



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

*Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga*

**Demographic and Statistical Analysis Unit  
Ministry of Education**

**Advantages in and Barriers to Gaining ECE  
Qualifications and Registration  
Education and Care and Home-based Services**

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12 October 2004**

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## **Purpose**

This paper is part of the third stage of analysis from the 2003 Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teacher-led Workforce survey. The focus of the third stage is on what the survey tells us about the experience of teaching in Early Childhood Education services. This part looks at the opinions Education and Care teachers and Home-based co-ordinators have about advantages of and any barriers to obtaining ECE qualifications<sup>1</sup> and registration.

This paper begins with a summary and an explanation of context before looking at the range of opinions held by respondents. As questions in the survey were asked of different groups some discussion is included regarding the populations for each question before going on to discuss findings.

## **Summary**

- The wide range of responses that were given is the key finding from this section of the survey. These highlight the issues that are important to Education and Care teachers and Home-based co-ordinators in terms of advantages and barriers to obtaining ECE qualifications and registration<sup>2</sup>.
- The more common advantages mentioned in relation to qualification were improved knowledge, better job or career prospects and financial advantages related to better pay. The more frequent advantages mentioned in relation to registration had one in common with those for qualification – better job or career prospects. Other more prevalent advantages for registration were improved ECE quality and recognition related statements.
- When looking at barriers the most common barrier for qualifications was financial whilst for registration the most common barrier was time. Time was the next most frequently quoted barrier for qualifications whilst for registration it was getting qualified first.
- For registration, Home-based co-ordinators reported particular barriers related to being co-ordinators due to lack of contact time with children. Being a co-ordinator was not an issue for obtaining qualifications.

## **Context**

Pathways to the Future: Nga Huarahi Arataki aims to improve quality in early childhood education. The objective of the plan is for all people working in teacher-led early childhood services to be registered teachers by the year 2012. The target for 2012 is for 100% of regulated staff in every teacher-led service to be registered teachers **or** a minimum of 70% of regulated staff to be registered teachers while 30%

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<sup>1</sup> Qualifications in this paper refer to those qualifications that lead to registration.

<sup>2</sup> Complete lists of the range of advantages and obstacles are provided in the Range of Responses section.

of other regulated staff may be enrolled in a NZ Teachers Council-approved programme of ECE teacher education. The plan affects all teachers in teacher-led services who do not have benchmark ECE qualifications or are not fully or provisionally registered – Education & Care Services and Home-based co-ordinators are affected the most.

## **Range of responses**

In this section the range of responses to both the “advantages in” gaining ECE qualifications and registration and the “barriers to” gaining ECE qualifications and registration questions are listed<sup>3</sup>. It was found that similar themes emerged for both qualifications and registration advantages and barriers, therefore the same groupings of responses were used for advantages and for barriers. Some respondents provided one word answers while others wrote more detailed replies. A maximum of four responses from any one respondent were recorded.

Respondents were asked to list the main advantages or barriers. The results from these questions are the lists below that represent the issues that respondents raised.

Individual responses were grouped into related themes. Each theme is described by using a leading statement (e.g. Financial advantages) and then a series of words to convey the sort of responses that were grouped into this theme (e.g. Better pay, more pay, more money, financial advantages generally). Words underlined in the description high-light key differences between this theme and other similar themes. Below is the range of advantages to holding an ECE qualification or registration that were reported.

### **List 1: Range of advantages**

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Financial advantages – better pay, more pay, more money, financial advantages generally

Financial advantages – pay parity (with primary or secondary school sector)

Support or collegiality – mentoring or support from supervisor, provides a network of teachers for support or collegiality, there's a professional body to back you up

Are able to mentor other teachers through to registration

Better job or career prospects – better chance of promotion or getting a job, better opportunities, more responsibility, advancement, better career prospects generally

Transferability – able to work in kindergartens, allows career move to kindergartens

Transferability – able to work in primary or secondary schools, allows career move to schools

Transferability – able to work overseas, allows career move overseas, allows travel

Transferability (generally) – able to work almost anywhere, larger range of jobs available, wider choice of jobs

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<sup>3</sup> Copies of the questions in the survey which this paper refers to are in Appendix Two.

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Are able to set up or run own centre

Recognition – improved status, better standing, professional status, respect

Personal development – improved (self-)confidence, sense of personal achievement, personal reasons

Improved knowledge – learn more about ECE or child development or working with children or Te Whāriki or ECE Curriculum or the theory, get to know more about ECE, better understanding, experience, learn about administration of a centre

Improved skills – able to improve your skills, can put theory into practice

Quality – provides quality ECE teaching, improves quality, improves standards, improves or provides professionalism, improves safety for the children, benchmark standard, gives parents confidence

Accountability – provides a register of teachers, there's a system of checking or vetting teachers, you are accountable

Have to become qualified or registered – the government says teachers have to be qualified or registered (in the future, by 2012, etc), no choice

Other

Are able to become registered (once qualified), can work towards registration

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As with advantages, individual responses to the barriers question were grouped into related themes. Each theme is described by using a leading statement (e.g. Financial barriers (generally)) and then a series of words to convey the sort of responses that were grouped into this theme (e.g. money, financial, have to work while studying, can't get grants). Below is the range of barriers to obtaining an ECE qualification that were reported.

### **List 2: Range of barriers**

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Financial barriers (generally) – money, financial, have to work while studying, can't get grants

Financial barriers – loss of income while studying, have to take unpaid leave, have to take time off work, can only work part-time while studying, not paid on practicum

Financial barriers – not enough financial reward after becoming qualified/registered

Financial barriers – course costs, fees, ongoing costs (registration)

Financial barriers – don't want burden of a student loan, have to repay student loan

Financial barriers – travel costs

Time – haven't got time, busy or too busy, time management, commitments (other than family or commitments unspecified), workload issues, adds to stress, means more work

Family commitments – time away from family or home or children, have family commitments, have x-number of children, have small children, am pregnant

Travel/distance – have to travel to place of study or another centre, long distance or travel time to nearest place of study or centre with supervisor, have to relocate to be near institution

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No supervisor available (for registration) – lack of a registered teacher in centre or area to supervise or mentor or support me

Lack of information – don't know enough about it or what is involved or what is expected, not enough information, don't know what the advantages are

Not working enough hours in same centre (must be doing 12 hours per week), not working full time, not in permanent position

NZTC unhelpful, don't return calls, slow to process applications, etc

Lack of support from my centre – lack of financial support to get registered, lack of support generally

Getting qualified first (before registration) – have to do qualifications or study first, becoming qualified, need my ECE qualifications

My qualifications are not recognised – (if did Diploma of Teaching ECE through Chrysalis, SEACOH, or Creative Learning Environments (CLE), not eligible for registration), overseas qualifications not recognised

Length of time it takes to study or complete diploma or degree or qualification

English is my second language, language barrier, need to pass IELTS test

Other

Goal-posts shifting – MOE or Government changing rules or requirements or system for qualifications

Issues related to the nature of home-based coordinator's role

Age – too old to gain new qualifications or get registered, nearing retirement

Lack of recognition of prior learning (RPL), there's no acknowledgement of my experience or knowledge, object to being treated like a graduate or being supervised

Lack of study skills or computer skills – my writing isn't good, have trouble expressing myself or putting pen to paper, lack confidence, lack entry qualifications

Resistance or lack of commitment or lack of motivation – don't want to do it, don't see the need to do it, don't see the point, not motivated to do it, plan to leave sector

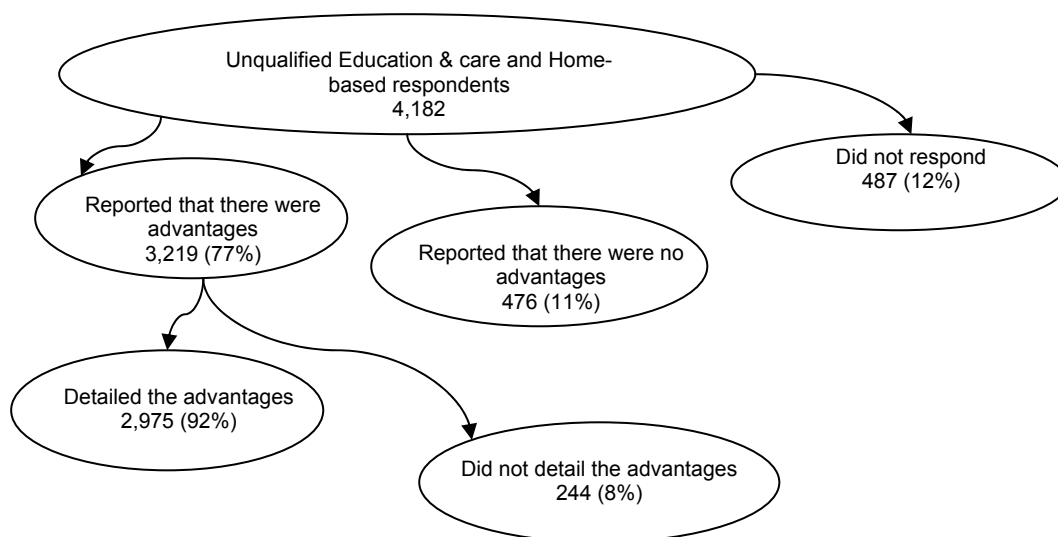
Timing or process (will be) interrupted – moving to a new town or area, moving to a new centre, having a baby, taking time off teaching ECE

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## Advantages in and barriers to gaining ECE qualifications

### Population

Questions on advantages in and barriers to obtaining ECE qualifications were asked of all unqualified Education & care teachers and Home-based co-ordinators. The diagram below shows the population of respondents who were asked the advantages in and barriers to gaining ECE qualifications and the resulting types of responses that were received.



Unqualified Education & Care teachers and Home-based co-ordinators were first asked, “whether in their opinion, there are any advantages in having a recognised ECE qualification?” Those answering “Yes” were then asked to detail the main advantages of having a recognised ECE qualification. 2,975 respondents detailed the main advantages. Respondents were able to supply more than one advantage: 4,920 detailed advantages were received in total.

All unqualified Education & care teachers and Home-based co-ordinators were then asked “what obstacles, if any, do you face in obtaining a recognised ECE qualification?” 3,065 respondents detailed such barriers. Respondents were able to give more than one barrier: 5,165 detailed barriers were received in total.

Slightly more respondents provided barriers than advantages. Respondents who provided several advantages were most likely to give different categories of advantages e.g. quality and financial. When detailing barriers, respondents who provided several barriers were more likely to give different barriers in the same category, for example several finance related barriers.

Non-response to the advantages question was investigated. At 8% the non-response rate appears low. When broken down by selected characteristics the numbers in some groups were very small, limiting analysis. Service type, ethnic group, age group

and years in current service type were investigated but no obvious bias in response/non-response was found in these groups.

Non-response to the barriers question was also investigated. As we did not ask respondents whether they thought there were no barriers to gaining ECE qualifications we cannot tell how many respondents did not answer the barrier question because they thought there were no barriers. Service type, ethnic group, age group and years in current service type were investigated but, as with advantages, no obvious bias in response/non-response was found in these groups.

### **Advantages in gaining a recognised ECE qualification**

77% of unqualified Education & Care teachers and Home-based co-ordinators who responded said that there were advantages in having a recognised ECE qualification. When these advantages were detailed most reported advantages to do with improved knowledge (38% of respondents) followed by statements related to better job or career prospects (35%) and financial advantages related to better pay (34%).

Examples of advantages to do with improved knowledge included:

“Knowing how to deliver a curriculum [effectively].”

“Know what to do.”

“Being knowledgeable in area of child development stages of children's learning, being able to [meet] children's needs. Plan for their holistic development.”

Examples of statements related to better job/career prospects included:

“To be able to become supervisor or teach in kindy.”

“Easier to get a job.”

Examples of financial advantages related to better pay included:

“More pay.”

“Higher wages.”

### *Respondent characteristics do not affect advantages detailed*

Responses were looked at in the context of various characteristics – region, ethnic group and age group. No clear relationship was found between these characteristics and the advantages given.

## **Barriers faced in gaining a recognised ECE qualification**

73% of unqualified Education & care teachers and Home-based co-ordinators detailed barriers to attaining qualifications. Financial related barriers were by far the most reported with many respondents providing more than one financial barrier. 32% of responses<sup>4</sup> related to general financial obstacles. Time related barriers were the next most reported type of barriers with 17% of responses being related to not having time.

General financial barriers detailed include:

“Money”.

“Financial obstacles.”

“Little financial support...”

Not having time barriers include:

“Time.”

“Juggling work/family/study.”

*Respondent characteristics do not affect barriers detailed*

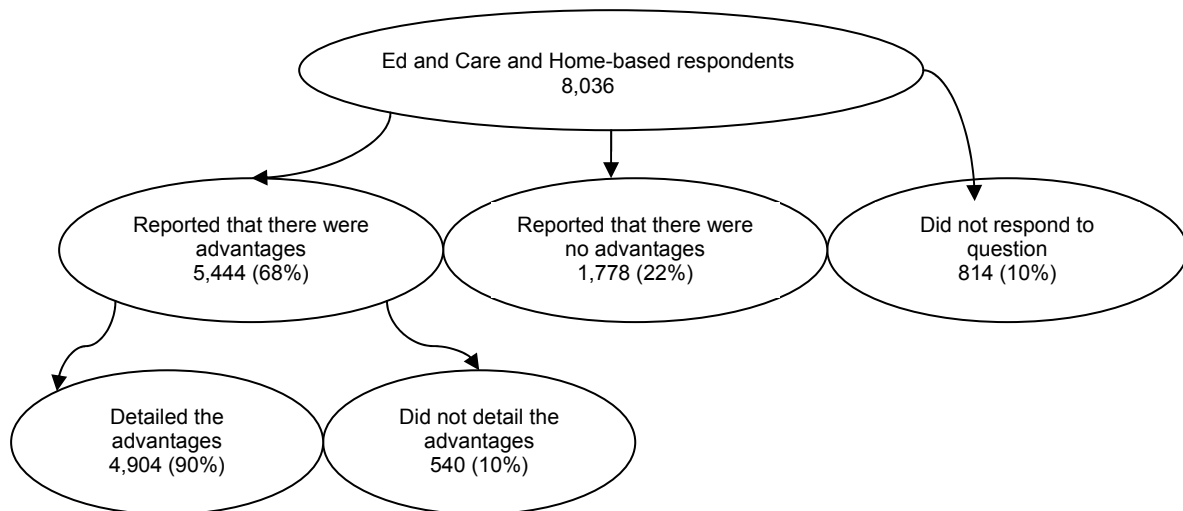
Responses were examined in the context of various characteristics – region, ethnic group and age group. No clear relationship was found between these characteristics and most of the responses given. The exception is age where those aged 50 or more were more likely to cite age as a barrier.

## **Advantages in and barriers to gaining registration**

### **Advantages in gaining registration**

#### *Population*

Respondents who work in Education and Care Services, and Home-based co-ordinators were asked if there were any advantages to being registered. If they indicated ‘yes’ they were asked to give the main advantages.



There were 8,036 respondents, most (97%) are from Education and Care Services. Overall 68% of these respondents indicated that there were advantages to being registered, and 22% indicated that there were not. 10% of respondents did not complete this question.

### Results

61% (4,904) of respondents from Education and Care and Home-based services gave advantages to being registered. The most common themes that were mentioned were quality of ECE (one third mentioned this), and recognition or improved status and respect (about a quarter mentioned this).

'Quality of ECE' responses included comments like:

"Professionalism. Improved safety for children."

"A high standard is maintained for quality."

"...it ensures that teachers are keeping to a particular standard."

'Recognition or improved status and respect' included comments like:

"To be accepted as a professional."

"It gives early childhood teachers more status being registered."

"Being treated in a professional manner."

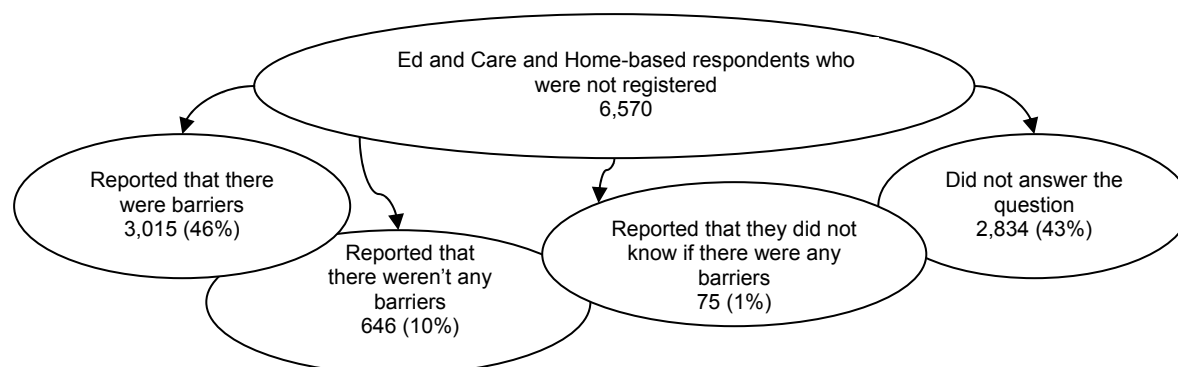
### *Respondent characteristics do not affect advantages detailed.*

There was no difference in the advantages mentioned when responses to this question are looked at by ethnicity, age and type of service. However there was a link between registration status and whether or not respondents believe that there are advantages to being registered. Respondents that were registered were more likely to believe that there are advantages to being registered (around 8 out of every 10 indicated that there were advantages) than were those that were not registered (only around 5 out of every 10 indicated that there were advantages).

## Barriers faced in gaining registration

### Population

All respondents from Education and Care Services, and Home-based co-ordinators who were not fully registered were asked to give what barriers (if any) stood in the way of them being registered. Overall 46% of respondents gave obstacles, 10% indicated that for them there weren't any barriers and a further 43% did not answer the question.



It is not possible to separate those who chose not to respond to this question and those who see no barriers to obtaining a full registration.

### Results

The main barriers that emerged for those from Education and Care services were financial (this was a barrier for nearly a third), time (nearly a fifth mentioned time), getting qualified first, and lack of available supervisors.

Those for whom finance was a barrier for talked about money/finance in general or mentioned the registration fee in particular. Examples of comments made include:

“Money”

“the cost”

“registration fee”

“I can't afford the \$120 registration fee.”

Examples of comments from those who indicated that time was a barrier:

“Study time.”

“Finding time.”

Examples of comments of those for whom ‘getting qualified first’ was a barrier:

“Need to finish my Diploma.”

“I am not qualified yet.”

“Still studying.”

Examples of comments from those who indicated that 'lack of available supervisors' was a barrier:

"Limited Registered teachers available."

"Having a registered person to mark off work."

"Difficulty in locating a registered teacher locally who will supervise my registration and provide guidance and support."

"...there is not enough registered teachers around..."

Barriers experienced by those from Home-based services are quite different (with the exemption of 'lack of supervisors' which was also an issue for Home-based co-ordinators). 'Issues related to the Home-based co-ordinators role' was by far the greatest barrier experienced by those from Home-based services. Home-based co-ordinators do not work directly with children. Co-ordinators report that this makes it very difficult for them to meet the requirement of spending at least 12.5 hours a week teaching.

Examples of comments from those for whom 'issues related to the home-based co-ordinators role' were obstacles:

"The fact that as coordinator I do [not] spend at least 50% teaching children."

"The definition of what is seen as teaching/not teaching by co-ordinators"

"We need recognition of our hours as co-ordinator."

"As a co-ordinator I am not considered to have child contact hours."

*Respondent characteristics do not affect barriers detailed*

There was no difference in the barriers mentioned when we look at responses to this question by ethnicity, age and type of service.

## **Appendix One**

### **About the survey**

The ECE Teacher-led Workforce survey was carried out in August 2003. 9,725 members of the workforce responded from Education and Care services, Kindergartens, Home-based services<sup>5</sup> and the Correspondence School. In all, 87% of services engaged in the survey by returning at least one questionnaire<sup>6</sup>.

### **Interpreting the survey results**

The ECE Teacher-led Workforce survey data is a sample of all ECE teachers. Therefore an element of error is associated with the results. Overall, due to the large response rate for the survey, the sampling error for the survey is  $\pm 1\%$  (95% significance level). However this will vary between questions as the number of teachers responding to particular question varies.

When the workforce survey data is compared with the 2003 annual return carried out 6 weeks earlier it is seen that persons responsible, qualified teachers and teachers in training are over-represented in the survey data. Results that consider persons responsible versus all staff, qualified versus unqualified staff or information about teachers in training compared to all teachers will need to be interpreted with these biases in mind. In addition not all staff from a service may have completed the survey, therefore results that are reported on a 'per service' will need to be treated with caution.

The analysis in the paper excludes people who did not respond to the questions being analysed. When one question is considered, people who did not answer that question will be excluded. When two questions are combined, people who did not answer either question will be excluded. Therefore the population of survey respondents will differ between pieces of analysis.

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<sup>5</sup> Only Home-based co-ordinators were surveyed

<sup>6</sup>Source: ECE Teacher-led Workforce Survey 2003: November 2003. Kathleen Murrow, Katrina Fryer & Emanuel Kalafatelis. BRC Marketing & Social Research.

## Appendix Two

Listed below are the questions from the workforce survey which are the focus of this paper. The questions were asked of some or all Education and Care teachers and Home-based co-ordinators. Please refer to the population sections of this paper to find out which parts of this group were asked any one question.

In your opinion, are there any advantages in having a recognised ECE qualification? **(Tick one.)**

Yes, there are advantages .....  <sub>1</sub>

No, there are no advantages .....  <sub>2</sub> **(If no, please go to QXX)**

What do you believe are the main advantages of having a recognised ECE qualification?

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What obstacles, if any, do you face in obtaining a recognised ECE qualification (e.g. financial obstacles, obstacles relating to your workplace or to the programmes offered by particular education providers)?

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In your opinion, are there any advantages in becoming registered to teach in early childhood education? **(Tick one.)**

Yes, there are advantages .....  <sub>1</sub>

No, there are no advantages .....  <sub>2</sub> **(If no, please go to QXY)**

What do you believe are the main advantages of becoming registered to teach in early childhood education?

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What, if any, obstacles do you face in becoming fully registered?

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