care. Training And Resource Pack** . London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2000b) **A Quality Strategy for Social Care: Executive Summary**. London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2000c) **Quality in Social Care: The National Institutional Framework** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2000d**) A Quality Strategy for Social Care: Executive Summary** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2000e) **Studies Which Inform The Development Of The Framework For The Assessment Of Children In Need And Their Families** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2000f) **Assessing Children in Need and their Families: Practice Guidance** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2000g) **Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2000h) **Learning the Lessons: Response to the Lost In Care Report**. London, HMSO. www.doh.gov.uk/lostincare

Department of Health (2001) **Studies Informing the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families** London:, HMSO.

Department of Health (2002a) **Requirements for Social Work Training** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2002b) **National Standards for the Provision of Children's Advocacy Services** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2002c) **Safeguarding Child in Whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2002d) **The Children Act Report 2001.** London, HMSO.

Department of Health (2003) **Social Services Performance Assessment Framework Indicators** London, HMSO.

Department of Health and Social Security (1974a) **The Family in Society: Dimensions of Parenthood**. London, HMSO.

Department of Health and Social Security (1974b) **Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Care and Supervision Provided in Relation to Maria Colwell**. London, HMSO.

Department of Health and Social Security (1982) **Child Abuse: A Study of Inquiry Reports 1973-1981** London, HMSO.

Department of Health & Social Security (1985) **Social Work Decisions in Childcare: Recent Research Findings and their Implications** London, HMSO.

Department of Health and Social Security (1988) **Working Together: A Guide to Inter-Agency Co-operation for the Protection of Children** London, HMSO.

Department of Health - Social Services Inspectorate (1995) **The Challenge of Partnership in Child Protection: Practice Guide** London, HMSO.

Department of Health – Social Services Inspectorate (2000a) **New Guidance on Children's Services Planning** London, HMSO.

Department of Health – Social Services Inspectorate (2000b**) Modernising Social Services** London, HMSO.

Department of Health – Social Services Inspectorate (2001-2002) **Modern Social Services: A Commitment to Reform** London, HMSO.

Department of Health - Social Services Inspectorate (2002) **Modernising Social Service: A Commitment to Reform The 11th Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Social Services** London, HMSO.

Department of Health- Social Services Inspectorate (2003a) **Audit of Services to Children in Need in Response to the Practice Recommendations of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report.** London: HMSO.

Department of Health -Social Services Inspectorate (2003b) **Performance Ratings for Social Services in England** London, HMSO.

Department of the Home Office (1997) **Supporting Families: A Consultation Document** http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/suppfam.html.

Dingwall, R. (1994) *The Dilemma of Family Policy in Liberal States* IN Maclean, M. & Kurczewski, J. **Families Politics and the Law**. Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Dominelli, L. (1996) *Deprofessionalising Social Work: Anti-Oppressive Practice, Competencies and Post Modernism.* **British Journal of Social Work 26** pp. 153-175.

Doyle, C. (1996) *Current Issues in Child Protection: An Overview of The Debates in Contemporary Journals* **British Journal of Social Work 26** pp. 565-576.

Dudding, P. (2003) Foreword to Trocme, N. Knoke, D. & Roy, C. eds. **Community Collaboration and Differential Response: Canadian and International Research and Emerging Models of Practice.** Fourth National Child Welfare Symposium, Banff Canada, Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare.

Ebers, G. (2003) Action Professor of Neurology, University of Oxford (Personal Conversation).

Edwards, A. & Talbot, R. (1994***) The Hard-pressed Researcher: A Research Handbook for the Caring Professions.*** London: Addison Wesley Longman

Erault, M. (1989) IN Burke, J. ed **Competency Based Education and Training** London, Falmer Press.

Erault, M. (1994) **Developing Professional Knowledge and Competence.** London, Falmer Press.

Evans, C. & Fischer, M. (2002) *Service Users: Moving Towards User Controlled Research* IN Shaw, I. & Lishman, J. eds. **Collaborative Evaluation** London, Sage.

The Exeter Centre for Evidence Based Social Services
Evidence to inform practicehttp://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/EPPIWeb/home.aspx

Federal Provincial Working Group on Child and Family Services Information Bulletin January 2000 http://www11.sdc.gc.ca accessed 22.07.04

Felson, D., Anderson, J. & Meenan, R. (1990). *Time for Changes in the Design, Analysis, and Reporting of Rheumatoid Arthritis Clinical Trails*. **Arthritis & Rheumatism 33**, pp. 140-149.

Fisher, M. (1999) *Social Work Research, Social Work Knowledge and the Research Assessment Exercise* in Broad, B. ed **The Politics of Social Work Research and Evaluation.** Birmingham, Venture Press.

Fischer, J. (1973) Is Casework Effective? A Review, **Social Work 1** pp. 5-20.

Fletcher, S. (1992) **Competence-Based Assessment Techniques** London: Kogan Page.

Foster K & Huber P (1999) **Judging Science: Scientific Knowledge and the Federal Courts**. Cambridge Ma, MIT Press.

Foyster, J. (1991) (TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, Leabrook, South Australia).

Frean A (May 30 2002) *Social workers ordered to reach for their stars*. **The Times** p10.

Freed, D (May 10 1997) *Stiffer Laws Urged as Shanay's Legacy* **The Toronto Star.**

Freeman, I. Morrison, A. Lockhart, F. & Swanson, M. (1999) *Consulting Service Users: The Views of Young People* IN Hill, M. & Aldgate, J. eds. **Child Welfare Services: Developments in Law, Policy, Practice and Research.** London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Freeman, R. & Lewis, R. (1998) **Planning & Implementing Assessment** London, Kogan Page Limited.

Gabor, P. & Ing, C (1997) *Sampling* IN Grinnell R. Jr. ed. **Social Work Research and Evaluation: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches Fifth Edition** Itasca, Peacock Publishers.

Gabor, P. Unrau, Y. Grinnell, R. Jr. (1998) **Evaluation for Social Workers: A Quality Improvement Approach for the Social Sciences Second Edition** USA, Allyn & Bacon.

Gambrill, E. (1983) **Casework: A Competency-Based Approach** Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall.

Gambrill, E. (1997) **Social Work Practice: A Critical Thinker's Guide** New York: Oxford University Press.

Gambril, E. Leever, M. DeCiani, G. Mulaney, E. Hasslinger, H. (2002) **Ethical Child Welfare Practice**. Washington, Child Welfare League of America Press.

Garbarino, J. (1993) *Preventing Adolescent Maltreatment* IN Willis, D. Holden, E. & Rosenberg, M. **Prevention of Child Maltreatment.** New York, John Wiley.

Gary, A. & (contributor), A. N. *Fundamental of Educational Research* (ed. Professor Ivor F. Goodson, W. G. S., University of Rochester) (Falmer Press, Hong Kong, 1998).

General Social Care Council (2002a) **Social work education & training annual quality-assurance report 2001-2**

General Social Care Council (2002b) **Standards: The Social Care Register.** http://www.gscc.org.uk/

General Social Care Council (2003) **Data Pack 2003.** http://www.gscc.org.uk/

General Social Care Council Website (2004): http://www.gscc.org.uk.

George, J. & Cowan, J. (1999).**A Handbook of Techniques for Formative Evaluation: Mapping the Student's Learning Experience** London: Kogan Page Limited.

Gibbons, J. & Bell, C. (1994) *Variations in Operation of English Child Protection Registers* **British Journal of Social Work 24** pp. 701-714.

Gibbons, J. Gallagher, B. Bell, C. & Gordon, D. (1995) **Development after Physical Abuse in Early Childhood: A Follow-up Study of Children on Child Protection Registers.** London, HMSO.

Gibbs, G. Habeshaw, S. & Habesahw, T. (1988) **Interesting Ways to Appraise Your Teaching**. British Technical & Educational Services.

Giovannoni, J. (1989) *Definitional Issues in Child Maltreatment* IN Cicchetti, D. & Carlson, V. eds. **Child Maltreatment : Theory and Research on the Causes and Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect.** New York, Cambridge Medical Press.

Giovannoni J. & Becarra R (1979) **Defining Child Abuse** New York: Free Press

Goldberg, E. M. & Warburton, R. W. (1979) **Ends and Means in Social Work: The Development and Outcome of a Case Review System for Social Workers** London: George, Allen & Unwin.

Gonczi, A., Hager, P. & Athanasou, J. (1993) Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

Grant, G. ed. (1979) **On Competence: A Critical Analysis of Competence-Based Reforms in Higher Education** San Francisco, Josey-Bass.

Greene J, Caracelli V, Graham W (1989*) Towards a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs.* **Educational Evaluation & Policy Analysis Vol. 11(3).** pp. 255-74.

Greenwood, E. (1957) *Attributes of a Profession Social Work,* NASW Social Work Journal pp 45-55

Gross, G. (1981) *Instrument Design: Bridge to Competence*. **Journal of Education for Social Work 17** pp

Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. (1989) **Fourth Generation Evaluation**. California, Sage.

Hager, P. (1992) IN Scott, G. (ed) **Defining, Developing and Assessing Higher Order Competencies in the Professions: Discussion Papers from a Symposium** Sydney, Australia: School of Adult Vocational Education, University of Technology,

Hager, P. & Gonczi, (1993). A. *Attributes and Competence***. Australia and New Zealand Journal of Vocational Education and Research 1**

Hall, W. C. (1897) **The Queens Reign for Children.** London: T.Fisher Unwin.

Hall, W. (1994). Competency Based Training and Assessment. *Review of Research One*

Harold, N. (1998) *Doing Comparative Education: Three Decades of Collaboration* (Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong,

Harris, R. (1983) *Social Work Education and the Transfer of Learning* **Issues in Social Work Education Vol 3:2**, pp.103-117.

Hart, E. Bond, E. (1998) **Action Research for Health & Social Care: A Guide to Practice.** Buckingham, Open University Press.

Hatton, M. Campbell, G. Colantoni, H. Ferron, R. Huyer, D. Macmillian, H. Oritz, T. & Trocme, N. (1998) **Protecting Vulnerable Children: report of the Panel of Experts on Child Protection.** *(Ministry of Community & Social Services No. 160303)* Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Hayward, G. (1995) **Getting to Grips with GNVQs: A Handbook for Teachers** London: Kogan Page Limited.

Haywood, L., Gonczi, A. & Hager, P. (1992) (Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra,).

Healy, K. (2002) *Managing Human Services in a Market Environment: What Role for Social Workers?* **The British Journal of Social Work 32** pp. 527-540.

Hendrick, H. (1997) *Constructions and Reconstructions of British Childhood: An Interpretive Survey 1800 to the Present* IN James, A. & Prout, A. eds. **Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood.** London, Falmer Press.

Hersen, M. & Barlow, D. (1976) **Single Case Experimental Designs: Strategies for Studying Behavior Change.** New York, Pergamon Press.

Heidenheimer, A. J. e. a. H. H. C. T. A. *Comparative Public Policy: The Policy of Choice in America, Europe, and Japan* (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1990).

Hill, M. & Aldgate, J. eds (1999) **Child Welfare Services: Developments in Law, Policy, Practice & Research.** London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Hills, D. & Child, C. (2000) **Leadership in Residential Childcare: Evaluating Qualification Training** West Sussex, John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Hodkinson, P. & Issitt, M. (eds.) (1995).**The Challenge of Competence** London: Cassell.

Holland, S. Scourfield, (2004) *J. Liberty and Respect in Child Protection I* **British Journal of Social Work 34** pp.21-36.

Holter, I. & Schwartz-Barcott, D. (1993) *Action research: what is it? How has it been used and how can it be used in nursing?* **Journal of Advanced Nursing 18.** pp. 298-304.

House of Commons (1998) **Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Health in Relation to Children Looked After by the Local Authority.** London, HMSO.

Howard, H. & Tain, P. (1993).**Child Care Law** London: Longman Law Tax & Finance.

Huff, D. 1954 (1993) **How to Lie with Statistics** New York: WW Norton & Company.

Hughes, R. & Rycus, J. (1989).Child Welfare League of America and The Institute for Human Services, Washington,

Hudson, B. (1998) Cognitive Behavioural Social Work: You Win Some, You Lose Some **The Cognitive Behavioural Social Work Review Vol 19(2**) pp. 7-12.

Humphries, B. (ed.) (2000). **Research in Social Care and Social Welfare: Issues and Debates for Practice** London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers Limited

Humphrey C Berridge D Butler I & Ruddick R (2003) *Making Research Count: The Development of Knowledge-Based Practice.* **Research Policy & Planing Vol 21(1)**

Hurley, D. Chiodo, D. Leschied, A, & Whitehead, P. (2003) **Intergenerational Continuity and Life Course Trajectory in a Child Protection Sample: Implications for Social Work Practice**. London ON: University of Western Ontario.

Hutchinson, R. (1994) *Defining Child Abuse and Neglect* IN Barth, R. Berrick, J & Gilbert, N. eds. **Child Welfare Review.** New York, Columbia University Press.

Hyland, T. (1994). **Competence, Education and NVQs: Dissenting Perspectives** London, Cassell.

Hyland, T (1995a). IN Hodkinson, P. & Issitts, M ed. **The Challenge of Competence** London, Cassell.

Hyland, T. (1995b) *Morality, Work and Employment: Towards a Values Dimension in Vocational Education and Training.* **Journal of Moral Education 24**

Ing, C. & Gabor, P. (2002). **Towards Intercultural understanding: Increasing Cultural Competence** 9th Biennial Family Support America Conference. Chicago, Illinois. USA.

Issitt, M. (1995) IN (eds). Hodkinson, P. & Issitt, M. **The Challenge of Competence** London: Cassell.

Jacob, E. (1990). *Alternative approaches for studying naturally occurring human behavior and thought in special education research.* **The Journal of Special Education, 24 (2),** pp.195-211.

Jackson, S. (1998) *Looking After Children: A New Approach or Just an Exercise in Form Filling? A Response to Knight & Caveney* **British Journal of Social Work Vol 28** pp.45-56.

Jamison, D. T. (1993) **World Development Report 1993 - Investing in Health: World Development Indicators** Oxford: The World Bank

Jessup, G (1991) **Outcomes: NVQs and the Emerging Model of Education and Training London,** UK: Falmer Press.

Jones, C. (2001) *Voices From the Front Line: State Social Workers and New Labour* **British Journal of Social Work 31(4)** pp. 547 -62.

Jones, L. & Moore, R (1993).. *Education, Competence and the Control of Expertise.* **British Journal of the Sociology of Education 27** .

Jones, D. & Corrigan, P (2000).. in *International Federation of Social Workers* (Montreal, Quebec.,

Jordan, B. (2001) *Tough Love, Social Work, Social Exclusion, and the Third Way* **The British Journal of Social Work 31(4)**

Kameoka, V. & Lister, L. (1991) *Evaluation of Student Learning Outcomes in MSW Programs* **Journal of Social Work Education 27**

Kazi, M. (2003) *Realist Evaluation for Practice* **The British Journal of Social Work 33** pp. 803-818.

Kemp, A (1998) **Abuse in the Family – An Introduction** Pacific Grove California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company

Kemshall, H (1993) *Assessing Competence: Process or Subjective Inference? Do we really see it?* **Social Work Education 12 (1)** pp. 36-45.

King, C. Leschied, A. Whitehead, P. Chiodo, D. & Hurley, D. (2003) **Child protection Legisation in Ontario: Past, Present & Future?** London Ontario: University of Western Ontario Research Project

Kroll, B & Taylor A (2003) **Parental Substance Misuse and Child Welfare** London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Kohn, M. (1969) **Class and Conformity: A Study in Values** Illinois:The Dorsey Press

Kumar, R. (1999) **Research Methodology; A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners** London, Sage Publication Limited.

Kushner, S. (2003) **Values in Evaluation.** UKES - <evalchat@uwe.ac.uk>

Kyte, N. & Bostwick, G. (1981) IN Grinnell R (Jr) **Social Work Research and Evaluation.** Itasca, Peacock Publishers Inc.

Laming (2003a) **The Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report: Summary & Recommendations.** http://www.victoria-climbie-inquiry.org.uk

Laming (2003b) **The Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report** CM 5730

Last, J. (1995) A **Dictionary of Epidemiology – Third Edition.** New York, Oxford University Press.

Laur-Ernst, U. in *Assessments and Standards in Vocational Education and Training* (TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, Leabrook, South Australia, 1990).

Leschied, A. Whitehead, P. Hurley, D. & Chiodo, D. (Winter 2003-2004) **Protecting Children is Everyone's Business: Investigating the Increasing Demand for Services at The Children's Aid Society of London & Middlesex**, Toronto; Ontario Association of Childrens' Aid Societies vol 47(3) pp.10-14.

Lester, S. (1995). *Beyond Knowledge and Competence: Towards a Framework for Professional Education* **Capability 1** pp

Levin, J. (1987) *The Jasmine Beckford Inquiry* **Nursing 3(14)** pp 521-523.

Levinson, D. (1989) **Family Violence in Cross Cultural Perspective.** Newbury Park CA, Sage Publications.

Lewin, K. (1946) *Action Research and Minority Problems* IN Lewin, G. ed. **Resolving Social Conflicts: Selecting Papers on Group Dynamics by Kurt Lewin** New York, Harper & Brothers.

Lingard, S. (2001). Personal Conversation in Oxford

Lishman, J. ed. (1984, revised 1991). **Research Highlights in Social Work 8: Evaluation** London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Lishman J (1998) *Personal & Professional Development* IN Adams R, Dominelli L & Payne M. eds **Social Work: Themes Issues and Critical Debates.** London, Macmillan.

Lishman, J. (2003) IN Shaw, I. & Lishman, J. eds. **Evaluation & Social Work Practice** London, Sage Publications.

Loacker, G. & O'Brien. (1986). **Assessment in Higher Education: Issues and Contexts** Washington, D.C.: Department of Education: Office of Research and Improvement.

Loewenberg, F. (1972) **Time and Quality in Graduate Social Work Education: Report of the Special Committee to Study the Length of Graduate Social Work Education** New York, New York Council on Social Work Education.

Lyons, K. & Manion, K. (2003) *Social Work Doctoral Studies: Researching Research* **British Journal of Social Work 33,** pp.1115-1121.

Macdonald, G, (1990) *Allocating Blame in Social Work* **British Journal of Social Work 20(6)** pp525-46.

Macdonald, G. (1997). IN Maynard, A. & Chalmers, I eds. **Non-Random Reflections on Health Services** Plymouth, Latimer Trend and Company.

Macdonald, G. & Winkley, A. (2000) *What Works in Child Protection* **Barnardo's What Works Series –**http: www.barnardos.org.uk/resources

Macdonald, G. (2001) **Effective Interventions for Child Abuse and Neglect.** West Sussex, John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Macdonald, G. Sheldon, B. & Gillespie, J. (1992) *Contemporary Studies of the Effectiveness of Social Work.* **British Journal of Social Work 22(6)** pp 615-643.

Maclean, M. & Kurczewski, J. (1994) **Families, Politics and the Law: Perspectives for East and West Europe** [Oxford Socio-Legal Studies] Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Macwilliam S Maggs P Caldwell A & Tierney S (2003) **Assessing Social Care Research: An Introductory Guide** Exter: CBESS.

Making Research Count in the Personal Social Services, http://www.uea.ac.uk/swk/research/mrc/welcome.htm

Manton K. PhD, Research Director – Centre for Demographic Studies, Duke University.

Marsh, P. & Triseliotis, J.(1996) **Ready to Practice? Social Workers and Probation Officers: Their Training and First Year in Work** Aldershot: Avebury Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Martin Loney, D. B. J. C. (ed.) (1985).**Social Policy & Social Welfare.** Milton Keynes Open University Press

Maslach, C. (1982). **Burnout - The Cost of Caring** New Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc.

Masters, G. & McCurry, D. (Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1990).

Matheson, W. Van Dyk, C. & Millar K. (1995) **Performance Evaluation in the Human Services.** London: The Hawthorne Press.

Maynard, A. & Chalmers, I. (eds.) (1997). **Non-random Reflections on Health Services Research** London: BMJ Publishing Group-Latimer Trend & Co.

McClelland, D. (1993). *Testing for Competence Rather Than For Intelligence*. **American Psychologist 28** pp.1-14.

McMahon, L. (2000) *The Key Role Of Social Workers In Promoting The Well-Being Of Children In State Care: A Neglected Dimension In Reforming Policies* **Children & Society 14 (4)** pp. 267-276.

McNabb, D. in *The Social Work World Conference IASSW/IFSW* (Hong Kong, 1996).

Medawar, P. (1979) **Advice to a Young Scientist.** [Alfred P Sloan Foundation Series], USA, Perseus Books Group.

Meyer, J. (1993) *New Paradigm Research in Practice: The Trials and Tribulations of Action Research* IN **Journal of Advanced Nursing 18,** pp.1066-72

Miles, M. & Huberman, A. (1994) **Qualitative Data Analysis**. California, Sage.

Miller, R. (1975) *Statistical Analysis of Data* IN Polansky, N. ed. **Social Work Research: Methods for the Helping Professions Revised Edition** Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Miliband, A. ed. (1994) **Paying for Inequality: The Economic Cost of Social Injustice** London, Rivers Oram Press

Milner, J. & O'Bryne, P. (2002) **Assessment in Social Work – Second Edition** Basingstoke, Palgrave-MacMillian.

Mitchell, L. IN Burke, J.(ed) (1989).**Competency Based Education and Training** London: Falmer Press

Mitchell, L. & Cuthbert, T. (Scottish Vocational Council, Glasgow, UK, 1989).

Mitchell, L. (1992) **Competence and Assessment: Compendium Two** Sheffield: Sheffield Employment Department

Monit, L. Cheung, K., Stevenson, K. & Leung, P. (1991).*Competency-Based Evaluation of Case Management Skills in Child Sexual Abuse Intervention.* **Child Welfare LXX** pp.425-435.

Munro, E. (2002) **Effective Child Protection.** London, Sage Publications.

Munro, E. (2003) ***Making Risky Decisions: Constructive Ways of Dealing with Uncertainty –*** Paper presented at **Risk in Social Services and Its Consequences** Bath, Centre for Evidence Based Social Services.

Northern Ireland Post Qualifying Education & Training Pilot Partnership (1992) **Post Qualifying Level Competencies.** Antrim, North Ireland, NIPQETPP.

Newman (2002) **Promoting Resilience: A Review of Effective Strategies for Child Care Services.** Centre for Evidence Based Social Services: University of Exeter & Barnardos.

O'Hagan, K. ed. (1996) **Competence in Social Work Practice: A Practical Guide for Professionals.** London & Bristol, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2003a) **Keeping Children Safe: The Government's Response to the Victoria Climbie Inquiry Report & Joint Chief Inspector's Report – Safeguarding Children.** London: HMSO.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2003b) **Every Child Matters – Summary Report – Safeguarding Children.** London: HMSO.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2003c**) Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment Children's Green Paper: Every Child Matters.** London: HMSO.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2003d**) Every Child Matters Presented to Parliament by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury by Command of Her Majesty.** London: HMSO.

Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies- OACAS, **The Ontario Child Protection Training Program - OCPTP** (http://www.oacas.org/programs/ocptp.htm accessed 22.07.04)

Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies- OACAS Website http://www.oacas.org/ Ontario Child Mortality Task Force (1997) Ontario Child Mortality Task Force Final Report [Special Edition] OACAS Journal, July 1997.

Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies- OACAS (February 2004) CAS Facts: April 1, 2003 – September 2003 with 2003-2004 projections.

Ontario Ministry of Community & Social Services, (1984) **The Child and Family Services Act.** Toronto, Printer for Ontario.

Ontario Ministry of Community & Social Services (1998) **The Child Welfare Reform Agenda.** Toronto, Printer for Ontario.

O'Reilly, D., Cunningham, L. & Lester, S. (eds.) (1999) **Developing the Capable Practitioner - Professional Capability Through Higher Education**. London: Kogan Page Limited.

Orme, J. (2001***). Regulation or Fragmentation: Directions for Social Work Under New Labour.*** **The British Journal of Social Work 31(4)**

Owen, J. & Rodgers, P. (1999). **Program Evaluation: Forms and Approaches** London, Sage Publication.

The Oxford Library of Words & Phrases (1998) Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Parsloe, P. (1981) **Social Services Area Teams,** [Studies in the Personal Social Services Series, Stevenson & Hill (ed)] London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Parton, N. (1998) *Risk: Advanced Liberalism and Child Welfare – The Need to Rediscover Uncertainty and Ambiguity*. **British Journal of Social Work 28** pp 5-27.

Phillips, M. (1979) *Social Workers 'below standard'* ***The Guardian*** **20/09/79.**

Pierce, M. (1988) Professor of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology & Director of University of Georgia Athens Cancer Clinic…Lecture for Graduate Students.

Pincus, T. & Stein, M. (1995) *What is the Best Source of Useful Data on the Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis: Clinical Trials, Clinical Observations, or Clinical Protocols?* **Journal of Rheumatology 22.** pp.1611-1617.

Polansky, N. ed (1975) **Social Work Research: Methods for the Helping Professions Revised Edition** Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Pottinger, P. (1977) *Competency Assessment at School and Work.* ***Social Policy*** **8**

Powell J. (2002) *The Changing Conditions of Social Work Research.* **The British Journal of Social Work 32(1)** pp.17-33.

Powers, E. & Witmer, H. (1951) ***An Experiment in the Prevention of Delinquency: The Cambridge-Sommerville Youth Study*** New York, Columbia University Press.

Power, M. (1997) **The Audit Society: Rituals of Verification.** Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Pritchard, C. (1992) *Children's Homocide as an Indicator of Effective Child Protection: A Comparative Study of Western European Statistics*. **British Journal of Social Work 22(6)** pp. 663-684.

Pritchard, C. (1993) *Re-Analysing Children's Homicide and Undetermined Death Rates as an Indicator of Improved Child Protection: A Reply to Creighton* **British Journal of Social Work 23** pp. 645-652.

Pritchard, C. & Stroud, J. (2002) *A Reply to Helen Barnes' Comment on Child Homicide: A Review and Empirical Approach: The importance of Values and Evidence in Practice* **The British Journal of Social Work 32** pp. 369-373.

Raffe, D. (ed.) (1992) **Modularization in Initial Vocational Training: Recent Developments in Six European Countries** Edinburgh: (University of Edinburgh

Rankin, G. (August 5, 1974) *Personal view***. Social Work Today**

Raven, J. (1984).**Competence in Modern Society: Its Identification, Development and Release** Scotland:

Reason, P. (1988) ed. **Human Inquiry in Action: Developments in New Paradigm Research.** London, Sage.

Reder, P. & Duncan, S. (1999) **Lost Innocents: A Follow Up Study of Fatal Child Abuse** London, Routledge.

Reder, P. & Duncan, S. (2004) *Making the most of the Victoria Climbe Inquiry Report* **Child Abuse Review 13:** pp.95-114.

Reid, W. & Zettergren, P. (1999) *A Perspective on Empirical Practice* IN Shaw I & Lishman J (eds) (2003) **Evaluation and Social Work Practice** London, Sage.

Rein, M. & White, S. (1981) *Knowledge in Practice* **Social Service Review 55(1)** pp. 1-4

Rennie, G. (1996). paper presented at *Joint World Congress of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work* Hong Kong,

Research in Practice –**What's New** www.rip.org.uk/whatsnew

Richardson, A. Jackson, C. & Sykes, W. (1990) **Taking Research Seriously: Means of Improving and Assessing the Use and Dissemination of Research.** London, HMSO.

Robottom, I., & Colquhoun, D. (1992). *Participatory research, environmental health education and the politics of method.* **Health Education Research, 7,** pp.457-469.

Rodgers, J. (1979) **Adults Learning: Second Edition.** Milton Keynes: The Open University Press.

Rowntree, D. (1987) **Assessing Students: How Shall We Know Them?** London, Kogan Page.

Rubin A & Babbie E (1997) **Research Methods for Social Work – Third Edition** London: Brook/Cole Publishing

Russell, M. (1990) **Clinical Social Work: Research & Practice** [Sage Source Books for the Human Services #14] Newbury Park, Sage.

Ruzicka, L. (ed.) (1989). **Differential Mortality: Methodological Issues & Biosocial Factors** Oxford: Clarendon Press - Oxford University Press

Schein (1972) in Argyris, C. & Schon, D (1982) **Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness,** San Fransisco, Jossey-Bass Inc.

Schon, D. (1983) **The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action** London, Temple Smith.

Scott, D. (1989) *Meaning Construction and Social Work Practice* **Social Service Review 63** pp.39-51.

Scott, D. & Usher, R. (1999). **Researching Education: Data, Methods and Theory in Educational Enquiry** London, Cassell.

Seden, J. (2003) **Counselling Skills in Social Work Practice.** Towbridge, The Cromwell Press.

Shank, B. (1996) *Participating in Change - The Social Work Profession in Social Development* **Presentation at the- Joint Congress of Joint World Congress of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work in Hong Kong,**

Sharkey, S. (1990) *An Approach to Organizing the Undergraduate Social Science Major Around Learning Outcomes.* **Teaching Sociology 18**

Shaw, I. & Lishman, J. eds. (1999) **Evaluation & Social Work Practice** London, Sage Publications.

Shaw, I (2003) *Cutting Edge Issues in Social Work Research* **The British Journal of Social Work 33** pp.107-116.

Sheldon, B. & Baird, P. (1978) *Evaluating student performance* **Social Work Today 10 (16)** pp. 15-18.

Sheldon, B. & Chilvers, R. (2000) **Evidence-Based Social Care: Study of Prospects & Problems.** Dorset, Russell House Publishing.

Sheldon, B. & Macdonald, G. (1999) **Research & Practice in Social Care: Mind the Gap.** Exeter Centre for Evidence Based Social Services.

Shepard, G. & Parker-Whale, L. (1981) *A Competency Based Approach to Social Work Education: Does it Work?* **Journal of Education for Social Work**.

Sheppard M (1998) *Practice Validity, Reflexivity and Knowledge for Social Work.* **British Journal of Social Work 28**. pp. 763-781.

Shore M (1993) *Social Policy: The Wheels of Change* **American Journal of Orthopsychiatry** pp 498

Short, E. (ed.) 1984). **Competence: Inquiries into It's Meaning and Acquisition in Educational Settings** New York: University Press of America.

Shulman, L. (1992).**Core Skill Guide for Developing Competency - The Skills of Helping Individuals, Families and Groups** Illinois: Peacock Press.

Sieghart, M. (Jan 17 2001) *I'm Sorry for Social Workers* **The Times** p. 7.

Smalley, R. E. 1967).**Theory for Social Work Practice** New York:Columbia University Press.

Smith, M. Nursten, J. & McMahon, L. (2004) *Social Workers' Responses to Experiences of Fear* **British Journal of Social Work (34)**: pp 541 – 559.

Steinhauer P IN Steinhauer P.D. and Rae-Grant, Q. eds. (1983) *How to Succeed in the Business of Creating Psychopaths Without Even Trying* **Psychological Problems of the Child in the Family** New York, Basic Books.

Steinhauer P, Leitenberger M, Manglicas E, Paulker J, Smith R, & Boncalves L (1993) **Guidelines for Assessing Parenting Capacity.** Toronto: The Toronto Parenting Capacity Assessment Project.

Susman, G. & Evered, R. (1978) *An Assessment of the Scientific Merits of Action Research* **Adminstrative Science Quarterly 23**, pp. 582-603.

Sutton, C. (1987). **A Handbook of Research for the Helping Professions** London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd

Sydenstricker-Neto J (1997) **Research Design and Mixed Method Approach** – Cornell University: **http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/tutorial/Sydenstricker/bolsa.html**

Szewello-Allen H (undated) **Creating Field Curriculum in a Context of Change: An Examination of Field Education in Child Welfare –**unpublished paper Vancouver, University of British Columbia.

Ten Downing Street (2003) **Children's Minister Sets out first steps in joining up Services.** London, HMSO.

Thames Valley PQ in Child Care Partnership (Dec 2000a) **Submission to CCETSW of Programme Leading to the Post Qualifying Child Care Award**

Thames Valley PQ in Child Care Consortium (July 2000b) **Resubmitted Tender for the provision of Post Qualifying Child Care Programmes.**

Thames Valley PQ in Child Care Partnership (January 2001a) **Programme Handbook – Intake One**

Thames Valley PQ in Child Care Partnership (January 2001**) Module One Handbook– Working Directly with Children & Young People.**

Thames Valley PQ in Child Care Partnership (Summer 2001) **Module Two Handbook – Working with Parents and those with Parental Responsibilities.**

Thames Valley PQ in Child Care Partnership (September 2001) **Module Three Handbook –Working with the Family and the Wider Environment.**

Thames Valley PQ in Child Care Partnership (2001**) Practice Assessor and Candidate Handbook.**

The Independent (30 April 2004) **EDITORIAL & OPINION: It would be simplistic and wrong to vilify all social workers over the Toni-Ann case.** p 38.

Thompson, N. Osada, M. & Anderson, B.(1994) **Practice Teaching in Social Work: A Handbook 2cd Edition** Birmingham, PEPAR Publications.

Toohey, S. Ryan, G. McLean, J. & Hughes, C. (1995), *Assessing Competency Based Education and Training: A Literature Review.* **Australian and New Zealand Journal of Vocational Education and Training** pp. 86-117.

Toop, L. 1993). (Assessment Steering Group - Competency Based Training Working Party, Canberra,

Training Organisation for the Personal Social Services (TOPPS) (June 2000) **National Occupational Standards for Child Care at Post Qualifying Level.**

Trinder, L. 1996) *Social work research: the state of the art (or science).* **Child and Family Social Work, 1 (4)** pp. 233-242.

Trinder L (2000) *Evidence Based Practice in Social Work and Probation* IN Trinder L & Reynolds S ed. **Evidence-Based Practice: A Critical Appraisal** Oxford, Blackwell Publishing.

Trinder L (2003) Introduction: *The Rise of Evidence-Based Practice.* IN Trinder, with S. Reynolds ed. **Evidence-Based Practice: A Critical Appraisal**, Oxford, Blackwell Science

Trocme N, Mertins-Kirkwood B, MacFadden R, Alaggia R, Goodman D, (1999) **Final Report - Ontario Risk Assessment Model Phase 1: Implementation and Training** Toronto: Centre for Applied Social Research for the Ministry of Community and Social Services

Trocme, N. & Chamberland, C. (2003) *Re-involving the community: The need for a Differential Response to Rising Child Welfare Caseloads in Canada* in Trocme, N. Knoke, D. & Roy, C. eds. **Community Collaborations & Differential Response: Canadian and International Research and Emerging Models of Practice**. Ottawa Centre for Excellence in Child Welfare Child, The Welfare League of Canada.

Trocme, N. Fallon, B. McLaurin, B. & Copp, B. (2002) **The Changing Face of Child Welfare Investigations in Ontario: Ontario Incidence Studies of Reported Child**

Abuse & Neglect (OIS 1993/1998) Toronto: Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare, University of Toronto, Ministry of Community & Social Services Government of Ontario Child Maltreatment Division, Health Canada Bell Canada.

Tsui, M. & Cheung, F. (2004) *Gone with the Wind: The Impacts of Manageralism on Human Services,* **The British Journal of Social Work 34:** pp. 437-442.

Tunstill, J. & Aldgate, J. (2000) **Services for Children in Need: From Policy to Practice (Studies in Evaluating the Children's Act)** London, HMSO.

United Nations (1989) **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 19.** New York, United Nations.

University of East London (2001) **Research Report on Newly Qualified Social Workers.** http:www.uel.ac.uk/

Utting, W. (1997) **People Like Us: The Report of the Review of the Safeguards for Children Living Away from Home**. London, The Stationery Office.

Waterhouse R (2000) Lost in Care :The Waterhouse Report into Child Abuse in Wales. London, HMSO. www.doh.gov.uk/lostincare.

Weber, R. & Polansky, N. (1975) *Evaluation* IN **Social Work Research: Methods for the Helping Professions Revised Edition** Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Wheatley, M. (2003-2004) *Supporting Pioneering Leaders as Communities of Practice* **OCACAS Journal 47(2)** pp. 24-32.

Wiggins, G. (1998) **Educative Assessment**. San Francisco, California, Jossey-Bass.

Wilczynski, A. (1994) *The Incidence of Child Homicide: How Accurate are the Official Statistics?* **Journal of Clinical Forensic Medicine 1** pp.61-66.

Wilczynski, A. (1997) **Child Homicide** London, Greenwich Medical Media.

Wilkins, P. (2000) IN Humphries, B. ed. **Research in Social Care & Welfare: Issues and Debates for Practice** London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Woodward, J. & Mayhew, C.(2003) **Implementation Plan: Looking After Children at the Children's Aid Society of Ottawa.**

York, R. (1997) **Building Basic Competencies in Social Work Research: An Experiental Approach.** Boston, Allyn & Bacon.

York R (1998) **Conducting Social Work Research: An Experiential Approach.** Boston: Allyn & Bacon

Zigler, E & Hall, N. (1999) **Child Development and Social Policy** Boston, McGraw Hill.

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

SHARON VITALI

APPENDIX A

Data Collection Flow Chart & Instruments

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

SHARON VITALI

APPENDIX B

Correspondence to Participants

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

SHARON VITALI

APPENDIX C

Reports & Documents for Thames Valley Post Qualification Child Care Award Consortium & the General Social Care Council.

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

SHARON VITALI

APPENDIX D

Ontario Child Protection Training Programme Materials

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE: POST QUALIFICATION TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

SHARON VITALI

APPENDIX E

Supplementary Tables and Figures

CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY

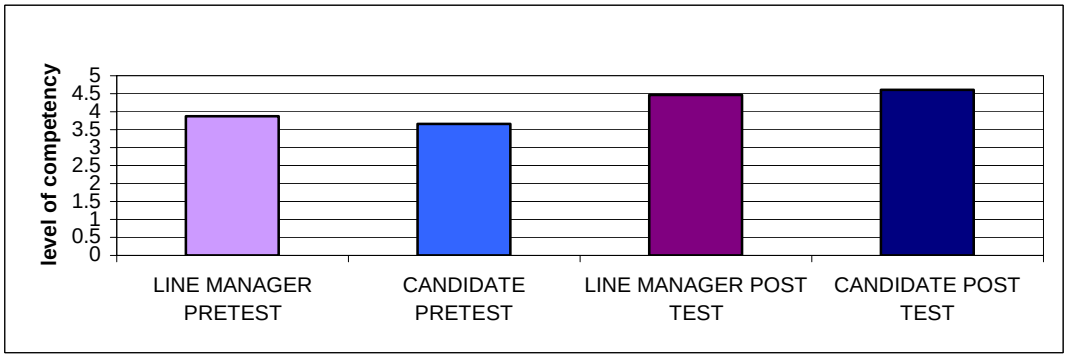
by candidates (pre & post tested)
by line managers (pre & post tested)

Scale for Levels of Competence:

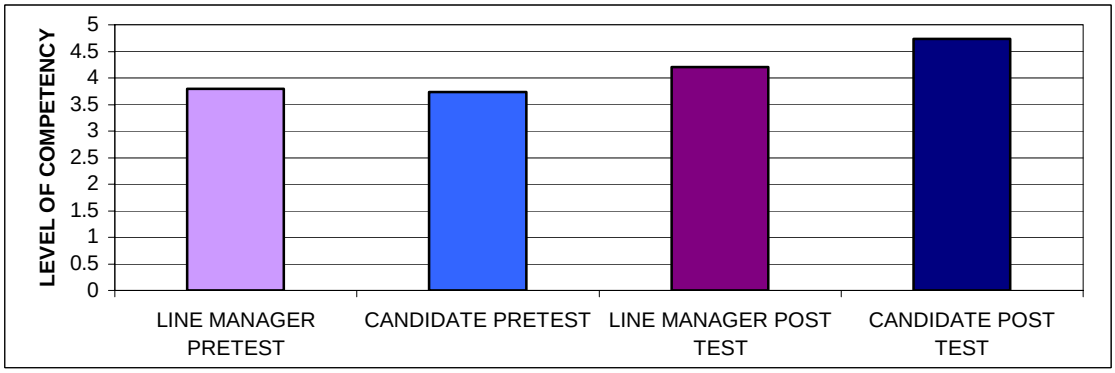
1 = **Cannot** produce any evidence of competence.
2 = Understands the learning outcome, but can produce only **limited** or no evidence of appropriate attempts to put it into practice. Much more knowledge/practice needed.
3 = **Understands**, and can offer evidence of **tentative** attempts to integrate into current knowledge/skill base
4 = Demonstrates competence with **some regularity**.
5 = **Consistent and appropriate** application of skill /knowledge as part of personal style.

Competencies (Learning Outcomes):

1) Able to identify and articulate the main dimensions of human growth and development required for optimal development.

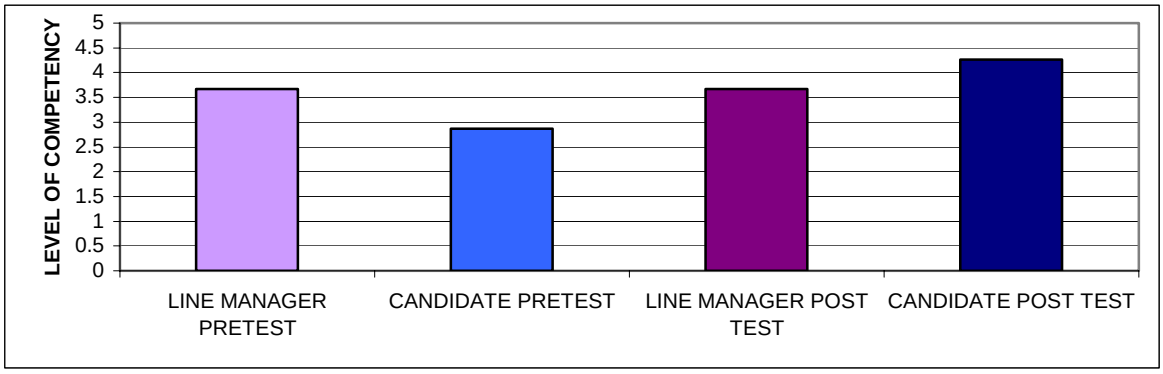


2) Able to identify and critically evaluate the impact of factors which prevent or enable optimum development.

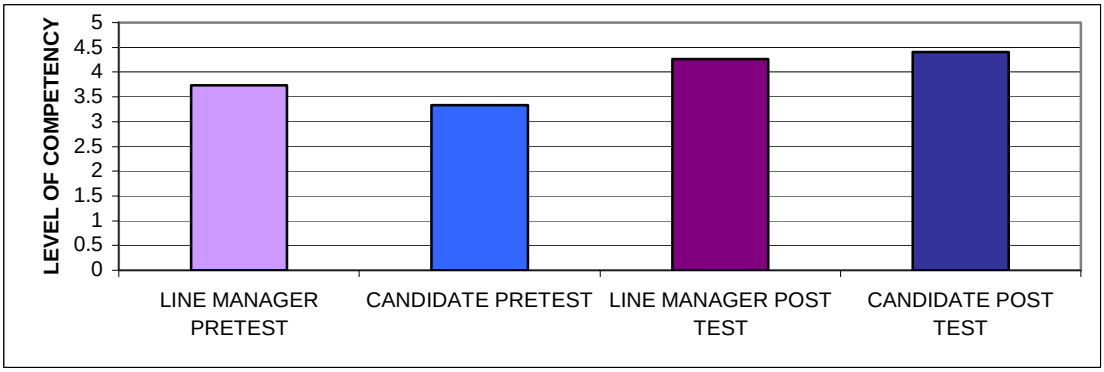


©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

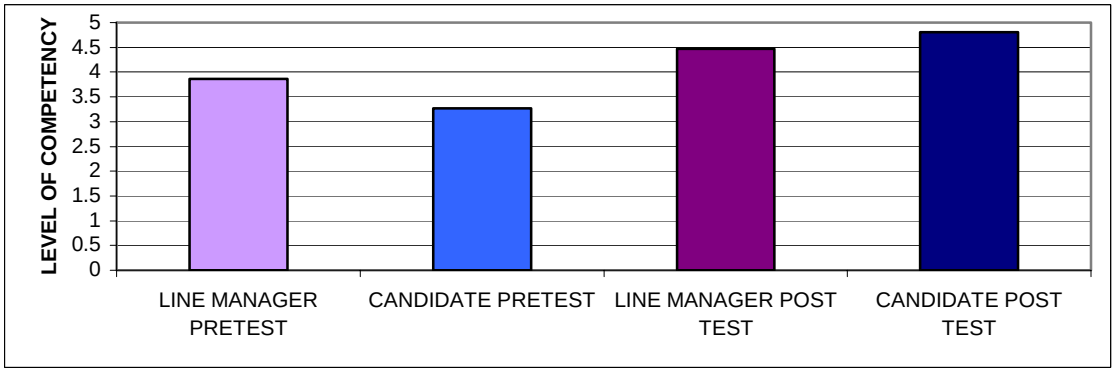
3) Able to critically analyse research which informs practitioners about the development of identity.



4) Able to critically evaluate the impact that group or substitute care has on child development.

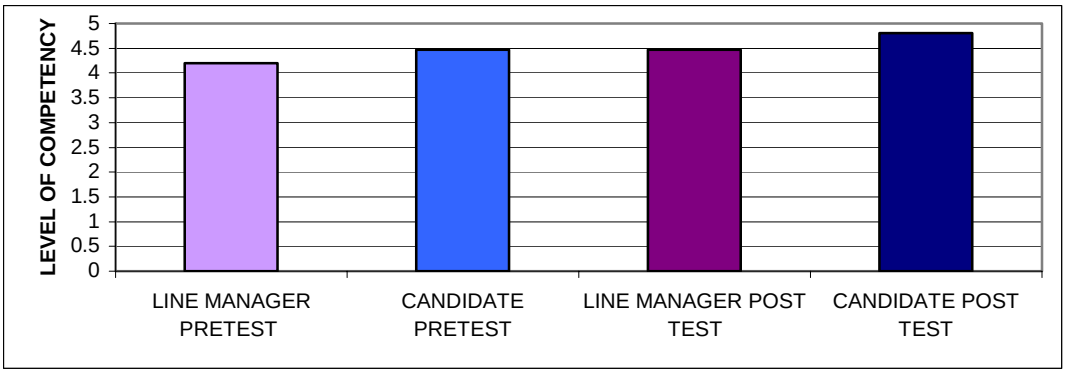


5) Able to apply a model of child observation or assessment.

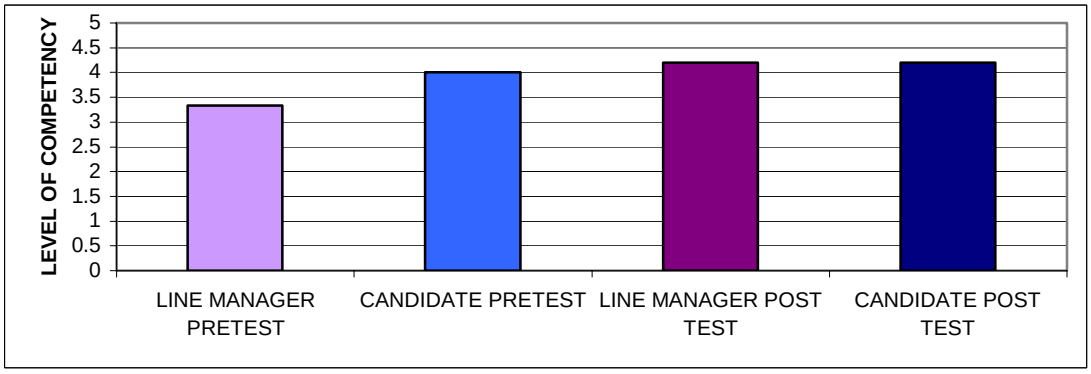


©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

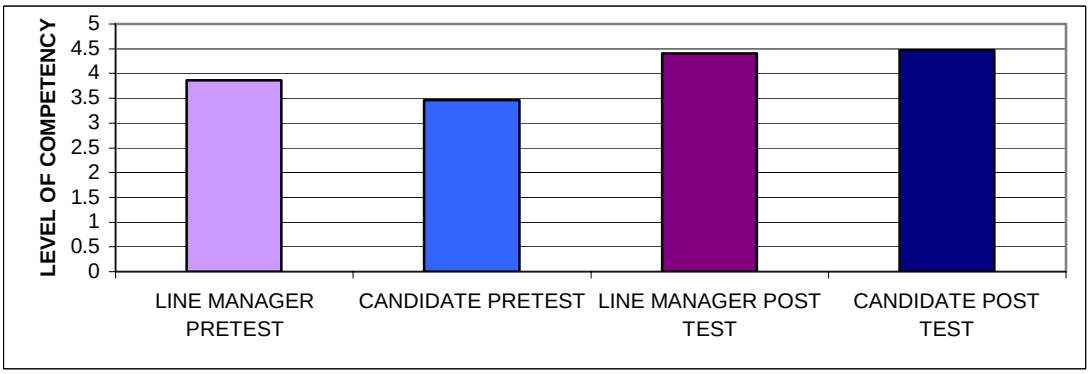
6) Able to assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved.



7) Able to identify and evaluate the influence of communities of interest and geographic communities on child development.

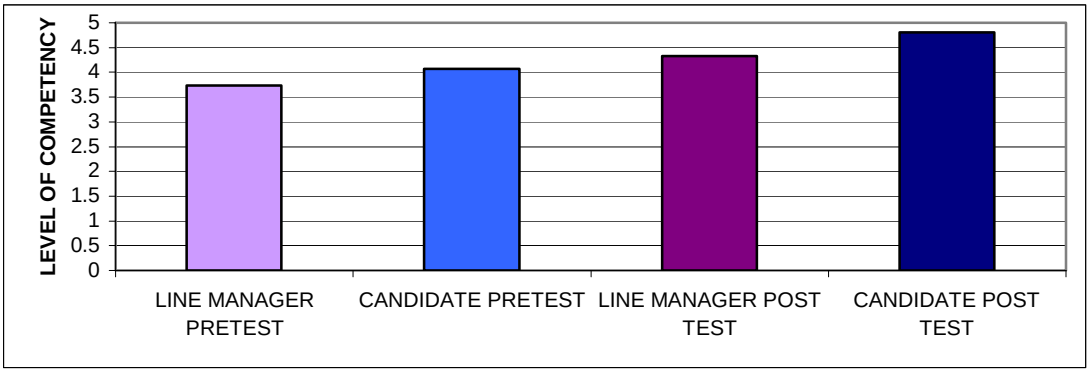


8) Able to critically analyse the macro and micro elements of good parenting which lead to optimal outcomes.

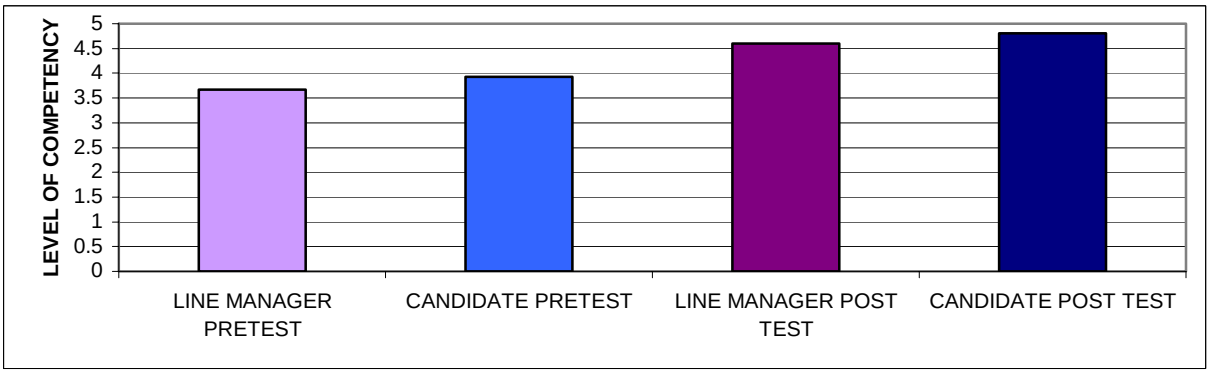


©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

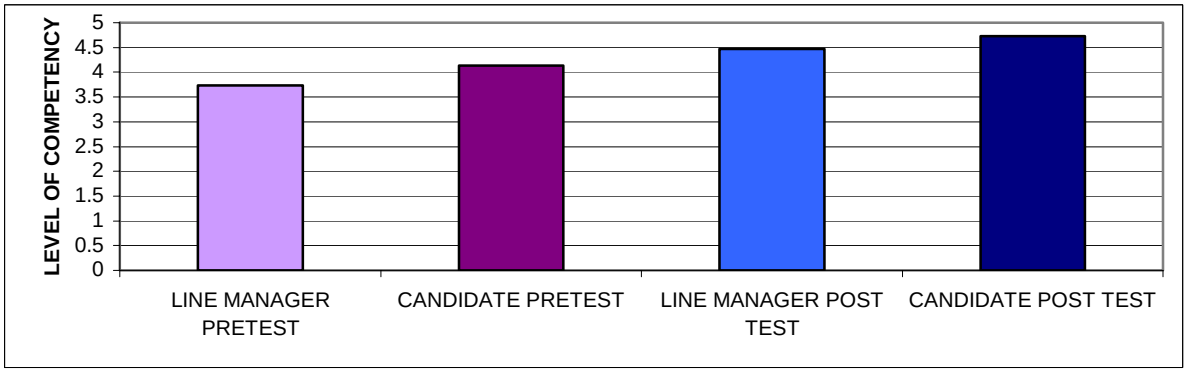
9) Able to identify and critically evaluate the range of factors which promote or diminish parental functioning.



10) Able to use risk assessment frameworks.

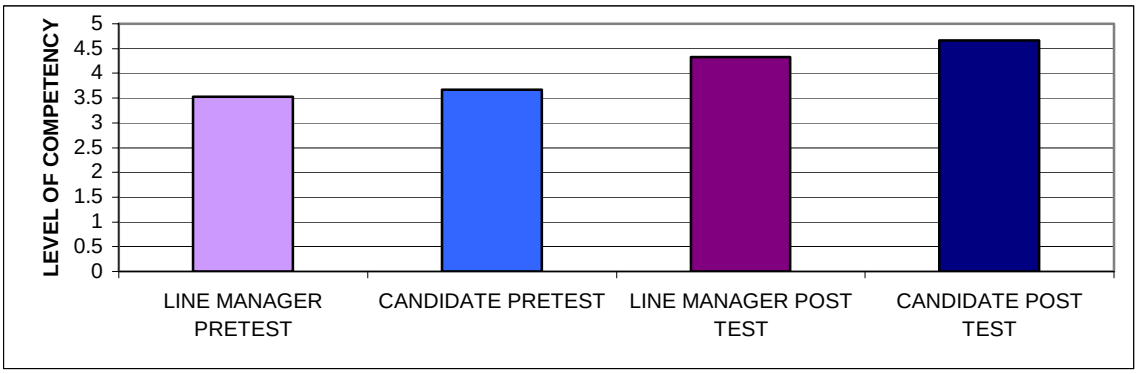


11) Able to critically evaluate the influence of environmental, economic, and social factors on the lives of children, young people and families.

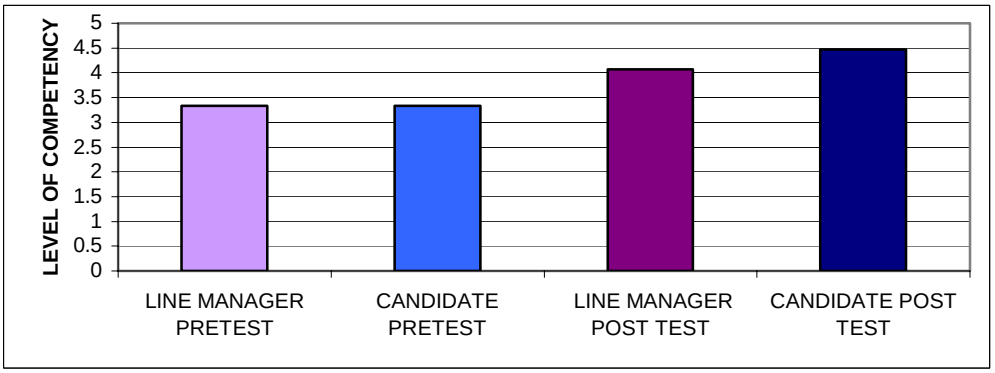


©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

12) Able to articulate the rationale for corporate parenting and critically evaluate its effectiveness.

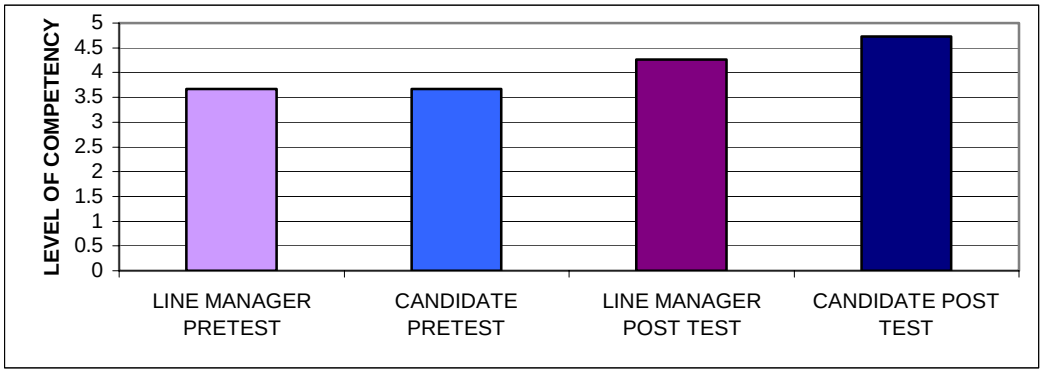


13) Able to articulate and evaluate strategies for managing conflict and violence.

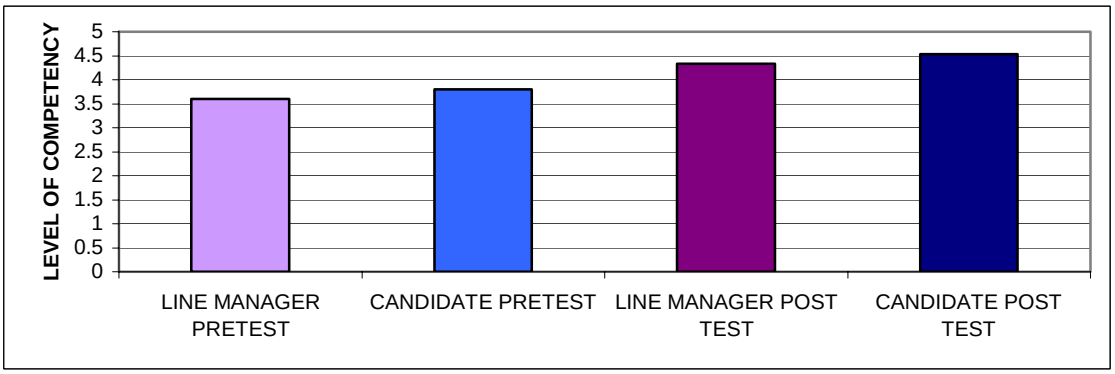


14) Able to explain the philosophy, rationale and scope of child care policy, local procedures and legislation which underpins work with children, young people and their families.

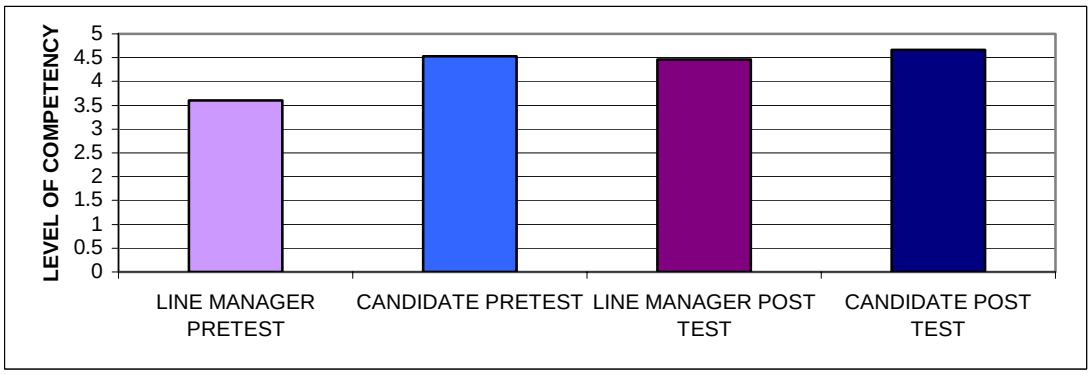
©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002



15) Able to critically analyse the impact these policies, procedures and legislation have on children, young people and their families.

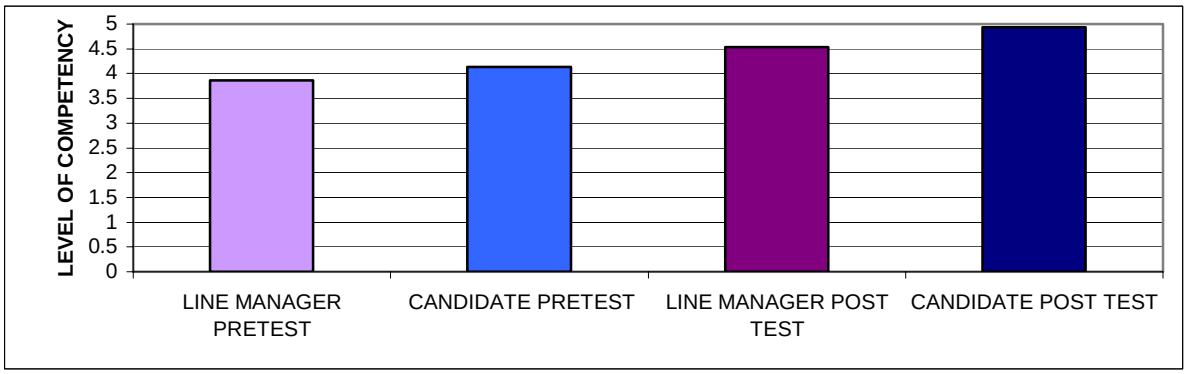


16) Able to articulate the roles and responsibilities of other professionals and agencies and the contribution they make to achieving optimal options.

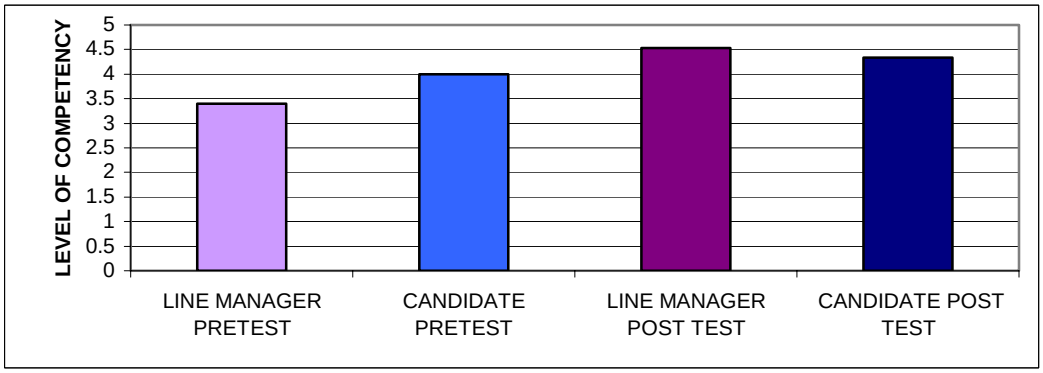


17) Able to identify and analyse the legal responsibility and accountability of social workers in relation to legislation and their employing agency.

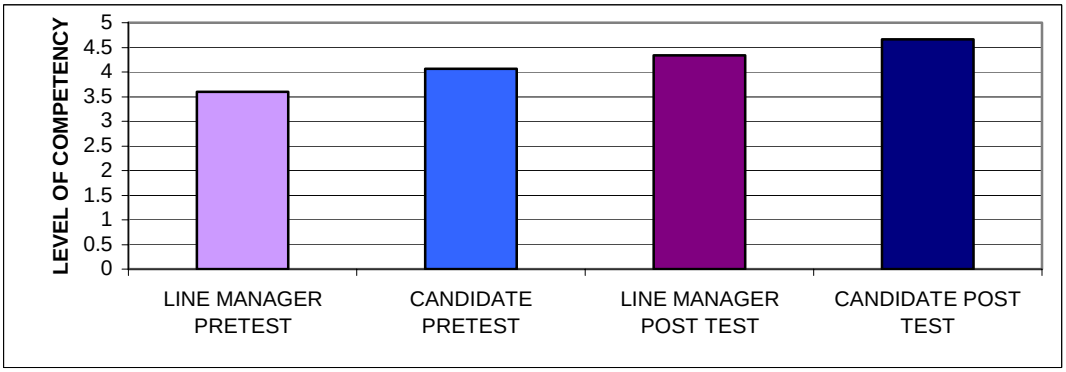
©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002



18) Able to demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive repertoire of theories for practice, social work methods, and current child care research which can be used to achieve optimum outcomes for children, young people and their families.

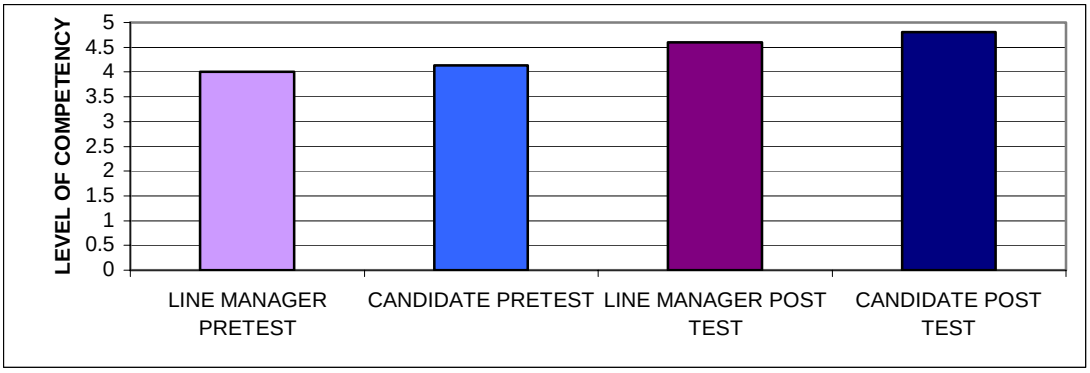


19) Able to evaluate the use of self in social work practice and the influences of personal beliefs and attitudes on judgement.

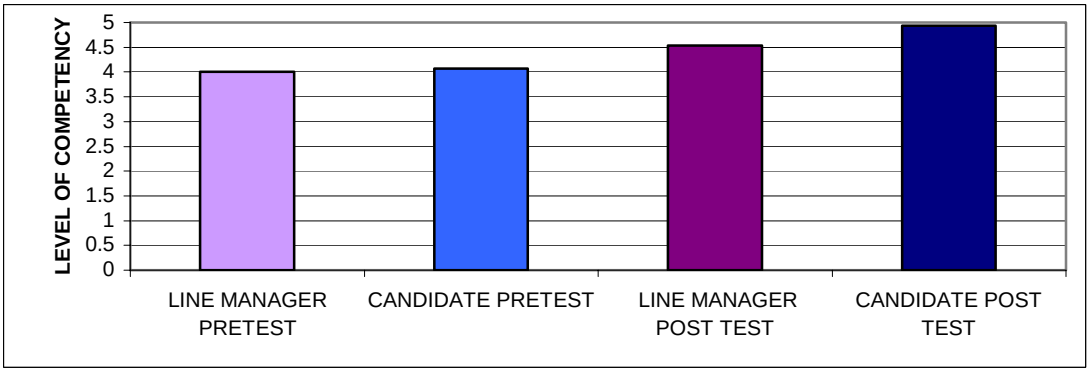


©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

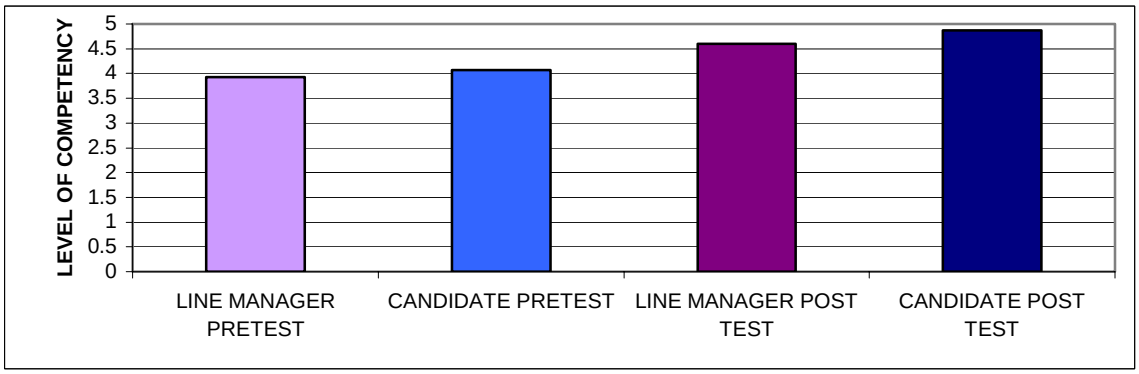
20) Able to engage with children and young people, ensuring their appropriate participation in decisions that affect their lives.



21) Able to identify and assess the developmental progress of children and young people, taking into account all the main dimensions of development.

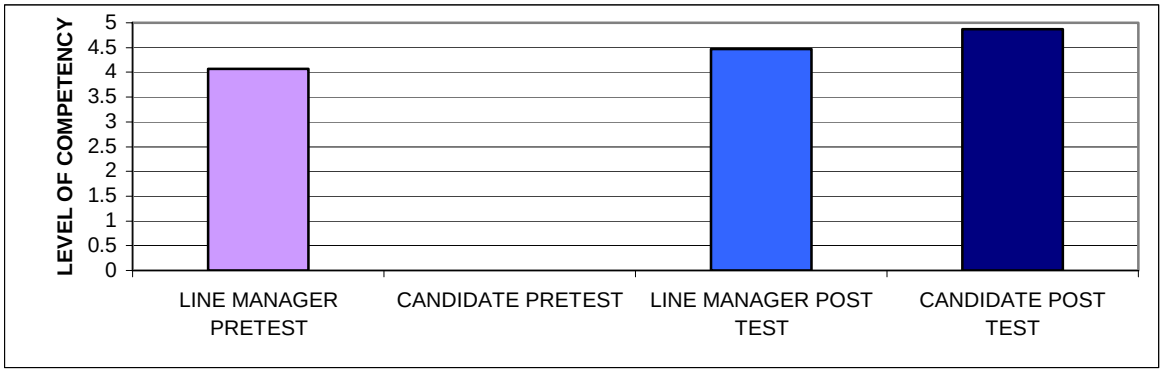


22) Able to assess, plan, and implement direct work with children and young people and review the outcomes

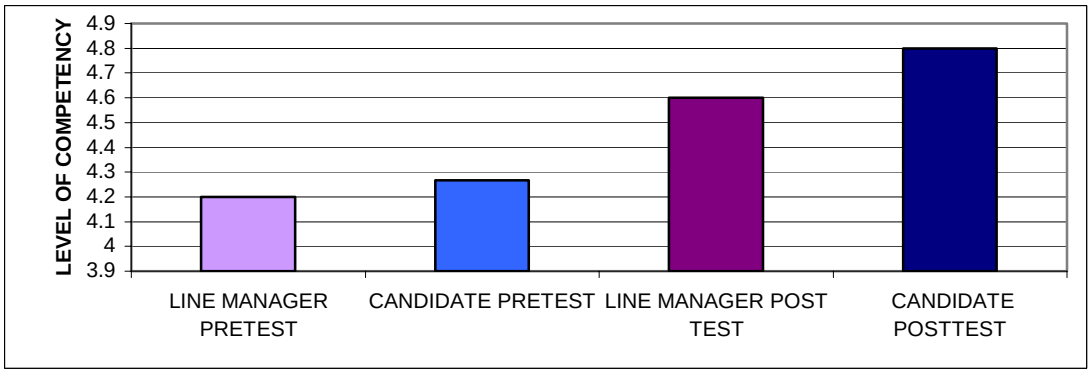


©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

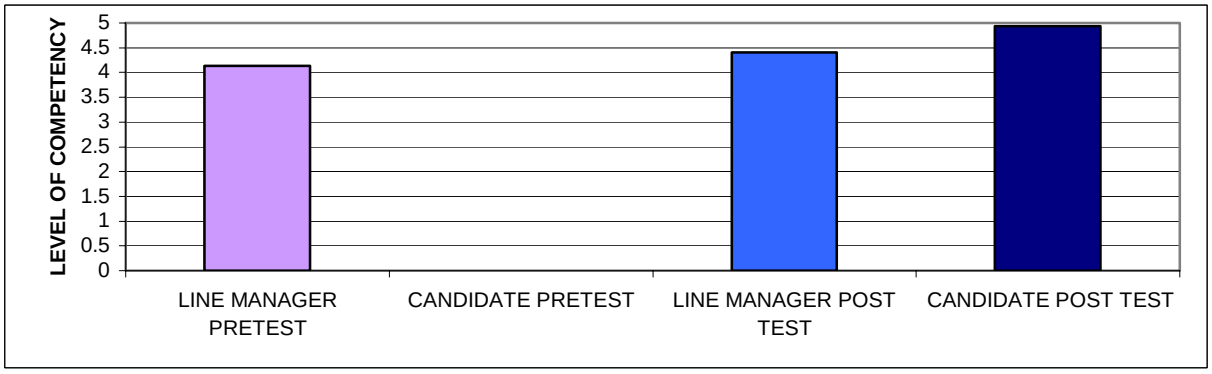
23) Able to develop effective working partnerships with those with parental responsibility, carers and significant others in the life of the child/young person.



24) Able to assess, plan, implement and review the delivery of services to support the parenting task.

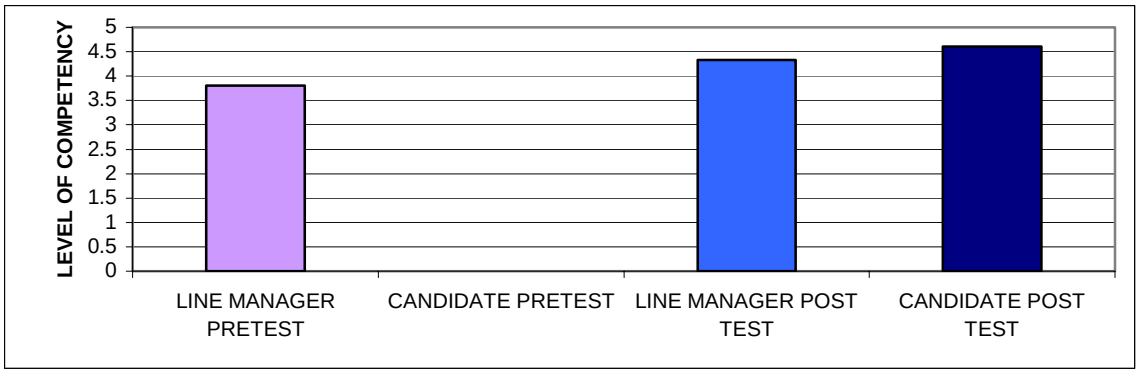


25) Able to assess parental capacity, building on strengths and identifying risk of serious harm.

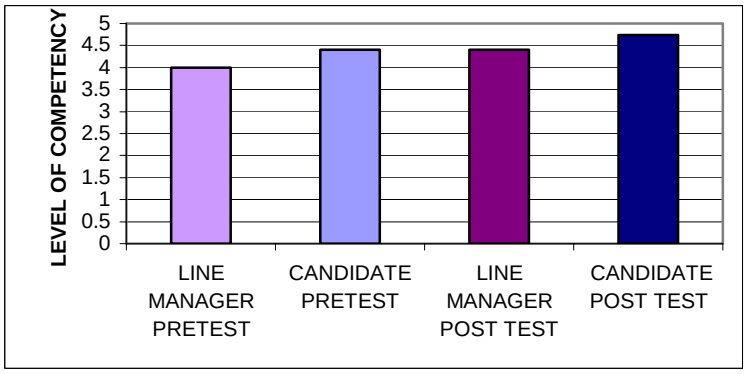


©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

26) Able to identify, manage and mediate conflicts that impact upon the child or young person's life.

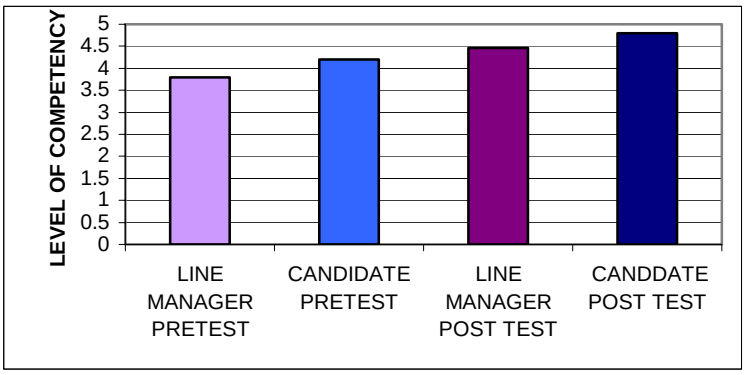


27) Able to formulate needs led assessments which take full account of potential strengths and weaknesses of the child or young person's networks and communities, acknowledging diversity and the role of oppression.

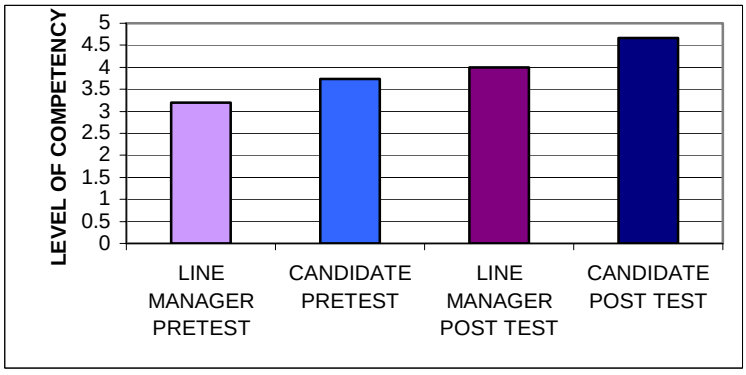


28) Able to contribute to effective inter agency working within the areas of planning, managing, delivering and reviewing services, in order to provide an integrated service and range of resources.

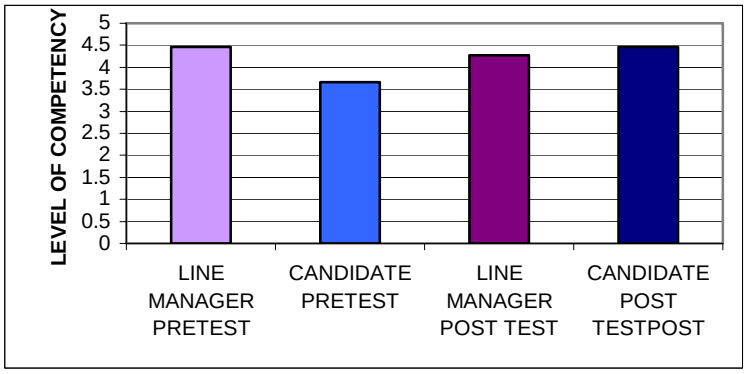
©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002



29) Able to work with neighbourhoods, communities, family networks and locale to identify service needs

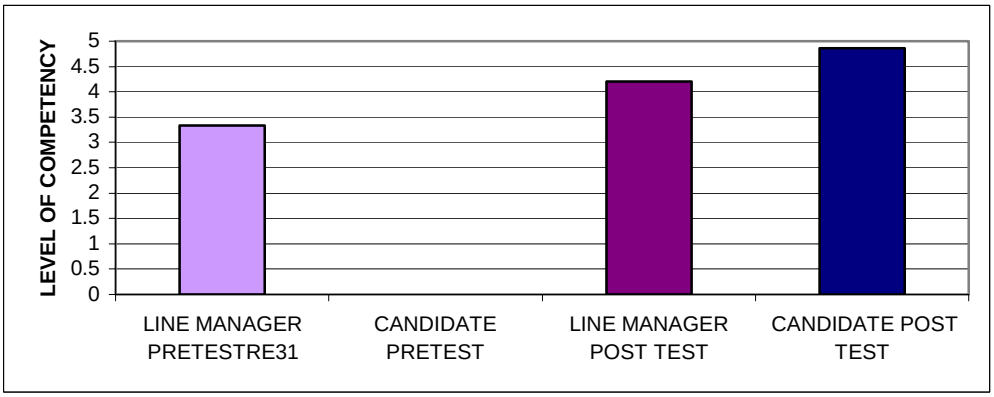


30) Able to identify needs and gaps in services, and contribute appropriately to corporate and strategic planning processes.

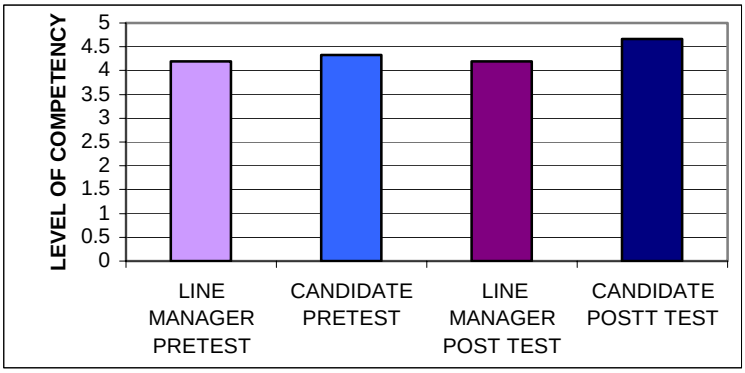


©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

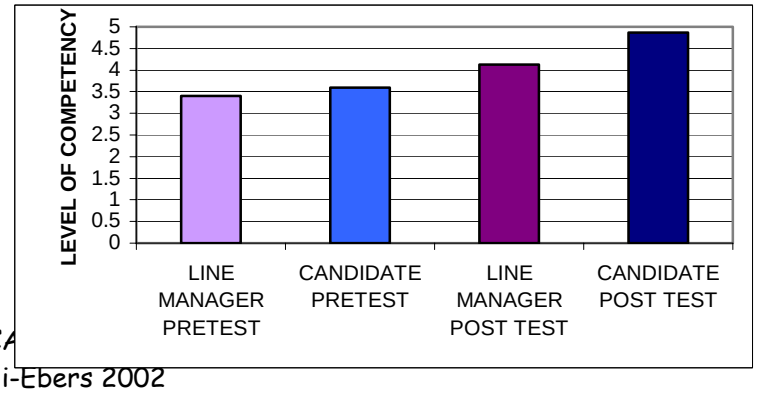
31) Able to critically analyze and evaluate local child-care policy and contribute to the development of models of best practice.



32) Able to work effectively within the legal framework.

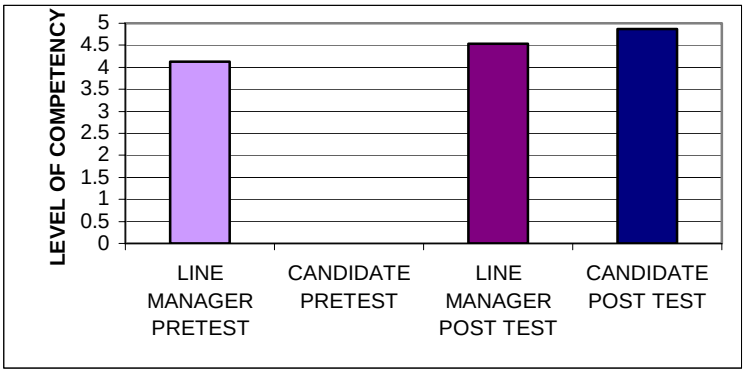


33) Able to work within and critically evaluate national and agency structures, policy and procedures.

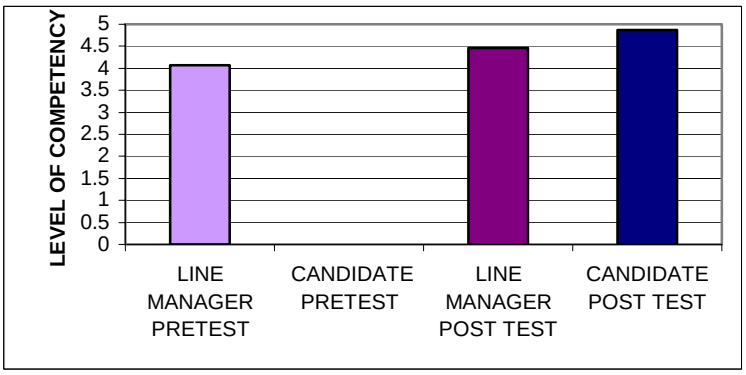


©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

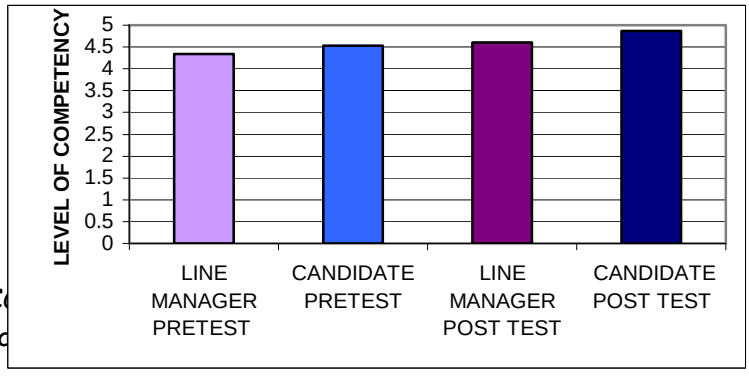
34) Able to compile and complete statutory documentation and present the issues to a formal hearing.



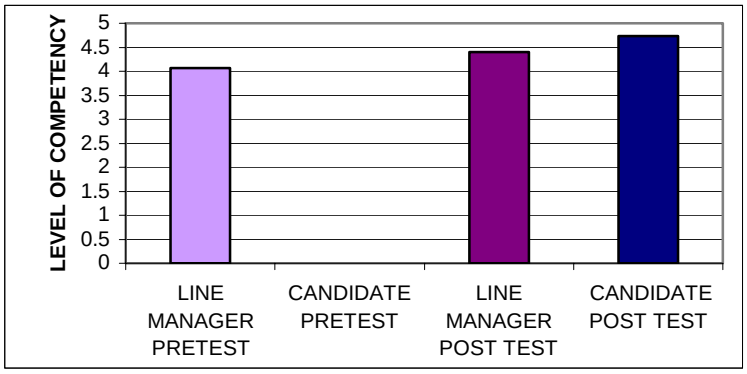
35) Able to keep accurate records and provide reasoned verbal and written reports to promote effective decision making and accountable practice.



37) Able to take responsibility for own professional development.



38) Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training.



©S.Vitali-Ebers 2002

REPORT FOR GENERAL SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL – MARCH 2002
CONTENTS:

1.0 Introduction & Context

2.0 Methodology

3.0 Quality Assurance Mechanisms

4.0 Pre-Test Report (January 2001)

5.0 Post Module One Report (May 2001)

6.0 Post Module Two Report (September 2001)

7.0 Post Module Three Report (December 2001)

8.0 Practice Assessor Feedback

9.0 Portfolio Feedback

10.0 Post Program Report

11.0 Summary & Overview

1.0 Introduction:

☑ This report is the product of a collaborative relationship struck between the Thames Valley Child Care Award Consortium, and this author since the Spring of 2000.

☑ Whilst teaching Social Work at a Canadian University, I was hired by our Government as a consultant for the development and institution of a parallel, competency based educational program for child protection workers. I moved to the UK before the programme was evaluated, and accordingly was particularly keen to evaluate the pilot year of the TVC programme for the field research of my D.Phil in Comparative Social Policy at the University of Oxford.

2.0 Methodology:

☑ Adopting a ***participant observer role***, I became fully involved throughout the development and delivery of the Programme to the first (2001) Cohort. Instrument design, modification and data collection methodology developed in congruence with programme design. Some of the instruments had been piloted in Canada, but required modification to meet the needs of this study.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS:

A1 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA
A2 LINE MANAGER INPUT

B1 PRETEST - CANDIDATE - PROGRAMME EXPECTATIONS & SOURCES OF ANXIETY
B2 PRETEST - LINE MANAGER- PROGRAMME EXPECTATIONS & SOURCES OF ANXIETY
B3 PRETEST – LINE MANAGER – EVALUTION OF CANDIDATE'S COMPETENCY LEVELS IN LEARNING OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS)

C1 PRETEST – CANDIDATE – IPSATIVE EVALUATION OF COMPETENCY LEVELS IN MODULE ONE LEARNING OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS)
C2 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE – IPSATIVE EVALUATION OF COMPETENCY LEVELS IN MODULE ONE LEARNING OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS)
C3 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE - SOURCES OF DISTRESS – MODULE ONE
C4 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE – SATISFACTION & SUGGESTIONS FOR MODULE ONE

D1 PRETEST – CANDIDATE – IPSATIVE EVALUATION OF COMPETENCY LEVELS IN MODULE TWO LEARNING OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS)
D2 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE – IPSATIVE EVALUATION OF COMPETENCY LEVELS IN MODULE TWO LEARNING OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS)
D3 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE - SOURCES OF DISTRESS – MODULE TWO
D4 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE – SATISFACTION & SUGGESTIONS FOR MODULE TWO

E1 PRETEST – CANDIDATE – IPSATIVE EVALUATION OF COMPETENCY LEVELS IN MODULE THREE LEARNING OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS)
E2 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE – IPSATIVE EVALUATION OF COMPETENCY LEVELS IN MODULE THREE LEARNING OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS)
E3 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE - SOURCES OF DISTRESS – MODULE THREE
E4 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE – SATISFACTION & SUGGESTIONS FOR MODULE THREE

F1 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE – PROGRAMME EXPECTATIONS & SOURCES OF STRESS
F2 POSTTEST – LINE MANAGER – PROGRAMME EXPECTATIONS & SOURCES OF STRESS
F3 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE – DEMOGRAPHICS, EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, TIME ANALYSIS, PROGRAMME SUGGESTIONS, ETC
F4 POSTTEST – LINE MANAGER – DEMOGRAPHICS, EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, TIME ANALYSIS, PROGRAMME SUGGESTIONS, ETC
F5 POSTTEST – CANDIDATE – IPSATIVE EVALUATION OF COMPETENCY LEVELS IN LEARNING OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS)
F6 POSTTEST – LINE MANAGER– EVALUTION OF CANDIDATE'S COMPETENCY LEVELS IN LEARNING OUTCOMES (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS)

MPF MENTOR FEEDBACK DOCUMENT – FEEDBACK COLLECTED FROM PRACTICE ASSESSORS

PMF PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT FEEDBACK DOCUMENT – FEEDBACK COLLECTED FROM MEMBERS OF THE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

☑ Candidates and Line Managers completed the questionnaires independently of each other, and with no referencing back to pre-tests, (with a one year interim for line managers)

thereby reducing the tendency towards incremental ranking against reference point and ensuring maximum objectivity of these responses.

☑ All completed documents were returned sealed by the respondent with the assurance of confidentiality. All feedback was reported anonymously and in aggregate, thereby ensuring the privacy of participants.

☑ Where appropriate, collected data was coded in quantitative form and entered into SPSS for analysis. Qualitative data was collated and reported whilst ensuring complete anonymity.

☑ Employing an ***action based research philosophy*** (where the subjects of the research benefit from the findings on an immediate and ongoing basis the intended and unintended impact of the programme was explored, and looped back to the appropriate body...curriculum committee, assessment committee, program management committee or Program Director.

☑ Immediate, anonymous feedback from candidates, line managers, and practice assessors to the Consortium, ensured maximum quality assurance, contemporaneous improvement and refinement of the programme during its delivery.

☑ At the conclusion of the first offering of the programme, the efficacy of the programme was evaluated and recommendations provided to the Consortium. This document forms part of that report.

3.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISM:

After the first intake (January 2001) a pre-test report (Section 4.0) was submitted to the Programme Management Committee to ensure immediacy of feedback for changes that could be instituted in the programme delivery and within partner agencies.

Subsequent to the completion of each module, a full evaluation report (Sections 5.0, 6.0, 7.0) was provided to the Curriculum Development Committee and Assessment Committee who then actioned changes that addressed concerns and complaints of the candidates.

Candidates, line managers and practice assessors were guaranteed complete anonymity in their feedback, enabling a quality assurance mechanism with maximum **candour**.

At each Programme Management Committee meeting a report was given, although any matters of more urgency were directly relayed to the Programme Director for response.
On completion of the first year of the programme, the Management Committee was provided with a presentation of the evaluation report, of which this document is a summary.

More detailed analysis and suggestion for further action will be collated into reports specific to the Committee, which is empowered with the responsibility for the area under discussion.

Modified instruments have been developed for the Consortium for ease of on-going quality assurance.

4.0 PRE-TEST REPORT (January, 2002)

4.1 General Comments and Suggestions:

☑ The candidates were quite receptive and positive about involvement in the external evaluation.

☑ In general compliance with the questionnaire instructions was quite high. Although there was some evidence of reading fatigue by the end of the second questionnaire in about 1/3 of the group.

☑ The vast majority of candidates had difficulty with the wording of the knowledge and performance outcomes... and complained that they were articulated in 'academic language' that was not familiar to them. (Note: these outcomes were extracted from the official documents).

☑ Candidates also expressed frustration and confusion about conflicting guidelines in the manuals/handbooks and other written materials (although they were understanding that the materials were produced under severe time constraints).

TVC ACTION:
☑ The manuals and handbooks have been re-written, guidelines and expectations clarified, information better organized and consistency ensured.

☑ Candidates and line managers expressed frustration where the candidates from one Agency (and team) were split into different University sites.

TVC ACTION:
☑The rationale for this policy (equity and viability of all three HEI sites) has been discussed and revised to avoid this for future intakes.

☑ The candidates were extremely keen to have an opportunity to express their concerns and frustrations in an anonymous channel (as evidenced by their spontaneous discussions at induction, and subsequent emails).

☑ The Programme demonstrates openness to the expressed concerns of the candidates (as evidenced by emails from Steve Farnfield). The challenge will be for the Management Committee to effect some changes that would respond to these concerns. Some may simply be intrinsic to the entire process and the current political and occupational climate, and therefore will be feed back to the Department of Health and CCETSW.

☑ Some concerns (ie: delay in Agency payment of fees SHOULD be addressed immediately, as this sabotages students by preventing their access to library resources).

TVC ACTION:
☑ The factors that led to this concern have been fully explored, and the 2002 intake have experienced a radically improved efficiency of induction.

4.2 Candidate Expectations & Motivations:

☑ ALL candidates were attending with a strong commitment to increasing their general social work skills (63 % strongly motivated) and specifically their childcare skills (73% strongly motivated).

☑ 60% of the group were there because the line manager had advised the to attend, and 40% have been sent by their employing agency. There is a great deal of resentment expressed by individuals who feel they were 'forced' and some who were told to attend 'at the last minute'. The Agencies need to respond to this as candidate motivation and staff morale is jeopardised.

TVC ACTION:
☑ This concern returned to the Agencies to explore further.

☑ 73% of the candidates are motivated by the impending government requirement to attend the course

☑ ALL candidates were highly motivated by the opportunity for intellectual stimulation (63% strongly motivated), and were extremely keen to update their theory (80% strongly motivated).

☑ A desire to improve assessment skills (90% strongly motivated), learn how to use research to inform practice (70% strongly motivated), evaluating their own practice (93%), (improve skills in applying scales and instruments (80% strongly motivated) increase skills/knowledge needed in court work (60%), improve their use of reflective practice (56%), was identified.

☑ Almost all candidates were looking to improve their general and specific confidence in their work tasks, and 73% were hoping to learn something to help them in their work with difficult families.

☑ 73% were highly motivated to increase their skills as a supervisor/mentor/trainer, and 60% were hoping to use the course to build toward further academic qualifications. Furthermore, 73% were hoping that the programme would increase their chances of promotion and 73% were hoping that the qualification would make them more attractive in the job market.

☑ 80% of the candidates expressed a desire to increase their self-awareness of his/her own value and prejudicial biases.

☑ *** There was a strong negative correlation with completion of the PQ1. This is beyond the scope of this study, but needs to be addressed as 60% felt very strongly that their experience of the PQ1 reduced their motivation for this programme.

TVC ACTION:
☑ This observation, and related concerns about the PQ1 programme have been addressed at the Management Board level, and the PQ1 will be explored more fully

4.3 Strongest Motivations & Expectations in Order

☑ Increase child care skills
☑ Learn how to utilize research to inform practice
- ☑ Increase knowledge of current theory
- ☑ Prepare for future government requirements
- ☑ Increase general social work skills
- ☑ Increase attractiveness on the job market
- ☑ Intellectual stimulation

- ☑ Increase confidence in assessments
- ☑ Increase ability as a trainer/supervisor
- ☑ Earn credit towards an academic degree
- ☑ Have protected time for structured learning
- ☑ Improve ability to evaluate own practice
- ☑ Time away from the stress of work
- ☑ Increase self-awareness of value and prejudicial biases
- ☑ Increase ability and use of reflective practice

4.4 Candidate Anxieties/Frustrations

- ☑ There was a great deal of anxiety and frustration expressed by the candidates and much of it was expressed in narrative outside the structured questions.

TVC ACTION:
☑ Narrative concerns were subsequently listed and explored in detail, with immediate responses (including correspondence meetings with the candidates. Programme changes and improvements instituted immediately wherever possible, or considered and prepared for the next Cohort.

- ☑ There was significant concern that the line managers /other workers / government / CCETSW did not understand the amount of work that the programme demanded of them. Candidates asked that the Universities educate Line Managers about what was being expected of them.

TVC ACTION:
☑ Line managers more actively engaged by inclusion in the 2001 Conference, and more fully integrated into the 2002 Cohort in numerous stages of the Programme.

- ☑ Most candidates were very concerned that there was not sufficient protected time at the work place (due to current understaffing, lack of adequate resources provided to hire in replacement staff).

TVC ACTION:
☑ This concern was returned to the Agencies who despite their best efforts continued to struggle as a result of lack of qualified social workers and resources available. This matter requires attention at a higher policy level.

- ☑ 80% of the candidates expressed significant concern about stress levels related to the juggling the demands of work, home, and the programme.

TVC ACTION:
☑ There was a significant commitment to the well being of candidates, and this was demonstrated by the availability/support of tutors, extensions granted, etc, and evidenced by the significant number of candidates who completed the programme successfully.

- ☑ Some candidates expressed concern about the resentment their teammates might feel if extra work was imposed upon them as a result of the candidate being involved in the program.

- ☑ Candidates expressed natural anxieties about returning to the role of a student, particularly, the amount of reading required (83%), producing written assignments (75%), presenting in front of a group (45%), exams (62%), being evaluated by the tutors (45%), having their practice evaluated (55%).

TVC ACTION:

☑ The Curriculum Committee and tutors were particularly attuned to this and ensured that appropriate formative assignments were instituted to assist candidates with calibrating their study/writing skills against the academic assignments. This issue received further discussion and planning in advance of the 2002 Cohort, and continues to remain under scrutiny and revision for the next intake.

- ☑ 62% of the group were anxious about the possibility of failing, and 34% were concerned about job security as a result of the programme.

TVC ACTION:
☑ As noted above, the tutors continue to make improvements to the academic programme and assessments modalities (ie: formative & summative to ensure that they are assisting the candidates in their re-entry to academic expectations and work).

- ☑ A small number of candidates were anxious about using the library, using computers, and being a mature student on campus.

TVC ACTION: The 2002 Cohort experienced a more in-depth induction process designed to address these concerns in a proactive manner.

- ☑ 28% expressed concern about transportation issues, and this was particularly the case where candidates from the same agency were split into different University sites.

- ☑ A great deal of spontaneous anxiety was expressed about the portfolio, especially related to being able to produce the evidence required for the competencies, and the amount of time and work required for this component.

TVC ACTION: The shortness of time between approval and start up of the Programme during the 2001 Cohort resulted in difficulties with MODULE FOUR (the portfolio and practice assessment process). A number of remedial mechanisms were instituted including .....PAM AND ... AND SUE@S REWRITE.....SUE CAN YOU FLESH THIS OUTR????

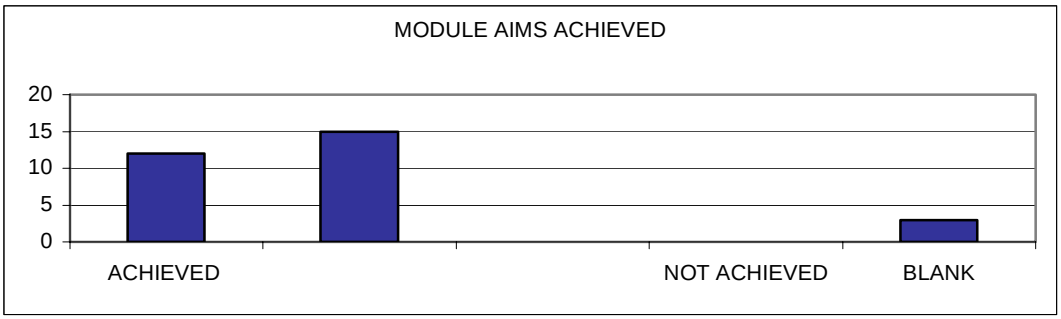
- ☑ A few candidates were concerned that they would be bored with the content of the programme, and/or wished they could be taking a more specialized curriculum.

4.5 Strongest Anxieties and Frustrations in Order:

- ☑ Impact of combined stress of work and the program
- ☑ Getting enough protected time from work
- ☑ Completing written assignments
- ☑ Amount of reading required
- ☑ Possibly failing
- ☑ Exams
- ☑ Speaking in front of peers
- ☑ Possible stress at home as a result of the programme demands
- ☑ Having practice evaluated

5.0 CANDIDATE SATISFACTION FOR MODULE ONE (post-test) (May 2001)

5.1 To what extent have the aims of the module been achieved?



BCUC:

☑ Good teaching handouts appreciated
☑ Aims have been achieved within the great constraints of time that have applied.
☑ Timescales have been very tight
☑ We discussed many areas... but some briefly

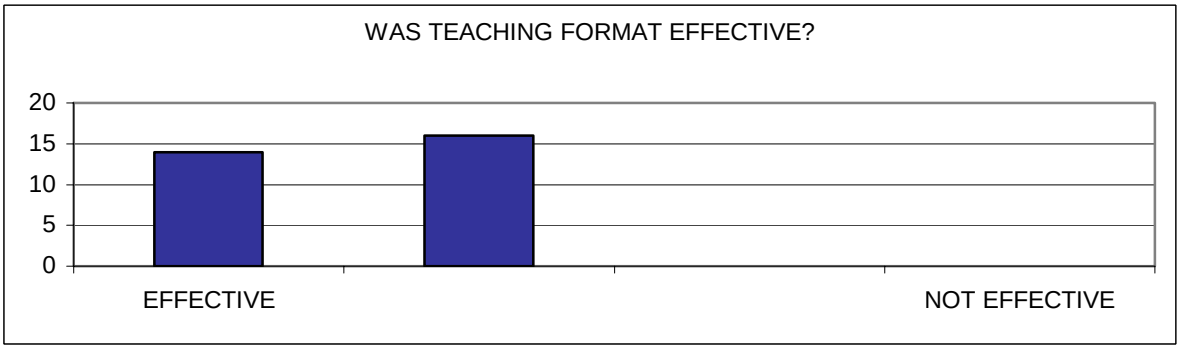
READING:

☑ I have developed greater understanding and knowledge of development and attachment theory and related it to my area of work
☑ Learnt more about attachment theories/issues and impact on carer(s). Learnt about development, interview techniques/tools/skills AND analysis of responses
☑ Most areas have been touched on – issues of race need more discussion as does mental health and teenagers
☑ Can't comment on specific aims without reference to the written materials

OXFORD BROOKES:

☑ Very interesting – however far too fleeting on too many areas and not enough time on any one topic
☑ Appropriate lecture topics, room for discussion
☑ I have become much more child focused and theory based
☑ I have gained really useful knowledge on child development and attachment
☑ Achieved, although more time was needed
☑ Lots of theories to absorb...stimulating
☑ Would have liked more time to fully embrace the topics. Superb module
☑ A working knowledge of attachment theory with the opportunity to test out lecture subjects has been welcome

5.2 Was the teaching format effective?



BCUC:

☑ Extremely, I enjoyed the balance of relaxed humour, encouragement, and presentation of theory

☑ Excellent, would have preferred longer period of time
☑ Format was participative and informative. Relaxed and enjoyable learning environment established
☑ Handouts were good, but brief

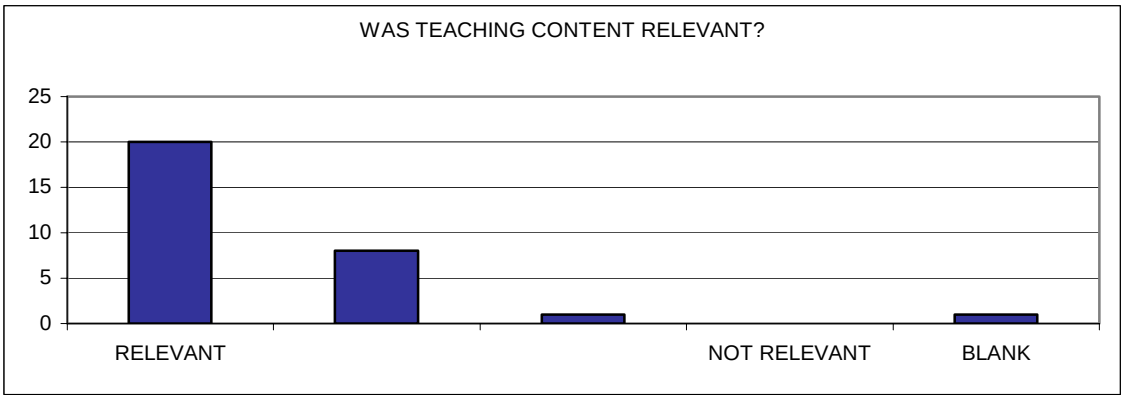
READING:

☑ On occasion it was a bit like Island Hopping, but good content and lots of discussion
☑ Yes, but more time needed to go over areas needing more explanation
☑ Casual style took some getting used to
☑ Would say yes...if it had been followed all the time
☑ Fairly effective, however, often erratic and unstructured which made it difficult to follow topics and link to handouts

OXFORD BROOKES:

☑ Brought to life by 'real' examples – both tutor and student provided
☑ Effective style and format of presentation material
☑ Course tutor was excellent, his style, approachability, knowledge, etc.
☑ Module could have been longer to undertake more case studies
☑ Enjoyable
☑ Subject brought alive by lecturer
☑ Interactive – flexible, felt able to contribute
☑ Excellent teaching format. Delivery was appropriate and thought provoking
☑ Rushed at times, but enjoyable

5.3 Was the teaching content relevant?



BCUC:

☑ Nice mix of cognitive, behavioural and psychodynamic theory
☑ Reading material and handout very useful
☑ Course content has been directly applicable to practice
☑ All relevant to daily work with children & families
☑ A pity the rest of the SSD hasn't got a clue about what we are learning, so they don't understand when we discuss things
☑ Majority of it
☑ Content was relevant, simply needed to be more focused and structured

READING:

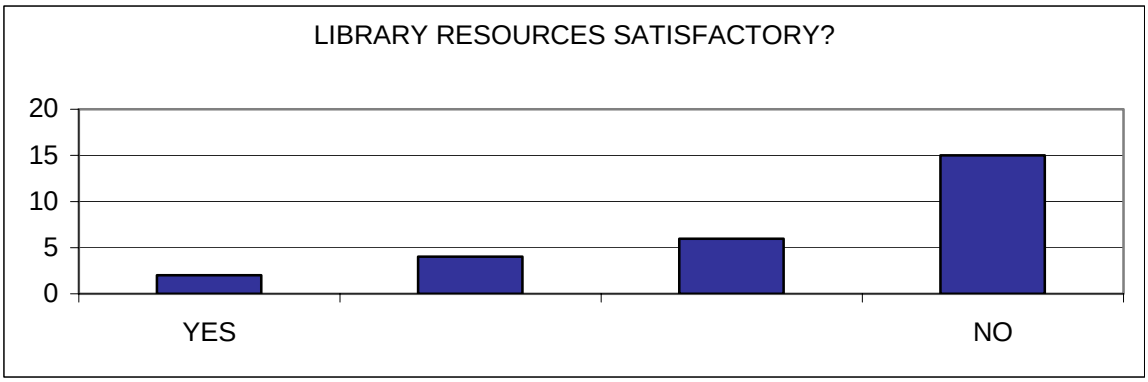
☑ More so to some students than others

OXFORD BROOKES:

☑ Very relevant
☑ Very interesting, needed longer on it all
☑ I have used all of it in my practice
☑ Spot on. I was left with a desire to go away and incorporate newly learned skills into practice

☑ Yes, although not what my daily work would be

5.4 Have you found the library resources for this module satisfactory?



BCUC:

☑ Getting access to the library was delayed at the start of the course. I have found few of the recommended books in the library
☑ 4-5 weeks before library card was issued. Limited range of books
☑ OK Have not used the library a great deal
☑ It took 4-5 weeks to get (temporary) library card issued

READING:

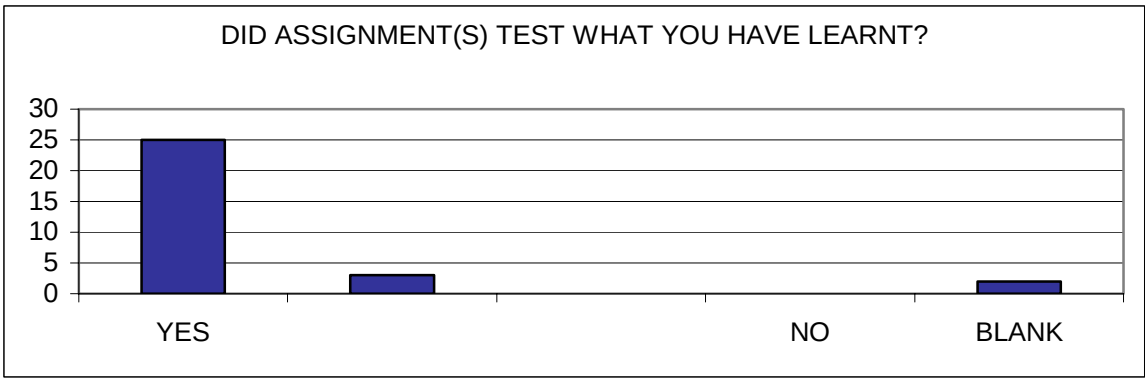
☑ I did not use the library for this module. I relied on personal and work resources.
☑ Books available but very old! Newer books on list...library do not have.
☑ Great to have access to the library
☑ Didn't use the library so far
☑ Many books outdated

OXFORD BROOKES:

☑ No real range of books available or resources – on order/on loan...etc.! Also, did not have valid library cards until week 7/8
☑ I haven't had time to use the library!
☑ Too far from home, so I do not use the library, struggle having to carry them and ensuring they are returned on time.
☑ Very hard to access primarily research. Some recent publications not available.
☑ We have a supply of relevant books at the office
☑ Delay in issue of library card
☑ Lots of limited books not in the library
☑ Difficulty in finding enough time to make effective use of library
☑ A resource not as yet used.
☑ Okay, however, being in for one day only made access to certain material impossible

TVC ACTION: Some Agencies set up 'in house' libraries.
Induction procedures tightened for 2002 Cohort, which ensured faster library/computer access.

5.5 Did the assignment(s) test what you have learnt?



BCUC:

☑ Useful to do to show guidance of what was learned
☑ Assignments related closely to course content
☑ Although 1500 words for assignment was short to express what we had learned

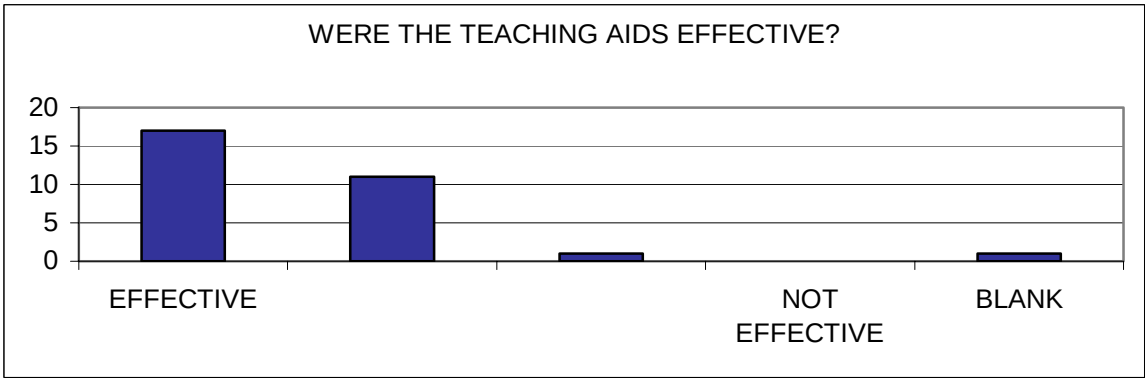
READING:

☑ Required a lot of focus and did test knowledge – Sometimes difficult to pick out relevant bit from wealth of information presented
☑ Yes, but only first assignment completed so far
☑ Useful procedures, but very stress provoking
☑ Very relevant
☑ I could have written much more than 500 words
☑ Especially re: attachment theory

OXFORD BROOKES:

☑ Cannot comment on this...too early...not enough feedback as yet
☑ Format cannot fail to do this

5.6 Were the teaching aides (videos, audiotapes, workbooks, readings, etc.) effective?



BCUC:

☑ Good mix and balance
☑ Relevant videos/audio material

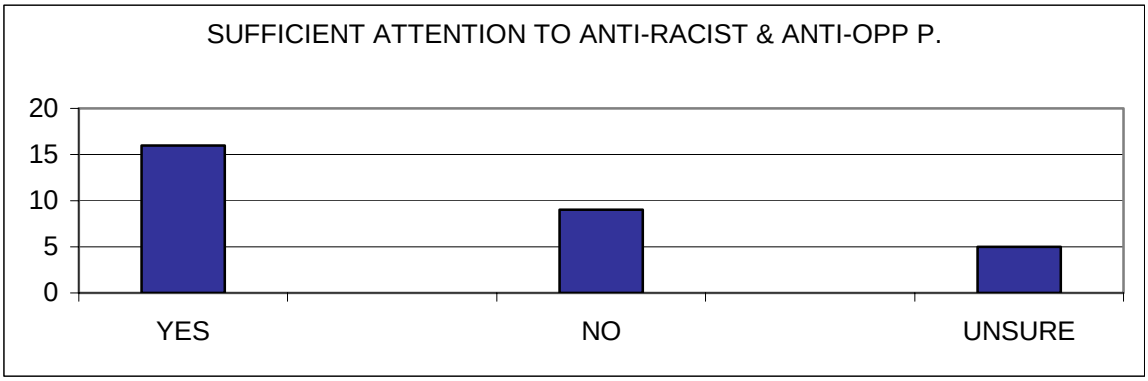
READING:

☑ On the whole – very good sometimes it felt narrative stems a bit overdone
☑ Access to material the problem

OXFORD BROOKES:

☑ Very appropriate for the course
☑ Just the right amount

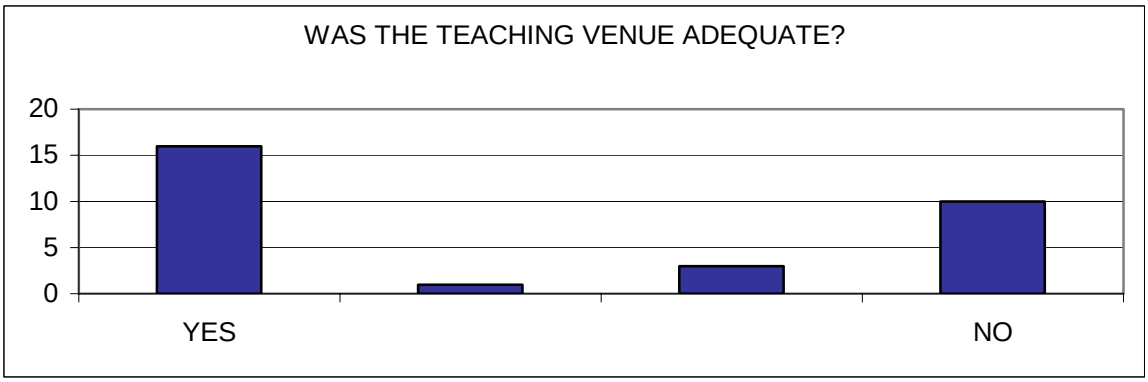
5.7 Did the module pay sufficient attention to racism and anti-oppressive practice issues? (If no, please indicate which areas needed more attention):



☑ Not really...but I think this is a criticism of the new assessment framework
☑ Both aspects touched on but brief on ALL aspects
☑ Brief... .but OK given time limit
☑ NO...Not covered at all
☑ Impact of racism on child development/identity/self-esteem needs to be covered
☑ Just sufficient...having the time, this could have been extended
☑ Limited time to go into depth, adequate, but could have done more with more time
☑ No—neither
☑ Culture/race barely touched on
☑ Like most of the course content, we could have spent more times, esp with regard to statistics on mixed race children in care
☑ Appropriate attention paid throughout course

TVC ACTION: Both the Curriculum Committee and the Management Committee were extremely vigilant regarding matters related to minorities, anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice within the Programme. Wherever possible the emphasis on these matters was enhanced within the existing curriculum of 2001 by extracting examples within candidate's practice. More comprehensive revision and enhancement was achieved for the 2002 curriculum.

5.8 Was the teaching venue adequate?



*** Note the 13 candidates who were dissatisfied with the venue were all at the Oxford Brookes site.

BCUC:

- ☑ Room somewhat cold
- ☑ A little cold in the room

READING:

- ☑ no comments

OXFORD BROOKES:

- ☑ Room totally inhospitable...lacking air, space, etc.
- ☑ Room too small, we were squashed in, and very little room for manoeuvring
- ☑ Room very small and airless
- ☑ Lack of day light in room
- ☑ Too hot
- ☑ Room too small, inadequate
- ☑ Poor, but interest in the course content soon overtook this
- ☑ Room stuffy and overcrowded

TVC ACTION: Oxford Brookes managed to secure alternate teaching space for next module.

5.9 The three best things about this module were:

- ☑ Course tutor was excellent...his style, approachability, knowledge, etc.
- ☑ New and innovative teaching methods
- ☑ Good group – able to share with others
- ☑ Learnt new skills / insight
- ☑ New information on narrative stems – Tutor's expertise
- ☑ Mixing with other professionals
- ☑ Encouraging relaxed informative teaching style
- ☑ Interesting and varied topical content
- ☑ An accepting and good group to work in (very well established and facilitated)
- ☑ Course content esp. story stems and the tutor!
- ☑ Discussion with fellow colleagues – support and shared experiences
- ☑ Actual theoretical evidence/studies
- ☑ Having a lunch break/study time
- ☑ The group's dynamic/size
- ☑ Teaching methods
- ☑ Support systems/tutor
- ☑ Reference to further learning to improve practice
- ☑ Interactive learning approach
- ☑ Learning in more depth about attachment
- ☑ Tools for direct work..eg. Story stems, etc. and analysis
- ☑ Group sharing/support/learning

☑ Learning to do skilled direct work with children
☑ Learning about the development of personality
☑ Learning about the child's inner world
☑ Mutual stimulus – lecture style
☑ Reflection
☑ Immediately applying theory to practice
☑ Attachment theory
☑ Back to basics – and detailed
☑ Group discussion and live examples
☑ Good range of materials to use
☑ Learning new relevant issues
☑ Being away from the office and using new skills
☑ Learning about attachment theory
☑ Meeting other professionals
☑ Having time to reflect on practice
☑ Excellent tutor !!!!
☑ The subject – children really being the focus for change
☑ The group
☑ Being away from work
☑ Informative
☑ Enabled me to reflect more on how I work with children
☑ A day a week away from the office
☑ Crittenden & Bion
☑ Discussion on working tools/assessment packs
☑ Story stem analysis
☑ Good group environment (eg. learning environment)
☑ Interesting care studies
☑ Learning more about attachment theory
☑ I learned a new method of working
☑ Very relevant to my work
☑ I enjoyed the discussion of case material
☑ The chance to look at some current research and literature
☑ Taking time out to do some reading (note enough)
☑ Crittenden paper
☑ Learning on attachment, generally
☑ New skills learnt re: narrative stems, flow charts, tools generally
☑ Tutor is very knowledgeable
☑ In depth look at attachment theory
☑ Talking about practice with the other social workers
☑ Getting to meet others and hear about other jobs
☑ Learning more about attachment theory esp. Critterdon paper
☑ Having ideas of where to go to get more information
☑ The Tuesday sessions at college
☑ The learning that has taken place
☑ The impact that the learning has had on practice
☑ Interesting information
☑ Up to date research
☑ Ability to have time to reflect on practice
☑ The group size, dynamics
☑ Learning
☑ Teaching method – tutor
☑ Opportunity to look in depth at attachment theory and what it means for children's well being
☑ Opportunity to put theory into practice
☑ Time to reflect upon practice
☑ Knowledge gained
☑ Group

☑ Tutor
☑ Being able to apply knowledge to practice
☑ Examining current research
☑ Away from the stress of workplace
☑ Working model of attachment as an assessment tool
☑ Seminar discussions
☑ Time out of work to reflect
☑ Stimulation of new material
☑ Many case discussions
☑ Learning new techniques

5.10 Three things I would like changed in this module are:

☑ More time to reflect
☑ More information on child development
☑ More IT info...ie: better prepared with regard to ID and library
☑ The room (OXBR)
☑ The difficulty in accessing reference material
☑ Recognition of time needed must be acknowledged
☑ Admin. arrangements better in place at the start
☑ A better stocked library
☑ Quicker and clearer information about the possibility of achieving linked academic awards
☑ More time..more time..more time !!!
☑ Shorter break – one hour rather than two
☑ Reading time
☑ More time and only one assignment!
☑ Fewer subjects to cover
☑ Less reading materials/ more books in library
☑ Bombardment of source material with the time framework
☑ More time to cover the material
☑ Distribution of notes/papers for reading the week prior to teaching
☑ Audio-visual tapes...more examples of these and for candidates to contribute with prior warning and preparation
☑ Shorter lunch
☑ Help with accessing reading from the Library
☑ Change in word count for assignment. too short.
☑ Expectations about accessing primary research
☑ Concentrate more on particular areas
☑ Change of room
☑ Better access to library
☑ Two hour lunch break is too long
☑ Afternoon sessions more structured
☑ More focused reading time (possibly in afternoon)
☑ The room (OXFORD BROOKES)
☑ More time
☑ More time for interventions
☑ Make sure that there is support for people who may have personal issues come up
☑ More time to look in-depth at specific ages
☑ More time to look at interventions
☑ More lecture time
☑ A reading week half way through
☑ Afternoons a bit unstructured – more teaching time needed
☑ Not enough space in module for completion of two assignments – we are doing the second one in the holidays.
☑ Better access to resources eg. more relevant books in library

☑ Quicker access to student ID card (took 6 weeks to get – B)
☑ More time on attachment theory to gather with other child development theories
☑ More help with internet learning
☑ More library books – esp. gov't publications
☑ A reading week in middle to catch up
☑ Longer teaching day
☑ A reading week
☑ I think it would have been better if we had been given 6 months away from the workplace to do the course
☑ More time looking at candidates prepared…videos or listening to audio cassettes.
☑ This way not really possible as candidates did not begin preparing them until the end of the course
☑ A structured reading week built into the course
☑ Longer lectures and less tutorial time
☑ Afternoon sessions
☑ Some small group work needed
☑ Lectures to be more structured and less waffly
☑ A reading day
☑ Do 2 assignments have to be the same
☑ More time – module feels very compressed
☑ More clarity re expectations
☑ Practice assessors not to have any direct input into session as happened on one occasion during this module
☑ Fewer assignments
☑ More reading time associated
☑ Greater communication with managers
☑ Cover fewer subjects in more depth
☑ Less reading material due to time
☑ Only one assignment
☑ More time so that I could actually enjoy the course
☑ More info/time on 16+ years
☑ To be less rushed
☑ Block teaching away from the workplace (ie: 6 months)
☑ Longer teaching day (ie: 6 hours per day)
☑ Reading week
☑ Less material
☑ Not having to choose cases..esp for course work
☑ Not having folio (?) start yet
☑ A more structured day
☑ Better use of time
☑ Less subject areas/more depth of those covered

5.11 Suggestions for future candidates:

☑ Meet assessors much earlier
☑ More input into portfolio
☑ Get things in place well before module
☑ Provide primary source materials so that hours are not wasted in getting resources
☑ Allow more time for reading, preparation, assignments
☑ Locum coverage
☑ Knowledge of how hard it will be to balance course plus full time employment
☑ Course in a block NOT on days !
☑ DON'T PANIC!!!!!
☑ Negotiate study time/tutorials/mentoring early on.
☑ Preparation time – advance warning of readings
☑ More efficient registration to access library…time was lost!
☑ Planning with relation to work to be established prior to course

☑ More preparation for the course...eg. example of the papers for reading
☑ Induction prior to onset of PQ1
☑ Preparation of work base/colleagues in order that candidates feel supported
☑ This course is fascinating, but difficult
☑ Maybe it should be taught later in the course...it is quite specialized
☑ Plan time
☑ Start early in portfolios straight away
☑ Get a book grant...purchase lay texts
☑ Be prepared to work hard
☑ Think about how this well benefit your practice
☑ Get clear guidance and support from colleagues and managers
☑ Relax and enjoy the course!
☑ Make sure that you get work load relief
☑ Don't panic....enjoy it !!
☑ Talk to tutor and group about any worries
☑ Prepare to enjoy!
☑ Learning agreements sorted out before start of course
☑ Registration at University should take place before start
☑ Parking space
☑ Don't take it on until the work load – v- assessment of course argument is resolved
☑ Plan, plan, plan.
☑ Don't do it without a really supportive line manger – mine is!
☑ Ensure agencies are aware of the PQ
☑ That agencies are more sensitive to candidates needs and include them in planning
☑ Read suggested books before course
☑ Meet practice assessor earlier
☑ Sort out esp. for Guardian ad litems how, if the course will be funded in terms of loss of earnings
☑ Think twice before coming on the course
☑ Keep up with the reading
☑ Be prepared to stand your ground with management
☑ More warning re: workload implications
☑ Realistic awareness of personal time to be committed
☑ Reading week to be incorporated into module
☑ Workload relief to be arranged by workplace
☑ One assignment each module
☑ Line managers more aware of content
☑ Greater preparation
☑ Recognition of time limits
☑ Know expectations
☑ DON'T BOTHER..ITS EASIER TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER JOB !!!!
☑ Direct lead in from PQ1...reading list, assessor meeting
☑ Money available for work replacement immediately at start of course
☑ Given tape recorders, dolls, video, 2 way mirror info in advance please
☑ Need better availability of library/other materials
☑ Need refined reading list...focused info
☑ Work relief.... REDUCE CONFLICTS!!!

5.12 Other suggestions/comments:

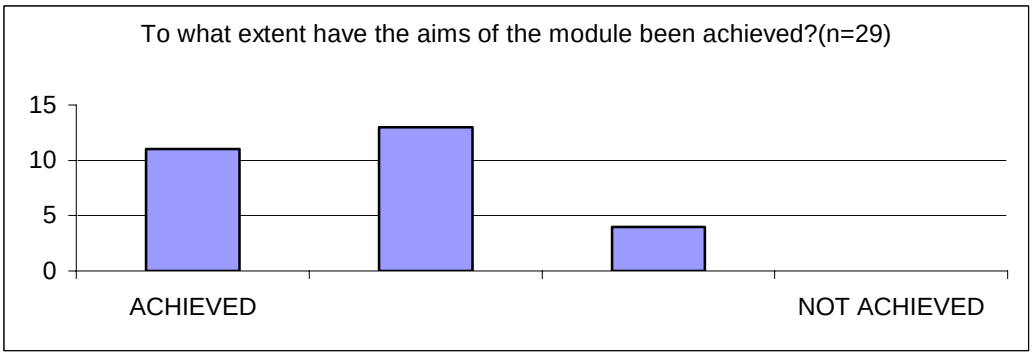
☑ Reading list sent out prior to course
☑ A well-taught module
☑ Course Tutor has brought it alive!
☑ I hope another module on this could build on what we have begun to learn
☑ I have found teaching style excellent.

☑ I have enjoyed the course and gained a great deal from it.
☑ The course has taken 2 to 2 ½ days per week of my time, which is more than I had anticipated at the outset.
☑ More time to submit portfolios
☑ Line managers need to be more informed re: the course ...managers given a general book, etc.
☑ The agencies must be aware and sympathetic to the level of work/time required
☑ This is an important course, which all child care workers must take – this therefore needs to be presented in a more positive way to future candidates. They need to be encouraged that this is a career enhancement and should be financially rewarded on completion
☑ Has been useful to meet and learn about other aspects of work in the field and how different services operate within the same agency.
☑ How there appear to be constant 'battles' to demonstrate and use the results of this course
☑ Module was very interesting and enjoyable, however, everything else was a major headache
☑ Agency totally unaware of what PQ involves...hopefully this will change
☑ More specific info as to what loss of earnings can be allowed – the local Authority are given money for us – what happens to this if your agency isn't social services?
☑ Get rid of the portfolio. We did one for PQ1 and to have to do one for PQ2 is excessive.
☑ The achievement in passing the course (if we do) should be recognize in some way by our employers
☑ I've really enjoyed the module, but the combined stress of work and the course has at times proved impossible
☑ Employers to recognise and accommodate amount of work, how individuals will be given workload relief
☑ Get rid of exams and portfolio
☑ IF YOU WANT TO KEEP SOCIAL WORKERS STOP PUTTING THEM UNDER MORE STRESS !!!

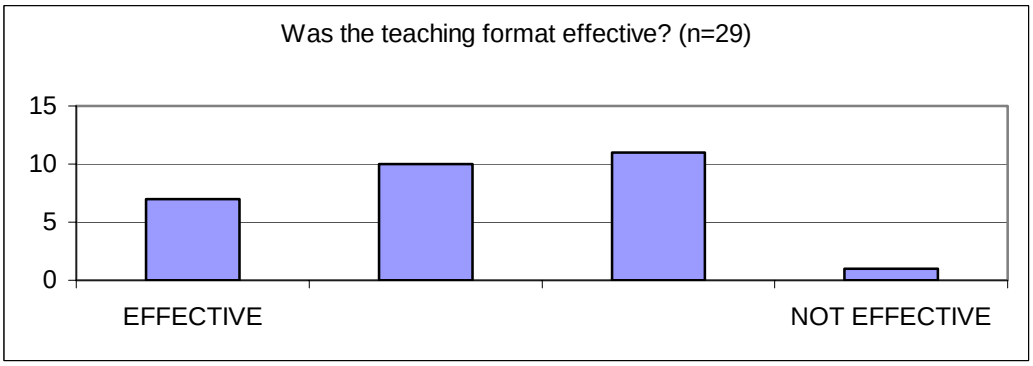
TVC ACTION: Significant revision of Module One Curriculum was undertaken.
Candidates for 2002 cohort met with Tutorial Leader before start of Course, and were provided with revised and clarified guidelines, reading lists, and expectations for assignments.
Assessment assignments were revised with a reduction of the amount of time to be spent on observation transcriptionXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

6.0 CANDIDATE SATISFACTION FOR MODULE TWO (September 2002)

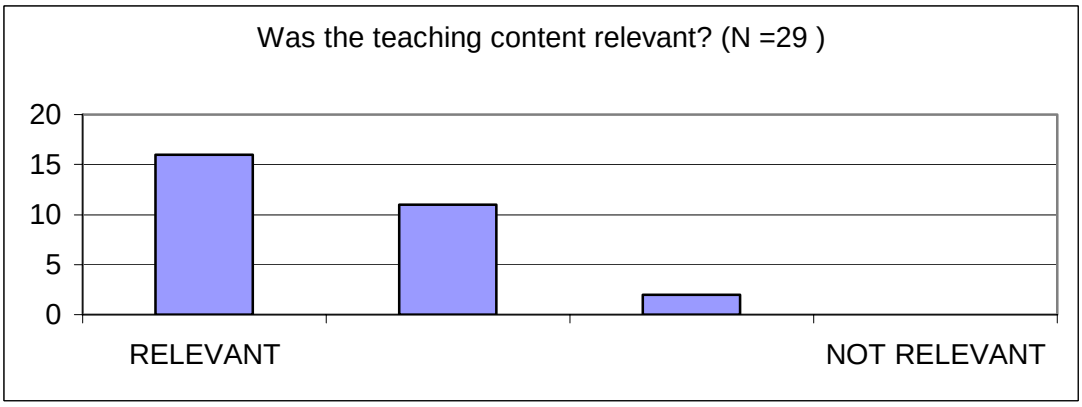
6.1 To What Extent have the aims of the module been achieved?



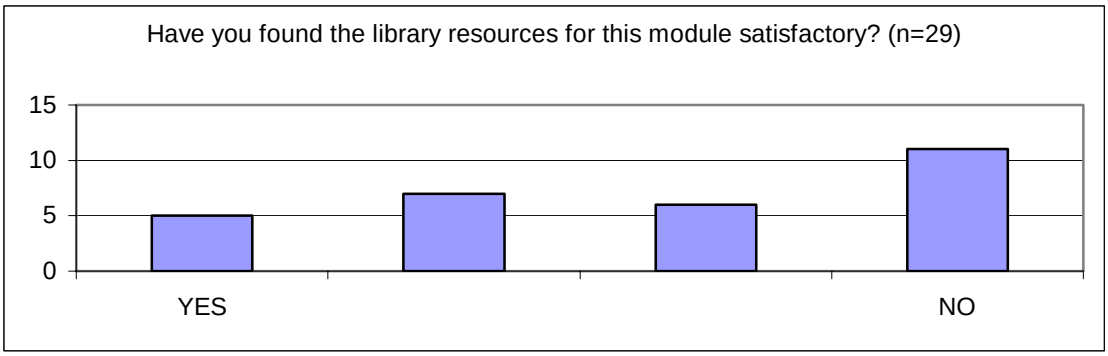
6.2 WAS THE TEACHING FORMAT EFFECTIVE?



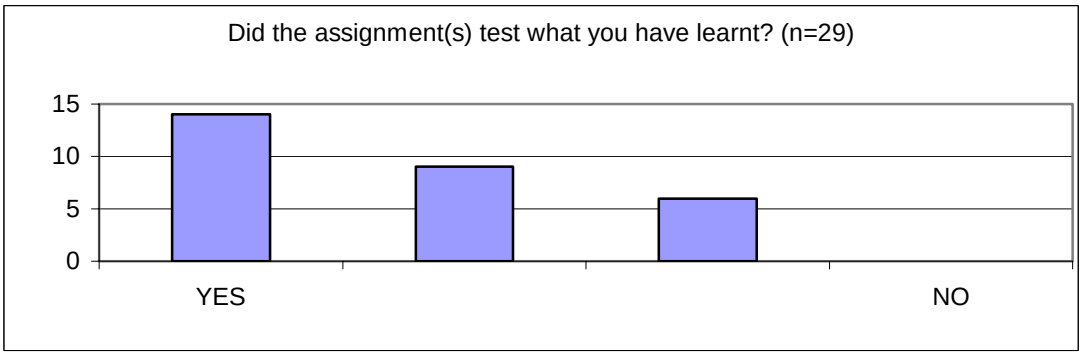
6.3 WAS THE TEACHING CONTENT RELEVANT:



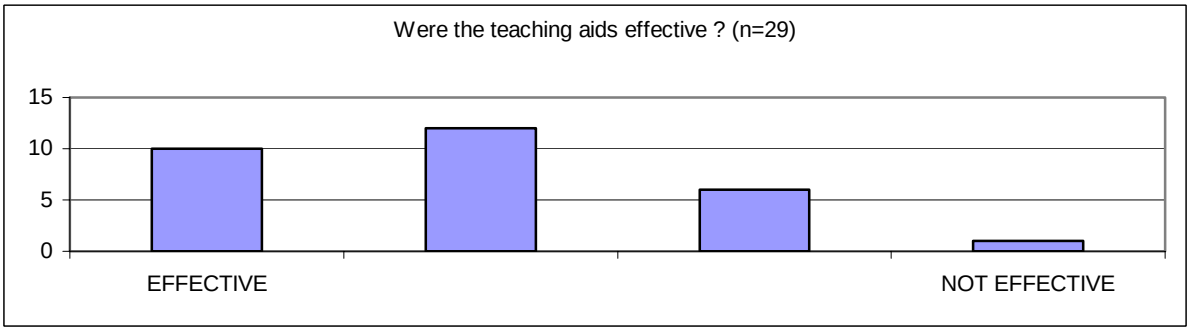
6.4 WERE THE LIBRARY RESOURCES SATISFACTORY?



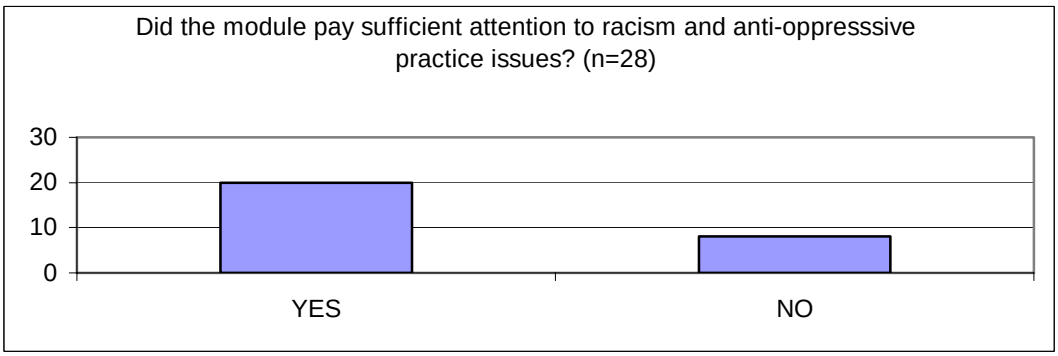
6.5 DID THE ASSIGNMENT(S) TEST WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT?



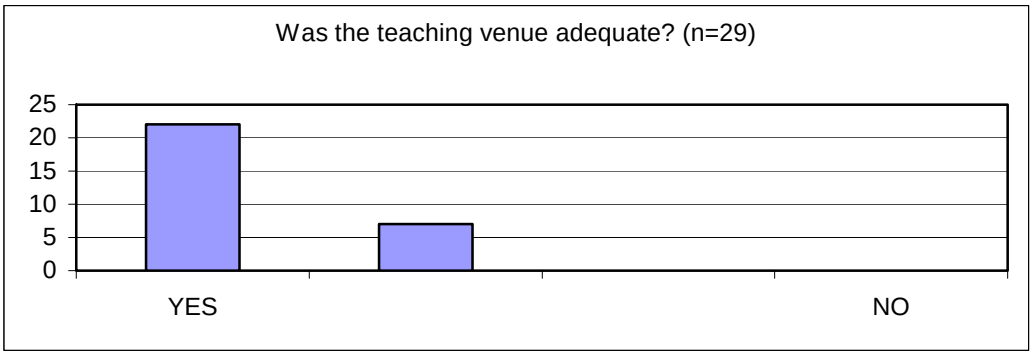
6.6 WERE THE TEACHING AIDS EFFECTIVE?



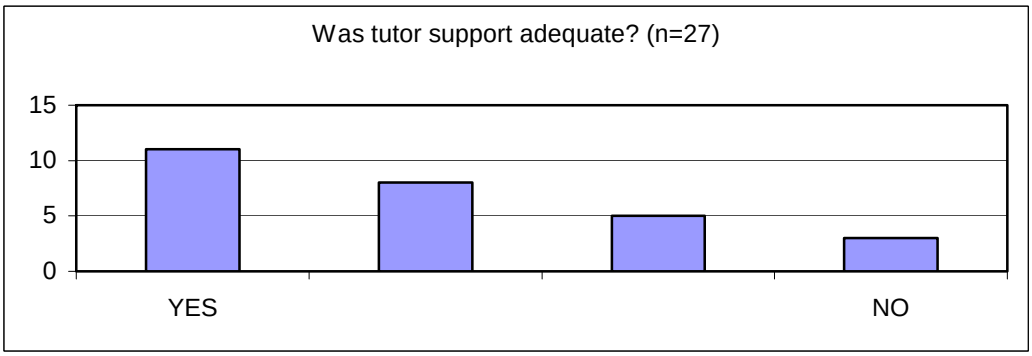
6.7 Did the module pay sufficient attention to racism and anti-oppressive practice issues:



6.8 Was the teaching venue adequate?



6.9 Was tutor support adequate?



6.10 THREE BEST THINGS ABOUT THIS MODULE WERE:

- ☑ Linked well into framework for assessment
- ☑ Good practice in other countries touched on
- ☑ Strategies for working with resistant and reluctant parents
- ☑ Opportunity to reflect upon practice
- ☑ Work on Assessments.
- ☑ Work on contracts.
- ☑ Greater understanding on parental capacity.
- ☑ Structured – clear sense of format
- ☑ Handbook was great
- ☑ Learning about new framework
- ☑ The handbook
- ☑ Clarity
- ☑ Discussing ecological approaches to assessment.
- ☑ Revisiting theoretical perspectives.
- ☑ It was more structured than the first module.
- ☑ Over-view of framework
- ☑ Clear presentation and references.
- ☑ Intervention work
- ☑ Assessment framework
- ☑ Reluctance/ resistance
- ☑ Effective intervention.
- ☑ Sessions have been fully focused on linking objectives to learning outcomes.
- ☑ Aiding vs. analysis and decision making – assessments

☑ Sharing examples and cases of work with others.
☑ Research information
☑ More relaxed teaching style
☑ Handouts/ lectures met the program well
☑ Learning new skills and putting into practice
☑ Support of other students and tutor
☑ Pitched at the right level
☑ Time out from work
☑ Tutor very approachable and nice
☑ Learning sets
☑ Looking in a detailed structured way at parenting
☑ Being given help with essays e.g. Concentrating on answering a question
☑ Opportunity to update information
☑ Finding out about new research
☑ The teaching was good
☑ Interesting and informative
☑ Tutor kept to right level
☑ Support from other candidates
☑ Clearly presented theories, concepts and up to date research.
☑ Stimulation of a positive learning group environment.
☑ Good humour and sense of debate promoted.
☑ Time out of work to reflect but this would be better integrated into work place.
☑ Candidate's own presentations.
☑ Application to DOH framework
☑ Opportunity to listen to colleague's presentations
☑ Opportunity to learn about the perspectives of colleges
☑ Learning set/ individual presentations
☑ Group discussions
☑ Enjoyed writing the assignments
☑ Encouraged reading
☑ Encouraged reflection on practice and had an impact on practice.
☑ Structural factors contributing to abuse and neglect.
☑ Learning sets
☑ Focus on parenting capacity
☑ Clarity of info presented
☑ Links with research

6.11 Three things I would like changed in this module:

☑ More discussion in relation to work scenarios
☑ More interactive style
☑ Needs to be made more interesting – discussion/groups
☑ Greater use of alternative teaching aids
☑ New books in library
☑ Greater focus on fewer theories to gain better understanding
☑ More books in library
☑ Teaching methods creating more enthusiasm
☑ Make it more exciting –sorry not sure how
☑ Less lecture format...more video extracts or other teaching methods
☑ Lack of support and general disorganization of the course as a whole ensued
☑ I felt undervalued
☑ Newer videos
☑ Nothing
☑ Use of course handbooks helpful and examples of relevant practice
☑ Use of other teaching methods to get info across
☑ More discussion
☑ Time it takes to mark assignments

☑ More time to do summative assignment
☑ More time to visit library and do group work
☑ No changes!
☑ Less spoon-fed lessons
☑ Get assignments and feedback earlier
☑ No particular changes necessary
☑ I would have preferred slightly more definite built in breaks although these were introduced more in the second half of the module
☑ Only one essay 3,000 words necc.
☑Tutor spend day at work place and aware of work pressure
☑ Line manager to attend intro
☑ More student input
☑ Less direct teaching
☑ Reduce 'lectured' at times
☑ Reformat learning sets/student input
☑ More interactive lectures
☑ More use of case studies
☑ More lively-interviews like last term..interviews with parents and families
☑ More recent videos
☑ Extension of workshops – ie; case discussion
☑ More intensive content over shorter time period
☑ More use of student input
☑ More advanced preparation time for learning sets
☑ Focus more on particular areas..research evidence based p[practice
☑ More attention to children with disability
☑ Evidence from practice in other countries
☑ More learning sets
☑ The case discussion focus

6.12 Suggestions for future candidates:

☑ Try and access resources before beginning of course
☑ Make sure assignments are clear (several candidates from Bucks had difficulties with formative assignment)
☑ Don't panic
☑ Use colleagues as support 'academically'
☑ Make sure you have computer to use
☑ Make sure you negotiate to have books provided by work
☑ Get basic books at beginning of module
☑ Get hold of reading list before module starts
☑ Get your own computer
☑ Negotiate study time with line manager
☑ Buy your own books prior to course as library and bookshop lacking in material
☑ I feel very despondent about social work as a result of this course
☑ Make time for reading
☑ Get clear agreements from work
☑ Sort out resource bay for books
☑ None
☑ Try and get hold of books before module begins
☑ Read and digest as much as possible
☑ Pace yourself
☑ More reflection on practice
☑ Earlier involvement of assessors
☑ Prepare work to fit into learning sets
☑ Keep up reading

☑ Think deeply about the implications on your work and personal life, they are quite earth shattering at times
☑ Read
☑ Amount of reading required is more realistic than the first module

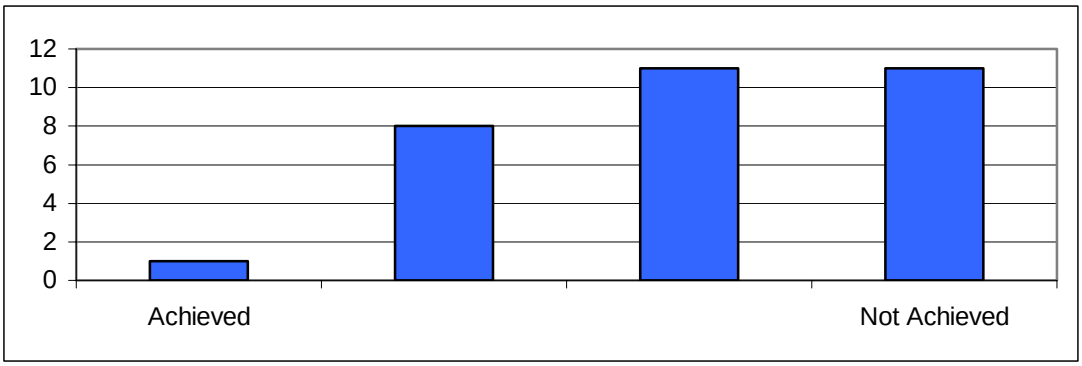
6.13 Other suggestions/comments:

☑ Was difficult to get motivated for second essay and tired of fighting for management support
☑ Fed up with general disorganization
☑ Wish course ended September not December (work pressure)
☑ Content is good
☑ Found it difficult to become involved in sessions....lack of enthusiasm
☑ I was not so enthused by this module, ...not sure if it was because this module was more repetitive of things we knew
☑ Excellent content!
☑ The module was well paced
☑ Being given library classification system with reading list to know where books are and that they are actually in the library
☑ Very difficult to sustain motivation
☑ Suggest three-month college block out of work – easier to get work replacement
☑ Module one was a hard act to follow

7.0 CANDIDATE SATISFACTION FOR MODULE THREE (post-test)

Please Note: There were extraordinary circumstances that resulted in a poorly designed and delivered Third Module. Immediate intervention to remedy the situation was blocked by the sensitivity of legal and political issues. However, the Consortium is seriously concerned about the Third Module and have made major changes which will bring this module up to the standards of the first two, and will prevent a reoccurrence of the difficulties will not occur again. Any further discussion of this matter should be directly with the Programme Director.

7.1 To what extent have the aims of the module been achieved?

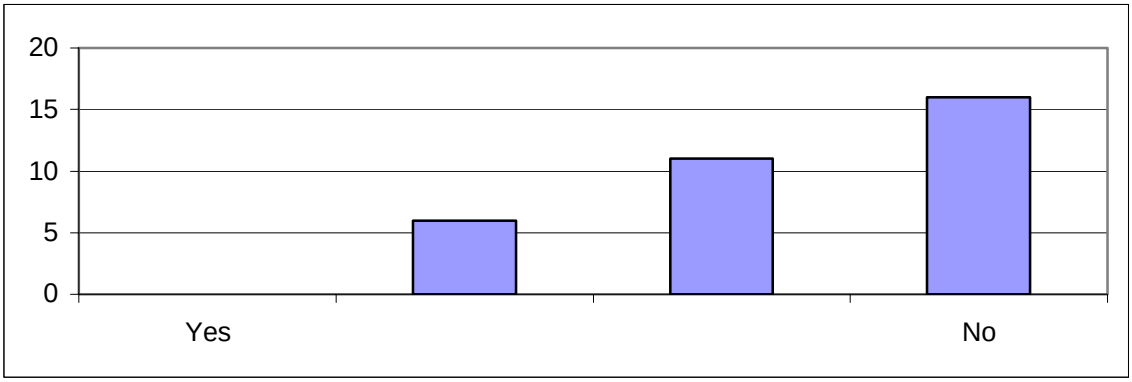


n=31

☑ The module's aims as requested by CCETSW could have been explained more at the beginning so we knew what we were focusing on. Instead we had three different lecturers each going from their own perspective.

☑ I am able to complete requirements from my own previous learning, however I haven't had the opportunity to look at policy in any detail. Repetitive info on NA framework – which was completed in Module 2
☑ The only new knowledge gained related to one session on Asylum Seekers
☑ Could have been taught more variety of law – rather than left to our own devices, and should have taught us how to access info on the Internet rather than assume we could all do it. More in-depth discussions of policy and how used was needed
☑ Content felt superficial at times
☑ Aims unclear from start – piecemeal, bitty
☑ No clear aims/objectives were given
☑ Would be better as Module One to give overview of ADP/legal and Policy framework
☑ Areas have been covered, but not to the depth expected – very little 'new' stuff for us as practitioners (Except for the legislation – human rights stuff)
☑ I felt that many of the issues were not addressed in much depth. I would have appreciated more comprehensive seminar(s) on the legal aspects
☑ The program designed does not meet the module outcomes
☑ Achieved, but in a very bland way. Interest factors improved
☑ Very basic level of learning
☑ This module has been quite basic, stating the obvious and not focused on new learning and development
☑ Not enough academic 'rigour'
☑ Aims not achieved as difference between lecturers in module content caused confusion
☑ This module has not been adequately addressed. It lacked academic context and stimulus with the exception of the law component, which was not long enough
☑ Cannot be effectively achieved if inadequately taught
☑ Very broad area to cover
☑ A lot of time was spent on material that seemed self-explanatory
☑ I think the whole module lacked clarity
☑ Very shallow content covered. Would have been useful to more thoroughly cover law and/or comparative policy

7.2 Was the teaching format effective?

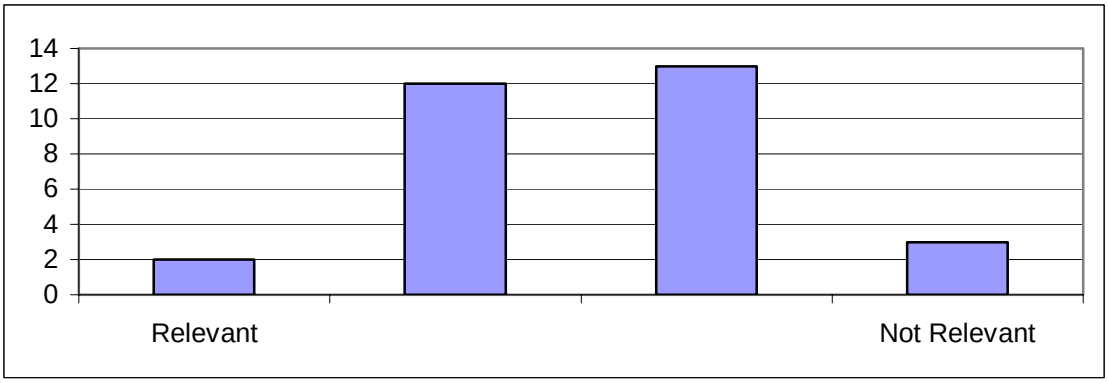


n=33

☑ Style could be varied more.
☑ We were placed in a class with students attempting to get a degree...unsatisfactory.
☑ Boring, repetitive from Module 2...learnt nothing new
☑ Absolutely hopeless – being chatted to each week was like being in a nursery class.
☑ Just not good enough. Very disappointing
☑ One video used which majority of candidates had seen before. All other sessions
☑ Involved reading from typed notes – limited discussions.
☑ Reading word for word from hand-outs is not effective
☑ Found teaching style difficult to engage with

☑ Having numerous people unhelpful
☑ Clearly not an experienced teacher.
☑ Boring presentation/repetition of assessment framework.
☑ Variety of tutors good
☑ Limited discussions, and no learning sets which although add extra work, at least allow for other areas to be covered by the course. (Did vary dependent on the lecturers)
☑ At times it seemed quite non-directive and more like a general discussion
☑ I felt that the lectures required more structure in the teaching style
☑ Could be boring
☑ Each morning lasted no more than an hour
☑ For me, I have not felt interested or stimulated. Did not feel style was effective to gain interest or learning
☑ Taught to...other teaching aides needed
☑ Lecturer just had photocopies and discussed our practice.
☑ The taught content has been far too limited, the level superficial and it has not effectively expanded our knowledge or learning
☑ Rather simplistic
☑ Reading from overheads is a waste of time...although useful for pointers/main issues
☑ The teaching standard was terrible.
☑ It was difficult to have a full discussion on some of the topics.
☑ Changing tutors was not helpful
☑ Needed more outside speakers who were briefed.
☑ Learning sets were useful in other modules

7.3 Was the teaching content relevant?

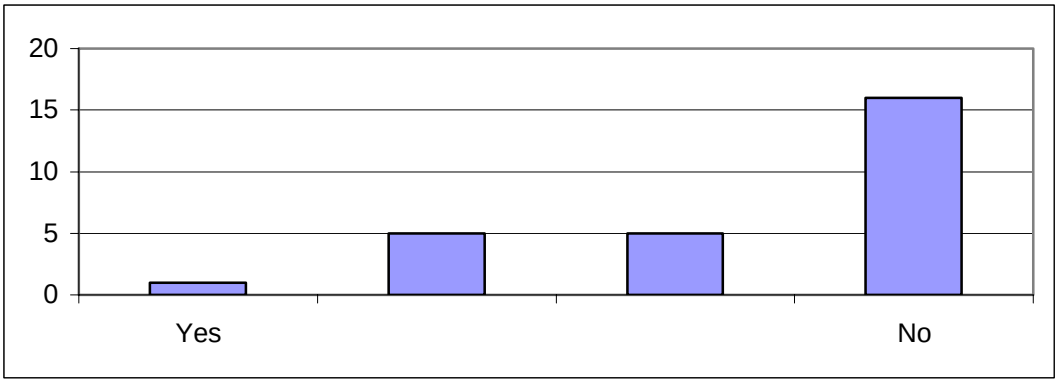


n=30

☑ Teaching relevant to some content but not detailed enough. Need to be more advanced
☑ To a certain extent, but far too basic. I don't think I learned anything new
☑ Relevant, but extremely basic
☑ The law...more so – the rest I don't feel was at all relevant
☑ The content felt rather fragmented
☑ Focus on speakers experience with youth justice/probation not relevant
☑ Of particular value were sessions on immigration and asylum seekers
☑ The theme of the module was lost after the law exam and ended up with discussions
☑ Need more on black theorists of empowerment/could devise own questionnaire/research for use in community and feedback
☑ Varied between the lecturers. Legal could have been much more integrated throughout the module.
☑ It was relevant, but I would have liked more teaching specific to my area of work
☑ Teaching material relevant to the module

☑ First two sessions OK
☑ Content was relevant, but lecture delivery was boring and repetitive. No help with essay (final) preparation
☑ Whilst the information imparted was relevant, we could have read this ourselves – with the exception of the law component
☑ Relevant, but nowhere near challenging enough. However, the law lectures were very useful re-visit
☑ Module topics relevant but not presented in a useful way
☑ The teaching content might have been relevant if it had taken a more imaginative form.
☑ The handouts on asylum seekers were good
☑ Seemed more theoretical, idealised than relevant to practice at times
☑ Relevant, but not much learned from sessions.

7.4 Have you found the library resources for this module satisfactory?

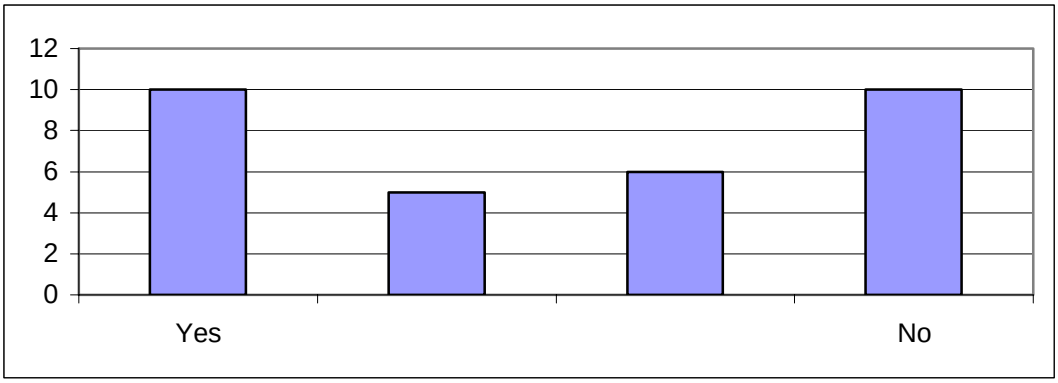


n=27

☑ Haven't used them so much for this module as for the others. Have used the internet far more this time
☑ No new books – which were needed for the course
☑ Out of date material
☑ No password for computer access
☑ Didn't use library
☑ Had to search things on Internet on own – help with use of Internet would have been well received
☑ Don't know – used resources other than those to be found in the library
☑ Have done no reading
☑ The lecturers provided excellent handouts, plus Internet site references to support me in searching the Internet for appropriate material.
☑ Didn't know what was expected from this module, so I didn't use the library at all
☑ No time to use library. They do not have black theorists/internet better.
☑ A reasonable range, once sorted on law reports!
☑ Insufficient in general
☑ Library adequate, but could always be improved! (B)
☑ Haven't used them
☑ Plenty of reading material available
☑ Due to time constraints and negative feedback from others I have not accessed library resources. Waterstones very useful and helpful in ordering books
☑ Never any books in it!
☑ The library staff has helped to explain access to internet sites (X)
☑ Too many out of date books
☑ I have not made great use of the library in this module.... very time constrained with pressure from work
☑ Relevant book not available

☑ Law – yes. For the rest, there has never been any impetus this term to look up information.
☑ I found more relevant and useful texts for this module than I had for the first 2 modules
☑ Books were not available as promised

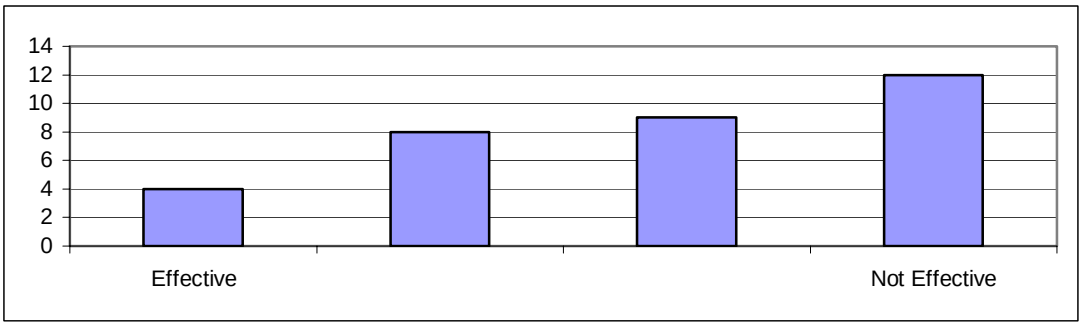
7.5 Did the assignment(s) test what you have learnt?



n=31

☑ The first assignment
☑ Exam –yes
☑ Essay – no. Essay legislation, policy etc., teaching was on environmental factors and NA framework
☑ 1st assignment – exam was far too early. Haven't completed assignment two yet, so can't comment.
☑ Tested prior learning/knowledge
☑ Didn't learn anything new in lectures to be tested on...assignments not related to 'lectures'
☑ Most of knowledge for exam found from sources other than the course – course input was minimal
☑ It tested our coping abilities. Law exam was a totally ridiculous exam. As I didn't learn anything it was difficult to relate this to an assignment
☑ Delay in feedback from law exam
☑ Exam format not necessarily helpful – what was it hoping to achieve?
☑ Some titles a little vague
☑ Assignment question is good. Law exam was annoying as it was not an exam.
☑ I feel I have been reminded of stuff I already knew
☑ I do not feel learning was in synch with assignments, have learnt more from my own research and practice
☑ Law exam was just a memory test.
☑ The law assignment/exam fit but could have been a written assignment – The second assignment will not be greatly expanding my existing knowledge as gained in modules 1 and 2
☑ The law exam
☑ Not done essay yet – have lost my motivation!
☑ Summative assignment was great fun and very interesting. BUT stress levels raised TOO high by it being in examination.
☑ Very well.
☑ I don't know about the essay yet, but the law exam did not really demonstrate my knowledge and understanding fully – I felt totally deskilled even though it could have been easier for some.

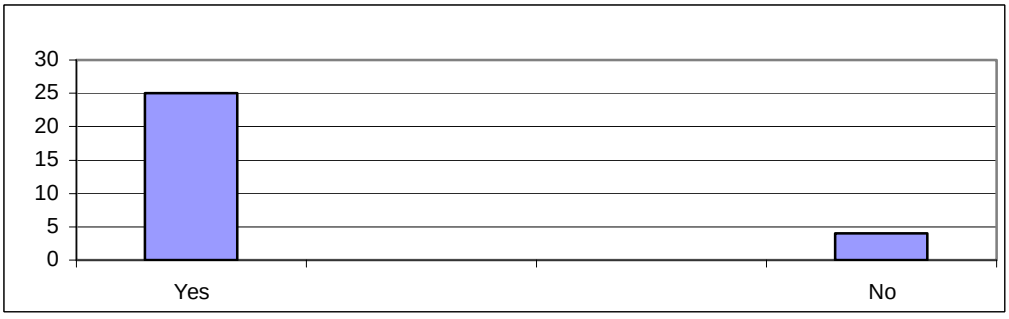
7.6 Were the teaching aides (videos, audiotapes, workbooks, readings, etc) effective?



n=33

☑ There were none
☑ No teaching aids used except short video
☑ Reading from a handout is hardly inspiring
☑ Could be more creative – more use of group feedback – eg. speaker from family rights group.
☑ Varied between lecturers and styles
☑ Useful book (Child Reader)
☑ Some of the photocopied articles were helpful
☑ One outside speaker was interesting.
☑ Video boring and dated
☑ Handouts were used, video x1 during the module
☑ Obviously prepared well, but lacked confidence around subjects in Module 3.
☑ Level too limited
☑ The handouts were helpful
☑ Handouts good but knowledge of subjects delivered without depth, perhaps I should have pursued topics more myself!
☑ Except for the asylum handouts, we could have taught this module ourselves in a more interesting lively way by taking adult learning into account.
☑ Format in sessions 4 onward was repeated with little variation
☑ Not particularly exciting, but lots of handouts

7.7 Did the Module pay sufficient attention to racism and anti-oppressive practice issues?

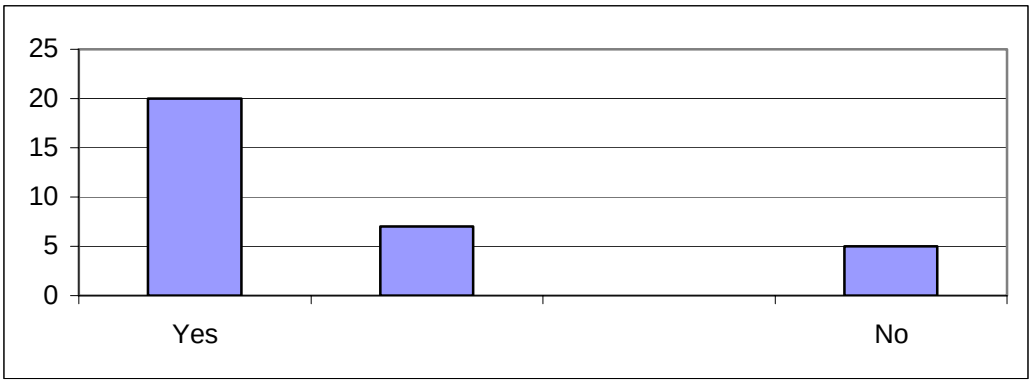


n=29

☑ Racism yes ...Anti-oppressive practice much less
☑ Covered this well
☑ Disability, racism, sexism etc
☑ Covered in last module – good.
☑ When I asked for cultural explanations these weren't addressed fully, but skirted over or personalized
☑ Although modules tended to have more superficial general discussions on ADP
☑ Outside speaker was interesting and covered subject well

☑ Not enough. The one guest speaker was a start, but this was not properly integrated into the rest of the module – it didn't lead me anywhere, challenge or inspire.
☑ Well addressed
☑ Skimmed the surface

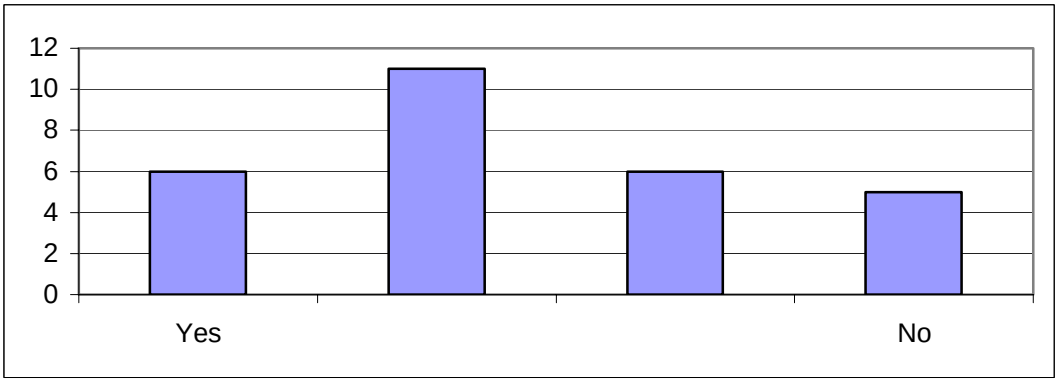
7.8 Was the teaching venue adequate?



n=32

☑ We objected to being moved mid-course to another room, although the new room was adequate
☑ A good lunch with colleagues has usually been the highlight of these modules
☑ Room was uncomfortable and poorly set out
☑ We had to move rooms, which made things very formal and were joined by DipSw students who didn't want to be with us
☑ Better with desks in a circle
☑ The classroom was adequate, however, the previous classroom made discussion within the group easier
☑ Not initially
☑ Better than Module One (X)
☑ Much better than module one (X)
☑ Having to change room disrupted the group and changed the dynamics
☑ Much better this module (X) ...a room with daylight and space!
☑ Room was not as conducive as the room used for module one and two (B)
☑ We didn't like changing rooms for this module

7.9 Was tutor support adequate?



n =28

☑ Yes, but we needed to see more of him
☑ Very helpful and supportive, but lectures not stretching ...repetitive from Modules 1 & 2...we have explained this to her as a group, so she is more aware
☑ I haven't really used tutor support, but I knew was accessible if required
☑ There was none offered... but I didn't request any...therefore...adequate?
☑ Very little seen of course tutor
☑ Tutor not seen during module 3
☑ Instructor very supportive, but felt that she was trying to make up for things that our on-site tutor should have done (B)
☑ Instructor was not able to advise on assignment, despite the fact that she was 1st marker.
☑ Gave general advice on essay – no detailed tutorial on essay structure, etc.
☑ Know that both tutor and lecturer available when sought.
☑ Yes – although tutor could have been a little more proactive
☑ Tutor was available if required
☑ Always willing to listen
☑ It was available if requested
☑ Didn't see him
☑ It was available if required, but not needed
☑ Open to requests for further assistance or direction towards other resources and sources. (X)
☑ Offer of tutor support available not used! Not knowing when tutor in, but if requested supportive
☑ No need this term to refer anything to tutor.
☑ Provided helpful support and clarification when needed/asked directly.
☑ Instructor incorporated a useful tutorial role into her teaching
☑ On-site tutor was not available as promised. Lecturer's contribution was good.

7.10 The three best things about this module were:

☑ There was a lot of information from tutor in handouts
☑ The law lectures were interesting
☑ Lectures & research – law exam
☑ Info on research
☑ Shown how to use website
☑ Handouts
☑ Discussion with peers
☑ Practice Assessor's advice re: portfolio
☑ Information on asylum seekers
☑ Revisiting law –although could have done a better/more thoroughly
☑ Spending time with other candidates
☑ Opportunity to revisit aspects of legislation, etc.
☑ More focus on specific bits of research, etc.
☑ Meeting colleagues
☑ Having lunch
☑ Time out from work
☑ ADP input
☑ Flexibility to finish early and use time for study
☑ Revisiting legislation/human rights legislation
☑ Hearing about research
☑ Legal section raised some interesting issues
☑ Practical input from visiting practitioners/informal structure/atmosphere
☑ The law section

☑ Reminding myself of legal issues
☑ Discussion on multi-agency working
☑ Some interesting parts – i.e.: law and asylum
☑ First two weeks on Law
☑ The friends I have made
☑ Law exam prompted research and information gathering
☑ Other students' support
☑ Lunch
☑ Case discussions
☑ First two weeks
☑ Finding the case law for my own case, which mentioned me by name very exciting!
☑ I can complete my final assignments
☑ I will have some time to do other things
☑ Law issues
☑ Roles and responsibilities
☑ Self-evaluation
☑ Session on asylum – good – needed more sessions like this
☑ Looking up case law
☑ Looking closely at the law
☑ Learning about the ecological approach
☑ Being in a positive group...(B) in a relaxed facilitative atmosphere/environment
☑ Law lectures
☑ Conference was good
☑ Good handouts
☑ The other candidate's contributions

7.11 Three things I would like changed in this module are:

☑ Have it more focused on our practice – the afternoon sessions went somewhere!!!
☑ Not have people from other courses here
☑ Having a more varied teaching style
☑ To do more on policy and enquires – link to practice and teaching
☑ No more NA framework – too repetitive
☑ Better planning and organization of afternoon sessions
☑ The content – proper teaching about the law and social policy...look at some child care enquiry reports
☑ One lecturer for the whole module (must be qualified and know what they are talking about!)
☑ Get outside speakers who turn up
☑ Make the portfolio more of the module
☑ More challenge
☑ More structure
☑ Lecturer to stick to the syllabus
☑ Info on theory base, discussion/info on relevant research
☑ Info on definitions, etc
☑ Critical perspective / different perspectives – e.g.: sociological/ecological, etc.
☑ More in depth discussion on law – including housing, mental health...etc over more than two lectures
☑ The organisation – evidently not there – telling us we are having outside speaker, and then they cannot attend all three sites.
☑ Better teaching methods
☑ Better organization
☑ More interactive teaching style
☑ A more comfortable teaching venue
☑ Structure
☑ Focus

☑ Consistency
☑ Organisation
☑ This module should be the first one
☑ The law exam should be integrated into the essay
☑ More creative – e.g. student research into community
☑ Format & content
☑ Style of lectures
☑ Detail of topics (new info!)
☑ More creative/inspiring teaching methods
☑Topics more specific to my area of work, e.g. fostering and adoption
☑ Higher academic level of reading
☑ Learning/lectures more focused towards meeting the learning outcomes of the module.
☑ Academic lectures – not just notes/handouts
☑ Not to repeat Module Two – All based on the Child's World
☑ More depth
☑ More research
☑ More analysis rather than reading from scripts
☑ Lecture structure
☑ Classroom layout
☑ This module should be first as an intro and then narrow in on family and then child third
☑ We had read a lot of the books relevant on previous modules
☑ More QUALITY outside speakers
☑ Teaching style
☑ More in-depth teaching
☑ Case discussion in the afternoon
☑ All of it
☑ More focused on actual policy and legislation
☑ Better planning and organised afternoon sessions
☑ More variety and content in actual lectures
☑ Law exam
☑ Clarity between lecturers
☑ Outside speakers relevant to topic
☑ The structure and teaching of this module
☑ Law should be continued throughout the module incorporating mental health, asylum seekers, race relations, etc.
☑ This module lacks **depth,** its current teaching content has not been appropriate for mature practitioners
☑ The lecturer... a lovely lady, but NOT a teacher
☑ The style of teaching
☑ How the afternoons are spent/structured
☑ On site tutor (B)
☑ On site room (B)
☑ Seen exam better as an assignment
☑ More in depth about law –especially Human Rights Act
☑ Speakers that have relevance
☑ Change seen exam format
☑ The structure of the module
☑ Law should have been more integrated
☑ Better standard of teaching
☑ More variation in teaching styles from session 4 onward
☑ More organisational structure in the afternoons
☑ I preferred the room we were in originally
☑ Assignments set a beginning of module and handed in before the end
☑ Use afternoon sessions better
☑ Better tutor support
☑ Too little content

☑ The exam didn't demonstrate my knowledge

7.12 Suggestions for future candidates:

☑ Have reading lists before course starts
☑ Clarify what the knowledge requirements mean
☑ Help for those who have been out of education for some time in writing essays – staying focused on what is wanted etc.
☑ Be clear about what you want from the course – knowledge requirements, etc
☑ Be assertive and stick together as a group (i.e.: support)
☑ Get login for computer/library earlier – at beginning of course
☑ Read The Guardian
☑ Ask for library Internet login at beginning of term
☑ Be assertive. Stick together with group
☑ Clear links made to assessment framework
☑ Possibly planning officer to look at policies
☑ Consistent speaker
☑ Read Child's World
☑ Beware of lack of consistency
☑ Not to panic about exam!
☑ Try for learning sets
☑ Module needs a bit of a revamp I'm not sure what advice I could give to future candidates
☑ Plan to do the learning on your own
☑ Ask for library Internet login before term starts! This never arrived, and Internet needed for this module
☑ Be assertive about what you want and need
☑ Hang in there!!!
☑ Make sure you get support from agency
☑ Remember to renew library books, as the fines are costly
☑ I have not found this module a great experience. I felt that tutors are floundering and not clear about what to do with us, the level has been too basic considering this is a post-qualified course and we are all experienced practitioners
☑ Change the law exam to an assignment
☑ Re-think structure and teaching of module
☑ The course needs visiting speakers who are really knowledgeable about their subject
☑ Do your own research and study
☑ Be more assertive in asking for what you need from lecturers
☑ Work as a group
☑ Prepare yourself for a certain amount of stress
☑ Ensure assessor has time to work with you and your relationship is conducive with course work, etc
☑ Be assertive about own learning needs
☑ Think long and hard about the personal implications for health and family
☑ Do not agree to start course unless a locum has been identified to cover you
☑ Ensure you will have a high level of managerial support
☑ Begin work on Portfolio early
☑ Look ahead and 'pace' the work
☑ Keep details of relevant casework that could be used before the course begins
☑ Send out reading lists much earlier
☑ Use study time as stated
☑ More tutor time available
☑ Start thinking about portfolio pieces even at PQ1 Stage
☑ Provide a format for portfolio – it would save students' time

7.13 Other suggestions/comments:

☑ The last module seems to be a bit of an anti-climax
☑ Where do I start? This module has been a real disappointment to the course as a whole. I have not found it demanding or stretching at all. I have found it repetitive and feel it is far too basic. The lecturers have not known what to do with us in the afternoons – so a lot of wasted time. We could have got so much more out of this module (like the others) and I am disappointed and angry that our time has been wasted. This makes it hard to justify to managers and colleagues. I have lost my motivation and incentive to complete the essay – lets hope I get it back to finish the course. We could have done so much on discussion of enquires, policies, case law etc.
☑ Lecturer didn't know the facts e.g. difference between PCG's and PCTs
☑ I've just lost all motivation now. Don't know how I'm going to get the last assignment and portfolio completed.
☑ It was difficult to pick up the course again after the summer break
☑ This was an extremely disappointing end to the course and very different from the first two modules in terms of lack of theory/research/practice skills. Info shared was very basic.
☑ This has been the most frustrating module; the first 2 weeks crammed with legislation and then lack of structure and detail for the rest of the module. It needs re-thinking URGENTLY!!
☑ Third module was, on the whole, boring and uninspiring. It has limited what I actually learned.
☑ This module is very interrelated to the other two.
☑ All three sites could meet if there are outside speakers that could not cover three days
☑ Module three needs to be re-thought!
☑ Module I should remain as it is; some elements of it e.g. adult attachment interview should be incorporated into Module II.
☑ More could be made of learning sets and they are a valuable learning experience, which could be used in Module III. Learning sets could be incorporated into the Conference Workshops.
☑ Module III is totally unacceptable as it has been provided and needs a total re-think and improved standard of delivery expanding on the first two sessions, which were very worthwhile.
☑ Module One, although most satisfying, was the hardest intellectually and time wise. It would be good for the course to end with this module
☑ Portfolio Work needs to be integrated through the course. By the course structure and continual academic hoops, it has by default, been left to the end by most people. Perhaps should be that A&B to be completed term One, C&D in term Two, E Term Three.
☑The summer break was a disaster – back to increased work caseload, impetus completely lost.
☑ Could the days for portfolio work or library work be ring fenced?
☑ The learning sets were really enjoyable, and should have continued in Module 3
☑ Overall I have found the course a valuable, positive and enriching experience.
☑ Better stocking of Library
☑ More clarity around expectations
☑ Felt very neglected throughout this module by practice assessors/tutors, etc.

8.0 Practice Assessor Feedback

9.0 Portfolio (Module Four) Feedback

☑ **PORTFOLIO:** I have found the guidance on this confusing. As a result of attempting to work as I went along, I am completely re-writing each front sheet because the goal posts are being constantly changed and this has taken up a great deal of my personal time.

10.0 POST PROGRAMME FEEDBACK (MARCH 2002)

10.1 Tasks achieved:

☑ Development of all instruments required for evaluating first cohort of programme.

☑ Action based research with immediate loop-back to Curriculum Committee for all three modules (quantitative & qualitative).

☑ Quality assurance implemented through anonymous and immediate candidate feedback being directed through Curriculum Committee and the Programme Director as appropriate.

☑ Summary reports completed and submitted for each of the first three modules.

☑ Pre-testing completed for 97.2% of cohort (missing only one line manager's pre-test).

☑ Pre and post module testing completed for 100 % of candidates (excluding three candidates who deferred or withdrew during modules 2 & 3).

☑ Post programme testing completed, received, entered into SPSS database and analysed for Outstanding responses currently being pursued.

☑ Significant amount of data (quantitative and qualitative) collected from candidates, line managers, and practice assessors.

☑ Demographics, occupational and educational data collected which can be collated against the evaluations of motivations, anxieties, impact of the programme, and performance on assessments.

☑ Significant feedback with suggestions for program improvement and modification.

☑ Feedback collected from candidates, line managers and practice assessors regarding the possible utilization of line managers as practice assessors. (anonymous)

☑ First cohort may have some limitations in representation for future cohorts. First cohort population appears rather skewed. Many candidates have been in the field for many years, are already line managers, and were mostly highly motivated to take the award. Future cohorts will likely be incrementally less experienced and less motivated (as you begin to have increasing numbers of reluctant candidates).

10.2 General Comments and Suggestions – Feedback from Tranche One (2001 Intake)

☑ Need for improved organization and integration ...esp. of handbooks, guidance, curriculum organization, etc

☑ Logistics need to be better attended to (e.g. Resource materials Internet registration, library cards, lectures room facilities, etc)

☑ Increased involvement of Line Managers

☑ Earlier and more integration and involvement of Practice Assessors

☑ Better use of afternoon session…more use of learning sets

☑ More variety of teaching modalities/aides

☑ No merging with other groups after group formed

☑ Workload issues…. gradually settled…needs further exploration

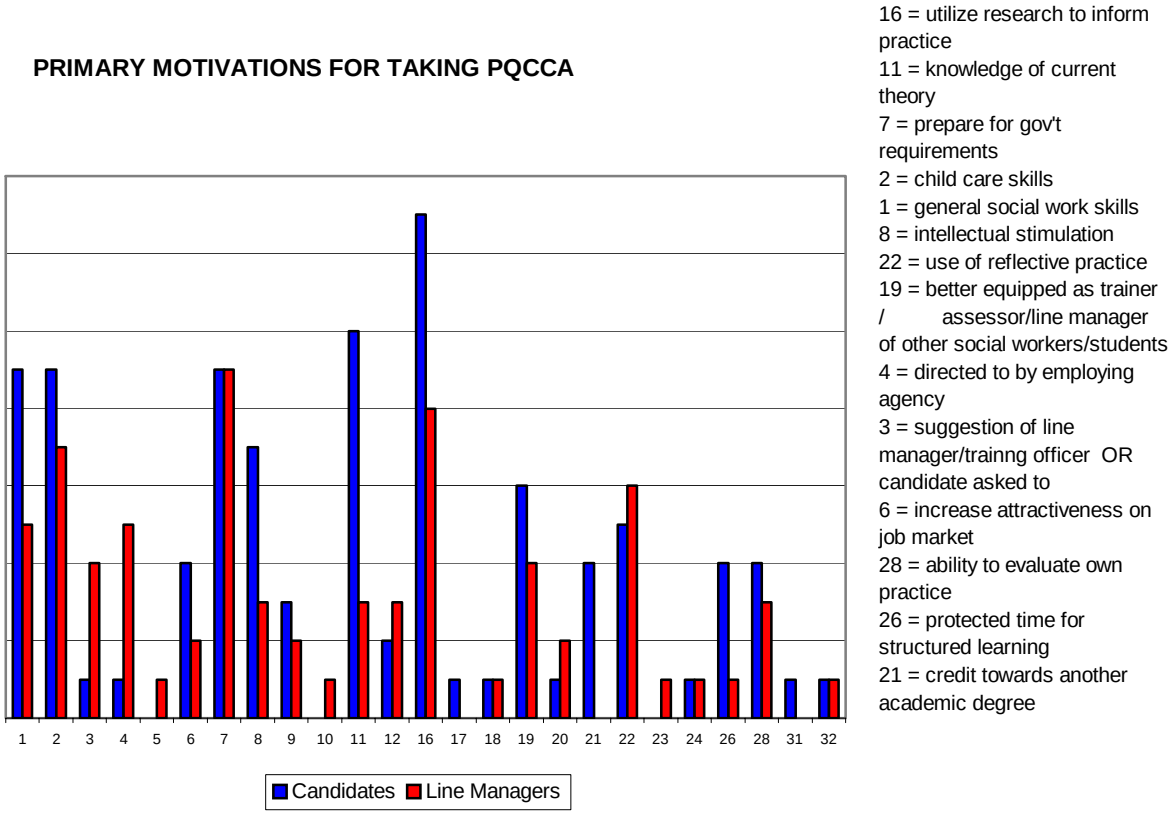
☑ Sequencing of units –Module Three first as broadest… perhaps put unit one last

☑ Complete re-think and configuration of Module Three

☑ Re-think of time framing …summer interruption significant

☑ Re-think of portfolio…instructions, timing, deadlines, etc.

10.3 PRIMARY MOTIVATIONS FOR TAKING PQCCA:



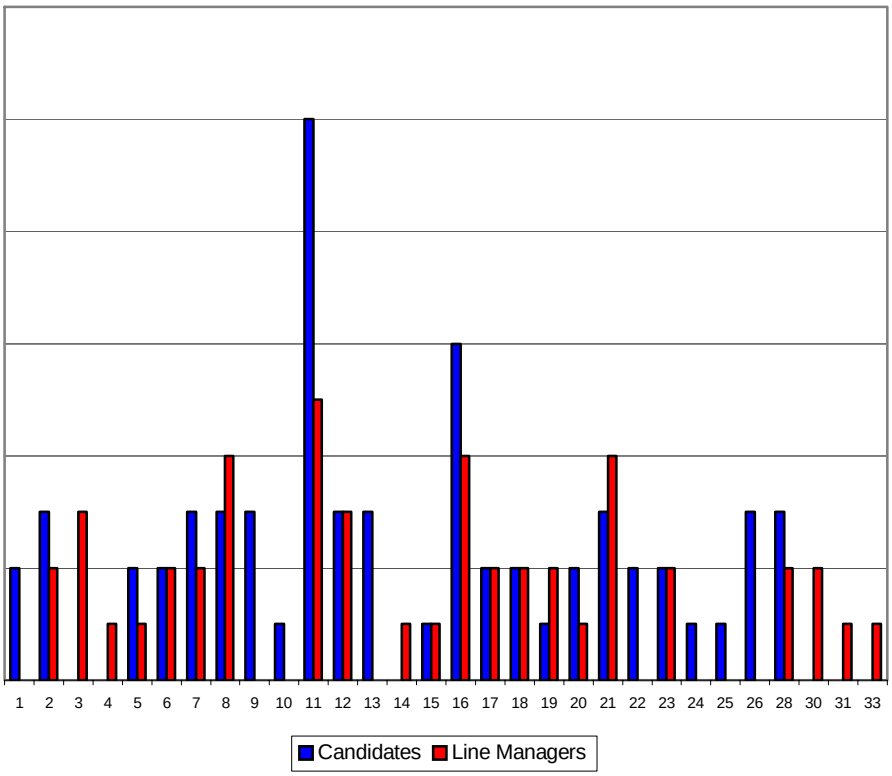
☑ Provides insight into the motivation of the candidates and the line managers for involvement in the PQCCA.

☑ Provides suggestions for further refinement of the curriculum, and possible suggestions for the learning sets or conference topics i.e.: strongest motivator for candidates was a desire to learn how to use research to inform their practice.

☑ Important to note the differences between the motivations of the candidates and the line managers, as the line managers/training officers are able to identify the knowledge and skill gaps in their staff.

10.4 PRIMARY BENEFITS (POST-PROGRAMME):

PRIMARY BENEFITS- POST PROGRAMME



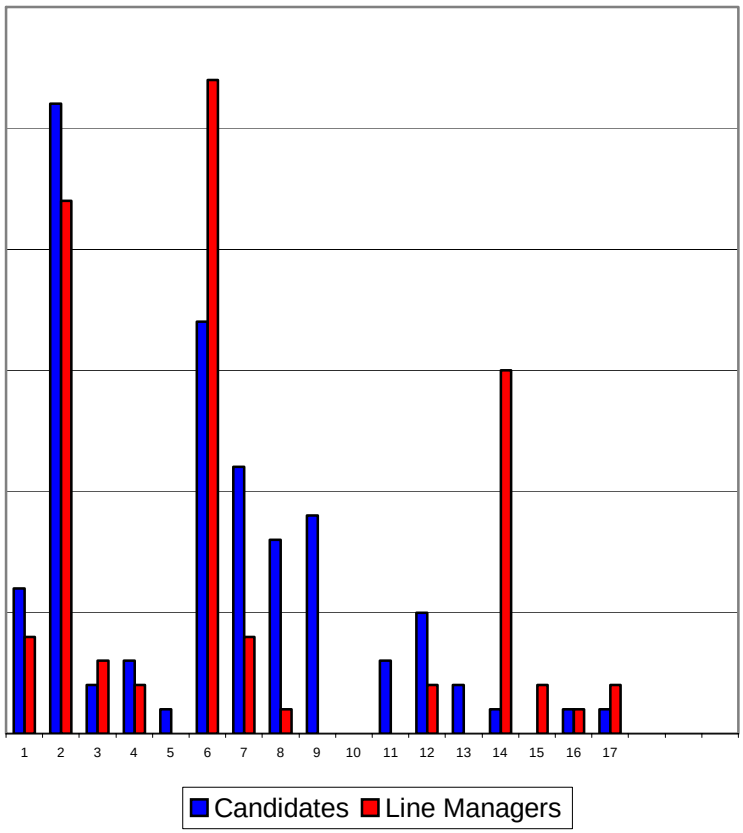
11 = increased knowledge of current theory
16 = how to utilize research to inform practice
8 = intellectually stimulating
21 = earned credits towards another academic award
2 = increased skills in child care
3 = satisfied line manager or training officer
7 = prepared for future gov't requirements
9 = increased confidence in assessments
12 = time away from demands of job
13 = links with other social workers
26 = protected time for structured learning
28 = improved ability to evaluate own practice

☑ This chart informs on how well the programme met the expectations of the candidates and line managers.

☑ It also identifies the strengths (and weaknesses) of the programme from the perspectives of the candidates and line managers.

☑ Academic credits, intellectual stimulation, increased knowledge of theory all indicate an intellectually motivated group.

10.5 PRIMARY SOURCES OF ANXIETY (PRE_PROGRAMME)



6 = enough protected time from work
2 = combined stress of work and the programme
14 = job security OR adequately staffing team
7 = completing written assignments
9 = possibly failing
8 = amount of reading required
1 = taking exams OR how much of my time (LM) will the programme demand (forms, meetings, etc)
12 = possible stress at home caused by the programme
11 = having to speak in front of peers
3 = getting bored in lectures OR candidate being dissatisfied with programme
4 = practice evaluation
17 = team mates resenting absence
15 = discomfort at being 'mature' student OR having to assume some of the candidates duties
13 = what tutors think of my knowledge
16 = use of a computer
5 = transportation difficulties

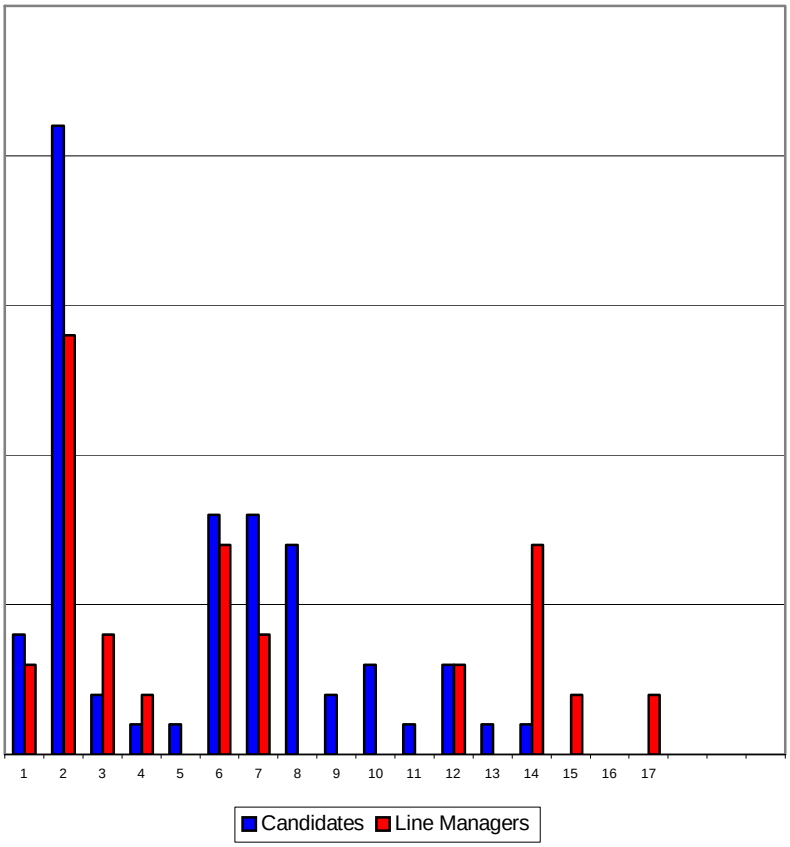
☑ This chart can be extremely useful for programme planning and redesign, as it clearly identifies the causes of anxiety for the candidates and line managers.

☑ Some sources of anxiety can be addressed very early in the Programme (ie: Steve's initial meeting with candidates OR earlier and better involvement of the line managers) to ensure optimal compliance and candidate comfort level.

☑ Some of these difficulties are simply intrinsic to the process; whilst other may be mitigated by policy and procedural changes effected by the programme, the agencies, or more macro level interventions (ie: GSCC or Department of Health)

10.6 SOURCES OF GREATEST STRESS – POST PROGRAMME):

SOURCES OF GREATEST STRESS: POST PROGRAMME



2 = combined stress of work & the programme
6 = enough protected time from work
7 = completing written assignments
14 = job security OR adequately staffing my (LM) team
8 = the amount of reading required
1 = taking exams OR how much of my (LM) time the programme has demanded
3 = getting bored in lectures OR candidate being dissatisfied with the programme
12= pressure/tension caused at home by the programme
10 = locating reading materials/using the library systems
4 = practice evaluation
15 = having to assume some of the candidate's duties
17 = teammates resenting candidate's absence
9 = possibly failing
5 = transportation difficulties
11 = having to speak in front of peers
13 = what tutors thought of my knowledge

☑ This chart is best reviewed in conjunction with the previous chart as it reveals which of the pre-programme anxieties were warranted...and likely need some sort of intervention to reduce stress levels for future cohorts

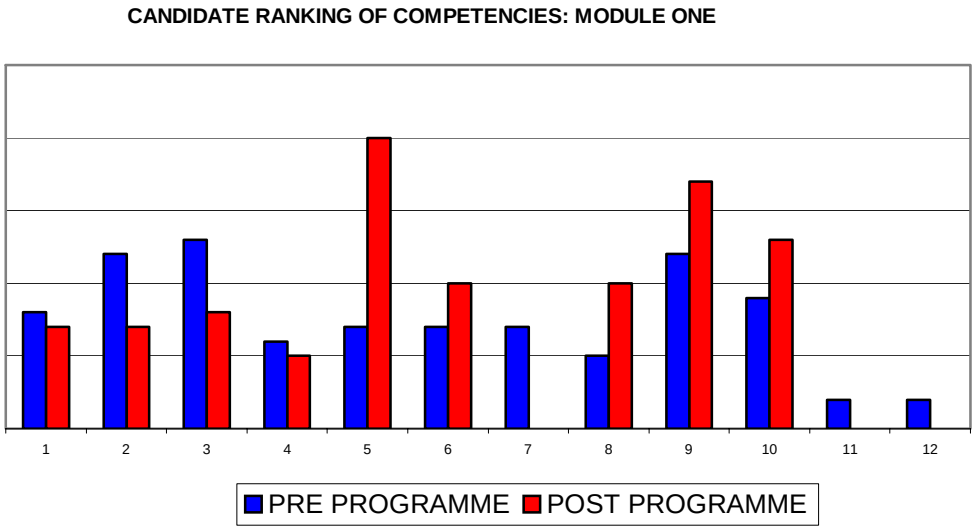
☑ All logistical sources of stress should be dealt with fully (ie: payment of fees, library cards, possible libraries in Agencies, computer logons, clarity of portfolio expectations, earlier introduction of practice assessors, etc), so that candidates and line managers are not frustrated and disillusioned unnecessarily.

10.7 Candidate Ranking of Competencies for Modules One, Two & Three

☑ Candidates were asked before the Module which three of the Competencies they felt they needed to improve in the most

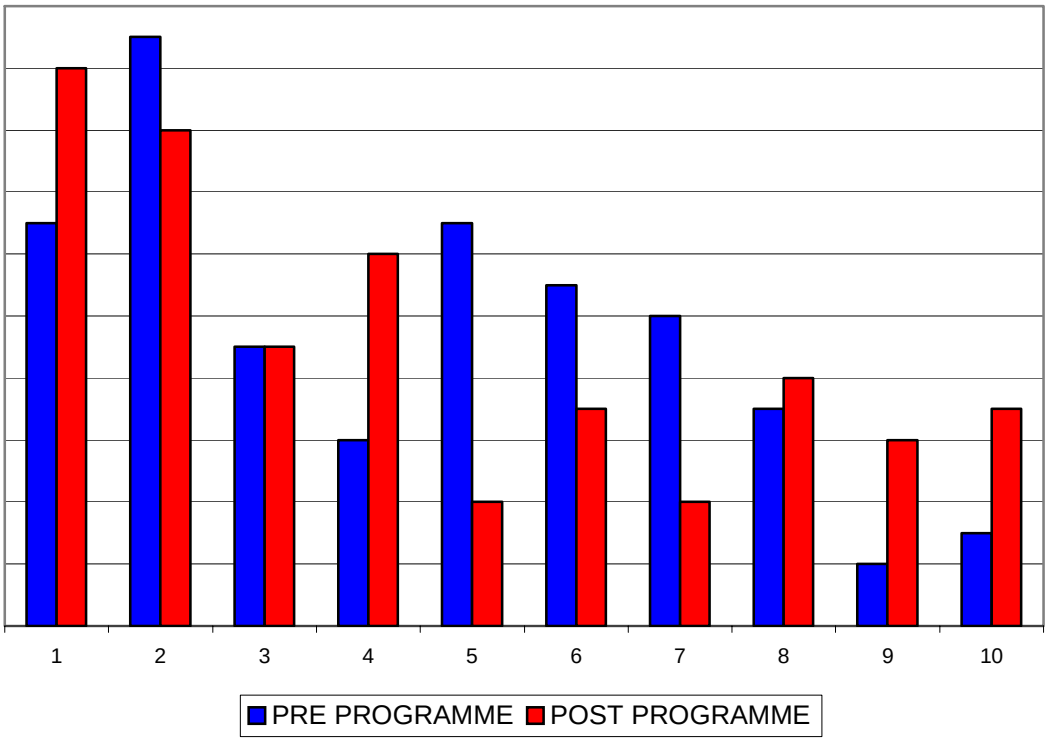
☑ Candidates were asked after the Module which three of the Competencies they felt the Module had helped them with the most

☑ This Chart represents which Competencies were most frequently identified by the group NOT how much an individual candidate felt their competency had increased in a particular learning objective...that is a different analysis.



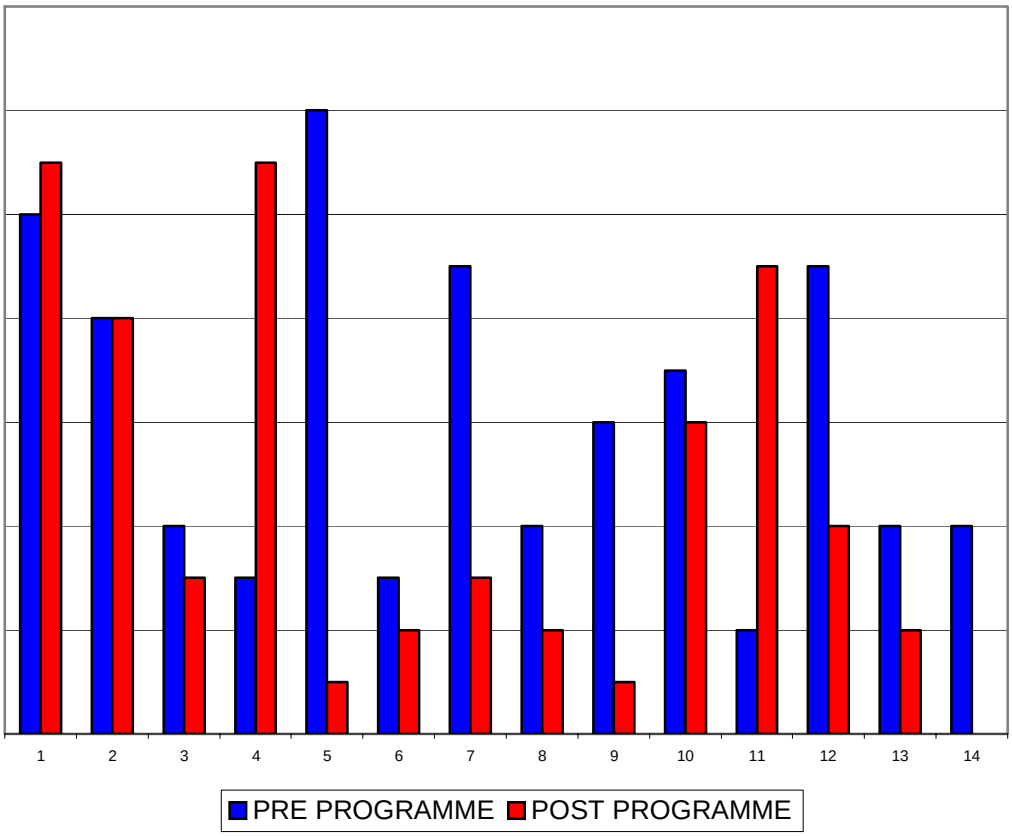
5 = apply a model of child observati assessment
9 = identify & assess the developme progress of children & young people
10 = assess, plan, & implement dire with children & young people & revie outcomes
3 = critically analyse research which informs about development of identif
2 = identify & critically evaluate impa factors which prevent or enable optin development
6 = assess if needs of child are bein met...plan of intervention
8 = engage with children & yp
1 = identify & articulate main dimens human growth & development requir optimal
7 = identify & evaluate influence of communities of interest

CANDIDATE RANKING OF COMPETENCIES - MODULE TWO



2 = identify & critically evalu
factors which promote or di
parental functioning
1 = critically analyse macro
elements of good parenting
5 = articulate the rationale f
parenting &critically evaluat
effectiveness
4 = critically evaluate influe
environmental, economic &
factors on children & yp
6 = assess whether needs
being met & provide plan of
intervention...
7 = articulate & evaluate str
managing conflict & violenc
3 = use risk assessment fra
8 = assess, plan, implemen
delivery of services to suppo
10 = contribute to professio
development of others...
9 = take responsibility for o
professional developement

CANDIDATE RANKING OF COMPETENCIES - MODULE THREE



5 = demonstrate knowledge of comprehensive repetoire of theo
1 = explain the philosphy, ration scope of child care policy, local procedures & legislation…
4 = identify & analyse legal responsibility of other profession and agencies…
12 = work within & critically evalu national & agency structures, po
11 = work effectively within legal framework
7 = formulate needs led assess
2 = critically analyse impact of c policies, procedures & legislatio
10 = identify needs & gaps in services...
9 = work with neighbourhoods, communities, family networks & locate...
3 = articulate roles & responsib of other professionals...
8 = contribute to effective inter-agency working within planning, managing, delivering, and review
13 = take responsibility for own professional development
14 = contribute to development o others
6 = evaluate the use of of self .

☑ These summaries should assist the Curriculum Committee and tutors determine which competencies candidates feel they need the greatest help with, so that the programme can meet these needs

☑ Competencies, which are ranked low, or gaps should be identified for remedial intervention.

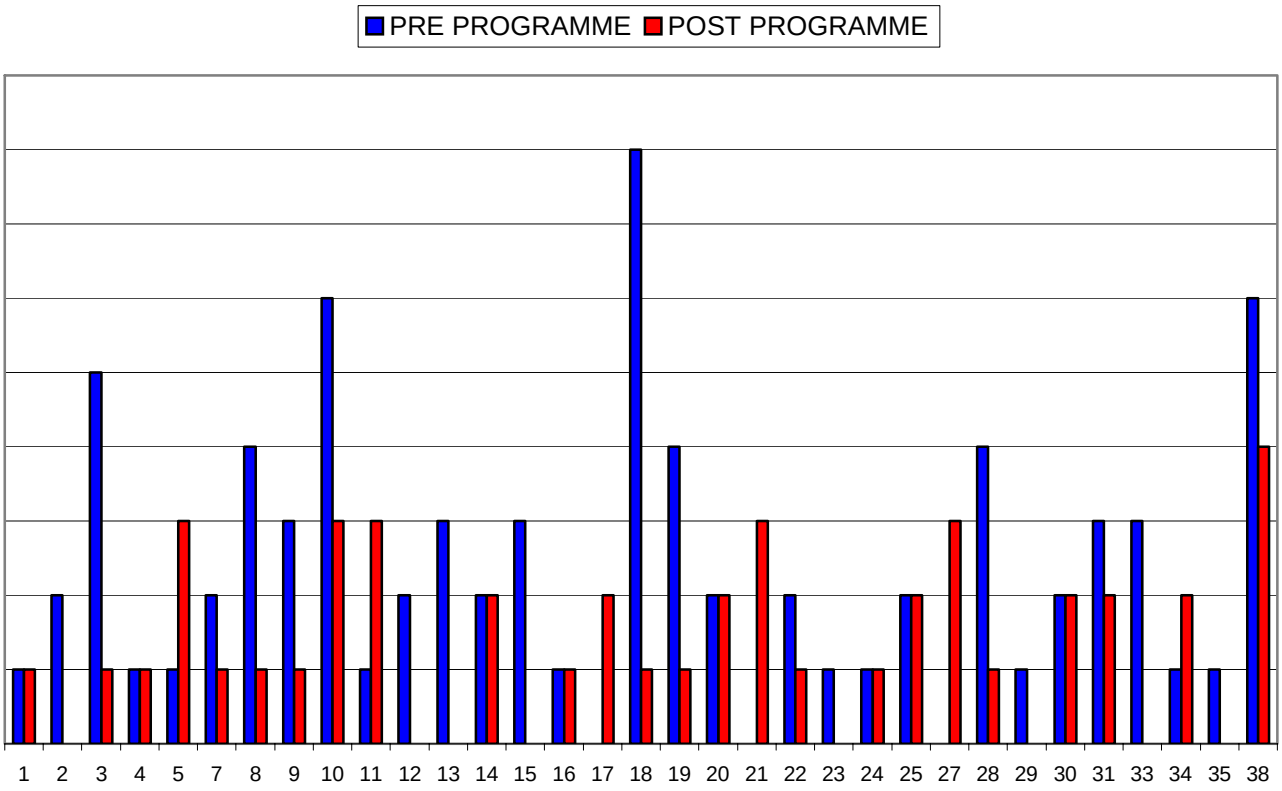
10.8 RANKING OF COMPETENCIES BY LINE MANAGERS:

☑ This chart summarizes a similar procedure, completed by the line managers, identifying the areas that they feel their candidates are weakest in, and where they feel there was the most improvement.

☑ Needs to be read with the following charts for clarification of the learning objectives (competencies)

☑ Although the identification of areas of weakness may be somewhat cohort specific, there is likely some generalizability.

RANKING OF COMPETENCIES BY LINE MANAGERS



Learning Outcomes

1) Able to identify and articulate the main dimensions of human growth and development required for optimal development.
2) Able to identify and critically evaluate the impact of factors which prevent or enable optimum development.
3) Able to critically analyse research which informs practitioners about the development of identity.
4) Able to critically evaluate the impact that group or substitute care has on child development.
5) Able to apply a model of child observation or assessment.
6) Able to assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved.
7) Able to identify and evaluate the influence of communities of interest and geographic communities on child development.
8) Able to critically analyse the macro and micro elements of good parenting which lead to optimal outcomes.
9) Able to identify and critically evaluate the range of factors which promote or diminish parental functioning.
10) Able to use risk assessment frameworks.
11) Able to critically evaluate the influence of environmental, economic, and social factors on the lives of children, young people and families.
12) Able to articulate the rationale for corporate parenting and critically evaluate its effectiveness.
13) Able to articulate and evaluate strategies for managing conflict and violence.
14) Able to explain the philosophy, rationale and scope of child care policy, local procedures and legislation which underpins work with children, young people and their families.
15) Able to critically analyse the impact these policies, procedures and legislation have on children, young people and their families.
16) Able to articulate the roles and responsibilities of other professionals and agencies and the contribution they make to achieving optimal options.
17) Able to identify and analyse the legal responsibility and accountability of social workers in relation to legislation and their employing agency.
18) Able to demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive repertoire of theories for practice, social work methods, and current child care research which can be used to achieve optimum outcomes for children, young people and their families.

19) Able to evaluate the use of self in social work practice and the influences of personal beliefs and attitudes on judgement.
20) Able to engage with children and young people, ensuring their appropriate participation in decisions that affect their lives.
21) Able to identify and assess the developmental progress of children and young people, taking into account all the main dimensions of development.
22) Able to assess, plan, and implement direct work with children and young people and review the outcomes
23) Able to develop effective working partnerships with those with parental responsibility, carers and significant others in the life of the child/young person.
24) Able to assess, plan, implement and review the delivery of services to support the parenting task.
25) Able to assess parental capacity, building on strengths and identifying risk of serious harm.
26) Able to identify, manage and mediate conflicts that impact upon the child or young person's life.
27) Able to formulate needs led assessments which take full account of potential strengths and weaknesses of the child or young person's networks and communities, acknowledging diversity and the role of oppression.
28) Able to contribute to effective inter agency working within the areas of planning, managing, delivering and reviewing services, in order to provide an integrated service and range of resources.
29) Able to work with neighbourhoods, communities, family networks and locale to identify service needs
30) Able to identify needs and gaps in services, and contribute appropriately to corporate and strategic planning processes.
31) Able to critically analyze and evaluate local child-care policy and contribute to the development of models of best practice.
32) Able to work effectively within the legal framework.
33) Able to work within and critically evaluate national and agency structures, policy and procedures.
34) Able to compile and complete statutory documentation and present the issues to a formal hearing.
35) Able to keep accurate records and provide reasoned verbal and written reports to promote effective decision-making and accountable practice.
37) Able to take responsibility for own professional development.
38) Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training.

10.9 CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY:

☑ Skewed population...ie: high baselines in the levels of competency reflect the experience level of this cohort.

☑ This is aggregate data. The breakdown for each candidate looks quite different...some candidates actually went down in their ranking...likely reflects false confidence at the beginning, and more realistic ranking now that they 'know what they don't know'...!

☑ These charts were generated with a mean average and show efficacy of the intervention when the mean average of the cohort is considered.

☑ Because of the small sample size, and assumption of normal curve (although skewed) the results may be somewhat distorted by extreme outliers.

☑ Comparison between the Line Manger's and Candidate's ranking very interesting, and could be utilized in the negotiation of learning contracts. In Canada I used it as an aide to self-reflection and teaching.

☑ In all learning objectives there was an increase in both the ipsative and the objective rankings!

☑ Comparisons between these levels of competency clarify differences in the *ipsative* (self) vs. objective evaluation of competency levels of the candidates as well as temporal changes, which reflect the efficacy of the programme.

In summary, this has been a very exciting, and successful first cohort of this programme. It has been very impressive to see such a dedicated group of professionals work in a collaborative and diligent fashion (often against the challenges of time, logistics and evolving guidelines), in their pursuit of excellence in social work education. I am very grateful for everyone's patience and assistance. It has been an honour to be

involved. I would be happy to provide an executive summary of the complete findings to any members of the Group who express an interest.

Sharon Vitali-Ebers

Suggestions for Programme Improvement – Thames Valley PQ in Child Care Partnership
First Cohort Intake 2001
Sharon Vitali-Ebers May 2002

General Comments and Suggestions:	Action Taken OR To be Taken	By Whom	Date Completed
☑ The vast majority of candidates had difficulty with the wording of the knowledge and performance outcomes... and complained that they were articulated in 'academic language' that was not familiar to them. (Note: these outcomes were extracted from the official documents).	☑ As these outcomes are key they should be interpreted and articulated with examples familiar to candidates/line managers/assessors emphasizing HOW to recognize an outcome when accomplished (demonstrable & measurable)		
☑ Candidates expressed frustration and confusion about conflicting guidelines in the manuals/handbooks and other written materials (although they were understanding that the materials were produced under severe time constraints).	☑ The manuals and handbooks have been re-written, guidelines and expectations clarified, information better organized and consistency ensured.		
☑ Candidates and line managers expressed frustration where the candidates from one Agency (and team) were split into different University sites.	☑ The rationale for this policy (equity and viability of all three HEI sites) has been discussed and revised to avoid this for future intakes.		
☑ The candidates were extremely keen to have an opportunity to express their concerns and frustrations in an anonymous channel.	☑ An anonymous feedback system should be instituted to maintain this communication as well as formal mechanisms.		
☑ Administrative delays in payment of fees frustrated students by preventing immediate access to library resources	☑ The factors that led to this concern have been fully explored, and the 2002 intake have experienced a radically improved efficiency of induction.		
☑ ALL candidates were attending with a strong commitment to increasing their general social work skills (63 % strongly motivated) and specifically their childcare skills (73% strongly motivated).	☑ Key issues to remain mindful of during curriculum revision/lecture design.		

☑ 60% of the group were there because the line manager had advised the to attend, and 40% have been sent by their employing agency. There is a great deal of resentment expressed by individuals who feel they were 'forced' and some who were told to attend 'at the last minute'. The Agencies need to respond to this as candidate motivation and staff morale is jeopardised.	☑ This concern returned to the Agencies to explore further.		
☑ 73% of the candidates are motivated by the impending government requirement to attend the course			
☑ ALL candidates were highly motivated by the opportunity for intellectual stimulation (63% strongly motivated), and were extremely keen to update their theory (80% strongly motivated).	☑ Key issues to remain mindful of during curriculum revision/lecture design.		
☑ A desire to improve assessment skills (90% strongly motivated), learn how to use research to inform practice (70% strongly motivated), evaluating their own practice (93%), (improve skills in applying scales and instruments (80% strongly motivated) increase skills/knowledge needed in court work (60%), improve their use of reflective practice (56%), was identified.	☑ Topics to be emphasised (as appropriate) in teaching materials, lectures, portfolio development, seminars, workshops, guest lecturers, etc. ☑ Some topics might be better addressed by training agencies or in-house continuing professional development		
☑ Almost all candidates were looking to improve their general and specific confidence in their work tasks, and 73% were hoping to learn something to help them in their work with difficult families.	☑ As above.		
☑ 73% were highly motivated to increase their skills as a supervisor/mentor/trainer, and 60% were hoping to use the course to build toward further academic qualifications.	☑ Indication of desire to gain further skills confidence for these advanced roles should be addressed, particularly as the field is in need of same. ☑ Academic issues should be explored further.		

73% were hoping that the programme would increase their chances of promotion and 73% were hoping that the qualification would make them more attractive in the job market.	☑ Should be addressed in annual performance appraisals and professional development goal setting; otherwise may lose to other occupations.		
☑ 80% of the candidates expressed a desire to increase their self-awareness of his/her own value and prejudicial biases.	☑ Should be incorporated into the curriculum further…perhaps as confidential self-awareness exercises.		
☑ *** There was a strong negative correlation with completion of the PQ1. This is beyond the scope of this study, but needs to be addressed as 60% felt very strongly that their experience of the PQ1 reduced their motivation for this programme.	☑ This observation, and related concerns about the PQ1 programme have been addressed at the Management Board level, and the PQ1 will be explored more fully		
Strongest Motivations & Expectations in Order: (Listed here to ensure integration into course materials, recruitment methods, and programme improvement)			
☑ Increase child care skills			
☑ Learn how to utilize research to inform practice			
☑ Increase knowledge of current theory			
☑ Prepare for future government requirements			
☑ Increase general social work skills			
☑ Increase attractiveness on the job market			
☑ Intellectual stimulation			
☑ Increase confidence in assessments			
☑ Increase ability as a trainer/supervisor			
☑ Earn credit towards an academic degree			
☑ Have protected time for structured learning			
☑ Improve ability to evaluate own practice			
☑ Time away from the stress of work			
☑ Increase self-awareness of value and prejudicial biases			
☑ Increase ability and use of reflective practice			

☑ There was a great deal of anxiety and frustration expressed by the candidates and much of it was expressed in narrative outside the structured questions.	☑ Narrative concerns were subsequently listed and explored in detail, with immediate responses (including correspondence meetings with the candidates. Programme changes and improvements instituted immediately wherever possible, or considered and prepared for the next Cohort.		
☑ There was significant concern that the line managers /other workers / government / CCETSW did not understand the amount of work that the programme demanded of them. Candidates asked that the Universities educate Line Managers about what was being expected of them.	☑ Line managers more actively engaged by inclusion in the 2001 Conference, and more fully integrated into the 2002 Cohort in numerous stages of the Programme. ☑ Ongoing goal		
☑ Most candidates were very concerned that there was not sufficient protected time at the work place (due to current understaffing, lack of adequate resources provided to hire in replacement staff).	☑ This concern was returned to the Agencies who despite their best efforts continued to struggle as a result of lack of qualified social workers and resources available. ☑This matter requires attention at a higher policy level.		
☑ 80% of the candidates expressed significant concern about stress levels related to juggling the demands of work, home, and the programme.	☑ There was a significant commitment to the well being of candidates, and this was demonstrated by the availability/support of tutors, extensions granted, etc, and evidenced by the significant number of candidates who completed the programme successfully. ☑ Ongoing goal		
☑ Some candidates expressed concern about the resentment their team-mates might feel if extra work was imposed upon them as a result of the candidate being involved in the program.	☑ Needs to be addressed in Agencies, esp. at point of recruitment to programme, and reviewed throughout the year of the course. Team meetings essential.		

☑ Candidates expressed natural anxieties about returning to the role of a student, particularly, the amount of reading required (83%), producing written assignments (75%), presenting in front of a group (45%), exams (62%), being evaluated by the tutors (45%), having their practice evaluated (55%).	☑ The Curriculum Committee and tutors were particularly attuned to this and ensured that appropriate formative assignments were instituted to assist candidates with calibrating their study/writing skills against the academic assignments. This issue received further discussion and planning in advance of the 2002 Cohort, and continues to remain under scrutiny and revision for the next intake.		
☑ 62% of the group were anxious about the possibility of failing, and 34% were concerned about job security as a result of the programme.	☑ As noted above, the tutors continue to make improvements to the academic programme and assessments modalities (ie: formative & summative to ensure that they are assisting the candidates in their re-entry to academic expectations and work). ☑ This should be addressed as a policy issue, as it may become more problematic as 'weaker' candidates enter the programme.		
☑ A small number of candidates were anxious about using the library, using computers, and being a mature student on campus.	☑ The 2002 Cohort experienced a more in-depth induction process designed to address these concerns in a proactive manner. ☑ Wherever resources allow, access to computers should occur in the workplace, as they are now essential technology in most occupations.		
☑ 28% expressed concern about transportation issues, and this was particularly the case where candidates from the same agency were split into different University sites.			
☑ A great deal of spontaneous anxiety was expressed about the portfolio, especially related to being able to produce the evidence required for the competencies, and the amount of time and work required for this component.	☑ The shortness of time between approval and start up of the Programme during the 2001 Cohort resulted in difficulties with MODULE FOUR (the portfolio and practice assessment process). A number of remedial mechanisms were instituted and further programme revision institute for 2002 Cohort		

☑ A few candidates were concerned that they would be bored with the content of the programme, and/or wished they could be taking a more specialized curriculum.	☑ Academic levels should be explored further as the course progresses		
Strongest Anxieties and Frustrations in Order: (Listed here to ensure integration into course materials, recruitment methods, and programme improvement)			
☑ Impact of combined stress of work and the program			
☑ Getting enough protected time from work			
☑ Completing written assignments			
☑ Amount of reading required			
☑ Possibly failing			
☑ Exams			
☑ Speaking in front of peers			
☑ Possible stress at home as a result of the programme demands			
☑ Having practice evaluated			
GENERAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS – FEEDBACK FROM TRANCHE ONE - 2001 INTAKE POST TEST			
☑ Need for improved organization and integration …esp. of handbooks, guidance, curriculum organization, etc	☑ Addressed for 2002 cohort, and on-going goal		
☑ Logistics need to be better attended to (e.g. Resource materials Internet registration, library cards, lectures room facilities, etc)	☑ Addressed for 2002 cohort, and on-going goal		
☑ Increased involvement of Line Managers	☑ Addressed for 2002 cohort, and on-going goal		
☑ Earlier and more integration and involvement of Practice Assessors	☑ Addressed for 2002 cohort, and on-going goal		

☑ Better use of afternoon session...more use of learning sets	☑ Addressed for 2002 cohort, and on-going goal		
☑ More variety of teaching modalities/aides	☑ Addressed for 2002 cohort, and on-going goal		
☑ No merging with other groups after group formed	☑ To be explored at a policy level		
☑ Workload issues.... gradually settled...needs further exploration	☑ Needs exploration at Agency and programme policy level		
☑ Sequencing of units – Module Three first as broadest... perhaps put unit one last	☑ To be explored at a policy level		
☑ Complete re-think and configuration of Module Three	☑ Addressed for 2002 cohort, and on-going goal		
☑ Re-think of time framing ...summer interruption significant	☑ To be explored at a policy level		
☑ Re-think of portfolio...instructions, timing, deadlines, etc.	☑ Addressed for 2002 cohort, and on-going goal		
CANDIDATE SATISFACTION FOR MODULE ONE (post-test - May 2001) (Listed here to ensure integration into course materials, recruitment methods, and programme improvement)			
☑ Good teaching handouts appreciated			
☑ Aims have been achieved within the great constraints of time that have applied.			
☑ Timescales have been very tight			
☑ We discussed many areas... but some briefly			
☑ I have developed greater understanding and knowledge of development and attachment theory and related it to my area of work			

☑ Learnt more about attachment theories/issues and impact on carer(s). Learnt about development, interview techniques/tools/skills AND analysis of responses			
☑ Most areas have been touched on – issues of race need more discussion as does mental health and teenagers			
☑ Very interesting – however far too fleeting on too many areas and not enough time on anyone topic			
☑ Appropriate lecture topics, room for discussion			
☑ I have become much more child focused and theory based			
☑ I have gained really useful knowledge on child development and attachment			
☑ Achieved, although more time was needed			
☑ Lots of theories to absorb...stimulating			
☑ Would have liked more time to fully embrace the topics. Superb module			
☑ A working knowledge of attachment theory with the opportunity to test out lecture subjects has been welcome			
☑ Extremely, I enjoyed the balance of relaxed humour, encouragement, and presentation of theory			
☑ Excellent, would have preferred longer period of time			
☑ Format was participative and informative. Relaxed and enjoyable learning environment established			
☑ Handouts were good, but brief			
☑ On occasion it was a bit like Island Hopping, but good content and lots of discussion			
☑ Yes, but more time needed to go over areas needing more explanation			
☑ Casual style took some getting used to			
☑ Would say yes...if it had been followed all the time			
☑ Fairly effective, however, often erratic and unstructured which made it difficult to follow topics and link to handouts			
☑ Brought to life by 'real' examples – both tutor and student provided			

☑ Effective style and format of presentation material			
☑ Course tutor was excellent, his style, approachability, knowledge, etc.			
☑ Module could have been longer to undertake more case studies			
☑ Enjoyable			
☑ Subject brought alive by lecturer			
☑ Interactive – flexible, felt able to contribute			
☑ Excellent teaching format. Delivery was appropriate and thought provoking			
☑ Rushed at times, but enjoyable			
☑ Nice mix of cognitive, behavioural and psychodynamic theory			
☑ Reading material and handout very useful			
☑ Course content has been directly applicable to practice			
☑ All relevant to daily work with children & families			
☑ A pity the rest of the SSD hasn't got a clue about what we are learning, so they don't understand when we discuss things			
☑ Majority of material relevant			
☑ Content was relevant, simply needed to be more focused and structured			
☑ More use to some students than others			
☑ Very relevant material			
☑ Very interesting, needed longer on it all			
☑ I have used all of it in my practice			
☑ Spot on. I was left with a desire to go away and incorporate newly learned skills into practice			
☑ Yes, although not what my daily work would be			
☑ Getting access to the library was delayed at the start of the course. I have found few of the recommended books in the library	☑ Some Agencies set up 'in house' libraries.		
☑ 4-5 weeks before library card was issued. Limited range of books	☑ Induction procedures tightened for 2002 Cohort, which ensured faster library/computer access.		
☑ It took 4-5 weeks to get (temporary) library card issued			

☑ I did not use the library for this module. I relied on personal and work resources.			
☑ Books available but very old! Newer books on list...library do not have.			
☑ Great to have access to the library			
☑ Didn't use the library so far			
☑ Many books outdated			
☑ No real range of books available or resources – on order/on loan...etc.! Also, did not have valid library cards until week 7/8			
☑ I haven't had time to use the library!			
☑ Too far from home, so I do not use the library, struggle having to carry them and ensuring they are returned on time.			
☑ Very hard to access primarily research. Some recent publications not available.			
☑ We have a supply of relevant books at the office			
☑ Delay in issue of library card			
☑ Lots of limited books not in the library			
☑ Difficulty in finding enough time to make effective use of library			
☑ Being in for one day only made access to certain library material impossible			
☑ Assignments were useful to do to show guidance of what was learned			
☑ Assignments related closely to course content			
☑ 1500 words for assignment was short to express what we had learned			
☑ Required a lot of focus and did test knowledge – Sometimes difficult to pick out relevant bit from wealth of information presented			
☑ Useful procedures, but very stress provoking			
☑ Very relevant			
☑ I could have written much more than 500 words			
☑ Especially relevant assignment re: attachment theory			

☑ Good mix and balance of teaching aids/formats			
☑ Relevant videos/audio material			
☑ On the whole – very good sometimes it felt narrative stems a bit overdone			
☑ Access to material the problem			
☑ Very appropriate for the course			
☑ Just the right amount			
☑ Not enough attention to anti-oppressive practice...but I think this is a criticism of the new assessment framework	☑ Both the Curriculum Committee and the Management Committee were extremely vigilant regarding matters related to minorities, anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice within the Programme. Wherever possible the emphasis on these matters was enhanced within the existing curriculum of 2001 by extracting examples within candidate's practice. More comprehensive revision and enhancement was achieved for the 2002 curriculum.		
☑ Racism not covered at all			
☑ Impact of racism on child development/identity/self-esteem needs to be covered			
☑ Just sufficient...having the time, this could have been extended			
☑ Limited time to go into depth on racism & anti-oppressive practice, adequate, but could have done more with more time			
☑ Culture/race barely touched on			
☑ Like most of the course content, we could have spent more times, esp. with regard to statistics on mixed race children in care			
Note the 13 candidates who were dissatisfied with the venue were all at the Oxford Brookes site.	☑ Oxford Brookes managed to secure alternate teaching space for next module.		
☑ Room totally inhospitable...lacking air, space, etc.			
☑ Room too small, we were squashed in, and very little room for manoeuvring			
☑ Room very small and airless			

☑ Lack of day light in room			
☑ Too hot			
☑ Room too small, inadequate			
☑ Poor, but interest in the course content soon overtook this			
☑ Room stuffy and overcrowded			
THE THREE BEST THINGS ABOUT THIS MODULE WERE:			
☑ Course tutor was excellent...his style, approachability, knowledge, etc.			
☑ New and innovative teaching methods			
☑ Good group – able to share with others			
☑ Learnt new skills / insight			
☑ New information on narrative stems – Tutor's expertise			
☑ Mixing with other professionals			
☑ Encouraging relaxed informative teaching style			
☑ Interesting and varied topical content			
☑ An accepting and good group to work in (very well established and facilitated)			
☑ Course content esp. story stems and the tutor!			
☑ Discussion with fellow colleagues – support and shared experiences			
☑ Actual theoretical evidence/studies			
☑ Having a lunch break/study time			
☑ The group's dynamic/size			
☑ Teaching methods			
☑ Support systems/tutor			
☑ Reference to further learning to improve practice			
☑ Interactive learning approach			
☑ Learning in more depth about attachment			
☑ Tools for direct work ..e.g. Story stems, etc. and analysis			
☑ Group sharing/support/learning			
☑ Learning to do skilled direct work with children			
☑ Learning about the development of personality			

☑ Learning about the child's inner world			
☑ Mutual stimulus – lecture style			
☑ Reflection			
☑ Immediately applying theory to practice			
☑ Attachment theory			
☑ Back to basics – and detailed			
☑ Group discussion and live examples			
☑ Good range of materials to use			
☑ Learning new relevant issues			
☑ Being away from the office and using new skills			
☑ Learning about attachment theory			
☑ Meeting other professionals			
☑ Having time to reflect on practice			
☑ Excellent tutor !!!!			
☑ The subject – children really being the focus for change			
☑ The group			
☑ Being away from work			
☑ Informative			
☑ Enabled me to reflect more on how I work with children			
☑ A day a week away from the office			
☑ Crittenden & Bion			
☑ Discussion on working tools/assessment packs			
☑ Story stem analysis			
☑ Good group environment (eg. learning environment)			
☑ Interesting care studies			
☑ Learning more about attachment theory			
☑ I learned a new method of working			
☑ Very relevant to my work			
☑ I enjoyed the discussion of case material			
☑ The chance to look at some current research and literature			
☑ Taking time out to do some reading (note enough)			
☑ Crittenden paper			

☑ Learning on attachment, generally			
☑ New skills learnt re: narrative stems, flow charts, tools generally			
☑ Tutor is very knowledgeable			
☑ In depth look at attachment theory			
☑ Talking about practice with the other social workers			
☑ Getting to meet others and hear about other jobs			
☑ Learning more about attachment theory esp. Critterdon paper			
☑ Having ideas of where to go to get more information			
☑ The Tuesday sessions at college			
☑ The learning that has taken place			
☑ The impact that the learning has had on practice			
☑ Interesting information			
☑ Up to date research			
☑ Ability to have time to reflect on practice			
☑ The group size, dynamics			
☑ Learning			
☑ Teaching method – tutor			
☑ Opportunity to look in depth at attachment theory and what it means for children's wellbeing			
☑ Opportunity to put theory into practice			
☑ Time to reflect upon practice			
☑ Knowledge gained			
☑ Group			
☑ Tutor			
☑ Being able to apply knowledge to practice			
☑ Examining current research			
☑ Away from the stress of workplace			
☑ Working model of attachment as an assessment tool			
☑ Seminar discussions			
☑ Time out of work to reflect			
☑ Stimulation of new material			

☑ Many case discussions			
☑ Learning new techniques			
THREE THINGS I WOULD LIKE CHANGED IN THIS MODULE ARE:			
☑ More time to reflect			
☑ More information on child development			
☑ More IT info...ie: better prepared with regard to ID and library			
☑ The room (OXBR)			
☑ The difficulty in accessing reference material			
☑ Recognition of time needed must be acknowledged			
☑ Admin. arrangements better in place at the start			
☑ A better stocked library			
☑ Quicker and clearer information about the possibility of achieving linked academic awards			
☑ More time..more time..more time !!!			
☑ Shorter break – one hour rather than two			
☑ Reading time			
☑ More time and only one assignment!			
☑ Fewer subjects to cover			
☑ Less reading materials/ more books in library			
☑ Bombardment of source material with the time framework			
☑ More time to cover the material			
☑ Distribution of notes/papers for reading the week prior to teaching			
☑ Audio-visual tapes...more examples of these and for candidates to contribute with prior warning and preparation			
☑ Shorter lunch			
☑ Help with accessing reading from the Library			
☑ Change in word count for assignment. too short.			
☑ Expectations about accessing primary research			
☑ Concentrate more on particular areas			

☑ Change of room			
☑ Better access to library			
☑ Two hour lunch break is too long			
☑ Afternoon sessions more structured			
☑ More focused reading time (possibly in afternoon)			
☑ The room (OXFORD BROOKES)			
☑ More time			
☑ More time for interventions			
☑ Make sure that there is support for people who may have personal issues come up			
☑ More time to look in-depth at specific ages			
☑ More time to look at interventions			
☑ More lecture time			
☑ A reading week half way through			
☑ Afternoons a bit unstructured – more teaching time needed			
☑ Not enough space in module for completion of two assignments – we are doing the second one in the holidays.			
☑ Better access to resources eg. more relevant books in library			
☑ Quicker access to student ID card (took 6 weeks to get – B)			
☑ More time on attachment theory to gather with other child development theories			
☑ More help with internet learning			
☑ More library books – esp. gov't publications			
☑ A reading week in middle to catch up			
☑ Longer teaching day			
☑ A reading week			
☑ I think it would have been better if we had been given 6 months away from the workplace to do the course			
☑ More time looking at candidates prepared...videos or listening to audio cassettes. ☑ This way not really possible as candidates did not begin preparing them until the end of the course			
☑ A structured reading week built into the course			
☑ Longer lectures and less tutorial time			

☑ Afternoon sessions			
☑ Some small group work needed			
☑ Lectures to be more structured and less waffly			
☑ A reading day			
☑ More time – module feels very compressed			
☑ More clarity re expectations			
☑ Practice assessors not to have any direct input into session as happened on one occasion during this module			
☑ Fewer assignments			
☑ More reading time associated			
☑ Greater communication with managers			
☑ Cover fewer subjects in more depth			
☑ Less reading material due to time			
☑ Only one assignment			
☑ More time so that I could actually enjoy the course			
☑ More info/time on 16+ years			
☑ To be less rushed			
☑ Block teaching away from the workplace (ie: 6 months)			
☑ Longer teaching day (ie: 6 hours per day)			
☑ Reading week			
☑ Less material			
☑ Not having to choose cases..esp for course work			
☑ Not having folio (?) start yet			
☑ A more structured day			
☑ Better use of time			
☑ Less subject areas/more depth of those covered			
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE CANDIDATES:			
☑ Meet assessors much earlier			
☑ More input into portfolio			
☑ Get things in place well before module			
☑ Provide primary source materials so that hours are not			

wasted in getting resources			
☑ Allow more time for reading, preparation, assignments			
☑ Locum coverage			
☑ Knowledge of how hard it will be to balance course plus full time employment			
☑ Course in a block NOT on days !			
☑ DON'T PANIC!!!!!			
☑ Negotiate study time/tutorials/mentoring early on.			
☑ Preparation time – advance warning of readings			
☑ More efficient registration to access library...time was lost!			
☑ Planning with relation to work to be established prior to course			
☑ More preparation for the course...eg. example of the papers for reading			
☑ Induction prior to onset of PQ1			
☑ Preparation of work base/colleagues in order that candidates feel supported			
☑ This course is fascinating, but difficult			
☑ Maybe it should be taught later in the course...it is quite specialized			
☑ Plan time			
☑ Start early in portfolios straight away			
☑ Get a book grant...purchase lay texts			
☑ Be prepared to work hard			
☑ Think about how this well benefit your practice			
☑ Get clear guidance and support from colleagues and managers			
☑ Relax and enjoy the course!			
☑ Make sure that you get work load relief			
☑ Don't panic....enjoy it !!			
☑ Talk to tutor and group about any worries			
☑ Prepare to enjoy!			
☑ Learning agreements sorted out before start of course			

☑ Registration at University should take place before start			
☑ Parking space			
☑ Don't take it on until the work load – v- assessment of course argument is resolved			
☑ Plan, plan, plan.			
☑ Don't do it without a really supportive line manger – mine is!			
☑ Ensure agencies are aware of the PQ			
☑ That agencies are more sensitive to candidates needs and include them in planning			
☑ Read suggested books before course			
☑ Meet practice assessor earlier			
☑ Sort out esp. for Guardian ad litems how, if the course will be funded in terms of loss of earnings			
☑ Think twice before coming on the course			
☑ Keep up with the reading			
☑ Be prepared to stand your ground with management			
☑ More warning re: workload implications			
☑ Realistic awareness of personal time to be committed			
☑ Reading week to be incorporated into module			
☑ Workload relief to be arranged by workplace			
☑ One assignment each module			
☑ Line managers more aware of content			
☑ Greater preparation			
☑ Recognition of time limits			
☑ Know expectations			
☑ DON'T BOTHER..ITS EASIER TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER JOB !!!!			
☑ Direct lead in from PQ1...reading list, assessor meeting			
☑ Money available for work replacement immediately at start of course			
☑ Given tape recorders, dolls, video, 2 way mirror info in advance please			
☑ Need better availability of library/other materials			

☑ Need refined reading list...focused info			
☑ Work relief.... REDUCE CONFLICTS!!!			
OTHER SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS:			
☑ Reading list sent out prior to course			
☑ A well-taught module			
☑ Course Tutor has brought it alive!			
☑ I hope another module on this could build on what we have begun to learn			
☑ I have found teaching style excellent.			
☑ I have enjoyed the course and gained a great deal from it.			
☑ The course has taken 2 to 2 ½ days per week of my time, which is more than I had anticipated at the outset.			
☑ More time to submit portfolios			
☑ Line managers need to be more informed re: the course... given a general book, etc.			
☑ The agencies must be aware and sympathetic to the level of work/time required			
☑ This is an important course, which all child care workers must take – this therefore needs to be presented in a more positive way to future candidates. They need to be encouraged that this is a career enhancement and should be financially rewarded on completion			
☑ Has been useful to meet and learn about other aspects of work in the field and how different services operate within the same agency.			
☑ How there appear to be constant 'battles' to demonstrate and use the results of this course			
☑ Module was very interesting and enjoyable, however, everything else was a major headache			
☑ Agency totally unaware of what PQ involves...hopefully this will change			
☑ More specific info as to what loss of earnings can be allowed			

– the local Authority are given money for us – what happens to this if your agency isn't social services?			
☑ Get rid of the portfolio. We did one for PQ1 and to have to do one for PQ2 is excessive.			
☑ The achievement in passing the course (if we do) should be recognize in some way by our employers			
☑ I've really enjoyed the module, but the combined stress of work and the course has at times proved impossible			
☑ Employers to recognise and accommodate amount of work, how individuals will be given workload relief			
☑ Get rid of exams and portfolio			
	☑ Significant revision of Module One Curriculum was undertaken. Assessment assignments were revised, and knowledge requirements teased out.		
	☑ Candidates for 2002 cohort met with Tutorial Leader before start of Course, and were provided with revised and clarified guidelines, reading lists, and expectations for assignments.		
CANDIDATE SATISFACTION FOR MODULE TWO (post-test September 2002) (Listed here to ensure integration into course materials, recruitment methods, and programme improvement)			
BEST THINGS ABOUT THIS MODULE:			
☑ Linked well into framework for assessment			
☑ Good practice in other countries touched on			
☑ Strategies for working with resistant and reluctant parents			
☑ Opportunity to reflect upon practice			
☑ Work on Assessments.			
☑ Work on contracts.			
☑ Greater understanding on parental capacity.			
☑ Structured – clear sense of format			

☑ Handbook was great			
☑ Learning about new framework			
☑ Clarity. Clear presentation and references.			
☑ Discussing ecological approaches to assessment.			
☑ Revisiting theoretical perspectives.			
☑ It was more structured than the first module.			
☑ Over-view of framework			
☑ Intervention work & assessment framework			
☑ Reluctance/ resistance			
☑ Effective intervention.			
☑ Sessions have been fully focused on linking objectives to learning outcomes.			
☑ Aiding vs. analysis and decision making – assessments			
☑ Sharing examples and cases of work with others.			
☑ Research information			
☑ More relaxed teaching style			
☑ Handouts/ lectures met the program well			
☑ Learning new skills and putting into practice			
☑ Support of other students and tutor			
☑ Pitched at the right level			
☑ Time out from work			
☑ Tutor very approachable and nice			
☑ Learning sets			
☑ Looking in a detailed structured way at parenting			
☑ Being given help with essays e.g. Concentrating on answering a question			
☑ Opportunity to update information			
☑ Finding out about new research			
☑ The teaching was good			
☑ Interesting and informative			
☑ Tutor kept to right level			
☑ Support from other candidates			

☑ Clearly presented theories, concepts and up to date research.			
☑ Stimulation of a positive learning group environment.			
☑ Good humour and sense of debate promoted.			
☑ Time out of work to reflect but this would be better integrated into work place.			
☑ Candidate's own presentations.			
☑ Application to DOH framework			
☑ Opportunity to listen to colleague's presentations			
☑ Opportunity to learn about the perspectives of colleges			
☑ Learning set/ individual presentations			
☑ Group discussions encouraged reading			
☑ Enjoyed writing the assignments			
☑ Encouraged reflection on practice and had an impact on practice.			
☑ Structural factors contributing to abuse and neglect.			
☑ Learning sets			
☑ Focus on parenting capacity			
☑ Links with research			
THINGS I WOULD LIKE CHANGED IN THIS MODULE:			
☑ More discussion in relation to work scenarios			
☑ More interactive style			
☑ Needs to be made more interesting – discussion/groups			
☑ Greater use of alternative teaching aids			
☑ New books in library			
☑ Greater focus on fewer theories to gain better understanding			
☑ More books in library			
☑ Teaching methods creating more enthusiasm			
☑ Make it more exciting –sorry not sure how			
☑ Less lecture format…more video extracts or other teaching methods			
☑ Lack of support and general disorganization of the course as a whole ensued			

☑ I felt undervalued			
☑ Newer videos			
☑ Nothing			
☑ Use of course handbooks helpful and examples of relevant practice			
☑ Use of other teaching methods to get info across			
☑ More discussion			
☑ Time it takes to mark assignments			
☑ More time to do summative assignment			
☑ More time to visit library and do group work			
☑ No changes!			
☑ Less spoon-fed lessons			
☑ Get assignments and feedback earlier			
☑ No particular changes necessary			
☑ I would have preferred slightly more definite built in breaks although these were introduced more in the second half of the module			
☑ Only one essay 3,000 words necc.			
☑Tutor spend day at work place and aware of work pressure			
☑ Line manager to attend intro			
☑ More student input			
☑ Less direct teaching			
☑ Reduce 'lectured' at times			
☑ Reformat learning sets/student input			
☑ More interactive lectures			
☑ More use of case studies			
☑ More lively-interviews like last term..interviews with parents and families			
☑ More recent videos			
☑ Extension of workshops – ie; case discussion			
☑ More intensive content over shorter time period			
☑ More use of student input			
☑ More advanced preparation time for learning sets			

☑ Focus more on particular areas..research evidence based p[practice			
☑ More attention to children with disability			
☑ Evidence from practice in other countries			
☑ More learning sets			
☑ The case discussion focus			
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE CANDIDATES:			
☑ Try and access resources before beginning of course			
☑ Make sure assignments are clear (several candidates from Bucks had difficulties with formative assignment)			
☑ Don't panic			
☑ Use colleagues as support 'academically'			
☑ Make sure you have computer to use			
☑ Make sure you negotiate to have books provided by work			
☑ Get basic books at beginning of module			
☑ Get hold of reading list before module starts			
☑ Get your own computer			
☑ Negotiate study time with line manager			
☑ Buy your own books prior to course as library and bookshop lacking in material			
☑ I feel very despondent about social work as a result of this course			
☑ Make time for reading			
☑ Get clear agreements from work			
☑ Sort out resource bay for books			
☑ None			
☑ Try and get hold of books before module begins			
☑ Read and digest as much as possible			
☑ Pace yourself			
☑ More reflection on practice			
☑ Earlier involvement of assessors			
☑ Prepare work to fit into learning sets			

☑ Keep up reading			
☑ Think deeply about the implications on your work and personal life, they are quite earth shattering at times			
☑ Read			
☑ Amount of reading required is more realistic than the first module			
OTHER SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS:			
☑ Was difficult to get motivated for second essay and tired of fighting for management support			
☑ Fed up with general disorganization			
☑ Wish course ended September not December (work pressure)			
☑ Content is good			
☑ Found it difficult to become involved in sessions....lack of enthusiasm			
☑ I was not so enthused by this module, ...not sure if it was because this module was more repetitive of things we knew			
☑ Excellent content!			
☑ The module was well paced			
☑ Being given library classification system with reading list to know where books are and that they are actually in the library			
☑ Very difficult to sustain motivation			
☑ Suggest three-month college block out of work – easier to get work replacement			
	☑ Module Two revised in accordance with suggestions made by Candidates.		
CANDIDATE SATISFACTION FOR MODULE THREE (post-test) **(Listed here to ensure integration into course materials, recruitment methods, and programme improvement)**	Please Note: ☑ There were extraordinary circumstances that resulted in a poorly designed and delivered Third Module. Immediate intervention to remedy the situation was blocked by the sensitivity of legal and		

	political issues. ☑ The Consortium is seriously concerned about the Third Module and have made major changes which will bring this module up to the standards of the first two, and will prevent a reoccurrence of the difficulties will not occur again.		
☑ The module's aims as requested by CCETSW could have been explained more at the beginning so we knew what we were focusing on. Instead we had three different lecturers each going from their own perspective.			
☑ I am able to complete requirements from my own previous learning, however I haven't had the opportunity to look at policy in any detail. Repetitive info on NA framework – which was completed in Module 2			
☑ The only new knowledge gained related to one session on Asylum Seekers			
☑ Could have been taught more variety of law – rather than left to our own devices, and should have taught us how to access info on the Internet rather than assume we could all do it. More in-depth discussions of policy and how used was needed			
☑ Content felt superficial at times			
☑ Would be better as Module One to give overview of ADP/legal and Policy framework			
☑ Areas have been covered, but not to the depth expected – very little 'new' stuff for us as practitioners (Except for the legislation – human rights stuff)			
☑ I felt that many of the issues were not addressed in much depth. I would have appreciated more comprehensive seminar(s) on the legal aspects			
☑ The program designed does not meet the module outcomes			
☑ Achieved, but in a very bland way. Interest factors improved			
☑ Very basic level of learning			

☑ This module has been quite basic, stating the obvious and not focused on new learning and development			
☑ Not enough academic 'rigour'			
☑ Aims not achieved as difference between lecturers in module content caused confusion			
☑ This module has not been adequately addressed. It lacked academic context and stimulus with the exception of the law component, which was not long enough			
☑ Cannot be effectively achieved if inadequately taught			
☑ Very broad area to cover			
☑ A lot of time was spent on material that seemed self-explanatory			
☑ I think the whole module lacked clarity			
☑ Very shallow content covered. Would have been useful to more thoroughly cover law and/or comparative policy			
☑ Style could be varied more.			
☑ We were placed in a class with students attempting to get a degree...unsatisfactory.			
☑ Boring, repetitive from Module 2...learnt nothing new			
☑ Just not good enough. Very disappointing			
☑ One video used which majority of candidates had seen before. All other sessions			
☑ Involved reading from typed notes – limited discussions.			
☑ Reading word for word from hand-outs is not effective			
☑ Found teaching style difficult to engage with			
☑ Having numerous people unhelpful			
☑ Clearly not an experienced teacher.			
☑ Boring presentation/repetition of assessment framework.			
☑ Variety of tutors good			
☑ Limited discussions, and no learning sets which although add extra work, at least allow for other areas to be covered by the course. (Did vary dependent on the lecturers)			
☑ At times it seemed quite non-directive and more like a			

general discussion			
☑ I felt that the lectures required more structure in the teaching style			
☑ Could be boring			
☑ Each morning lasted no more than an hour			
☑ For me, I have not felt interested or stimulated. Did not feel style was effective to gain interest or learning			
☑ Taught to...other teaching aides needed			
☑ Lecturer just had photocopies and discussed our practice.			
☑ The taught content has been far too limited, the level superficial and it has not effectively expanded our knowledge or learning			
☑ Rather simplistic			
☑ Reading from overheads is a waste of time...although useful for pointers/main issues			
☑ The teaching standard was terrible.			
☑ It was difficult to have a full discussion on some of the topics.			
☑ Changing tutors was not helpful			
☑ Needed more outside speakers who were briefed.			
☑ Learning sets were useful in other modules			
☑ Teaching relevant to some content but not detailed enough. Need to be more advanced			
☑ To a certain extent, but far too basic. I don't think I learned anything new			
☑ Relevant, but extremely basic			
☑ The law...more so – the rest I don't feel was at all relevant			
☑ The content felt rather fragmented			
☑ Focus on speakers experience with youth justice/probation not relevant			
☑ Of particular value were sessions on immigration and asylum seekers			
☑ The theme of the module was lost after the law exam and			

ended up with discussions			
☑ Need more on black theorists of empowerment/could devise own questionnaire/research for use in community and feedback			
☑ Varied between the lecturers. Legal could have been much more integrated throughout the module.			
☑ It was relevant, but I would have liked more teaching specific to my area of work			
☑ Teaching material relevant to the module			
☑ First two sessions OK			
☑ Content was relevant, but lecture delivery was boring and repetitive. No help with essay (final) preparation			
☑ Whilst the information imparted was relevant, we could have read this ourselves – with the exception of the law component			
☑ Relevant, but nowhere near challenging enough. However, the law lectures were very useful re-visit			
☑ Module topics relevant but not presented in a useful way			
☑ The teaching content might have been relevant if it had taken a more imaginative form.			
☑ The handouts on asylum seekers were good			
☑ Seemed more theoretical, idealised than relevant to practice at times			
☑ Relevant, but not much learned from sessions.			
☑ Haven't used library so much for this module as for the others. Have used the internet far more this time			
☑ No new books – which were needed for the course			
☑ Out of date material			
☑ No password for computer access			
☑ Didn't use library			
☑ Had to search things on Internet on own – help with use of Internet would have been well received			
☑ Don't know – used resources other than those to be found in the library			
☑ The lecturers provided excellent handouts, plus Internet site			

references to support me in searching the Internet for appropriate material.			
☑ Didn't know what was expected from this module, so I didn't use the library at all			
☑ No time to use library. They do not have black theorists/internet better.			
☑ A reasonable range, once sorted on law reports!			
☑ Insufficient in general			
☑ Library adequate, but could always be improved! (B)			
☑ Haven't used them			
☑ Plenty of reading material available			
☑ Due to time constraints and negative feedback from others I have not accessed library resources. Waterstones very useful and helpful in ordering books			
☑ Never any books in it!			
☑ The library staff has helped to explain access to internet sites (X)			
☑ Too many out of date books			
☑ I have not made great use of the library in this module.... very time constrained with pressure from work			
☑ Relevant book not available			
☑ Law – yes. For the rest, there has never been any impetus this term to look up information.			
☑ I found more relevant and useful texts for this module than I had for the first 2 modules			
☑ Books were not available as promised			
☑ The first assignment was useful			
☑ Exam tested the module well			
☑ Essay was not a good assignment to test learning. Essay was on legislation, policy etc., but teaching was on environmental factors and NA framework			
☑ 1st assignment – exam was far too early.			
☑ Tested prior learning/knowledge			

☑ Didn't learn anything new in lectures to be tested on...assignments not related to 'lectures'			
☑ Most of knowledge for exam found from sources other than the course – course input was minimal			
☑ It tested our coping abilities. Law exam was a totally ridiculous exam. As I didn't learn anything it was difficult to relate this to an assignment			
☑ Delay in feedback from law exam			
☑ Exam format not necessarily helpful – what was it hoping to achieve?			
☑ Some titles a little vague			
☑ Assignment question is good. Law exam was annoying as it was not an exam.			
☑ I feel I have been reminded of stuff I already knew			
☑ I do not feel learning was in synch with assignments, have learnt more from my own research and practice			
☑ Law exam was just a memory test.			
☑ The law assignment/exam fit but could have been a written assignment – The second assignment will not be greatly expanding my existing knowledge as gained in modules 1 & 2			
☑ The law exam			
☑ Not done essay yet – have lost my motivation!			
☑ Summative assignment was great fun and very interesting. BUT stress levels raised TOO high by it being in examination.			
☑ Very well.			
☑ I don't know about the essay yet, but the law exam did not really demonstrate my knowledge and understanding fully – I felt totally deskilled even though it could have been easier for some.			
☑ There were no teaching aids used			
☑ No teaching aids used except short video			
☑ Reading from a handout is hardly inspiring			
☑ Could be more creative – more use of group feedback – eg.			

speaker from family rights group.			
☑ Varied between lecturers and styles			
☑ Useful book (Child Reader)			
☑ Some of the photocopied articles were helpful			
☑ One outside speaker was interesting.			
☑ Video boring and dated			
☑ Handouts were used, video x1 during the module			
☑ Lecturer obviously prepared well, but lacked confidence around subjects in Module 3.			
☑ Level too limited			
☑ The handouts were helpful			
☑ Handouts good but knowledge of subjects delivered without depth, perhaps I should have pursued topics more myself!			
☑ Except for the asylum handouts, we could have taught this module ourselves in a more interesting lively way by taking adult learning into account.			
☑ Format in sessions 4 onward was repeated with little variation			
☑ Not particularly exciting, but lots of handouts			
☑ Racism covered...Anti-oppressive practice much less			
☑ This module covered racism & anti-oppressive practice well			
☑ Disability, racism, sexism very well covered.			
☑ When I asked for cultural explanations these weren't addressed fully, but skirted over or personalized			
☑ Outside speaker was interesting and covered subject well			
☑ Not enough. The one guest speaker was a start, but this was not properly integrated into the rest of the module – it didn't lead me anywhere, challenge or inspire.			
☑ We objected to being moved mid-course to another room, although the new room was adequate			
☑ A good lunch with colleagues has usually been the highlight of these modules			
☑ Room was uncomfortable and poorly set out			

☑ We had to move rooms, which made things very formal and were joined by DipSw students who didn't want to be with us			
☑ Better with desks in a circle			
☑ Previous room made discussion within the group easier			
☑ Room was not as conducive as the room used for module one and two (B)			
☑ We didn't like changing rooms for this module			
☑ Tutor adequate, but we needed to see more of him			
☑ Very helpful and supportive tutor, but lectures not stretching repetitive from Modules 1 & 2...			
☑ I haven't really used tutor support, but I knew was accessible if required			
☑ There was none offered... but I didn't request any...therefore...adequate?			
☑ Very little seen of course tutor			
☑ Tutor not seen during module 3			
☑ Instructor very supportive, but felt that she was trying to make up for things that our on site tutor should have done (B)			
☑ Instructor was not able to advise on assignment, despite the fact that she was 1st marker.			
☑ Gave general advice on essay – no detailed tutorial on essay structure, etc.			
☑ Know that both tutor and lecturer available when sought.			
☑ Yes – although tutor could have been a little more proactive			
☑ Tutor was available if required			
☑ Always willing to listen			
☑ It was available if requested			
☑ Didn't see tutor			
☑ It was available if required, but not needed			
☑ Open to requests for further assistance or direction towards other resources and sources.			
☑ Offer of tutor support available not used! Not knowing when tutor in, but if requested then supportive			

☑ No need this term to refer anything to tutor.			
☑ Provided helpful support and clarification when needed/asked directly.			
☑ Instructor incorporated a useful tutorial role into her teaching			
☑ On-site tutor was not available as promised. Lecturer's contribution was good.			
THE THREE BEST THINGS ABOUT THIS MODULE WERE:			
☑ There was a lot of information from tutor in handouts			
☑ The law lectures were interesting			
☑ Lectures & research – law exam			
☑ Info on research			
☑ Shown how to use website			
☑ Handouts			
☑ Discussion with peers			
☑ Practice Assessor's advice re: portfolio			
☑ Information on asylum seekers			
☑ Revisiting law –although could have done a better/more thoroughly			
☑ Spending time with other candidates			
☑ Opportunity to revisit aspects of legislation, etc.			
☑ More focus on specific bits of research, etc.			
☑ Meeting colleagues			
☑ Having lunch			
☑ Time out from work			
☑ ADP input			
☑ Flexibility to finish early and use time for study			
☑ Revisiting legislation/human rights legislation			
☑ Hearing about research			
☑ Legal section raised some interesting issues			
☑ Practical input from visiting practitioners/informal structure/atmosphere			
☑ The law section			

☑ Reminding myself of legal issues			
☑ Discussion on multi-agency working			
☑ Some interesting parts – i.e.: law and asylum			
☑ First two weeks on Law			
☑ The friends I have made			
☑ Law exam prompted research and information gathering			
☑ Other students' support			
☑ Lunch			
☑ Case discussions			
☑ First two weeks			
☑ Finding the case law for my own case, which mentioned me by name very exciting!			
☑ I can complete my final assignments			
☑ I will have some time to do other things			
☑ Law issues			
☑ Roles and responsibilities			
☑ Self-evaluation			
☑ Session on asylum – good – needed more sessions like this			
☑ Looking up case law			
☑ Looking closely at the law			
☑ Learning about the ecological approach			
☑ Being in a positive group...(B) in a relaxed facilitative atmosphere/environment			
☑ Law lectures			
☑ Conference was good			
☑ Good handouts			
☑ The other candidate's contributions			
THINGS I WOULD LIKE CHANGED IN THIS MODULE:			
☑ Have it more focused on our practice – the afternoon sessions went somewhere!!!			
☑ Not have people from other courses here			
☑ Having a more varied teaching style			

☑ To do more on policy and enquires - link to practice and teaching			
☑ No more NA framework – too repetitive			
☑ Better planning and organization of afternoon sessions			
☑ The content – proper teaching about the law and social policy...look at some child care enquiry reports			
☑ One lecturer for the whole module (must be qualified and know what they are talking about!)			
☑ Get outside speakers who turn up			
☑ Make the portfolio more of the module			
☑ More challenge			
☑ More structure			
☑ Lecturer to stick to the syllabus			
☑ Info on theory base, discussion/info on relevant research			
☑ Info on definitions, etc			
☑ Critical perspective / different perspectives – e.g.: sociological/ecological, etc.			
☑ More in depth discussion on law – including housing, mental health...etc over more than two lectures			
☑ The organisation – evidently not there – telling us we are having outside speaker, and then they cannot attend all three sites.			
☑ Better teaching methods			
☑ Better organization			
☑ More interactive teaching style			
☑ A more comfortable teaching venue			
☑ Structure			
☑ Focus			
☑ Consistency			
☑ Organisation			
☑ This module should be the first one			
☑ The law exam should be integrated into the essay			
☑ More creative – e.g. student research into community			

☑ Format & content			
☑ Style of lectures			
☑ Detail of topics (new info!)			
☑ More creative/inspiring teaching methods			
☑Topics more specific to my area of work, e.g. fostering and adoption			
☑ Higher academic level of reading			
☑ Learning/lectures more focused towards meeting the learning outcomes of the module.			
☑ Academic lectures – not just notes/handouts			
☑ Not to repeat Module Two – All based on the Child's World			
☑ More depth			
☑ More research			
☑ More analysis rather than reading from scripts			
☑ Lecture structure			
☑ Classroom layout			
☑ This module should be first as an intro and then narrow in on family and then child third			
☑ We had read a lot of the books relevant on previous modules			
☑ More QUALITY outside speakers			
☑ Teaching style			
☑ More in-depth teaching			
☑ Case discussion in the afternoon			
☑ All of it			
☑ More focused on actual policy and legislation			
☑ Better planning and organised afternoon sessions			
☑ More variety and content in actual lectures			
☑ Law exam			
☑ Clarity between lecturers			
☑ Outside speakers relevant to topic			
☑ The structure and teaching of this module			
☑ Law should be continued throughout the module incorporating mental health, asylum seekers, race relations, etc.			

☑ This module lacks depth**;** its current teaching content has not been appropriate for mature practitioners			
☑ The lecturer... a lovely lady, but NOT a teacher			
☑ The style of teaching			
☑ How the afternoons are spent/structure			
☑ Seen exam better as an assignment			
☑ More in depth about law –especially Human Rights Act			
☑ Speakers that have relevance			
☑ Change seen exam format			
☑ The structure of the module			
☑ Law should have been more integrated			
☑ Better standard of teaching			
☑ More variation in teaching styles from session 4 onward			
☑ More organisational structure in the afternoons			
☑ I preferred the room we were in originally			
☑ Assignments set a beginning of module and handed in before the end			
☑ Use afternoon sessions better			
☑ Better tutor support			
☑ Too little content			
☑ The exam didn't demonstrate my knowledge			
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE CANDIDATES:			
☑ Have reading lists before course starts			
☑ Clarify what the knowledge requirements mean			
☑ Help for those who have been out of education for some time in writing essays – staying focused on what is wanted etc.			
☑ Be clear about what you want from the course – knowledge requirements, etc			
☑ Be assertive and stick together as a group (i.e.: support)			
☑ Get login for computer/library earlier – at beginning of course			
☑ Read The Guardian			
☑ Ask for library Internet login at beginning of term			

☑ Be assertive. Stick together with group			
☑ Clear links made to assessment framework			
☑ Possibly planning officer to look at policies			
☑ Consistent speaker			
☑ Read Child's World			
☑ Beware of lack of consistency			
☑ Not to panic about exam!			
☑ Try for learning sets			
☑ Module needs a bit of a revamp I'm not sure what advice I could give to future candidates			
☑ Plan to do the learning on your own			
☑ Ask for library Internet login before term starts! This never arrived, and Internet needed for this module			
☑ Be assertive about what you want and need			
☑ Hang in there!!!			
☑ Make sure you get support from agency			
☑ Remember to renew library books, as the fines are costly			
☑ I have not found this module a great experience. I felt that tutors are floundering and not clear about what to do with us, the level has been too basic considering this is a post-qualified course and we are all experienced practitioners			
☑ Change the law exam to an assignment			
☑ Re-think structure and teaching of module			
☑ The course needs visiting speakers who are really knowledgeable about their subject			
☑ Do your own research and study			
☑ Be more assertive in asking for what you need from lecturers			
☑ Work as a group			
☑ Prepare yourself for a certain amount of stress			
☑ Ensure assessor has time to work with you and your relationship is conducive with course work, etc			
☑ Be assertive about own learning needs			
☑ Think long and hard about the personal implications for			

health and family			
☑ Do not agree to start course unless a locum has been identified to cover you			
☑ Ensure you will have a high level of managerial support			
☑ Begin work on Portfolio early			
☑ Look ahead and 'pace' the work			
☑ Keep details of relevant casework that could be used before the course begins			
☑ Send out reading lists much earlier			
☑ Use study time as stated			
☑ More tutor time available			
☑ Start thinking about portfolio pieces even at PQ1 Stage			
☑ Provide a format for portfolio – it would save students' time			
OTHER SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS:			
☑ The last module seems to be a bit of an anti-climax			
☑ Where do I start? This module has been a real disappointment to the course as a whole. I have not found it demanding or stretching at all. I have found it repetitive and feel it is far too basic. The lecturers have not known what to do with us in the afternoons – so a lot of wasted time. We could have got so much more out of this module (like the others) and I am disappointed and angry that our time has been wasted. This makes it hard to justify to managers and colleagues. I have lost my motivation and incentive to complete the essay – lets hope I get it back to finish the course. We could have done so much on discussion of enquires, policies, case law etc.			
☑ Lecturer didn't know the facts e.g. difference between PCG's and PCTs			
☑ I've just lost all motivation now. Don't know how I'm going to get the last assignment and portfolio completed.			
☑ It was difficult to pick up the course again after the summer break			

☑ This was an extremely disappointing end to the course and very different from the first two modules in terms of lack of theory/research/practice skills. Info shared was very basic.			
☑ This has been the most frustrating module; the first 2 weeks crammed with legislation and then lack of structure and detail for the rest of the module. It needs re-thinking URGENTLY!!			
☑ Third module was, on the whole, boring and uninspiring. It has limited what I actually learned.			
☑ This module is very interrelated to the other two.			
☑ All three sites could meet if there are outside speakers that could not cover three days			
☑ Module three needs to be re-thought!			
☑ Module I should remain as it is; some elements of it e.g. adult attachment interview should be incorporated into Module II.			
☑ More could be made of learning sets and they are a valuable learning experience, which could be used in Module III. Learning sets could be incorporated into the Conference Workshops.			
☑ Module III is totally unacceptable as it has been provided and needs a total re-think and improved standard of delivery expanding on the first two sessions, which were very worthwhile.			
☑ Module One, although most satisfying, was the hardest intellectually and time wise. It would be good for the course to end with this module			
☑ Portfolio Work needs to be integrated through the course. By the course structure and continual academic hoops, it has by default, been left to the end by most people. Perhaps should be that A&B to be completed term One, C&D in term Two, E Term Three.			
☑The summer break was a disaster – back to increased work caseload, impetus lost.			

☑ Could the days for portfolio work or library work be ring fenced?			
☑ The learning sets were really enjoyable, and should have continued in Module 3			
☑ Overall I have found the course a valuable, positive and enriching experience.			
☑ Better stocking of Library			
☑ More clarity around expectations			
☑ Felt very neglected throughout this module by practice assessors/tutors, etc.			
PORTFOLIO (MODULE FOUR) FEEDBACK:			
☑ The Portfolio Compilation was rather difficult during the first cohort, mainly due to the logistics of a new programme, and some confusion in the guidelines around the rules for evidencing.			
	☑ The 2002 Cohort has benefited from significant revision of this Module. The compilation of the Portfolios is presented in early learning sets, practice assessors introduced much earlier, and time guides given for completion of the portfolio, so that it is not outstanding at the end of the academic requirements.		
	☑ The course tutors have worked very hard to coordinate the learning objectives in the academic assignments and the portfolio		
	☑ The consolidation of the Curriculum and Assessment Committees into one decision-making body, should ensure comprehensive guidelines to enable this module.		

PRACTICE ASSESSOR FEEDBACK			
☑ As previously noted, the short time between approval and start-up of the programme, did not allow for sufficient organization of all logistical arrangements. This was particularly evident in the Practice Assessment & Portfolio compilation.			
☑ There was a deficit of practice assessors available and willing to undertake the task, particularly given the limited monies available as reimbursement for what was often a very labour and time intensive exercise.			
☑ Workshops were offered and required of practice assessors to ensure inter-tester reliability.			
☑ Two very experienced practice assessors assumed a leadership role in guiding the practice assessors, consolidating the group, and providing feedback to the Programme.			
☑ Formal feedback documents were administered to the Practice assessors, which revealed a number of concerns:			
☑ Financial reimbursement			
☑ Experience levels of some of the Practice Assessors, much shorter than the candidates in the first cohort			
☑ Practice Assessor desire to be more involved at an earlier stage in the Programme			
☑ Clarification needed regarding the evidencing of the learning outcomes			
☑ Commitment for better integration of learning outcomes, so that academic and practice does not become separated			
☑ Feedback was collected from Practice Assessors, Line Managers and Candidates regarding the possible utilization of Line Managers as Practice Assessors			
	☑ A significant amount of time and attention has been spent on attending to the concerns of Practice Assessments and Portfolios. The new Programme Director has first hand experience of both these roles, and is committed to significant revision.		

CANDIDATE & LINE MANAGER QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK

Who are you? CAN LM	What do you think the goal is of the PQCCA?	What do you think the goal of the PCAA should be be?	How well were goals met? VW= very well W=well S= somewhat NAA= Not at all	Why did you undertake or send a candidate to the PQCCA?
CAN-1	Consolidate academic & practice learning Achieve standard for registration & monitoring	nil	W - Academic content excellent esp mod 1 & 2 Unhappy with practice assessment	good timing as guardian under local authority ?£
LM -1	Ensure ongoing training & development for continuous improvement in social worker's professional capabilities	Ditto + Recognition for high levels & experience of many social workers needing to gain this award to stay in career	SOMEWHAT	Assist in having up to date qualifications & future recognition in prof. Social work role To evaluate value of course & award to team members & service
CAN-2	To improve social work standards	nil	SOMEWHAT	Qualified long ago - good opportunity for update & improve my practice
LM -2	To improve quality of practice with children & their families	Ditto	WELL	Opportunity to improve & enhance current practice with children & their families
CAN-3	Improved standards in social work training	nil	SOMEWHAT	improve my skills, knowledge & experience regarding professional development
CAN-4	To improve practice standards in social work	nil	WELL	to gain credits towards an MA
LM -4	To raise general standard of child care social work. To encourage professional development of SW. To raise public profile of SW	nil	mod 1&2- WELL Mod 3 NOT AT ALL	To raise general standard of child care social work. To encourage professional development of SW.

CAN-5	To have all social workers up to date on theory & research & for workers to continue learning	ditto	SOMEWHAT	I wanted to do some further studies. It is compulsory
LM-5	To provide further training after qualification when experience and training can be developed. To keep social workers up to date on practyice	I think ongoing training for experienced social workers should be the norm	WELL - but still needs to be ongoing not the end	it was going to be a professional requirement & candidate enthusiastic about taking award
CAN-8	Not clear - probably to develop knowledge & skills & ensure consistency across the workplace	?	WELL	was told I was on it by employer
LM -8	To improve standards of social work practice nationwide	ditto	WELL	Candidate was taking PQ when I joined the team
CAN-9	To meet government requirements regarding the quality protects initiative	Acknowledgement by the gov't that there is a substantial quantity of best practice currently taking place, and to see the award as an opportunity for workers to maximize learning opportunities	SOMEWHAT- mod 1 very rewarding mod2 satisfactory mod3 poor	Because of the pressure/compulsory nature of the award, that all workers have to achieve the award by 2005-6. I also thought it would be an opportunity to improve my practice
LM-9	To continue sw's professional development & develop their learning by keeping up to date with research	Ditto - Goal should also be that people feel motivated to do so rather than forced	SOMEWHAT very well in some modules and not at all in others	To enable their development They were keen to take PQCCA
CAN-10	Uniformity of practice across England. Qualified workers working to achieve best outcomes for service users.	Ditto	VERY WELL as long as the same programme rolled out across the country	Thirst for knowledge & skills. Organisational requirement
LM-10	Improve practice nationally	nil	Hard to say…Are courses the same? Candidate's practice has improved	Candiadte very keen & ready. Governemnt requirement
CAN-12	To increase my knowledge & therefore practice	nil	SOMEWHAT	I was told by my service manager that I had to..NO CHOICE

LM- 12	To improve quality of practice with children & their families	Ditto	WELL	candidate needed opportunity to enhance practice and consider use of her own personal skills with children & their families
CAN-13	Post qualification specialism	Should be remunerated	VERY WELL	Thought needed it by 2006
LM- 13	Improvement of analysis and practice to focus on unmet needs & reduce risk	ditto	NOT AT ALL	Hoped for improvement in practice to meet above goal
CAN-14	Enhancing SW practice, keeping up to date with knowledge, achieving a good standard in practicing SW & to comply with gov't legislation	To raise the professional status of social work and achieve good practice	WELL	Because I chose to - Also I was the first in the team to have completed the PQ1 and therefore was eligible
LM-14	To improve knowledge of social workers To continue with professional development. To improve quality of work of Swers	nil	WELL - Although this was a very good candidate	Candidate strongly wanted to. Department & governemnt expectations. All good training opportunities should be taken advantage of
CAN-15	Establish standards in social work .eg. Evidence based practice	NA	SOMEWHAT - could have focused more on specialist areas such as fostering & adoption	Needed to have it for future register & to be able to practice
LM - 15	REFUSED TO COMPLETE			
CAN-16	Improve reflective practice - update theoretical knowledge & current research. Proof of competence as a practitioner	nil	SOMEWHAT	It is compulsory
LM-16	To improve quality of child care practices & reduce harm to children	It should take more account of existing qualifications	SOMEWHAT	To support career development & development of competence
CAN-17	To ensure that all social workers practice to the same high standards nationally	nil	SOMEWHAT	To upgrade myself on current requirement of practice
CAN-19	Increase evidence based skilled social workers	nil	SOMEWHAT	Further career

LM -19	Continuous analysis of one's own learning and practice with children & families	ditto	WELL -	Candidate already agreed with previous manager to undertake the award. I believe that all training which assists us in our work should be taken if available
CAN-20	To improve the standards of care for children in need & their families	ditto	SOMEWHAT	To update, gain further knowledge, skills & values of social work practice
LM_ 20	Unclear - Further one's development	Re-assess social work core skills & provide further training	SOMEWHAT	Didn't!!
CAN-22	Achieve government objectives	Provide more opportunities at work	VERY WELL - gov't objectives NOT AT ALL- for opportunities at work	Achieve gov't objectives
LM- 22	To ensure social workers are aware of up to date research, skills & knowledge and have the ability	ditto	VERY WELL -	To develop her knowledge & skills. To help her develop analytical skills within assessments. To have the opportunity to enhance research skills to use within practice
CAN-24	To develop a broad base of skills & knowledge in child development assesment & direct case practice	nil	WELL	I am keen to progress my learning & development on a personal & professional level
CAN-25	To raise the standard of social work practice in respect of outcomes determined by central government	nil	WELL	Broadened my skills and validated my practice through evidence based practice (and research)
LM - 25	To facillitate increased knowledge for social workers providing direct social work service to children & young people	Ditto	WELL	To meet his & the Department's needs
CAN-26	To raise standards in child care profession	nil	SOMEWHAT	I was told to
LM- 26	To raise standards in profession. To ensure swers are adequately trained for the work they undertake	nil	SOMEWHAT	Pressure from organisation

CAN-27	To bring social workers up to date with current research, opportunities for reflection on practice & familiarisation with assessment framework	Ditto but there should be an opportunity for less prescribed curriculum and some scope for individual research interests	SOMEWHAT - Mod 1 was excellent, mod 2 competent & comprehensive but mod3 lacked depth, was poorly taught and left gaps	Because I value opportunities for reflection & academic work
LM-27	To continue sw's professional development & develop their learning by keeping up to date with research	Ditto - Goal should also be that people feel motivated to do so rather than forced	S- very well in some modules and not at all in others	To enable their development They were keen to take PQCCA
CAN-28	To increase knowledge & improve childcare practice; particularly re; assessments and empowering/helping families to take some responsibility for actions & decisions	Working in an open, honest information sharing way with all parties/agencies to move families on & protect children	WELL- very well in mods 1&2..not so well in mod3	For reasons outlined plus to help as a supervisor/manger of other social workers. It would be difficult to do this without a working knowledge of the course & the impact of this on individuals & teams
LM - 28	To improve the effectiveness of social work services to children & their families	Ditto	SOMEWHAT	Already participating when I was assigned LM
CAN-29	To improve status of social work. Increased competence. Consolidation of prior learning	Consolidate, increase confidence by improving practice . Develop skills & knowledge	WELL to SOMEWHAT - In some areas this was achieved. Mod 3 was poorly presented & the opportunity missed	Fait a complis. Consolidation. Develop learning
LM- 29	To offer good quality post-qualifying training to update & refresh candidate. To satisfy gov't requirements	nil	WELL	Little choice - all social workers must undertake the CCA
CAN-30	did not submit			
LM- 30	To equip social workers with higher level of skill in the job & delivery of service	To improve child care practice, assessment and analysis of poverty and risk	nil	To improve the candidate's practice. To provide the candidate with greater opportunities, and with more confidence

CAN-31	To add knowledge to general training to aid workers in specialist teams ie: children. To promote a task centred consistent child protection service.	nil	WELL	I enjoy studying, want to carry on working (need to), wish to be eligible for promotion, etc.
LM- 31	To standardise practice nationally & improve standards	To meet needs of individual - should have choice about post-qual. Training & level of material should be at advanced level	WELL - Some of coursework seemed to be similar to qualifying courses & is just demonstrating work already done	For her professional development. She wanted to do the course
CAN-32	A standardised qualification across the country - although we discussed on the course that it isn't at all! Some areas have simpler, much less academic courses	Much more work based. Regular updating throughout career	nil	For my personal satisfaction. I thought it would be fun..BUT once started was damned if I was going to give up !
CAN-33	To raise standards of practice	Previous goal valid, but the absence of funded resources can prove it to be impossible	WELL	I wanted to ..thought it was necessary for the future
CAN-35	To keep social workers up to date with current thinking and new initiatives. To provide an opportunity to meet with others & broaden one's knowledge base and perspective	nil	WELL	Always interested in opportunities to learn more
LM- 35	To increase the skill & professionalism of social workers	nil	Candidate is a capable student & it is not possible to assess the programme based on her performance	Self development is extremely important
CAN-36	To further your knowledge & have a chance to reflect on practice	Financial incentive - level 4 practitioner (senior)	WELL	I was approached when I asked to do my practice Teaching, and was encouraged to do this. I was not given a full picture of what it would entail
LM - 36	To raise standards in practice & self-development	nil	WELL	I would support candidate's personal development & acknowledge her position professionally

Who are you? CAN LM	How well did the PQCCA your expectations? VW= very well W=well S= somewhat NAA= Not at all	Sources of dissatisfaction?	Sources of Satisfaction?	Do you have any further suggestions or comments?
CAN-1	no rating -No support from Agency due to shift from local Authority to private. Academic content surpassed expectations. Practice support lacking	Practice assessment model Conflict of interest in the selected agency assessor/mentor Second assessor had no experience in specialized SW area	Academic Module structure. Lecture in am & case discussion in pm	East Anglia University Model..2 mentoring groups with 8 students and 2 mentors. 2 mentors would allow for depth and options with personality conflicts. Mentors/assessors need to attend sessions scehduled and to help candidates.
LM -1	WELL	Lack of appropriately experienced assessors for highly experienced worker . Lack of appreciation for role & capabilities of the worker.	Intellectual reach of the programme & encouragement of reflective practice on the practice & knowledge	Need to consider how best to work with & assess already experienced & capable workers & assessing workers in specialized work
CAN-2	SOMEWHAT	Lack of detailed planning and preparation. Complete farce of mod 3	Opportunity for academic work, update knowledge & practice & to network with other social workers	Sort out Mod 3 lecturer and programme. Ensure managers aware of what expected og their staff. Protect time for candidates to do course work. Sort out timings..summative of mod 3 not back before portfolio due
LM -2	WELL	Race issues not sufficienty tackled within programme	Candidate's emotional/professional growth	Candidate has grown in confidence through the course material.evidenced in recent report she wrote for courts.
CAN-3	SOMEWHAT	Disorganized programme Lack of consistency of tutoring Curriculum not matching handbook regarding specifications Inadequate tutoring sessions Late return of assignments I have not felt challenged	Assessor's knowledge about requirements for the portfolio Secretary for Consortium Mod 1 Attchment Liason with other social workers	nil

CAN-4	WELL - apart from mod3!	mod3 very poor quality of teaching. Not having final assessment marks before portfolio due. No formal ending to course. No time to reflect on group proccess/learning, etc	Mod 1 Info on attachment & assessment /observation methods very stimulating & informative. Case discussions with other students & tutors	Huge variation of what was expected by practice assessorsin content of portfolios. Cuased stress and anxiety for candidates
LM -4	WELL	Managing time needed by candidate in relation to service deliovery & other team members	Candidate's growth and general enjoyment of course	nil
CAN-5	mod 1 - WELL mod 2- SOMEWHAT mod3 NOT AT ALL Mod4 - SOMEWHAT	non-organization from college. Non-organization or sense of responsibility for mod3 Inequalities of how students treated by own line manager ie: study time/work load relief Lack of good up to date books in library	mod1 Learning more about policies Getting good marks in assignments Good positive feedback from practice assessor	PQCCA is a good idea but needs a lot of work before it is good in practice. Needs lots more communication between employing agencies, TASDA, Universities. University needs to be more commited ie. Marking assignments on time, actually offering tutorials, encouraging better use of afternoon slot.
LM-5	WELL It has been stimulating & felt a very worthwhile qualification	I am concerned about the volume of work while we are so short of qualified staff which increases pressure on everyone - How will we get all social workers through by 2006?	How it stimulated and satisfied the candidates' learning needs	PQ shuld develop into ongoing training to keep social workers up to date and informed about practice It could be followe by specialist modules but the employers need to see the value of this. MY CONCERN FOR THE PROFESSION IS THAT WE CANNOT RECRUIT & RETAIN SOCIAL WORKERS AND CREATIVITY IS BEING STIFLED BY A TOP-DOWN APPROACH FROM CENTRAL GOV'T. IT WOULD BE A SHAME IF THE PQ WAS SEEN IN THIS WAY.
CAN-8	NOT AT ALL	Lack of clear organization, unrealistic information provided about the work involved Mod3 unstructured & provided no real learning opportunities	mod 1 very informative although a lot to read Provided positive learning	Closer links between Universities & in house workplace Demands of course have been underestimated and candidates used a great deal of personal time to complete. Better planning of mod3 - one lecturer and up to date relevant research. Law Module needs strengthening and repositioning in the course time table. No up to date library books were available. Block home & university may be better...one day per week very difficult

LM -8	Candidate has spoken highly of course content	Constant disagreement about workload relief Workload underestimated by University	Candidate very positive about course content. Candidate learned some very good theory she was able to put into practice	nil
CAN-9	S OMEWHAT As above dependent on mod	Programmme very unorganized. Exam papers lost . On site tutor made appointments but didn't show. Took several weeks to get library card. My results for mod 3 sent to another candidate's address!!	Meeting a great group and sharing the experience with them Support from other candidates and time out from normal workplace Good to learn up to date theories	Programme would be more beneficial for candidate if course was in block allowing to dedicate time and effort and come away feeling staisfied and that course worthwhile. Struggle to manage full time work & programme caused huge pressure at work and at home
LM-9	SOMEWHAT- as before	The variance in the quality of teaching across the course - some was excellent and some terrible/non-existent resulting in candidate becoming disinterested and demotivated. Also great difficulty in covering staff's absence from team.	Contents of 1st mod	I think the course has much potential which has not yet been fulfilled. Difficulty in covering staff provides no motivation to support the training. Funding makes little difference when there are no social workers to employ. Intense structure of the course placed considerable strain on worker attending...perhaps blocks out of workplace better. CONCERNED ABOUT THE LACK OF CONSISTENCY ACROSS THE PQ OFFERED ELSEWHERE AND POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES OF OUTCOMES FOR CANDIDATE IN WHAT IS A NATIONAL QUALIFICATION.
CAN-10	VERY WELL	Disorganisation. Lack of clarity with portfolio information	Some of the modules were very informative and presented recent & relevant research findings	nil
LM-10	VW- Wish I had been more involved	Academic expectations not overt/ not clear at outset of course	Opportunity to work with practicing social workers who were also in lecturers and up to date with research etc.	nil

CAN-12	NOT AT ALL	Lack of structure and lectureer/programme leaders hadn't an idea of what they were doing	THE END!!	nil
LM-12	WELL	NA	Candidate stayed on board and completed the course!	Candidate seems to have struggled on ocassion, but got there in the end! However, this meant that candidate needed to examine some of her values which had a positive impact on her work
CAN-13	VERY WELL	First year inconsistency. Fitting it in with demands of work. Not enough study time. Having to work evenings and weekends.	Attachment Theory Meeting social workers from other areas	Lack of clarity about user feedback. Extra stress. Will there be follow-up evaluations?
LM-13	SOMEWHAT	Just recently became LM for this candidate..failures were avoided and poor practice not challenged early in academic year	The opportunity to begin to address some of this most difficult issues with external support of an impartial assessor	Such a course provides a forum for honest examination of practice. My anxiety is that it is pitched at too sophisticated a level for all candidates. How do you ensure that applicants can manage to rise to these expectations? What is your baseline selection procedure? For this particular candidate - no benefit...no improvement in workplace performance
CAN-14	WELL	Have suffered from it being first year - ie: systems not in place, not able to take out library books until after deadline for first assignment. Lack of integration on a practical system level between college (academic) & work (practice). No workload relief. Very poor Mod 3, Lack of coverage of all requirements even though passed all assignments and portfolio!?	Learning new information, being stimulated and benefitting from the knowledge/experience of others	Better pre-CCA preparation for course participants. More structure to modules/use of time. Better use of learning sets. More integrated academic & practice approach to the overall cause..too much us, them esp. from the academic side. Better support for workload relief.

LM-14	WELL - Rather difficult to answer as this is first year and I have not built up huge expectations	The lack of cover for the candidate in the workplace. Staff are simply not availableand this local authority only agreed to support cover during term time, when clearly work needs to continue throughout the holidays. We only had cover for 2 days throughout the time period. Inevitably this put pressure on the candidate who is extremely hard working	The candidate found it stimulating & satisfying. Candidate was able to develop areas of work which were of benefit to the team, and met competencies..I don't think this will always be true.	This was a good and hard working candidate who minimized the impact of her lack of availability. I know this will not always be true…Candidates are going to struggle with workloads vis a vis the demands of the programme. Indeed I think some candidates will struggle per se.
CAN-15	SW - Child development mod was very good. Last 2 mods were not as effective terms of learning achieved	I would have liked to have more specialist training	It was a good group of students. First module was very helpful	Mod 2 &3 were not as informative as I would have hoped. Curriculum was too broad based. If teaching were more focused then I would possibly have learnt more. It would have been interesting to be able to focus on my field of work more
CAN-16	SOMEWHAT	Lack of knowledge & interest in the programme from the Agency	Mod 1 -excellent programme enthusiastically taught - challenging & stimulating	No recognition by University or Workplace that you are struggling with two roles . Time comitment involved in completing this course grossly underestimated. I felt resentful that I had to devote most of my spare time for a YEAR in the PQ with ABSOLUTELY NO REWARD. Consequently I rewarded myself by leaving almost immediately for a job in the private sector with better pay & car & benefits. I personally don't believe in expecting something for nothing even if for the 'good' it may have done for me or my clients. During the course I was forced to neglect my kids, partner, family, friends & dog!
LM-16	SOMEWHAT	The time it takes and that it does not take account of other qualifications	The input on research & recent literature	nil

CAN-17	SOMEWHAT	Lack of tutorial support. Unclear boundaries in relation to Academic qualifications at the end.	Child Development module	nil
CAN-19	SOMEWHAT	Disorganisation.	Actual Learning Sessions	nil
LM - 19	WELL	Nothing	Support of the Assessor	College/Study Class - Should be in blocks in the week.
CAN-20	SOMEWHAT	The level of teaching on mod 2 & 3 too basic	All aspects of mod1	The level of the course was basic. More consideration should be given to the experience of the social workers on the course
LM_ 20	SOMEWHAT	Unclear about my role in it & what Swer gets from completing the course		
CAN-22	WELL	Having to attend college for 1/2 days during last module ie: having to travel and park for only 2-3 hours	Module One which was new information	Overall, a lot of work to fit into one year and I felt very tired by the end. No-one seemed to know what was needed for the portfolio compilation. Too much work required for mod2
LM-22	VERY WELL- The candidate is now able to evidence why she takes certain courses of action backed up by research	The prevention element did not challenge the candidate. She found this boring and non-stimulating	The opportunity for the candidate to meet social workers from other areas & the challenges it provided to her	nil
CAN-24	The course started with a big bank and ended with a sizzle. Mod 3 was not particulalry satisfying or stimulating. Poor planning and information about the portfolio	mod 1 was superb, hard work..but ultimately rewarding	Better use of afternoon sessions for study time/research or focused learning. Mod 3 to be revamped ad have clear structure focus and learning outcomes	Portfolio needs to be built into the course and not feel like a tag on. Targets need to be set and clear guidance and information given early in proccess.

CAN-25	SOMEWHAT	Energy spent working out the requirements of the course ..lack of clarity and paperwork. Over assessment..diverted our mental energy from reflection & creative thought	Stimulus of learning. Sharing experiences with other students. Respite from day to day demands of the job	nil
LM - 25	WELL	Worker felt college demands were great while working full time	Enables department to meet government expectations. Subjects covered by candidate	It would be helpful for candidates if more time allowed for study
CAN-26	SOMEWHAT	Mod 3 totally unorganised. Portfolio building not outlined by college until very last minute. Library facilitioes & available resources poor. Use of internet non-existent	mod 1 interesting & informative. Learning environment supporting fellow candidates	nil
LM-26	SOMEWHAT	Lack of communication. Student feeling abandoned towards end of course. Limited availability of resources from University. Disorganisation of mod3 - neglecting students. Differing expectations from assessors	Candidates have time to reflect on practice. Having to look at wider context. Candidates gaining experience in direct work with children.	nil

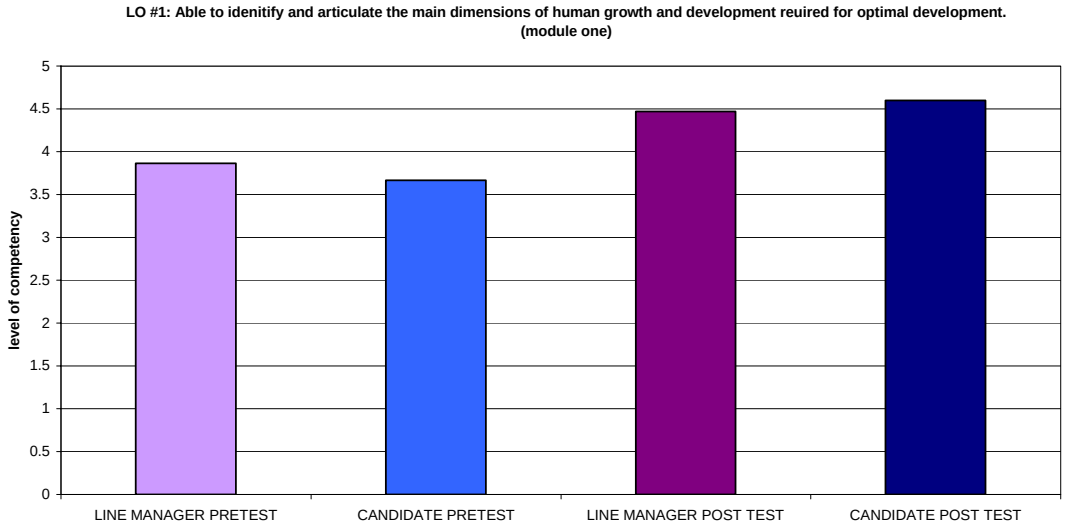
CAN-27	SOMEWHAT - The programme deteriorated for me after July…lost impetus	mod3 lacked teaching content- teaching days provided around 2 hours material & opportunities for visiting were missed because of the need to teach on 3 sites. The Law was too limited & needed to be continued throughout the module. There was confusing guidance on the portfolio and its completion was stressful	Mod 1 was stimulating & extremely well taught. It was a privilege to participate in this part of the programme, but I would have liked to undertake assessments of parents in a similar way (ie: adult assessment interview) in mod2 I enjoyed the learning sets & the law that was covered , and the comprehensive nature of mod2	Start course with less demanding mod..ie 3, and work up to the intellectually stimulating module. Provide an extra time period for preparation/completion of the portfolio or build portfolio as the course progresses. There was too much to accomplish in Dec/Jan which is already a stressful time due to Christmas holidays & a demanding time for social workers. Better use of conference- use learning set preparation for conference presentation - Ie workshops to develop individual interests, invite stimulating speakers, provide more academic content in the conference. Radically improve mod3 this is a huge topic area where there was a lack of depth in teaching -use learning sets & casestudies from candidates..they have lots of them to offer!
LM-27	S- as before	The variance in the quality of teaching across the course - some was excellent and some terrible/non-existent resulting in candidate becoming disinterested and demotivated. Also great difficulty in covering staff's absence from team.	Contents of 1st mod	I think the course has much potential which has not yet been fulfilled. Difficulty in covering staff provides no motivation to support the training. Funding makes little difference when there are no social workers to employ. Intense structure of the course placed considerable strain on worker attending...perhaps blocks out of workplace better. CONCERNED ABOU THE LACK OF CONSISTENCY ACCROSS THE PQ OFFERED ELSEWHERE AND POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES OF OUTCOMES FOR CANDIDATE IN WHAT IS A NATIONAL QUALIFICATION.

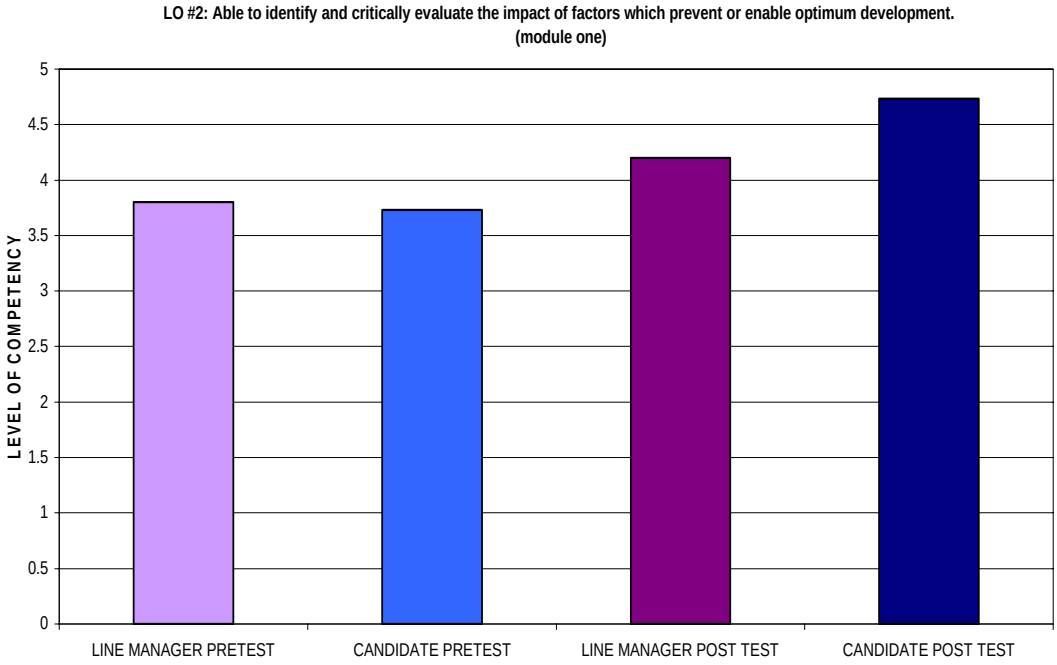
CAN-28	VERY WELL	The inadequacies of mod 3 lecturer to stimulate and challenge or increase knowledge. Inadequacies of up to date research volumes in University Library. Being a 'guinea-pig' PQ candidate with teaching staff also finding their way with the course.	Passing. Being enthused enough to continue with the MA. Finding that each module was on MA credit. Learning new concepts/theories, particularly re Attachments. The team of candidates and shared support. The help & encouragement of the programme secretary.	The need for a clearer understanding of course & portfolio requirements & guidelines BEFORE candidates begin the course. Lecture notes to be given out BEFORE lecture as with mod 2 is very good. For the management teams to be better informed of course requirements and commitments.
LM - 28	VERY WELL	No dissatisfaction, but I have not been very involved	Candidate is an excellent & skilled reviewing officer - if any of her practice competencies are attributable to the course, I am very please that she took part	nil
CAN-29	WELL to SOMEWHAT	Lots of wasted time. Some inspiring topics but a lot of repetition which was reminiscent of DipSW. Did not match the needs of senior practitioners	Mod 1 learning new skills which I have been able to implement in to practice. It also inspired me to continue to develop this area of knowledge.	Better use of conference. Development or reorganisation of mod3 More on anti-oppressive/ anti-discriminatory practice issues. Difficulty in covering some of the knowledge requirements because it reflected the gaps in the course delivery.
LM-29	SOMEWHAT	Lack of support for candidate & team. Incredible stresses on candidate. Inadequate cover allowed for candidate	Gave candidate an opportunity to learn and improve assessment skills	nil
LM-30	I would feel better able to judge in 1 year's time as I feel the candidate needs time to consolidate learning	I came in late	Feel unable to comment	nil
CAN-31	SOMEWHAT	mod 3 was awful!!	mod 1 without doubt	Sigh of relief I made it!

LM-31	SOMEWHAT	Repetition ie: producing coursework based on practice - not necessarily covering new areas of SW	Candidate's enthusiasm for further training. It may enable her to access further training	nil
CAN-32	SOMEWHAT		mod 1 -very gifted communicator. Esp for jaded adults..story stems excellent	nil
CAN-33	WELL	Some of the lack of clarity about administrative matters…a lot inevitable as first year	Stimulating & thought provoking teaching & group discussions. Reading for & writing the assignments which involved reflection on work undertaken & done. I enjoyed applying the learning from the course to my work.	nil
CAN-35	WELL	Over assessment and lack of focus in mod3	Learning new skills of assessment in mod1	Make mod3 1/2 term and allow other half for portfolio preparation. Provide a format for portfolio
LM-35	nil	It should build more systematically on basic training with regular input & assessments & should have opportunities for very experienced & skilled workers to undertake a more in-depth challenging course. For some workers this course was challenging in time, but not substance.	Direct skills development - workshop in working with yps.	Change whole structure of SW training…. regular tested updates, continued teaching, etc.

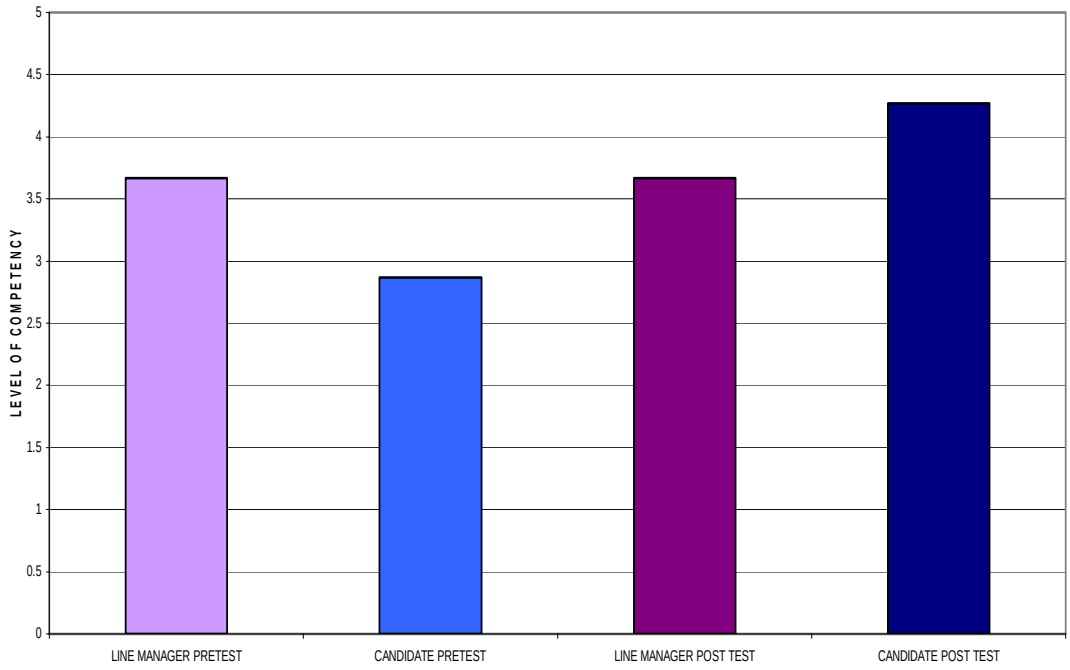
CAN-36	I was not clear until I began the course	mod 3 too basic & repetitive. I had hoped to have more chance to look at past enquiries & legislation/policy in more depth & discuss these as a group. I also feel there has been a lot of disorganisation in the running of this course- lots of changes and mixed messages which has been frustrating and confusing at times.	I really enjoyed mods 1 & 2 - excellent!	Portfolio Building needs to be addressed Too much was left to the end and on our own. The detail we received from the assessors came in Dec and was in conflict with what we had been previously told. Afternoons at the college could have been used for this..they were not properly used
LM - 36	WELL	Being the first time, the course had some hiccups. The candidate did not enjoy mod2 or changes in requirements	It has given the candidate the opportunity to develop her knowledge, practice and given her greater confidence to support & guide others. The Family Centre has benefited from her research, review of policies practice & procedures.	Working in a facility which has a high demand on legal requirements and having to submit within set deadlines, has meant that the candidates have been under great strain to complete certain assignments on time. Being a well organized and competent member of staff she has managed to keep going. The time spent on course work has been greater than predicted.

CHANGES IN LEVELS OF COMPETENCY IN LEARNING OBJECTIVES (AS REPORTED BY CANDIDATES AND LINE MANAGERS PRE & POST)

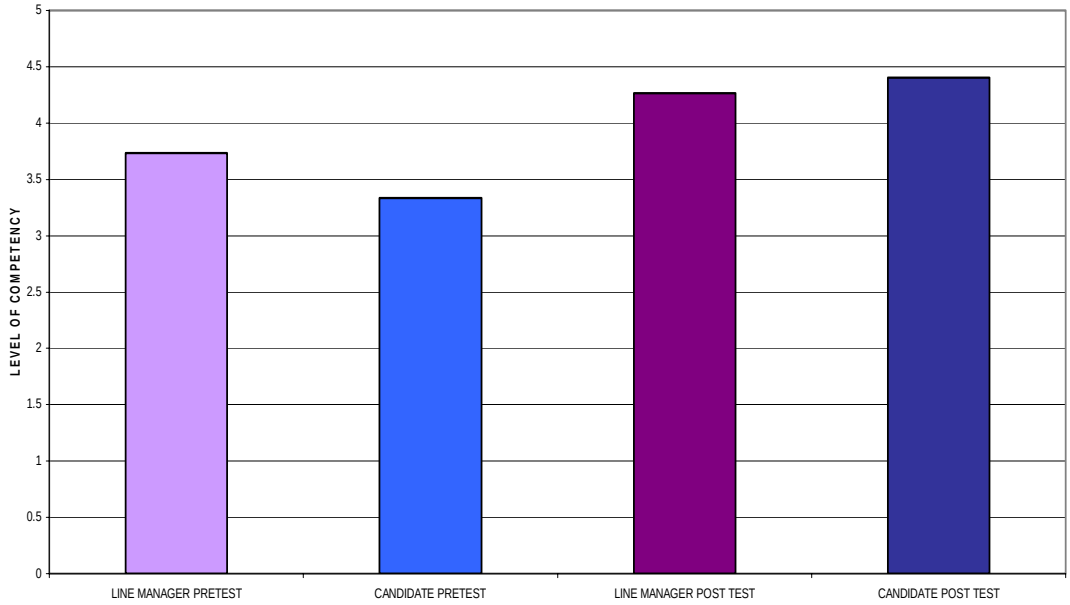




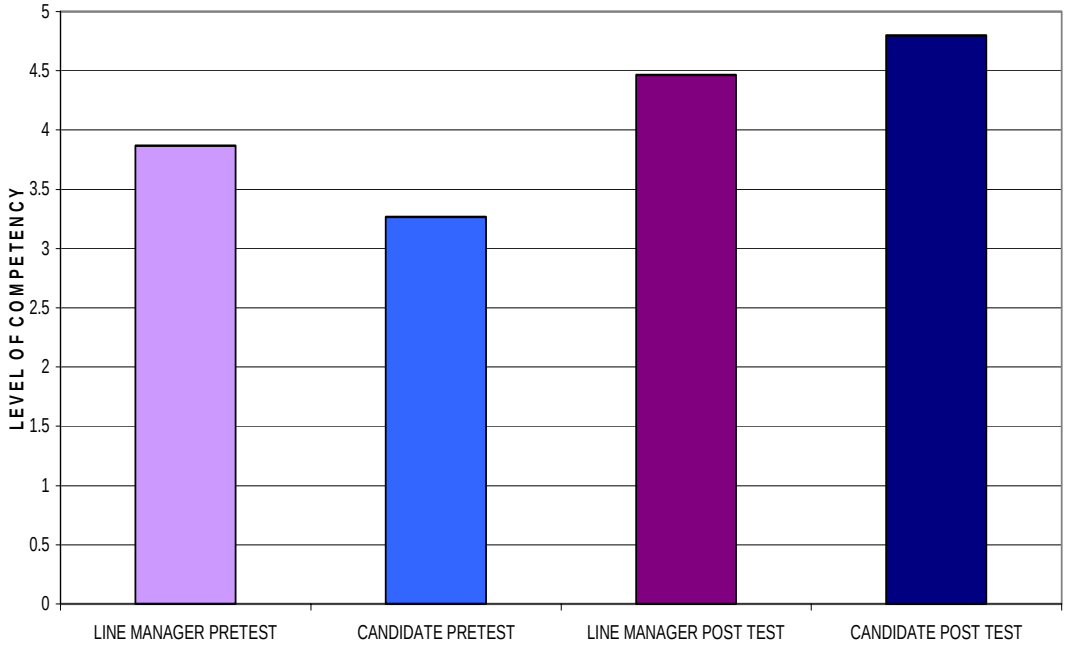
LO # 3 Able to critically analyse research which informs practitioners about the development of identity.
(module one)



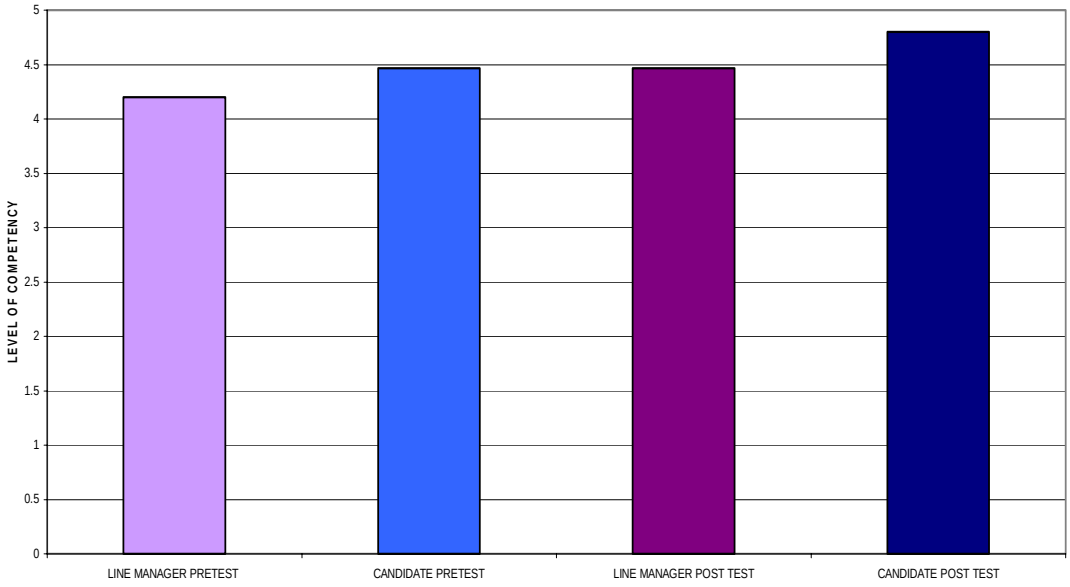
LO #4: Critically evaluate the impact that group or substitute care has on child development
(module one)



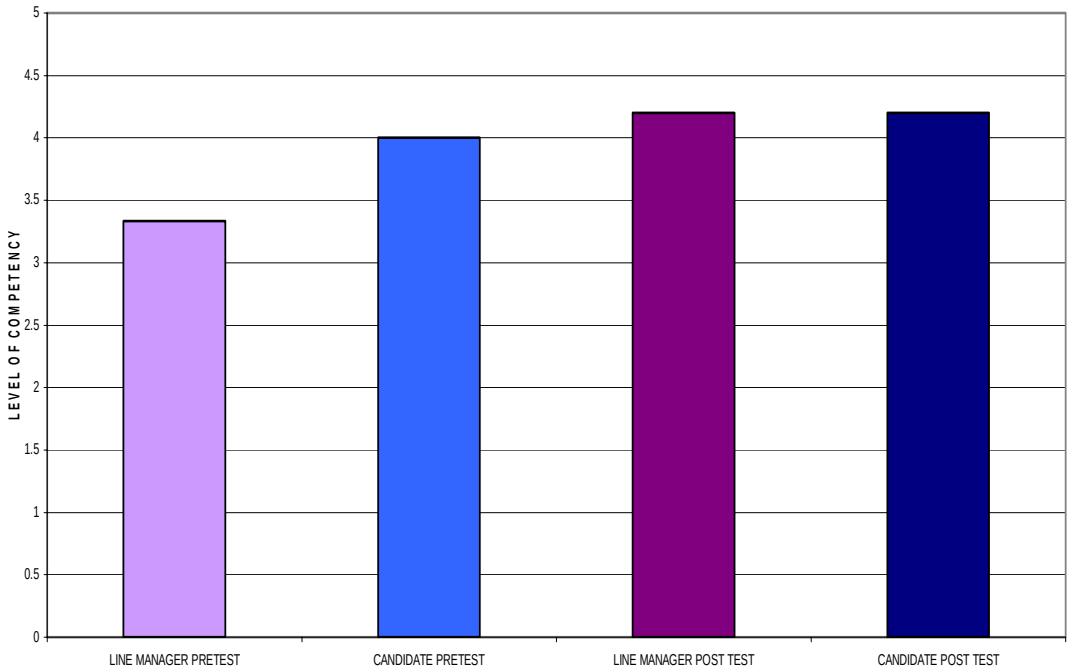
LO #5: Able to apply a model of child observation (module one)



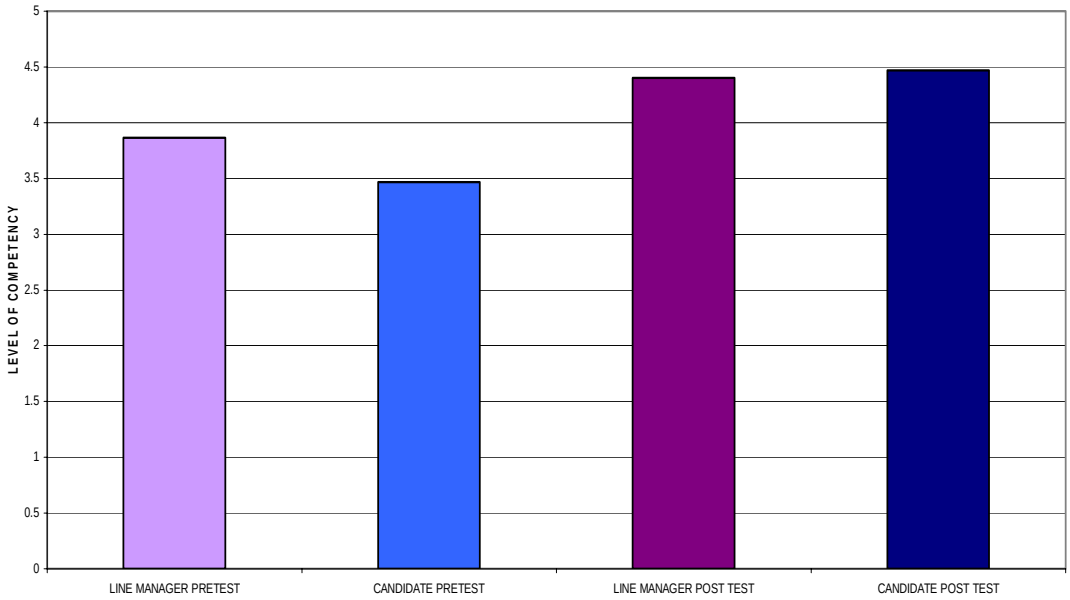
LO #6 Able to assess whether the needs of a child are being met and provide a plan of intervention where optimal outcomes are not being achieved (module one & module two)



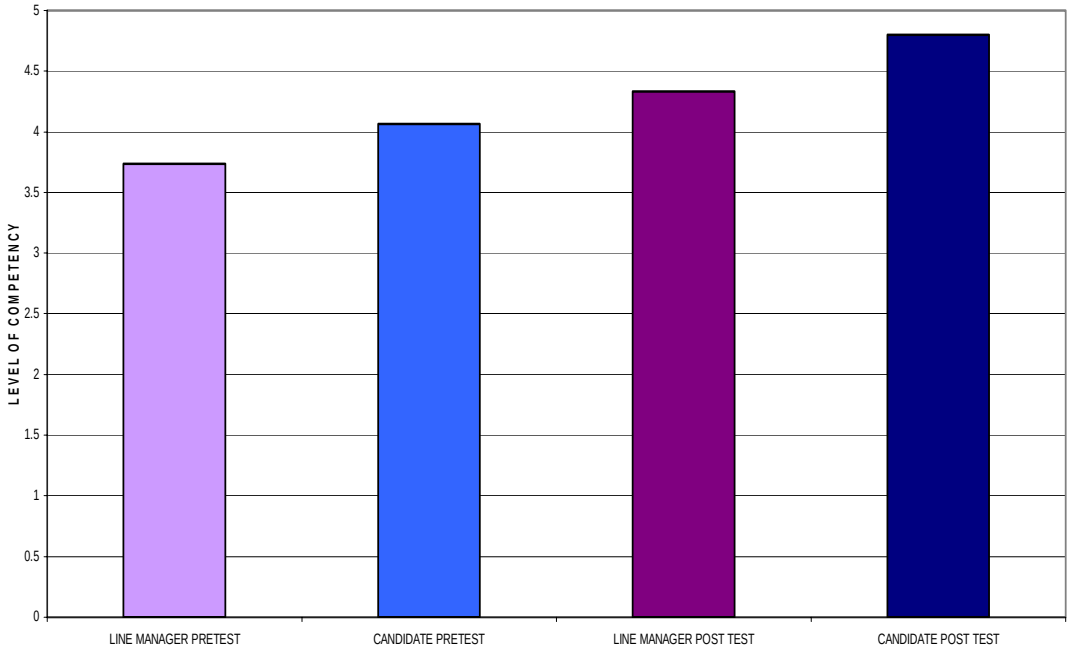
LO# 7: Able to identify and evaluate the influence of communities of interest and geographic communities on child development. (module one)



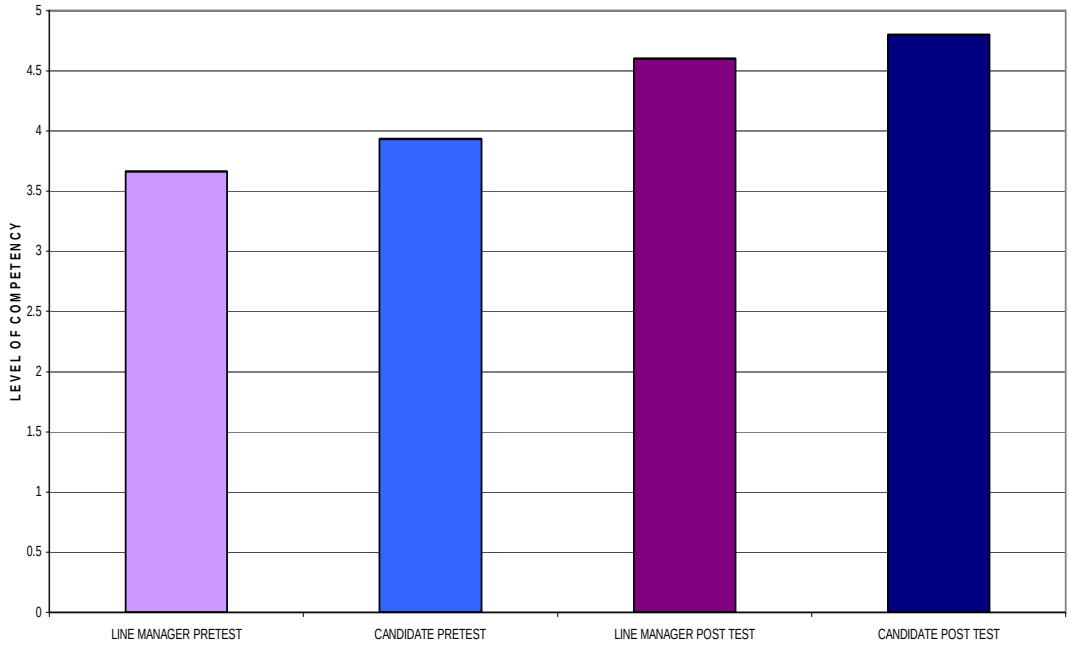
LO# 8: Able to critically analyse the macro and micro elements of good parenting which lead to optimal outcomes. (module two)



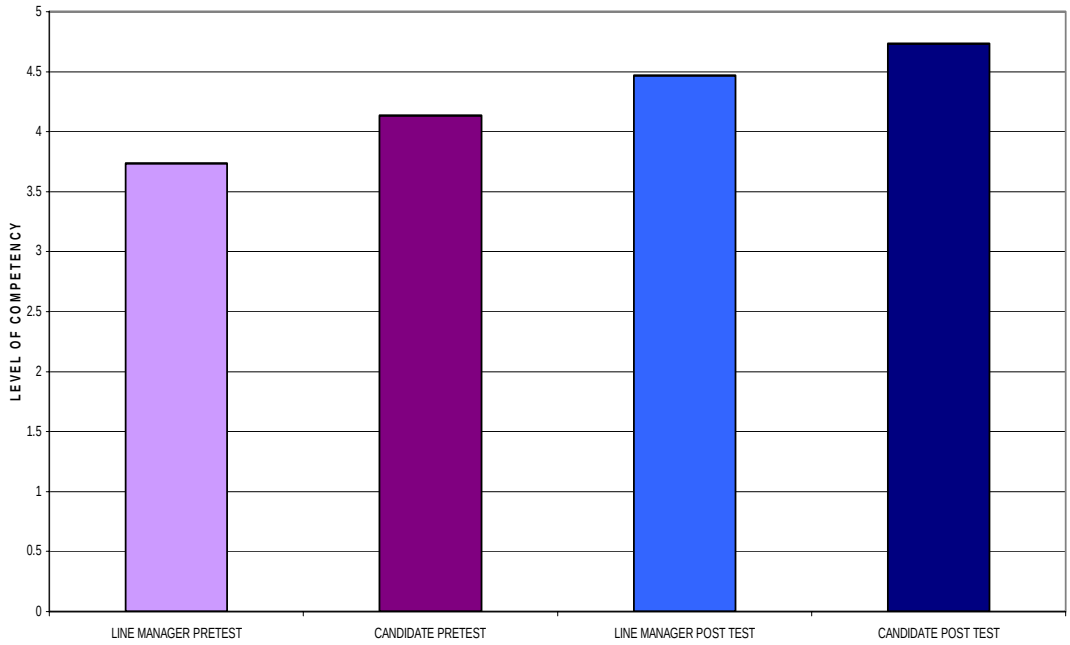
LO # 9: Able to identify and critically evaluate the range of factors which promote or diminish parental functioning. (module two)



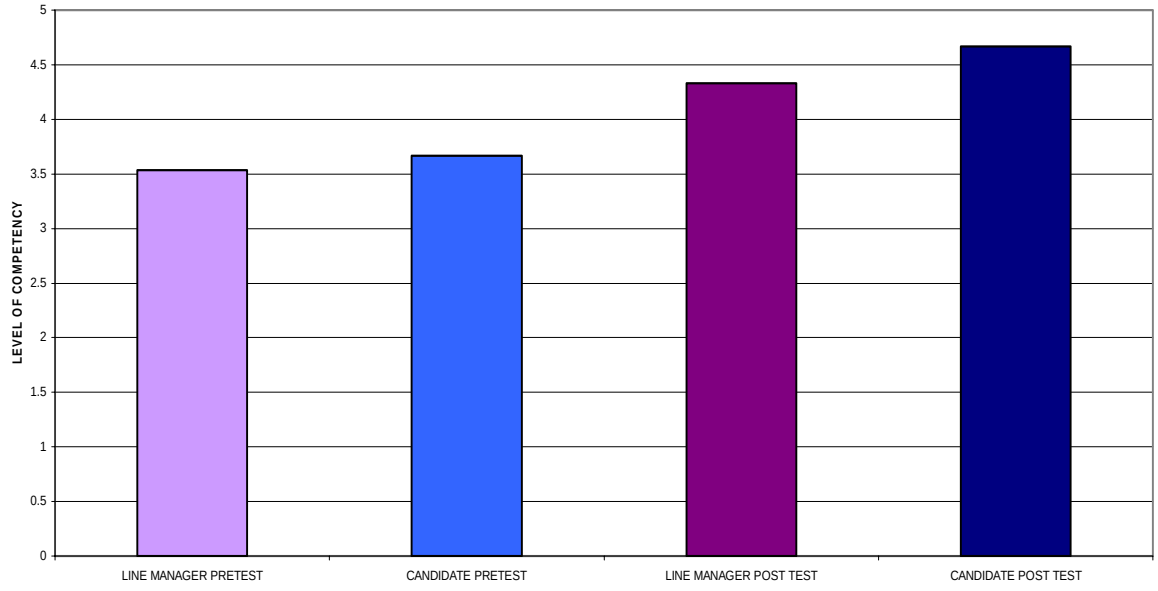
LO #10: Able to use risk assessment frameworks (module two)



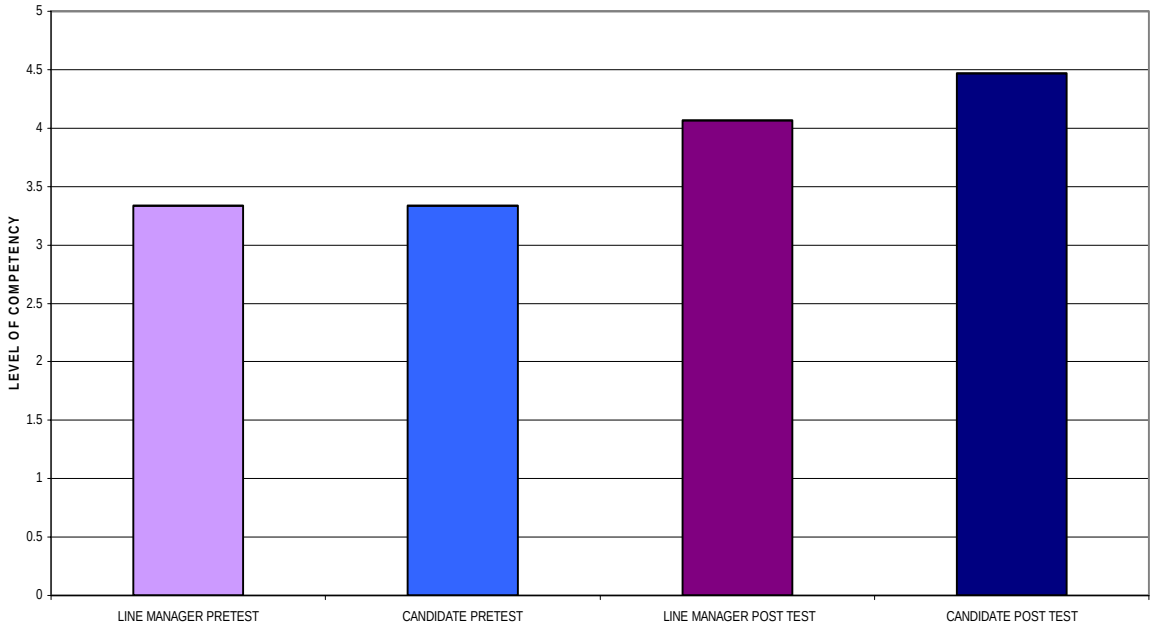
LO # 11: Able to critically evaluate the influence of environmental, economic, and social factors on the lives of children, young people and families (module two)



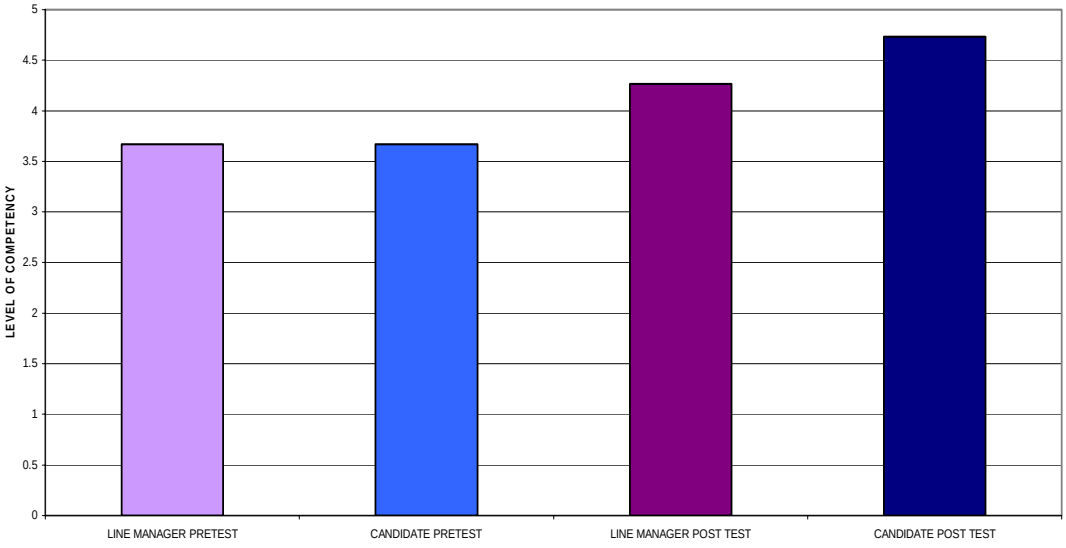
LO # 12: Able to articulate the rationale for corporate parenting and critically evaluate its effectiveness. (module two)



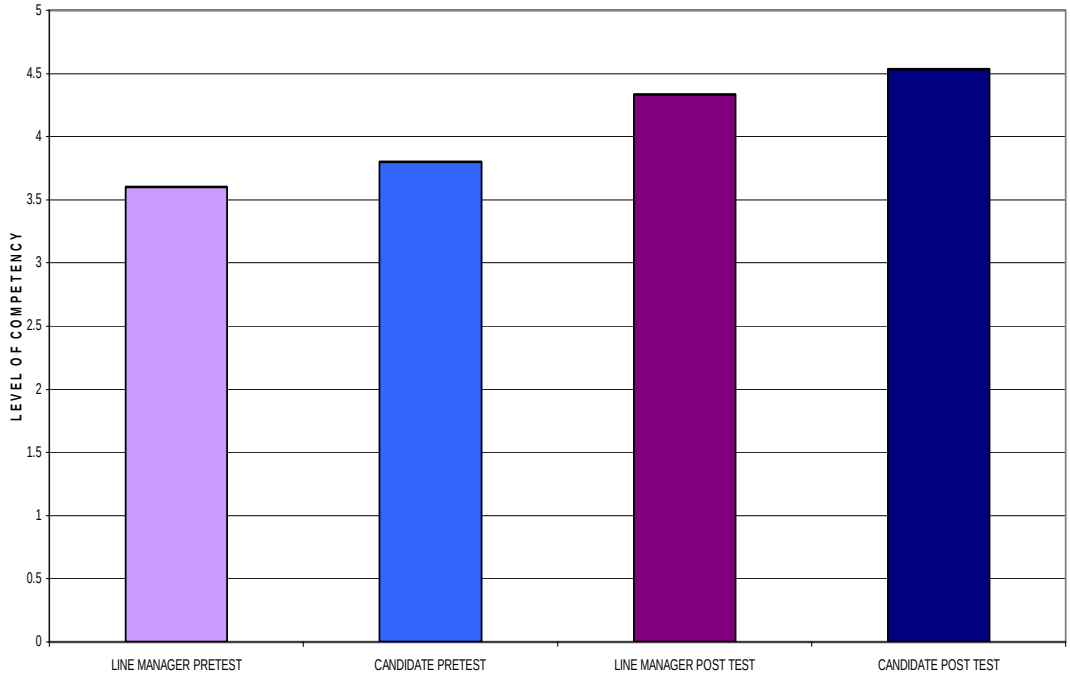
LO #13: Able to articulate and evaluate strategies for managing conflict and violence (module two)



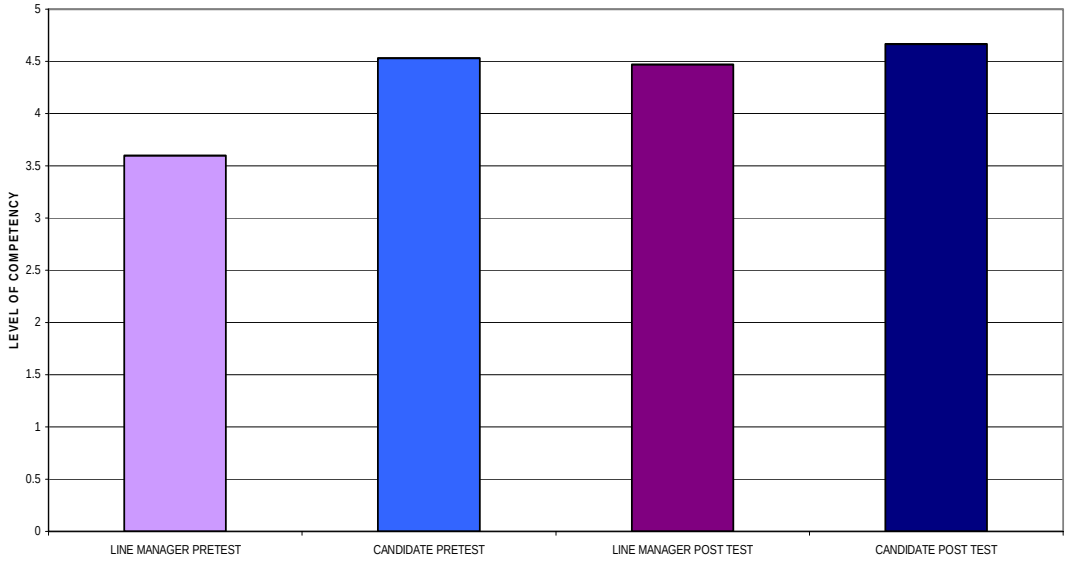
LO# 14: Able to explain the philosophy, rationale and scope of child care policy, local procedures and legislation which underpins work with children, young people and their families. (module three)



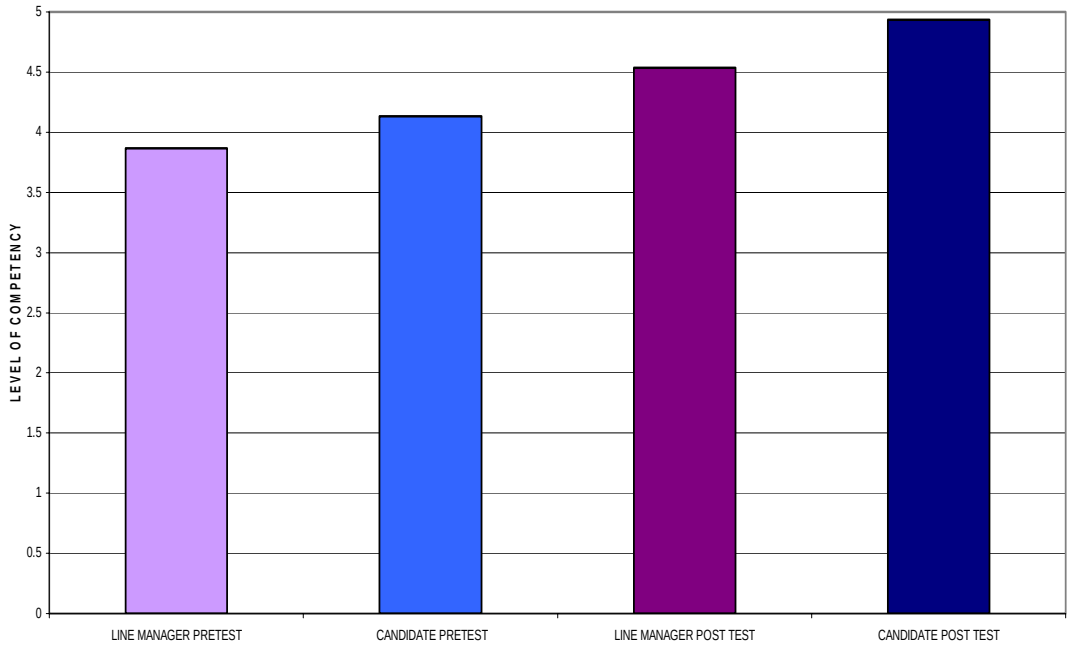
LO # 15: Able to critically analyse the impact these policies, procedures and legislation have on children, young people and their families (module three)



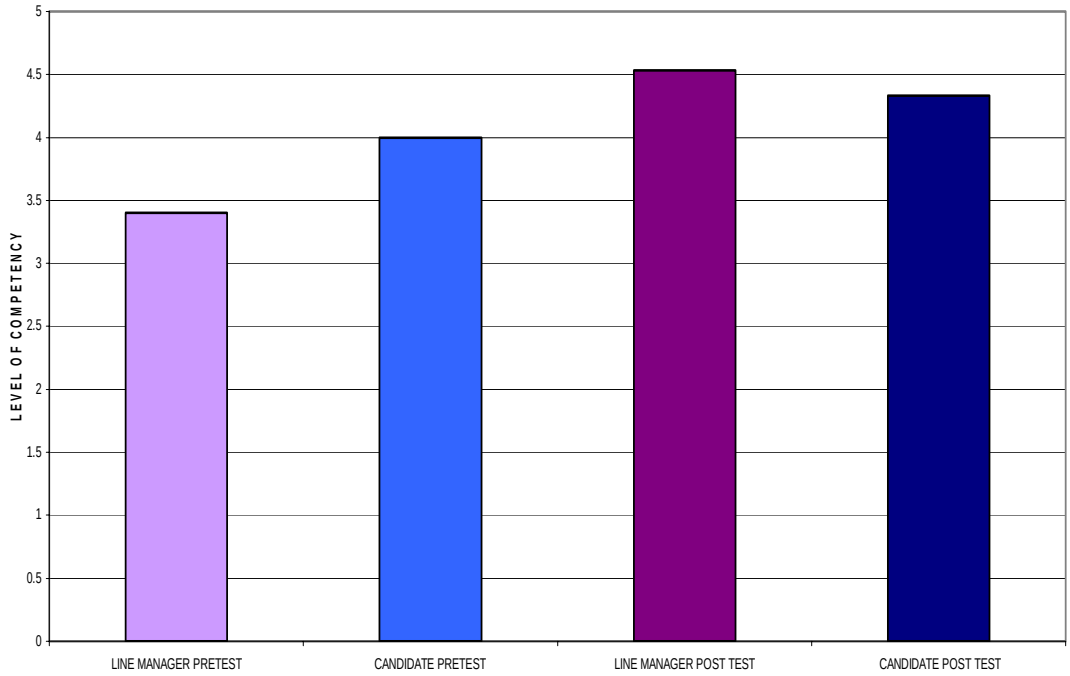
LO #16: Able to articulate the roles and responsibilities of other professionals and agencies and the contribution they make to achieving optimal options (module three)



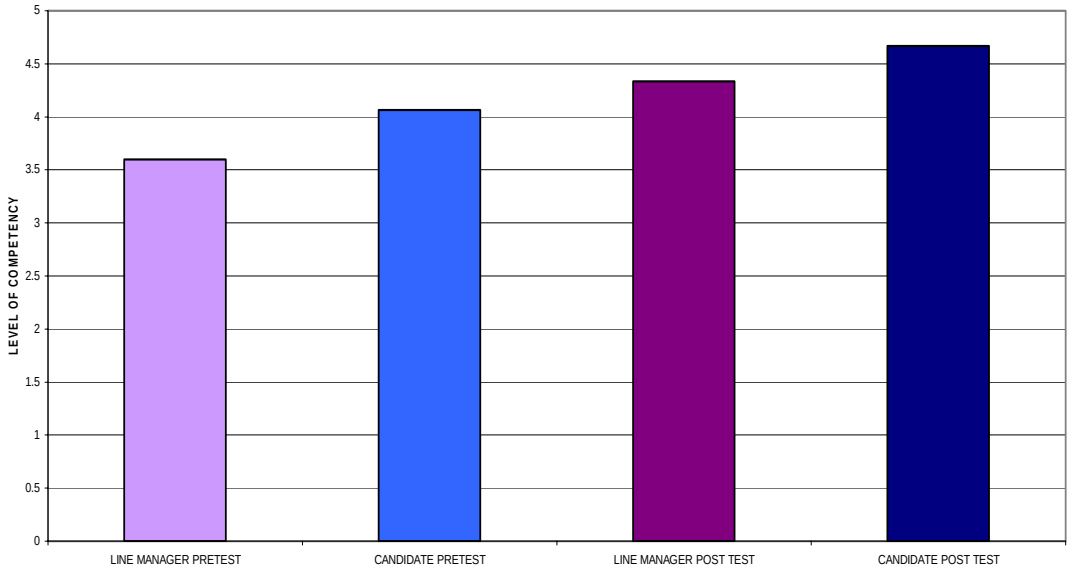
LO #17: Able to identify and analyse the legal responsibility and accountability of social workers in relation to legislation and their employing agency (module three)



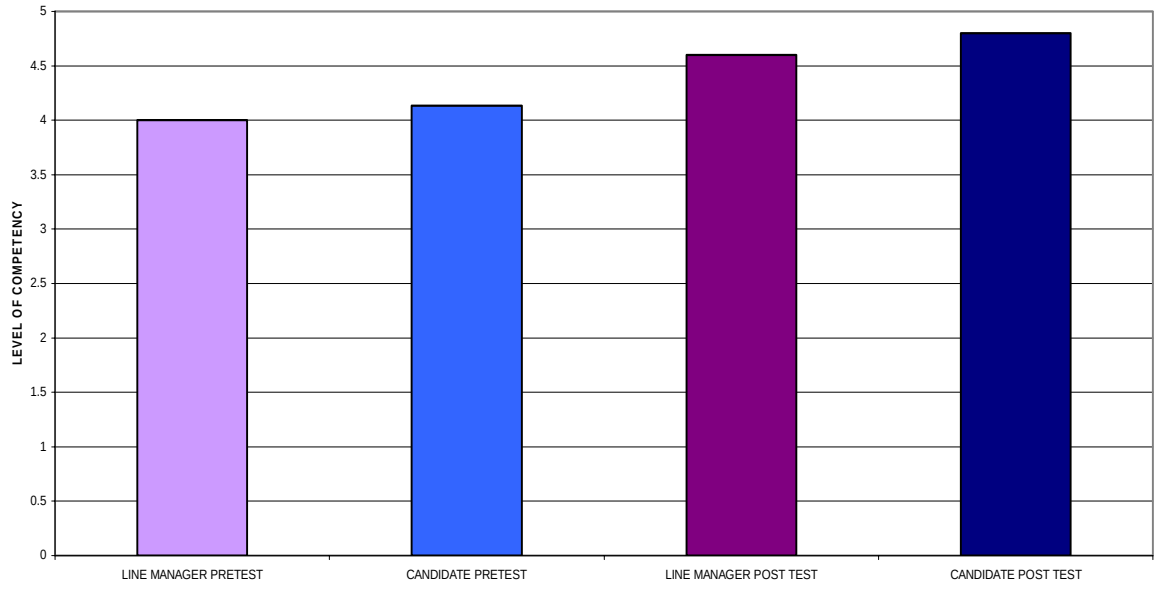
LO # 18: Able to demonstrate knowledge of a comprehensive repertoire of theories for practice, social work methods, and current child care research which can be used to achieve optimum outcomes for children, young people and their families (module three)



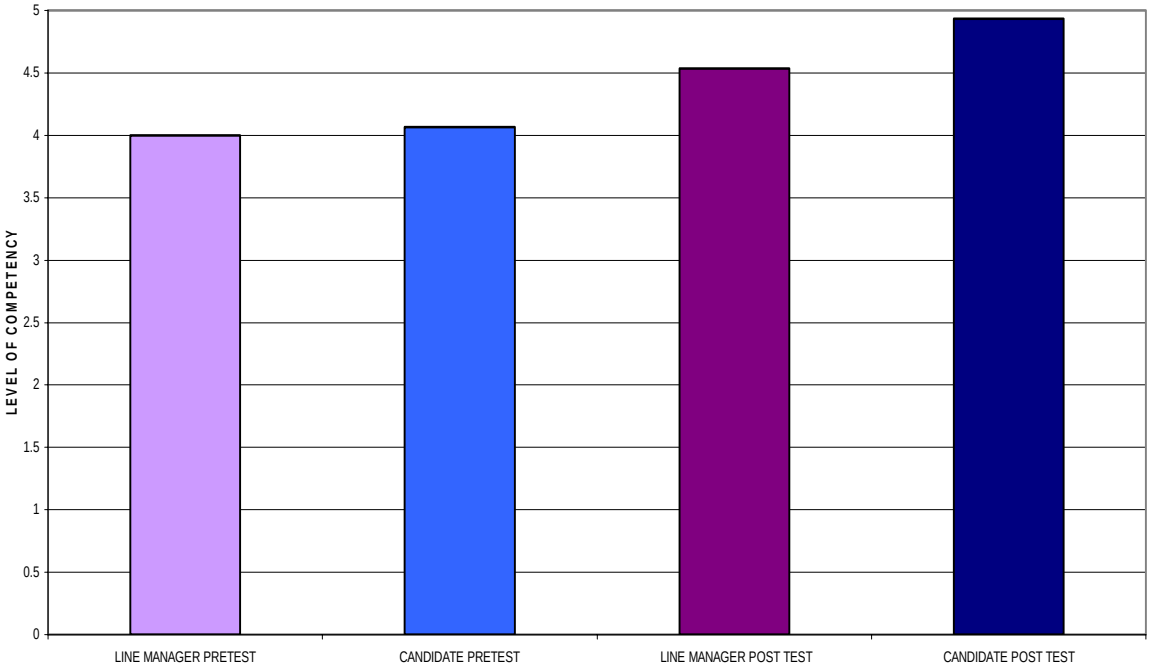
LO# 19: Able to evaluate the use of self in social work practice and the influences of personal beliefs and attitudes on judgement (module three)



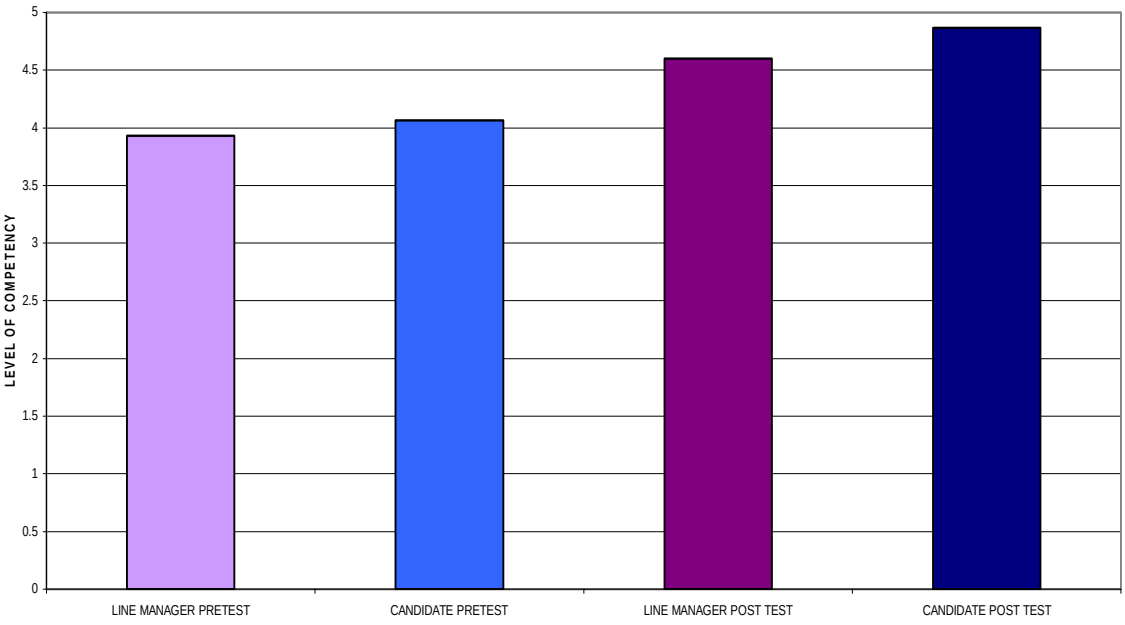
LO # 20: Able to engage with children and young people, ensuring their appropriate participation in decisions that affect their lives. (module one)



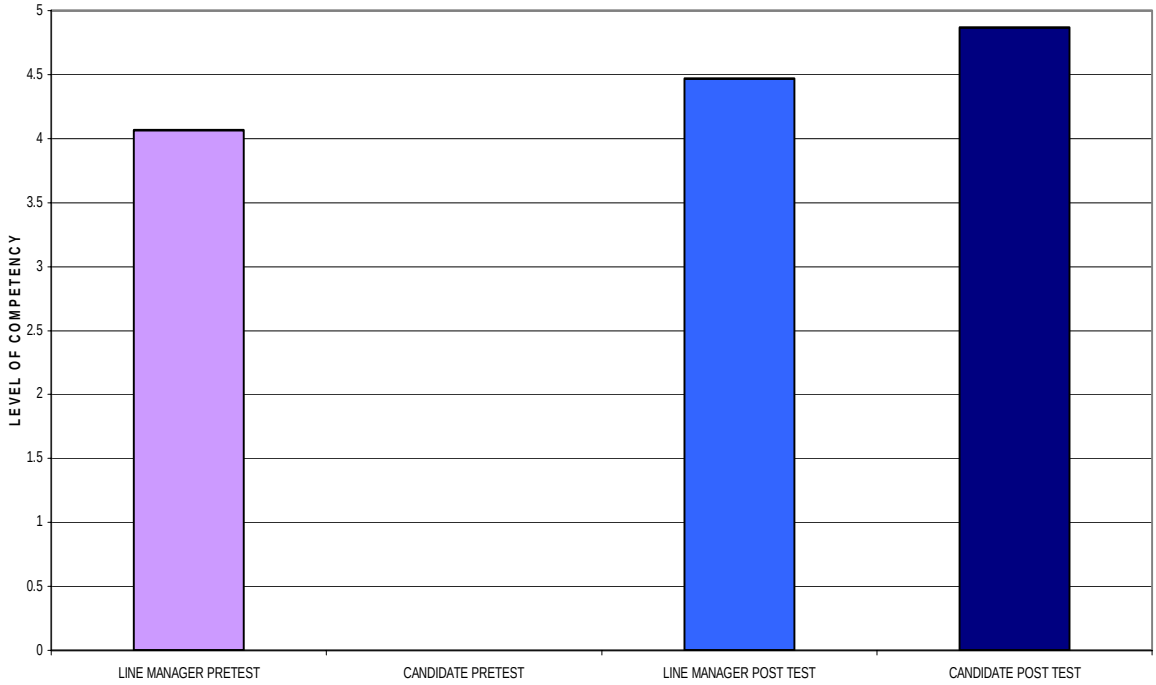
LO # 21: Able to identify and assess the developmental progress of children and young people, taking into account all the main dimensions of development (module one)



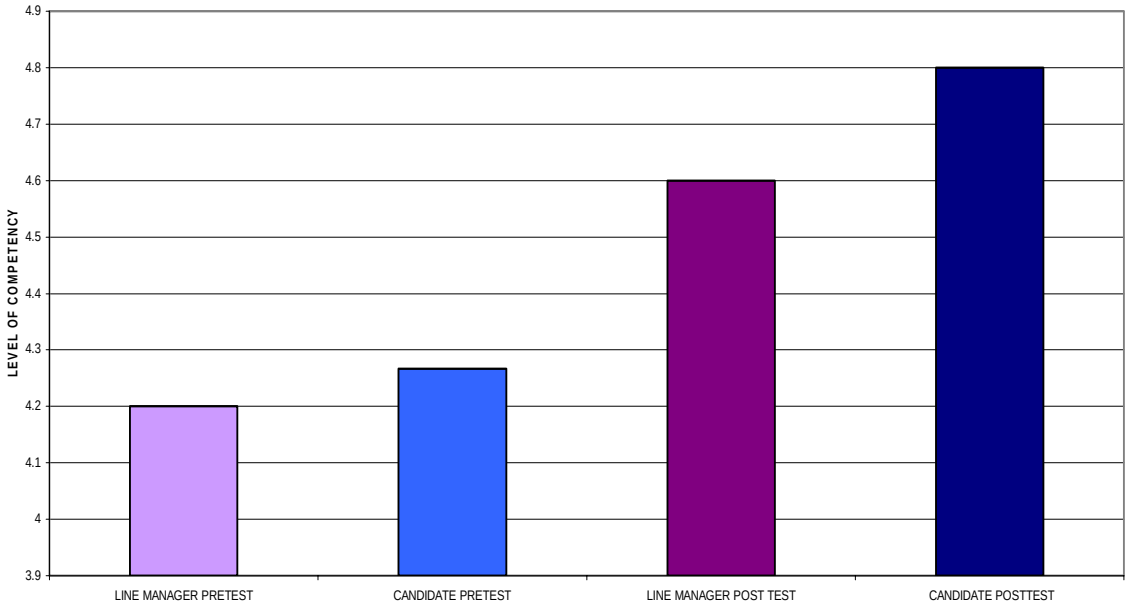
LO #22: Able to assess, plan, and implement direct work with children and young people and review the outcomes (module one)



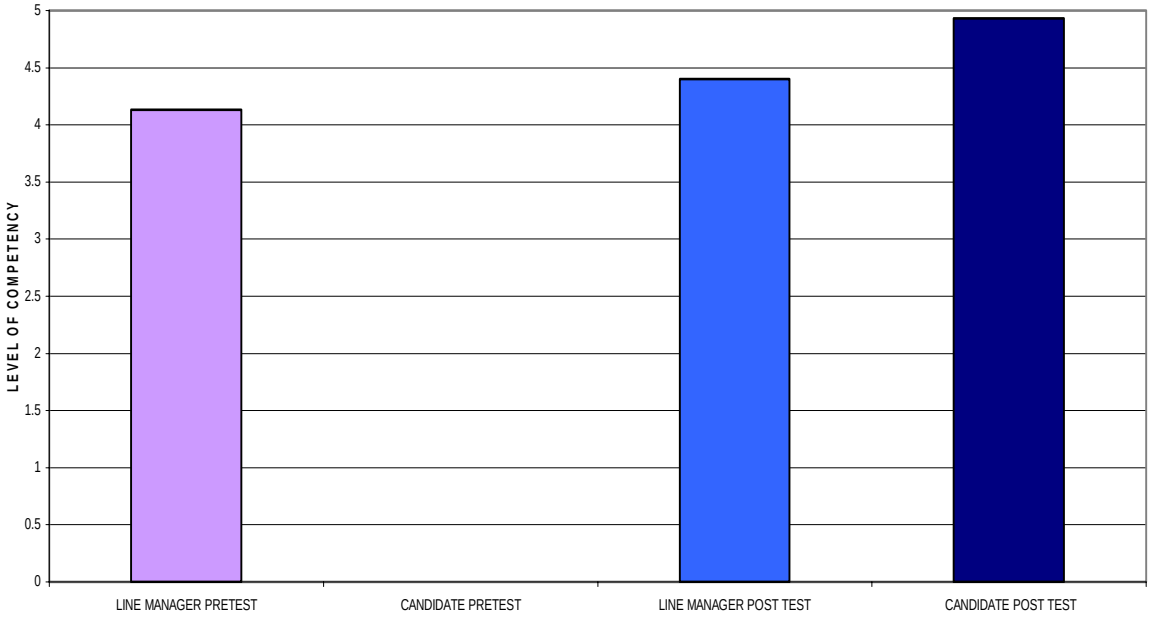
LO # 23: Able to develop effective working partnerships with those with parental responsibility, carers and significant others in the life of the child/young person



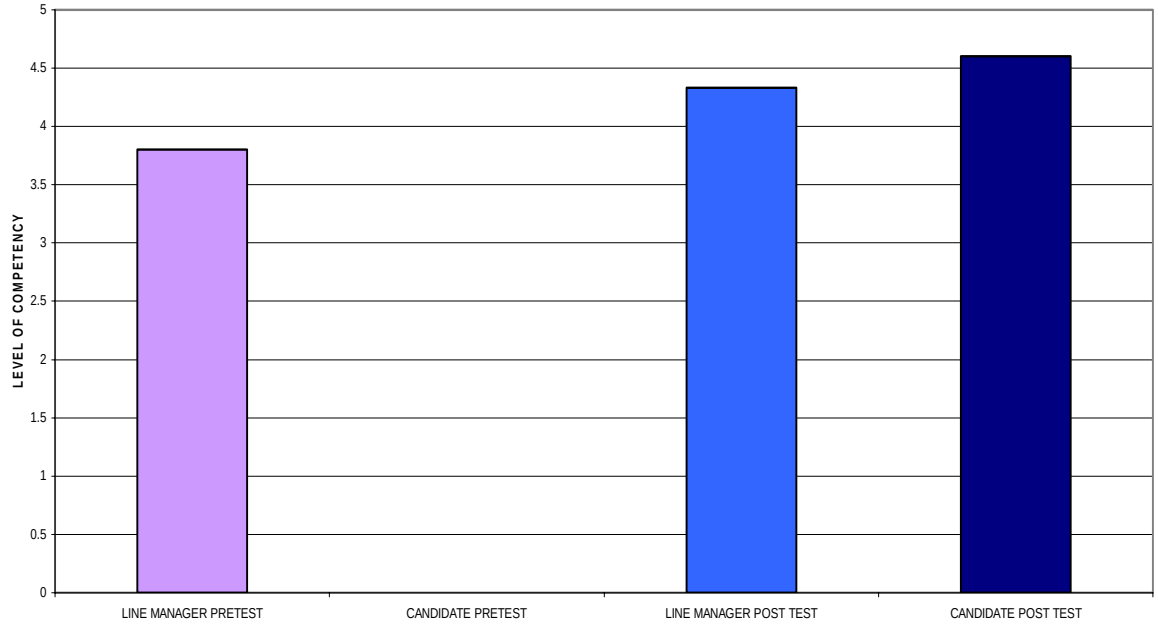
LO # 24: Able to assess, plan, implement and review the delivery of services to support the parenting task (module two)



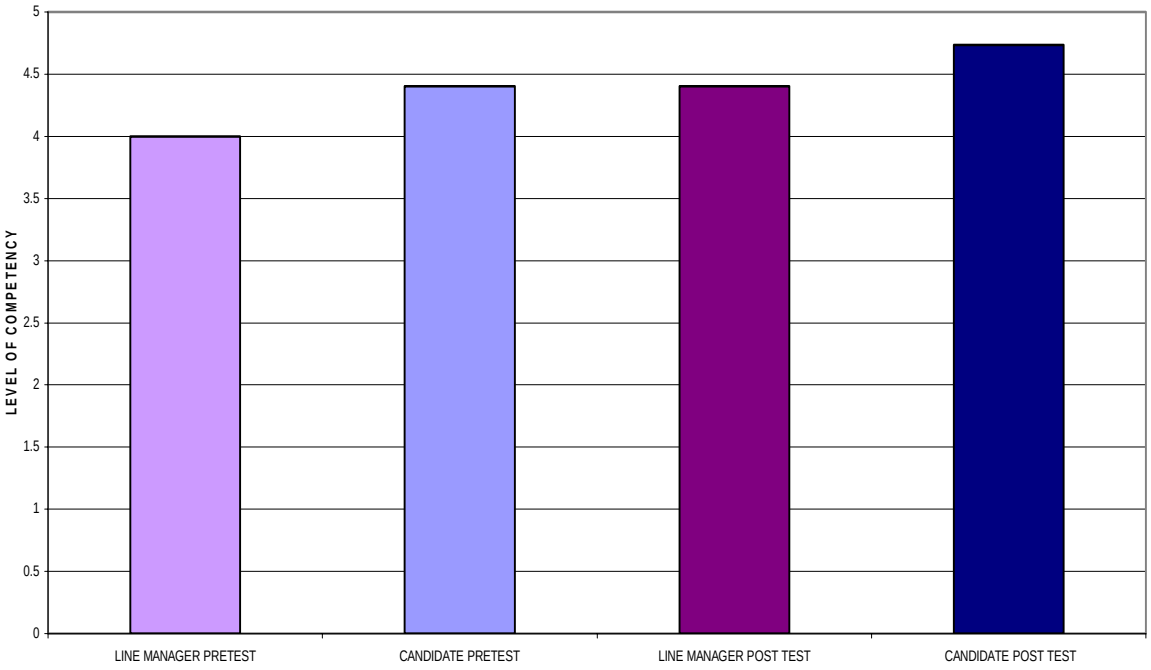
LO # 25: Able to assess parental capacity, building on strengths and identifying risk of serious harm.



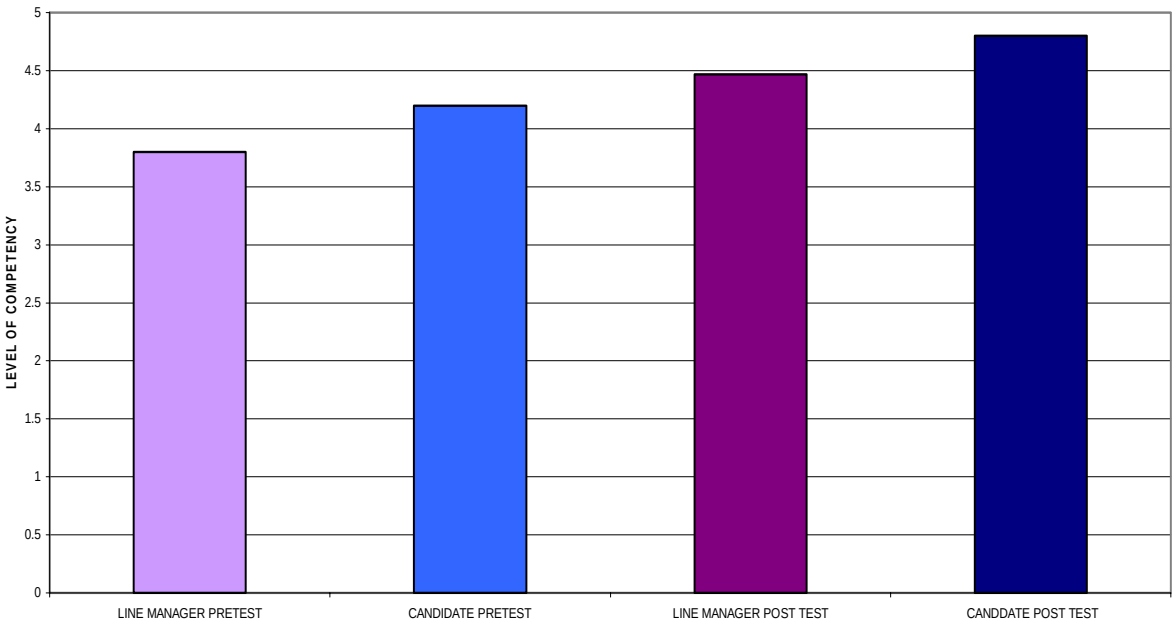
LO# 26: Able to identify, manage and mediate conflicts that impact upon the child or young person's life



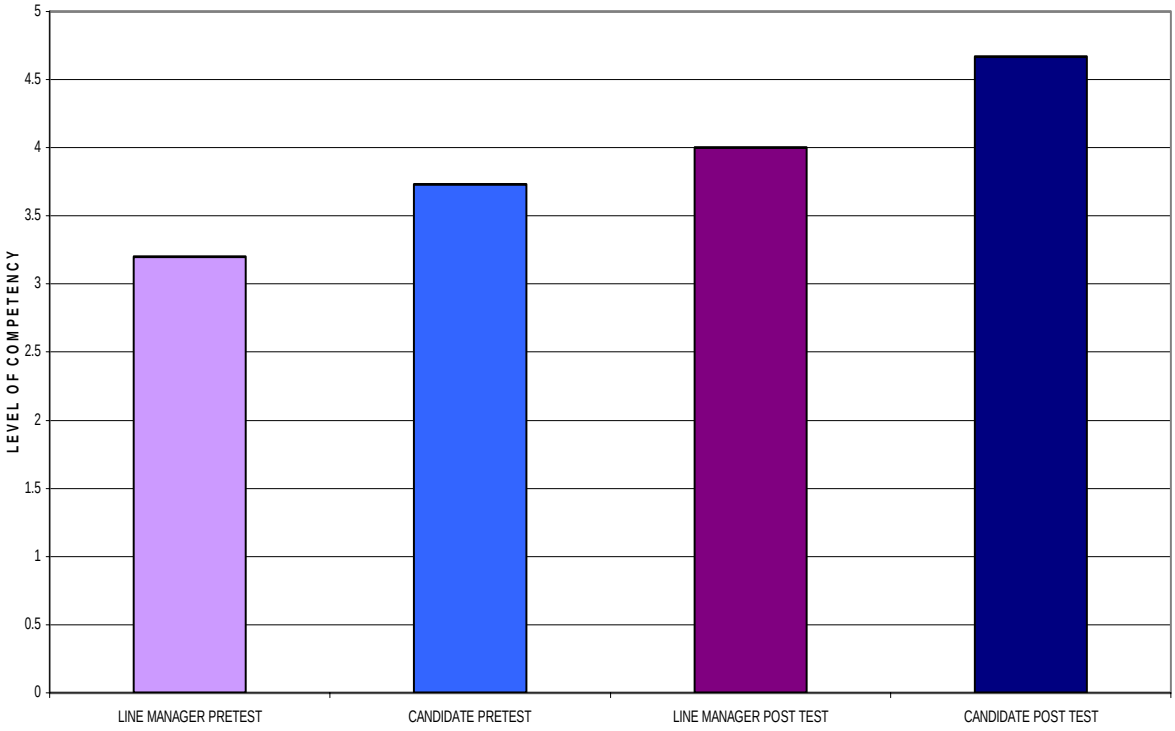
LO # 27: Able to formulate needs led assessments which take full account of potential strengths and weaknesses of the child or young person's networks and communities, acknowledging diversity and the role of oppression (module three)



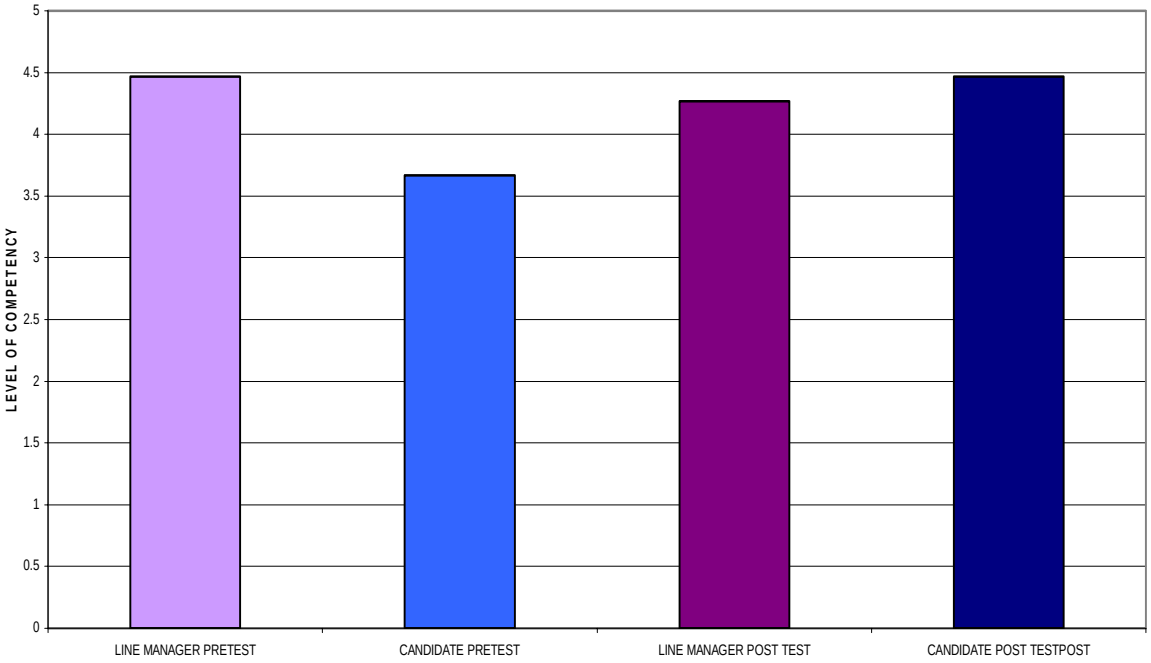
LO # 28: Able to contribute to effective inter agency working within the areas of planning, managing, delivering and reviewing services, in order to provide an integrated service and range of resources. (module three)



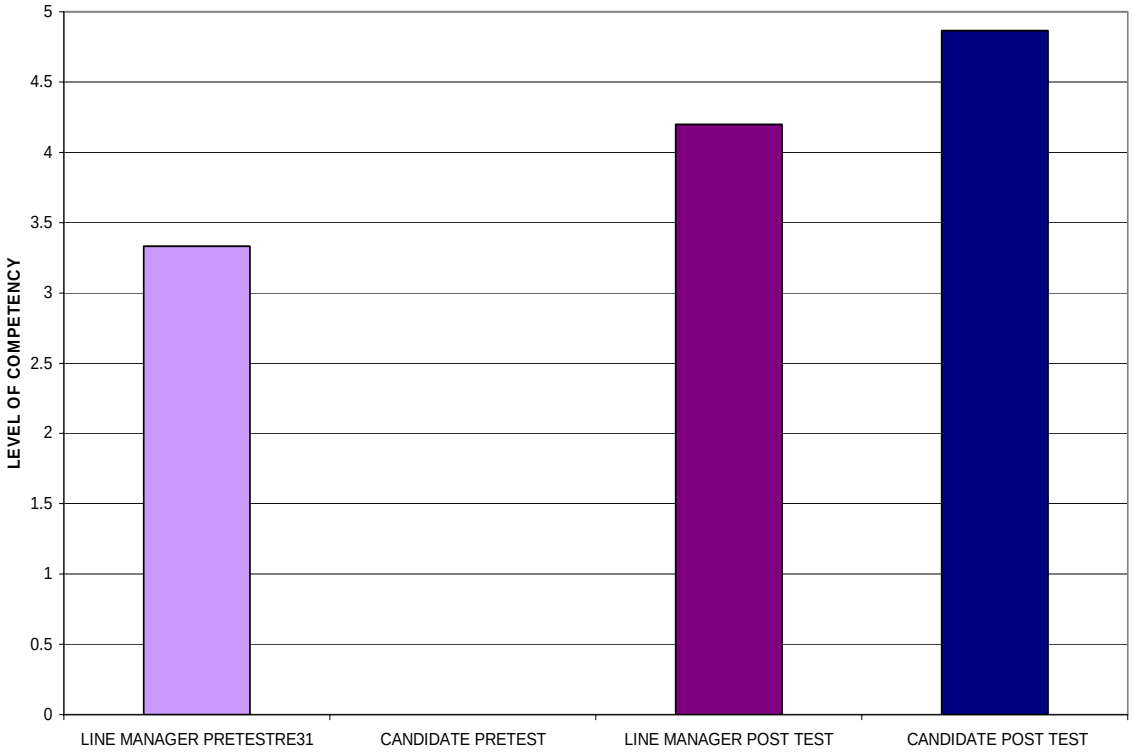
LO # 29: Able to work with neighbourhoods, communities, family networks and locale to identify service needs (module three)



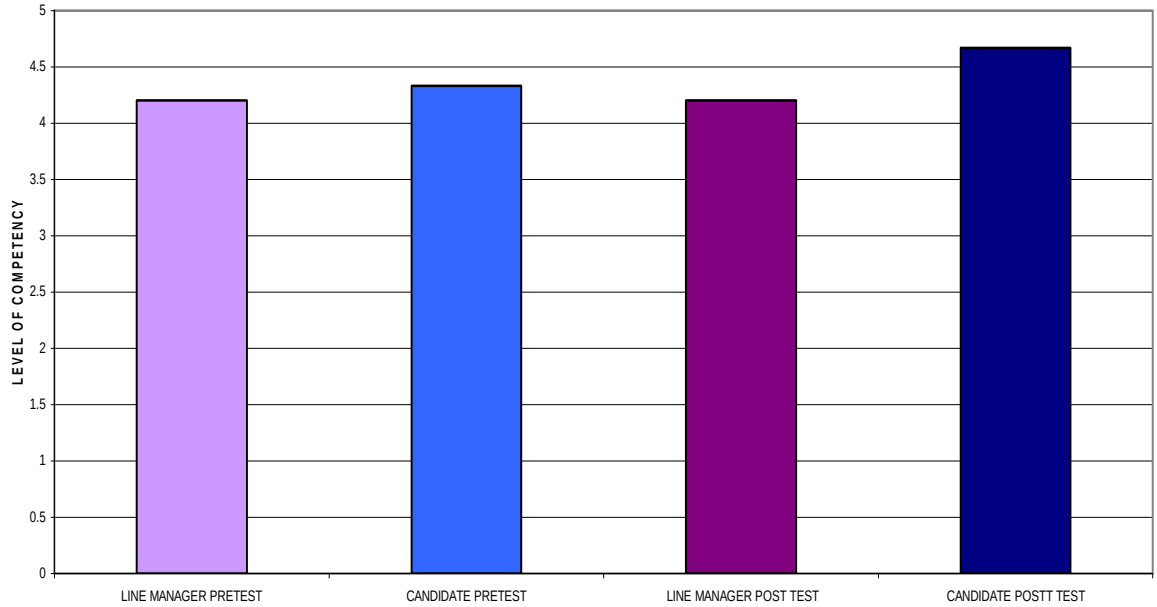
LO # 30: Able to identify needs and gaps in services, and contribute appropriately to corporate and strategic planning processes. (module three)



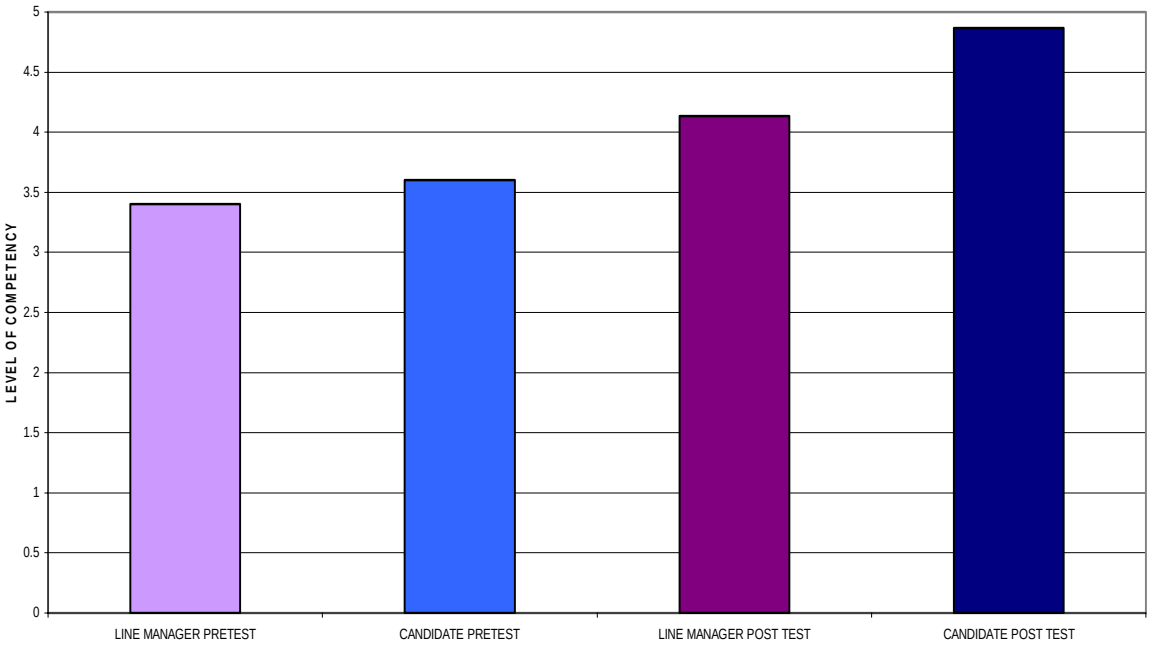
LO # 31: Able to critically analyze and evaluate local child-care policy and contribute to the development of models of best practice



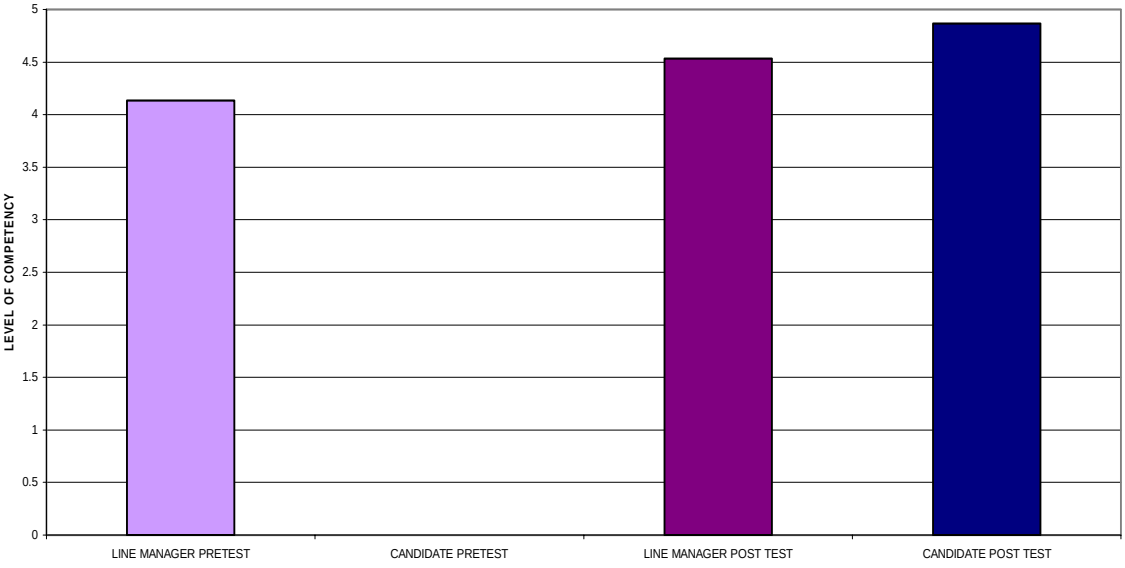
LO # 32: Able to work effectively within the legal framework (module three)



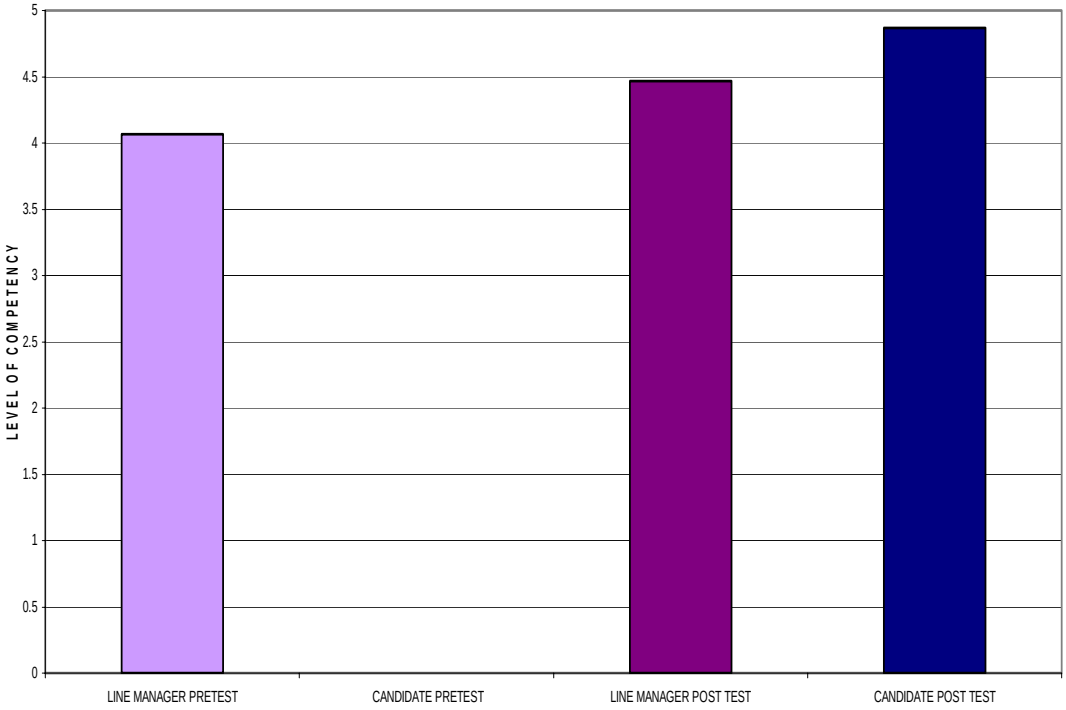
LO # 33: Able to work within and critically evaluate national and agency structures, policy and procedures (module three)



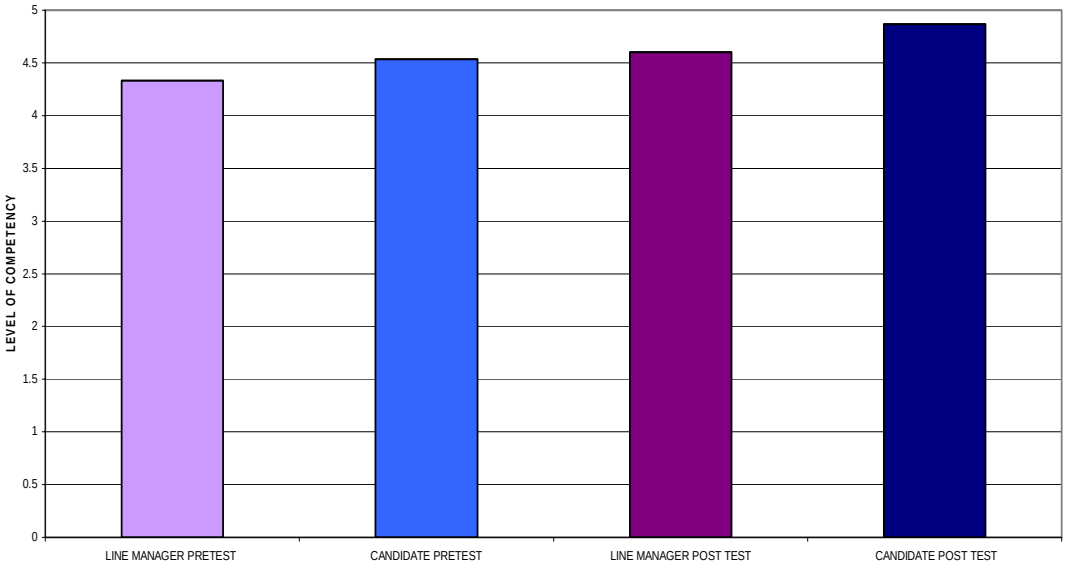
LO # 34: Able to compile and complete statutory documentation and present the issues to a formal hearing



LO # 35: Able to keep accurate records and provide reasoned verbal and written reports to promote effective decision making and accountable practice.



LO # 37: Able to take responsibility for own professional development (module one & two & three)



LO # 38: Able to contribute to the professional development of others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching, or direct contributions to education and training
(modules one & two & three)

