

## Results and Analysis of the online Survey of Professional Genealogists held 25th August to 20th October 2014

The survey was announced at a symposium entitled 'The Future of Professional Genealogy? A Symposium for Professionals'. This was held alongside the event 'Who Do You Think You Are Live' on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2014 in Glasgow, Scotland. The symposium was hosted by the University of Strathclyde Professional Postgraduate Genealogical Studies Programme: <http://www.strath.ac.uk/genealogy/> Videos of the symposium are available at [http://www.strath.ac.uk/genealogy/symposium\\_2014/](http://www.strath.ac.uk/genealogy/symposium_2014/).

### The Survey

The symposium in Glasgow examined the rationale for the development of a 'Register of Qualified Genealogists' and allowed participants, at the event to debate the issues raised by a number of speakers on this topic. The purpose of the subsequent online survey was to analyse the views of professional genealogists to the proposed development of a register, body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification. The questions in the survey facilitated individual confidential responses from genealogists both attending the symposium as well as from those unable to attend. The survey was open from the 25th August to the 20th October 2014. Question 9 asked respondents to give their name and email address. This information was treated as confidential and was not considered part of the analysis of the survey. The online survey was designed by Dr. Bruce Durie, in consultation with others, using SurveyMonkey®.

### Results and discussion

The following is a summary of the responses gathered. There were 88 responses to the survey however, three of these were discarded as they were multiple responses from the same person, or falsified. 90% of these responses were received in the first month of the survey.

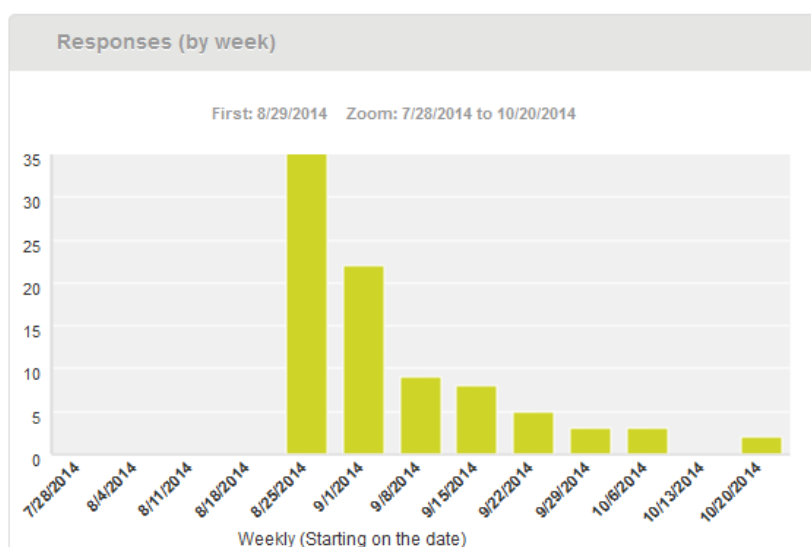


Figure 1. Responses to the survey by week

Questions 6, 7 and 8 asked the respondents about age, gender and location. 80% were in the age ranges 45 to 65 and over.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 25	0.0%	0
25-35	2.4%	2
35-45	15.3%	13
45-55	20.0%	17
55-65	44.7%	38
Over 65	15.3%	13
Prefer not to say	2.4%	2
<i>answered question</i>		85
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Figure 2. Age range of respondents

65% of respondents were female and 64% stated they lived in England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Question 4 asked about the current professional affiliations of the respondents. It was possible to choose more than one category for this question. The professional bodies identified in the question were the Association of Scottish Genealogists and Researchers in Archives (ASGRA), the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives (AGRA) and the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG). Respondents could also show affiliation with other groups such as the Society of Genealogists and family history societies. The responses in figure 3 shows the percentage of respondents belonging to each professional body as well as the number of members each body has in the UK and Ireland. The figure also shows this expressed as a percentage of the professional bodies' membership (where it was possible to express this).

Answer Options	Percent	Response Count	Members in UK & Ireland	% of Membership
ASGRA	2.4%	2	14	14.3%
AGRA	11.8%	10	100	10.0%
APG	35.3%	30	181	16.6%
Local Family History Society etc.	68.2%	58		
None	9.4%	8		
Other (please specify)	29.4%	25		

Figure 3. Affiliations to professional bodies and groups.

There was a small overlap in membership of the different organisations. Five individuals were members of both ASGRA or AGRA and APG. One respondent was an 'Associate' and one a 'Probationer' of AGRA or ASGRA. The analysis showed that a similar percentage for each of the professional bodies were represented in the survey although this must be interpreted with care as the total numbers of members for each of the organisations were very different with ASGRA having 14 members in total whereas AGRA had 100 members and APG had 181 members.

Figures 4, 5 and 6 show the results from the questions which dealt with potential support for a body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification and examines the likelihood of these respondents joining such a group.

Answer Options			ASGRA only	ASGRA+ APG	AGRA only	AGRA+ APG	APG+ AGRA/ ASGRA	APG only	None
Yes	48.8%	41			4	3	3	11	23
No	4.8%	4	1					2	1
Perhaps	19.0%	16		1			2	5	9
Depends what is meant by "formal qualification"	27.4%	23			2	1		8	14

Figure 4. Question 1. Would you support the creation of a body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification?

Answer Options			ASGRA only	ASGRA+ APG	AGRA only	AGRA+ APG	APG+ AGRA/ ASGRA	APG only	None
Yes	44.0%	37			4	2	3	10	20
No	7.1%	6	1					2	3
Perhaps	28.6%	24		1			2	7	15
Depends what is meant by "formal qualification"	20.2%	17			2	2		6	9

Figure 5. Question 2. Would you join a body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification?

Answer Options			ASGRA only	ASGRA+ APG	AGRA only	AGRA+ APG	APG+ AGRA/ ASGRA	APG only	None
Yes	40.5%	34			3	2	2	10	19
No	7.1%	6	1				1	2	3
Depends who operates it	52.4%	44		1	3	2	2	14	25

Figure 6. This shows an aggregate of the results of the three previous questions.

Yes	44%	112
No	6%	16
Perhaps	16%	40
"Depends"	33%	84

Figure 7. Question 10. Should there be a national recognition scheme for genealogists such as 'Chartered Genealogist'?

The responses to the above questions showed that those surveyed were in favour of a body that represents qualified genealogists. Over 50% of those surveyed suggested that joining the body would be dependent on who ran it. This suggests that the body may need to be independent of existing groups and institutions to be acceptable to qualified genealogists. What was interesting was the low number of absolute 'No' responses (shown in figure 8). The "Yes" responses overwhelmed the "No" responses except among the two ASGRA respondents. None of the AGRA respondents answered "No" to any of the three questions. The only APG "No" respondent came from outside the UK, and the no-affiliation "No" responses, which were not uniform across three questions, came mainly from outside the UK.

	ASGRA only	1	ASGRA +APG	1	AGRA only	6	AGRA+ APG	4	APG+ ASGRA/ ASGRA	5	APG only	25	None	47
Yes	0	0%	0	0%	11	61%	7	58%	8	53%	31	41%	62	44%
No	3	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	7%	6	8%	7	5%
Perhaps	0	0%	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%	4	40%	12	24%	24	26%
"Depends"	0	0%	1	33%	7	39%	5	42%	2	13%	28	37%	48	34%

Figure 8. The number of respondents answering 'No' to a body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification?

The survey responses were also analysed by professional activity. Question 1 asked respondents to identify their support for the creation of a body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification. Question 2 asked respondents to indicate if they were likely to join such a body. Question 3 categorised respondents into three groups. Figure 9 shows responses to question three which asked about the professional group the respondent most saw themselves affiliated to. Enthusiasm for a Register of Qualified Genealogists was highest amongst the professional, part time category as shown in figure10.

Professional, full-time genealogist	20.9%	18
Professional, part-time genealogist	47.7%	41
Experienced amateur genealogist	26.7%	23

Figure 9. Question 3. Categories of genealogists

*'Other' categories included: Chartered librarian, studying PGDip Genealogical Studies, retired professional genealogist, Archivist.*

	Professional, P/T				Professional, F/T				Experienced amateur						
	Q1	Q2	Q10		Q1	Q2	Q10		Q1	Q2	Q10				
Yes	22	21	19	62	50.4%	7	8	4	19	39.6%	12	8	11	31	38.3%
No	2	2	2	6	4.9%	2	2	2	6	12.5%	0	2	2	4	4.9%
Perhaps	8	12	0	20	16.3%	2	2	0	4	8.3%	6	10	0	16	19.8%
"Depends"	9	6	20	35	28.5%	5	4	10	19	39.6%	9	7	14	30	37.0%
	123				48				81						

	Strathclyde MSc Gen. Studies				Strathclyde PgDip Gen. Studies				Strathclyde PgCert Gen. Studies						
	Q1	Q2	Q10	8	Q1	Q2	Q10	8	Q1	Q2	Q10	16			
Yes	5	5	5	15	62.5%	7	7	5	19	73.1%	12	10	8	30	62.5%
No	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%
Perhaps	3	3	3	6	25.0%	1	2	3	3	11.5%	2	5	7	7	14.6%
"Depends"	0	0	3	3	12.5%	0	0	4	4	15.4%	2	1	8	11	22.9%
	24				26				48						

Figure 10. Analysis of the results by professional activity (Q1, Q2 and Q3).

*Note: none of the above is double counted, i.e., everyone with the Strathclyde MSc will have done the PgCert and PgDIP, but each is only counted by the highest qualification achieved.*

The responses were also analysed by pre-existing qualification (see figure 11).

	Dundee qualifications (all)					IHGS qualifications (all)					ICAPGen + BCG (may also be counted in other categories)				
	Q1	Q2	Q10	1		Q1	Q2	Q10	8		Q1	Q2	Q10	6	
<b>Yes</b>	0	0	0	0	0.0%	7	6	3	16	66.7%	4	5	2	11	52.4%
<b>No</b>	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0.0%	1	1	1	3	14.3%
<b>Perhaps</b>	1	1		2	66.7%	1	2		3	12.5%	0	0	0	0	0.0%
<b>"Depends"</b>	0	0	1	1	33.3%	0	0	5	5	20.8%	2	1	4	7	33.3%
				3					24		0	0	0	21	

Figure 11. Analysis of results by specific professional qualification.

*Note: some of these may also be in other categories, e.g., an IHGS qualification*

Perhaps not surprisingly, respondents with existing qualifications were very supportive of the development of a body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification. More interesting perhaps was that only one of the 46 respondents who have no pre-existing qualifications or credentials (Q5.) answered "No" to any aspect of questions 1,2,10. This exception was a respondent with a certification from ICAPGen or the Board for Certification of Genealogists.

### Conclusion and summary.

1. Overall, there was only a small percentage absolutely against the idea of the development of a body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification (7%), largely composed of ASGRA/AGRA members.
2. Enthusiasm for a 'Register' of qualified genealogists is highest amongst the professional, part time category. (The Professional, full time category includes most of those in the ASGRA/AGRA-non- APG group).
3. A large proportion of respondents would be interested in joining a body or group that represents and promotes the interests of genealogists who possess a formal qualification if they had more information about who was running that body.

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