

Executive Summary of the "Qualified Genealogists' Survey

Background:

The Qualified Genealogists Survey (QGSurvey) was announced at the symposium titled *The Future of Professional Genealogy? A Symposium for Professionals* and held in Glasgow, Scotland on 30 August alongside *Who Do You Think You Are Live! 2014*. The symposium was hosted by the University of Strathclyde Professional Postgraduate Genealogical Studies Programme. Video links are available at http://www.strath.ac.uk/genealogy/symposium_2014/

The symposium and subsequent survey were motivated by the fact that currently in the UK, a professional register for genealogists who possess a formal qualification does not exist.

Aim & Objective:

To survey the views of genealogists and allied professions regarding the establishment of a body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification and the creation of a national recognition scheme/register.

Methodology:

The online QGSurvey, designed by Dr. Bruce Durie* using SurveyMonkey®, opened on 25 August 2014 and closed on 20 October 2014. The survey consisted of ten questions, seven of which were related to the respondent's age, gender, geographical residence, contact details, pre-existing qualifications/accreditations, type of genealogical work undertaken (professional/amateur, full/part time) and current membership/memberships of genealogical bodies or societies. Three questions (1, 2, 10) related directly to the concept of a Professional Register of Qualified Genealogists.

*Results**:*

- 85 respondents completed the online QGSurvey, 90% within the first month.
- Respondents were overwhelmingly aged over 45 (80%), predominantly female (65%) and lived within the UK (65%).
- 70% considered themselves to be professional full or part time genealogists, with 25% experienced amateurs.
- 70% belonged to a local Family History Society, 45% to either ASGRA, AGRA or APG and 5% a member of two of these organisations.
- Almost half of the cohort possessed an undergraduate degree, with just under a third possessing a higher degree or PhD.
- A quarter of the cohort held a professional certificate in a discipline allied to genealogy, whilst half of the cohort held one or more post graduate genealogical qualifications. 15% of respondents held no formal qualification.
- 50% of respondents fully supported the creation a body or group that represented and promoted the interests of genealogists who possessed a formal qualification, 20% indicated possible support, 25% required further clarification of the term 'formal qualification' and 5% were not supportive.
- 45% would join such a body or group, 30% would possibly join, 20% required further clarification as previously and 5% would not join.
- 40% of respondents were in support of a national recognition scheme (e.g. "Chartered Genealogist"), 5% were against such a scheme and 55% of respondents answered that their support would be dependent on who operated the scheme.

- The aggregate responses to Q1, 2 & 10 were 45% in support, 15% possible support, 35% dependent support, 5% no support.
- Almost all respondents not holding a formal qualification were supportive of the two concepts in some form.

Analysis:

The percentage of respondents decidedly not in support of the statements in Q1, 2 & 10 was extremely low at 5%. Of this 5%, most respondents resided outside of the UK. Clear support for the statements in Q1, 2, & 10 was expressed by almost half of respondents, the most positive response of which was from Professional Part Time Genealogists. Over half of the respondents showed concern about who might operate a national recognition scheme and around a quarter of respondents felt that the term 'formal qualification' required further definition.

Conclusions:

Based upon the responses to the QGSurvey, there is no dispute over the clear and substantial support for the creation and desire to join a body or group which would represent and promote the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification. Conversely there exists very little opposition to this concept *per se*. This premise also holds for the concept of a national recognition scheme or register. There was considerable support for the suggested provisos relating to the implementation of these two concepts - firstly, the need to define the meaning of the term 'formal qualification' when applied to the criteria that maybe required when joining this previously described body or group and secondly, the need to identify the personnel and/or bodies who might be involved in the operation of the national recognition scheme, charter or register. Going forward, attention should initially be focused, therefore, on resolving definitions and clarifying the nature of stewardship and operation of the scheme.

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** Percentages are rounded to the nearest 5% for the purposes of this summary, but are shown precisely in the more detailed Survey Response document.

***n=88 of which 3 responses were discarded, having been deemed as fake or falsified, therefore n=85.

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