



# **Understanding how we grow the young Community Learning and Development workforce**



**A dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of MEd in Community Learning  
and Development at the School of Education, University of  
Aberdeen**



**by**

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## Disclaimer



'I declare that this dissertation has been composed by myself, that it has not been accepted in any previous application for a degree, that the work of which it is a record has been done by myself, and that all quotations have been distinguished appropriately and the source of information specifically acknowledged.'

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## Abstract



The Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland in partnership with Education Scotland published the Working with Scotland's Communities 2018 report (Rocket Science). The report presented the findings that "there is an ageing Community Learning and Development workforce with around 25% intending to retire or leave the profession in the next two to five years" and that "less than 15% of the workforce is under 35 with more than 45% over 50 years old".

Building upon the findings of the above report, this study examines the factors which lead young people, under the age of 35, to a career in Community Learning and Development. This study uses semi-structured interviews with four undergraduate CLD students to gather the data. There was an intention also to carry out an online survey with young people aged 14 to 25 to determine the levels of awareness of CLD amongst this age group. However, this was not possible due to the onset of COVID-19.

The findings demonstrated low levels of awareness of CLD as a profession amongst young people and those that play an influencing role in their career decision-making processes. There is also a suggestion that CLD students are concerned about the degree of job security a career in this profession brings.

The study concludes that it would be useful to develop a communications strategy to raise awareness of the CLD profession accompanied with a suggestion that CLD students build their career resilience during their studies to prepare for professional life.



## Keywords



1. Community Learning and Development
2. Influencing factors on career decisions
3. Young People
4. Youth Work
5. Adult Learning
6. Community Development

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

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AE	Area of Enquiry
CBE	Commander of the Order of the British Empire
CeVe	Community Education Validation and Endorsement
CIAG	Careers, information, advice and guidance
CLD	Community Learning and Development
CLDSC	Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland
COS	Charity Organisation Society
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DYW	Developing the Young Workforce
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
HNC	Higher National Certificate
MSYP	Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
S4	Secondary 4
S5/6	Secondary 5 and 6
SCDC	Scottish Community Development Centre
SLTG	Short Life Task Group

STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
SYP	Scottish Youth Parliament
UN	United Nations
WALT	Working and Learning Together
WEA	Workers' Educational Association
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association



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# 1. Introduction and context

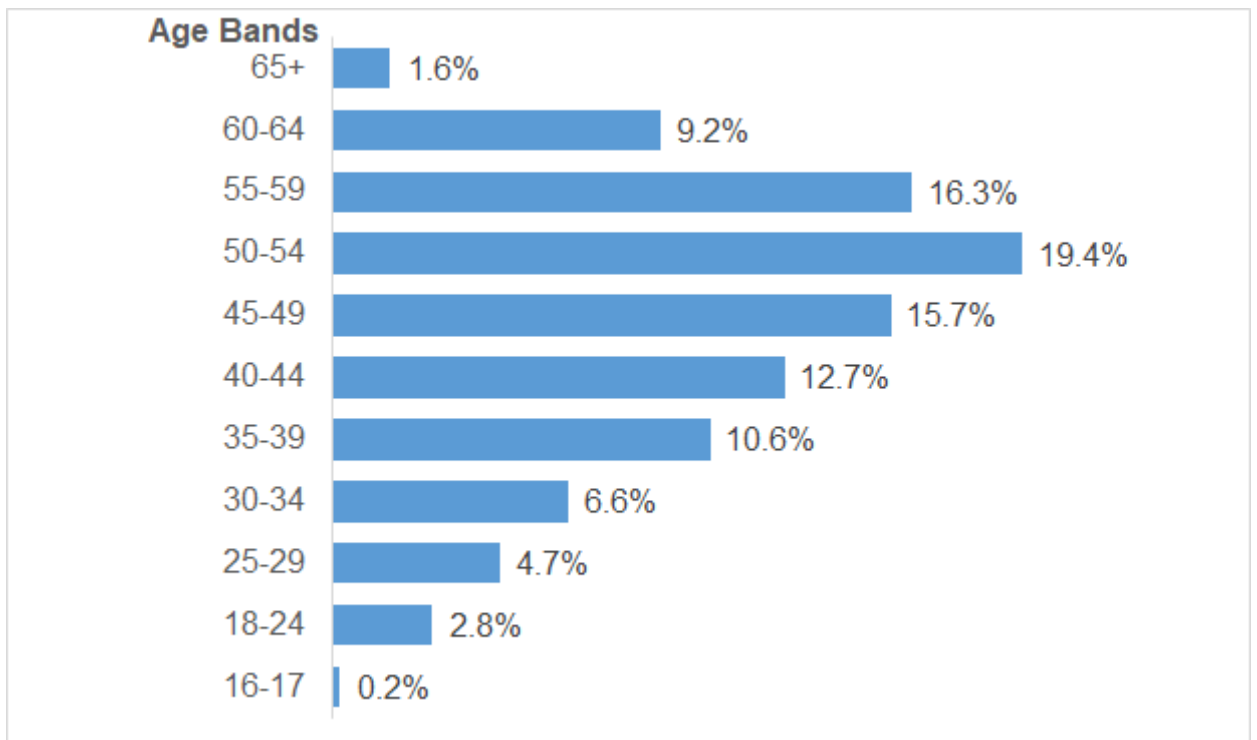
Given the rising concern with the decrease in the number of young people (those under the age of 35) entering the Community Learning and Development (CLD) undergraduate degree and the significant number of those who intend to leave or retire from the profession, this work-based research project sought to identify the influencing factors, which lead to a career in CLD. Also, whether that knowledge would lead to an understanding of how to grow the young CLD workforce in Scotland, this thesis reports the findings from online semi-structured interviews with four undergraduate degree students studying in Scotland.

## 1.1 Background

In 2019, the Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland (CLDSC) in partnership with Education Scotland published the Working with Scotland's Communities 2018 report (Rocket Science). Along with the 12 key findings, the report identified three areas requiring further study. These were:

- Understanding how to grow the young Community Learning and Development workforce
- Understanding how to increase the ethnic diversity of the Community Learning and Development workforce
- Understanding the role of volunteers in the Community Learning and Development sector

In reading the report, a critical finding that stood out was that, as shown in figure 1, "There is an ageing Community Learning and Development workforce with around 25% intending to retire or leave the profession in the next two to five years". Furthering this concern "Less than 15% of the workforce is under 35 with more than 45% over 50 years old".



**Figure 1 - Age profile of CLD workforce (based on 963 survey participants)**

As someone who feels very passionately about the CLD profession and as one who has spent a large part of their career building the capacity of new staff and volunteers in this sector, I am concerned that it appears we are a shrinking profession. I feel this concern raises several questions, the first one being, why are young people not choosing CLD as a career?

In addition to the concern raised by the data presented in the Working with Scotland's Communities 2018 report (Rocket Science), I was drawn to this area of research as a result of my own experience entering into the CLD profession. Those adults who played an influencing role during my secondary school years made significant decisions and determined for themselves the career path I should follow based solely on my skillset rather than my aspirations. Leading me to into a course in Accountancy that I neither enjoyed nor was successful at and resulted in my "dropping out" at the end of the first year to begin the career



path I wished to follow. As a part of this study, I want to explore the influence of those involved in young people's career decision-making processes.

While there has been some investigation into the pathways into CLD (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2014 and 2020), there is limited research looking at the influencing factors. This research project, therefore, contributes towards addressing that gap.

## **1.2 Context: Community Learning and Development**

The act of defining CLD is not without its challenges. Is it a profession, approach or both? Who determines who a CLD practitioner is and who is not.

In setting out the Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships (2012, p.4), Scottish Government defined CLD as an approach that “should empower people, individually and collectively, to make positive changes in their lives and their communities, through learning”.

The guidance also states that all partners “should aim to deliver Community Learning and Development outcomes through:

- community development (building the capacity of communities to meet their own needs, engaging with and influencing decision-makers)
- youth work, family learning and other early intervention work with children, young people and families
- community-based adult learning, including adult literacies and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- volunteer development
- learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the community, for example, people with disabilities, care, leavers or offenders,
- learning support and guidance in the community”.





Therefore, those who take this approach are often described as CLD practitioners. However, the discourse around profession vs approach is a long-standing one across the CLD sector (Mackie et al., 2013). With a multitude of factors determining how someone identifies themselves professionally, whether it is by their job title, approach, sector and/or qualification. The workforce survey from which this study stems, did not discriminate based on someone's professional identity. However, it should be acknowledged that 70% of the practitioners who responded were from the Public sector.

### **1.3 Policy context**

#### **1.3.1 Career decisions**

For young people in Scotland, there are three significant transitional decision-making points for career choices during secondary school, S2 when choosing subjects for National 4 or National 5 qualifications, S4 for making post 16 decisions and S5/6 for deciding what to do once they leave formal education (Skills Development Scotland, 2019). For many, making that initial decision at the age of 12 or 13 may seem like a daunting and often impossible task, with significant consequences for their future if they choose the wrong path early on (Iannelli, 2013). The starting point is usually to look at the careers of those in their family (Bregman and Killen, 1999; Lobermand and Tziner, 2011), speaking with teachers/careers advisors (Foskett et al., 2008; Haynes et al., 2013) or using a website like My World of Work to match their skills and interests to different professions (Blenkinsop et al., 2006).

The role of power (Jones et al., 2006, p.375) and influence from adults on young people continue throughout the transitional stages. In addition to the career choices of those adults, other factors such as financial gain and job security will play a role. CLD is not known to be a profession that will make you 'rich' with the average salary for a Community Worker being £28,080 (Skills



Development Scotland, 2019). Also, with the shift towards the majority of the CLD workforce, both paid and unpaid, being employed in the grant-funded third sector (Rocket Science, 2018, p.20), a career which is seen as 'secure'.

That is not to say that there have not been significant shifts over the last few years, in empowering young people to make their own decisions. Listening to the voice of the learner (Education Scotland, 2015, p.68) and the right to have a say in decisions that affect you (UN, 1989, p.4) are strongly encouraged and supported.

For those that do choose to follow a career into CLD, the pathway on offer takes a flexible approach, with several entry points available (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2014). The question still stands, though, what is the influencing factor that leads to that decision?

### 1.3.2 Community Learning and Development – Historical context

The establishment of CLD as a term stems from a convergence of the three strands of practice: youth work; adult learning; and community development. They joined together under the umbrella title of Community Education (Scottish Executive Education Department, 1975), evolving into CLD in a statement published by the Scottish Executive in 2002.

However, the history of the three strands goes back much further than this.

## **Origins of Youth Work**

The origins of youth work policy and practice can be traced back as early as the 1800s (Smith, 1998). Its emergence from the early stages of the industrial revolution was as a result of the rising concern for the number of young people living in extreme poverty (Malone, 2002). The introduction of the Factory Act (1833) aimed to improve the conditions for children and young people working in factories. However, this did not prevent the mistreatment of children and



young people in the workplace but would provide the basis for several significant changes throughout the 19th century. Around this time George Williams would go on to found the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in London. The first of many youth groups established by Christian organisations.

In comparing the values underpinning youth work practice then and now Smith argues that:

*“Sponsors of early clubs and youth provision recognised that if they were to safeguard the values and institutions they themselves believed in, then young people would have to be socialised into seeing the world as they did.” (1988, p.13)*

Whereas now the current practice is underpinned by three features:

- *“Young people choose to participate*
- *The work builds from where young people are and*
- *The young person and the youth worker are partners in the learning process” (YouthLink Scotland, 2009)*

## **Origins of Adult Learning**

Like Youth Work, the role of Class, Christian groups and the rise of the Industrial Revolution play a significant part in the origins of Adult Learning, stemming from two competing 'radical' and 'respectable' traditions (Bryant, 1984; Tett, 2010).

Bryant described the 'respectable' tradition as being the 'moral improvement' of the lower classes by those in a more affluent position (1984, p.5-7).

The influence of religious groups on adult learning stems from the ideals of:



*“thrift, discipline and self-improvement associated with these religious beliefs generated a culture that supported education as a means of acquiring both spiritual salvation and material advancement – along with a wider appreciation of culture and the arts.”* (Crowther and Martin, 2010, p.1)

The formation of the ‘respectable tradition’ of adult learning can also trace its roots back to Scotland, with the development of the ‘Institute for the Formation of Character’ in 1816 by Robert Owen, the owner of the New Lanark Mills. Rising from the need for a skilled but also compliant workforce with an acknowledgement that the children of employees are the future workforce, Owen set about establishing an institutional structure for all members of the local community. The aim was to develop “good personal character” and “reform vicious habits” (Donnachie, 2003)

In contrast, the ‘radical tradition’ had been born as a result of a rise in socialist beliefs amongst the working-class during the first half of the twentieth century. Their view was that by increasing their knowledge and understanding of the environment in which they live, they would be able to develop an understanding of how to change it (Johnson, 1988).

Competing agendas within the ‘radical’ movement both sought to increase workers awareness of “social and political” affairs (Bryant, 1984, p.10). Socialist educators, such as John MacLean, aimed to educate and empower working-class leaders in preparation for the role they would play in the ‘anticipated political revolution’ (Crowther and Martin, 2010). Whereas, the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA), adopted a more “personal enrichment ideology” (Tett, 2010, p.20).

Both traditions would evolve and intersect over time as a result of societal and political changes and the influence of Paulo Freire in the 1970s (Kirkwood and Kirkwood, 1989).



In the current Adult Learning context, the social practice model is in use in a variety of settings. It acknowledges that learning is a two-way process between both the facilitator and the learner. As with the values underpinning youth work, adult learning builds upon previous experiences and needs of the learner (adult learning statement of ambition).

*“Rarely does Adult Learning occur “in splendid isolation from the world in which the learner lives, but that it is intimately related to that world as affected by it“ (Jarvis, 1987)*

## **Origins of Community Development**

Of the three strands of CLD, Community Development is perhaps the newest area of practice in Scotland. Like Youth Work and Adult Learning, the roots of Community Development can be traced back to the late nineteenth century, with a focus on working with the poor. The Charity Organisation Society (COS), was established in 1869 (Leat, 1975), to co-ordinate philanthropic efforts to help the poor. They identified two areas as requiring urgent attention:

*“that self-respecting families who were struggling to keep themselves from destitution should be helped and encouraged, and that charities should be organised and coordinated, so that the best use could be made of resources” (Roof 1972).*

Not only has the establishment of the COS influenced Community Development, but it has also had a significant influence on the neighbouring profession of social work (Smith, 2002).

The history of Community Development can also be located within British colonialism (Mayo (1975, p.130). This rose out of a need for social and economic development to meet the new political and social expectations of the



working classes (Shaw, 2003, p.13). At this time, the British Colonial Office (1958, p.2) defined Community Development as:

*“active participation, and if possible on the initiative of the community, but if this initiative is not forthcoming spontaneously, by the use of techniques for arousing and stimulating it in order to achieve its active and enthusiastic response to the movement.”*

However, the attempts to mould society into a specific way of thinking and behaving would give rise to resistance as well as compliance. As David Jones argued:

*“While from one side community work is concerned with the encouragement of local initiative and local decision making, from the other, it is a means of implementing and expediting national policies at the local level”.* (Jones, 1981, p.7)

The discourse in Community Development, as identified by Jones, is one which continues into current practice. The restructuring of the welfare state in the UK (Steiner and Farmer, 2018) and the move towards shifting power from government to communities, as set out in the Christie Commission (2011) and the resulting Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, some have argued that this state-led model of community empowerment is designed to:

*“conceal the withdrawal of state from its duties, resulting in evermore vulnerability in communities that are less engaged with civic activity”* (Bock, 2016)

In response to the publication of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, organisations such as the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) have highlighted the importance of this legislation. When considered alongside the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 and the



Regulations for Community Learning and Development (2013), they commented that:

*“There appears to be unprecedented opportunities to position community participation more sustainably in a very wide range of local initiatives and plans”* (SCDC, 2015).

However, they also gave a note of caution that legislation is “not a substitute for other forms of social organisation”.

### 1.3.3 Community Learning and Development – Current context

The influence of policy and legislation on the profession of CLD is not limited to the three strands. Through the establishment of the Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, and the introduction of Scottish Legislation (Scottish Government 2012, 2013 and 2015), there is growing recognition of the importance of CLD in its ability to empower individuals and Communities. However, that recognition is not necessarily as strong as it could be, with education authorities only required to:

*“initiate and, having done so, maintain and facilitate a process by which Community Learning and Development (is) secured”.*

Even with the regulations in place, CLD, as a profession, is undergoing a period of considerable change. Local authority CLD services are reducing (Education Scotland, 2019) the majority of CLD professionals work in the third sector, where there is less of a demand for the degree qualification (Rocket Science, 2018, p.43), and the number of approved CLD degree programmes has diminished (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2020, p.8).

Historically, Local Authorities, required all of their CLD workers to hold a CLD degree, often providing financial support, for those unqualified staff to undertake



the degree while working. However, with little to no training budget and fewer young people entering the degree programme, Local Authorities are shifting towards CLD degree or equivalent, often accompanied by a caveat that new members of staff register with the CLDSC. Thus ensuring non-CLD qualified staff are committed to the values and ethics of CLD practice.

Where employers now give other qualifications recognition as leading to a similar skill set, have the reasons for undertaking a CLD qualification changed? Previously those who studied CLD qualifications were community activists looking to increase their skills and empower others to make a change. Often meaning they began the degree later in life. As has been shown with the recent climate strikes in Scotland and across the world, the number of young people becoming community activists is increasing (Fisher, 2019)? Would young people in 2019 see the CLD degree as a way of continuing this activism in the same way as previous generations have, or are they looking at other courses of study/careers such as politics?

#### 1.3.4 Community Learning and Development – Professional Context

A further area of discourse which has continued for several years through the development of the profession is the debate around CLD versus Community Education.

Historically this debate would have stemmed from the age of the practitioner and when they began their career (pre or post establishment of the CLDSC/publication of the Working and Learning together to build stronger communities (WALT) report (Scottish Executive, 2004).

However, this debate has never seemed to find a resolution. With degree programmes returning to using the title of Community Education, it is a debate that is finding a new audience with recent graduates to the profession finding it a challenge to identify who they are as a professional. See for example the list





of initially titled undergraduate courses provided in the career pathways report (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland 2020 p.23) and the updated course title to Community Education on the University of Dundee and the University of West of Scotland websites. In contrary to this approach, which would have created consistency across the courses, the University of Edinburgh has chosen to change the title of their relaunched undergraduate programme from Community Education to Learning in Communities.

The change from Community Education to CLD, in the early 2000s, was an attempt to move thinking about the profession away from it being seen as a service or practice to a priority (Mackie et al., 2013). The change also attempted to re-focus the work away from being delivered in local authority third sector silos, to one which was produced in partnership not only across sectors but also the three strands. An area which would be would be re-visited, with the introduction of the Regulations for Community Learning and Development (2013) and in the accompanying guidance for Community Planning Partnerships (Scottish Government, 2012).

While this renaming and re-focus of CLD have been relatively successful, the discourse persists. The reasons for which will vary from person to person. The related discourse around approach vs profession, an area which will be explored in the literature review and the inconsistency in job titles across the sector, are just two areas that may be contributing factors to its continuation.

#### **1.4 Summary**

Through my research, I aim to develop an understanding of how we grow the young CLD workforce by exploring the influencing factors, which lead to a career in CLD. I hope to inform my practice and that of others both locally and nationally who support young people to make career decisions, in particular those that lead to a career in CLD. I also hope to inform the work of the



Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, by recommending approaches which could be implemented to increase awareness of CLD as a profession amongst young people.



## 2. Literature Review



This literature review will set the context of this work-based research project, through an exploration of current policy and academic discourse related to the influencing factors of young people's career choices concerning CLD.

The review will focus on:

- Scottish policy context
- Community Learning and Development - approach vs profession
- The changing nature of the economy and work
- Career motivation theory
- Influencing factors on young people's career choices
- Relational influence on career choices
- Secondary school subject choices
- What we can learn from other professions

### 2.1 Scottish Policy context

Since the publication of Empowered to Practice in 2003 (Scottish Executive), the policy landscape concerning CLD has seen several considerable shifts that aimed to strengthen the profession and solidify its identity. In 2007, a short life task group published their report Strengthening Standards: Improving the Quality of Community Learning and Development Service Delivery (Scottish Executive, 2006, p.6). The main conclusion being that:

*“establishing a professional body for the Community Learning and Development sector would meet pressing public policy needs and make an essential contribution to building key assets for Scotland”.*

As a result of which, the CLDSC was set up and began operating fully in 2008.

As the work of the CLDSC began to grow and develop, the next few years saw the publication of several strategic documents relating to specific strands of CLD (youth work; adult learning; and community development). These included the; Adult Literacies in Scotland 2020 (Scottish Government, 2011), the Statement of Ambition for Adult Learning (Scottish Government/Education Scotland, 2014), Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland – National Youth Work Strategy, 2014-2019 (Scottish Government, 2014) and Welcoming Our Learners: Scotland’s ESOL Strategy 2015-2020 (Education Scotland, 2015).

However, the most significant change came in 2012 and 2013, with the publication of the Strategic Guidance for Community Planning partnerships: Community Learning and Development (Scottish Government, 2012), followed by the enactment of the Scottish Statutory Instrument: The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013. These changes aimed to give CLD a statutory footing, requiring education authorities to:

*“initiate and, having done so, maintain and facilitate a process by which Community Learning and Development (is) secured”.*

By establishing a legislative basis for CLD, it was highlighting to practitioners that the sector was being recognised and valued for the work that they undertake with individuals and communities. However, as with all national policy initiatives and legislation, it is public bodies who tend to carry the duty to implement the requirements.

It is at this stage that the strengthening of the political landscape and the experience of the CLD workforce begins to diverge. By reviewing existing CLD workforce surveys (Learning Connections, 2007, Lifelong Learning UK, 2008 and 2010, Education Scotland, 2015 and Rocket Science, 2019), the Aspect review which was undertaken by Education Scotland in 2017 and Planning for



Change (Education Scotland, 2019): through a comparative lens, a different story begins to emerge.

Budgets are being stretched by local authorities as far as they can, local authority CLD provision is being commissioned out to third sector partners and the number of CLD qualified staff reducing. Not the growing and sustainable workforce, I am sure many envisaged when CLD became a statutory duty for local authorities.

However, that is not to say that this would be a negative point for young people (those under the age of 35) entering the profession. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the nature of the economy and work has changed. If perceptions of the labour market are formed by experience (Jackson and Wilton, 2017), then having grown up during a global financial crisis in 2008, the uncertainty stemming from the UK's decision to leave the European Union in 2016 and the current COVID-19 pandemic, is the concept of a 'job for life' or "proper job" (Ferguson, 2018, p.2) one which young people associate with? This study can highlight the context in which new practitioners are entering the workforce and how their perceptions and experiences can help the profession plan for the future.

## **2.2 Community Learning and Development – Approach vs Profession**

The purpose of CLD as an approach has been described as one which:

*“empowers people, individually and collectively, to make positive changes in their lives and in their communities, through learning”* (Scottish Government, 2012).

A definition, in which the central ethos, has not changed much over time (Scottish Executive Education Department, (1975 and 1999) and (Scottish



Executive, 2004), albeit some of these definitions under the previous label of Community Education.

The main shift that has taken place within CLD since the Osler report in 2004 is the move towards being seen as a profession and not just an umbrella definition under which, youth work, adult education, community capacity building and community development practice sits (Scottish Executive, 2006). As highlighted by Mackie et al. (2013), the reason for this shift in discourse is not provided for in the Milburn Report (Scottish Executive, 2006). In addressing the recommendations of the Milburn report, Mackie et al. (2013) do raise a concern around the establishment of a professional body with a registration function. They question whether this will create a divide between who is and is not identified as a CLD practitioner, thus providing confusion over what CLD is. Is it a profession, an approach, or is it/can it be both?. This opinion contradicts the Working and Learning Together Report (Scottish Executive, 2004), where practitioners (qualified/unqualified and paid/unpaid) from across the sector were encouraged to group under the banner of CLD and work towards a common goal.

Since the establishment of the CLDSC in 2008, the profession versus approach debate has continued and from my experience, due to the implementation of the Strategic Guidance (Scottish Government 2012) and the Regulations on Community Learning and Development from Scottish Government (2013), has gathered some momentum. Where previously third Sector and Public Sector CLD provision operated separately, through funding agreements or informal partnerships, legislation is now requiring the two sectors to come together and develop needs-based CLD plans. The immediate issue raised when this work began was that not all third sector “CLD” organisations see themselves as such. However, when delving into the ethos and approaches taken to practice in these organisations, the universal themes of empowerment, social change, and working with individuals and communities is at the forefront.



### 2.3 The changing nature of the economy and work

An area that does need to be acknowledged is that the changing and unstable nature of the economic and work environment in Scotland is not unique to CLD or our country (Nabarro and Schulz, 2019). Many professions have indeed had to adapt to the introduction of automated systems and machines; however, technology has created more jobs than it has displaced (Frey and Rahbari, 2016).

This study will not seek to establish whether machines or automated systems could replace human practitioners. Still, the digital environment and considering what it means to live and work in the 2020 economy will play a considerable role in how we adapt as a profession and possibly reframe what a CLD career will look like over the next 10 to 20 years.

Working in a digital environment, albeit relatively new, is an area that CLD practitioners are beginning to and as a result of COVID-19 have somewhat been forced to embrace. For example, through the Digitally Agile (YouthLink Scotland, 2014) project and resulting national principles, one of the key areas is for:

*“Our practice to be supported and enhanced through the effective use of digital technology and Social media”.*

There is no question the Coronavirus has resulted in devastation across the world. However, it is the flexibility, adaptability and willingness of CLD practitioners to embrace change that has meant learning with communities has continued but in an online environment through platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams etc.

In a landscape of accelerating change, where does the role of a CLD practitioner fit into that economy? In the World Bank report, The Changing



Nature of Work (Stromquist, 2019), they found that one of the key areas that require investment to ensure society can keep up with the pace of change is human capital. Where human capital is defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), p.9) as:

*“the knowledge, skills, competences and other attributes embodied in individuals that are relevant to economic activity.”*

It is clear CLD workers have a role to play in developing human capital in individuals and communities, through literacy and numeracy groups and alternative curriculums for young people not achieving in the formal education system. However, we also can build social capital in the individuals and communities that we work with. It is through the interrelatedness of the capitals, and our ability to develop them, that may help us to market and promote our role in societal and economic change. Building on the work of Bourdieu (1986) and Lin (2002), Stanton-Salazar (2011) identifies this as CLD workers fulfilling the role of both Institutional agent (2011, p.1078), someone who:

*“mobilises or directly provides resources and support to a student or youth that significantly enables the latter to effectively navigate and exert control over the principal environments within which he or she is embedded”.* (Garcia Coll et al., 1996, cited in Stanton-Salazar, 2011, Chapters 3 & 4).

and empowerment agents(2011, p.1090) who:

*“enable low-status individuals to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them, to develop an awareness of what resources are necessary and how to acquire them in order to gain greater mastery over their lives and destinies”.* (Zimmerman, 1995, p. 583, cited in Stanton-Salazar 2011, p.1091).





Human capital theory, therefore, suggests that if education increases the productivity and earnings of individuals; education should be seen as an investment (Becker, 1964; Bowman, 1969). Such a theory would suggest that if CLD fulfils an essential role in developing human capital as well as social and cultural capital, investing in its implementation would be of economic benefit.

## **2.4 Career motivation theory**

In developing our understanding of how to grow the young CLD workforce, we have first to identify the motivating factors involved in career decisions.

Manuel London defines career motivation “as a multidimensional construct internal to the individual and influenced by the situation” (London, 1983; London & Noe, 1997). He determined, along with the expansion by Noe et al. (1990, p.341) that it consisted of three domains; career resilience (maintenance component), career insight (arousal component) and career identity (directional component).

Career resilience is defined as “the ability to adapt to changing circumstances, even when the circumstances are discouraging or disruptive” (London & Noe, 1997, p. 62; Grzeda & Prince, 1997; Noe et al. 1990). Secondly, career insight is “the ability to be realistic about oneself and one’s career and to put these perceptions to use in establishing goals” (London & Noe, 1997, p. 62). Finally, Career identity, “the extent to which one defines oneself by work” (London & Noe, 1997, p. 62). Lopes (2006) would go on to determine that even though the main focus of the initial research was on employees, it can also be applied to students.

In applying London’s theory to University students, research has shown that career motivation prepares them for making decisions, seeking out jobs and supports course completion (Lee & Choi, 2015).



Consideration of how career motivation theory would apply to secondary school pupils in Scotland, particularly in the uncertain economic climate as described previously, would suggest that supporting young people to increase their resilience, both personal and career, will prepare them for an uncertain employment situation (London & Bray, 1984; Noe et al., 1990; London & Noe, 1997).

## **2.5 Influencing factors on young people's career choices**

A number of studies have been undertaken to explore the influencing factors on young people's career choices, particularly in relation to Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). This research suggests that like career resilience (London, 1983), career aspirations begin to solidify as early as 13 years old (Tai et al., 2006; Schoon et al., 2007). Where this has begun to happen, the age at which subject choices are made is highly appropriate. However, it does highlight the need for young people to be exposed to a wide range of career paths at a very young age for them to make an informed decision this early on.

Much of the research undertaken into educational decision-making in young people explored structural influencing factors such as class, gender and race (Shavit et al. 2007; France 2007; Furlong and Cartmel 2007). With Social reproduction theorists, such as Bourdieu (1986) commenting on how young people's decision making and eventual career destinations are a reflection of their social class and the varying levels of social, cultural and economic capital that they hold. Payne (2003) also considered young people's sense of agency; however, further studies have shown that there is not one individual factor that influences young people's decision making.

Other factors such as the role of parents, careers advisors, teachers (Borycki and Samuel, 2001), subject availability (Woods, 1976; Jin et al., 2011, p. 63), family and friends (Taylor, 1992, p.325-326) play a vital role in providing young



people with access to the information they require regarding jobs and careers (Haynes et al., 2013).

As identified by Amundson (1995) and Borgen (1997) career decisions and personal issues are indivisible, therefore careers guidance, information and advice should not focus necessarily on one specific influencing factor but take a holistic approach (Amundson et al., 2010) to support young people to make decisions.

## **2.6 Relational influence on career choices**

As discussed earlier in this chapter, relational influences are an important contributing factor in young people's decision making processes. A study by Schultheiss et al (2001), which built upon existing theory on relational influences (Bowlby, 1982; Cutrona, 1996) found that the support provided by parents and siblings was one of the most prominent factors in this area.

The role parents play in a young person's career decision-making is an important one. Parents have reported the desire to remain neutral during this process (Taylor et al., 2004). However, research has shown that parental influence can be greater than that of teachers (Kniveton, 2004; Rodrigues et al., 2011)

In returning to Bourdieu's (1986) comments on decisions reflecting the different types of capital a young person holds, the role of the parent will play an important contributing factor in this. As gatekeepers to information and networks (Furlong, 2005; Foskett et al., 2008); their ability to provide young people with opportunities and access to new experiences depending on financial circumstances (Haynes et al. 2005) and they themselves as role models (Buikstra et al. 2007).



It is this reason that it is important for young people to be exposed to a variety of careers advice and to broaden their understanding of the employment opportunities available to them regardless of socio-economic background.

## **2.7 Secondary School Subject choices**

The consequences of choosing subjects in secondary school can have a significant effect on a young person's academic future and career pathway (Iannelli, 2013). With the options available being determined by what the school can provide (Jin et al., 2011), resulting in the breadth of career opportunity being restricted (McCrone et al., 2005).

A study by Anders et al. (2018), sought to explore the impact subject choice/availability had on 14 to 16-year-olds by assessing whether their decisions were determined by the school they attended. Much like previous research by Henderson et al. (2018), they found that young people's prior attainment, socio-economic background, and gender are all associated with the subjects they study at age 14–16.

The question arising from this finding is, does subject choice and availability create a barrier to young people undertaking a CLD degree qualification, particularly if they do not become aware of this career path until after these decisions are made? Having explored the main universities in Scotland offering a CLDSC approved undergraduate programme, the only subject requirement is English. As young people are encouraged to study this subject throughout secondary school, it would appear from these findings that subject choice is not necessarily an influencing factor or barrier to young people choosing a career in CLD.



## 2.8 What can we learn from other professions

In seeking to understand the possible factors that influence career choices, it is essential to look at the research undertaken in this area for similar “helping professions” (Graf et al., 2014, p.1) such as social work or teaching.

The establishment of social work in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century arose from a shift in beliefs that environmental factors may play an important role in people’s socio-economic status (Franklin, 1986). Early social workers, much like CLD practitioners, believed in the concept of social justice (Bogo et al., 1993; Falck, 1984; Perlman, 1974; Specht, 1991) where it refers to:

*“Social policies and other rights-based initiatives that protect vulnerable, disadvantaged groups of national or global society from oppression, discrimination and exclusion that support them materially” (Lorenz, 2014, p.14)*

Although the scope of social work has expanded over time, the original values, as well as beliefs, have remained at the core of their practice. Are these values what draw young people towards this career? If yes, and that it is the concept of social justice that is the influencing factor, could the problem of low numbers coming into CLD, be down to low levels of awareness of what it is that we do?

A study of new entrants onto undergraduate and postgraduate social work courses in Pittsburgh, Csikai and Rozensky (1997) identified two clear findings.

Finding 1 – Both undergraduate and postgraduate students who reported to having “high levels of social work idealism, tended to enter the profession for altruistic reasons”. However, postgraduate students, who on average were over the age of 30, “gave greater weight to professional concerns than to altruistic factors”.



Finding 2 – Students reported that having a positive experience with social workers, having come from a disadvantaged background or encouragement from friends and family to enter social work played a relatively unimportant role in their career decisions.

The study concluded that the desire to help others, advocate for social justice and develop their professional skills and knowledge were the key influencing factors for students choosing a career in social work.



### 3. Research Question

Findings from the literature review suggest that there are several factors which influence the future career decisions of young people. To explore this in-depth, in the context of CLD, interviews were undertaken with undergraduate degree students studying on CLDSC approved programmes in Scotland. The data analysis has been conducted to ascertain whether specific factors were influencing the decision making of those young people who choose to enter the CLD profession.

The research questions were defined as:

1. What factors influence young people to choose a career Community Learning and Development and
2. How does this further develop our understanding of how to grow the young Community Learning and Development workforce (those under the age of 35).

The following broad areas of enquiry provided a suitable response to the research question:

#### 3.1 Areas of Enquiry

1. Factors leading to the awareness of Community Learning and Development
2. Pathways into Community Learning and Development
3. Motivating/Influencing factors for becoming a Community Learning and Development practitioner
4. Influencing factors in deciding to undertake professional training
5. Perceptions of a career in Community Learning and Development
6. Challenges and opportunities of a career in Community Learning and Development

## 7. Methods of improving recruitment into Community Learning and Development

Responses to the areas of enquiry have provided insight into how we grow the young CLD workforce from young people at the beginning of their career. In turn, leading to the development of recommendations on how to increase awareness of CLD to young people in Scotland.





## 4. Research approach and methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

This work-based research project focuses primarily on the influencing factors, which lead to young people to choose a career in CLD in Scotland. The resulting knowledge gained in this study has the potential to inform the field of CLD as well as providing insight into our understanding of how to grow the young CLD workforce (those under the age of 35).

Given the constraints of COVID-19 on in-person contact, there was a need to conduct a study which focused on a small group of respondents who were able to take part in online interviews.

### 4.2 Methods

#### 4.2.1 Online survey (Appendix 2)

I designed the online survey to explore the areas of enquiry 1 and 7 – Factors leading to young people’s awareness of CLD. Young people, aged 14-25 years, who are Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament, were asked to describe their knowledge and understanding of CLD, what we could do better to promote CLD as a career path, where young people access careers information, what information they require when researching careers and which career they are currently thinking of going into.

#### ***Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP)***

SYP is Scotland’s democratically elected youth parliament, designed to give young people aged 14 to 25 a voice in local and national decision-making processes. Approximately 160 young people represent both the Scottish Parliament constituencies and national voluntary sector organisations.

#### 4.2.2 Semi-structured interviews with Undergraduate Community Learning and Development students

Semi-structured interviews were selected as the primary research method for this qualitative study. This method allows for flexibility in the structure of the session. It supports the collection of open-ended data, allowing participants to explore freely explore their thoughts, feelings and beliefs about their journey to and through the CLD profession (DeJonckheere and Caughn, 2009).

This method was selected to explore all areas of enquiry. An invitation to participate was distributed to students via the following approaches:

- through the course directors of Universities offering a CLDSC approved undergraduate course,
- through Twitter and
- through the CLDSC newsletter.

The interview took the form of a semi-structured interview online via Microsoft Teams, where the questions (Appendix 4) were pre-determined by the researcher. Participants were able to select the interview time, which best suited their availability. Initially, it was a condition of the study that participants should be at the end of the first or fourth year of the degree programme. However, someone at the end of the second year wished to participate, and due to the low numbers of self-selecting participants, it was believed this would be appropriate and would not interfere with the trustworthiness of the study.

All responses were digitally recorded on Microsoft Teams to allow the researcher to 'actively' listen to the participants and to transcribe the interviews in full. Participants were alerted as to when the recording was started and stopped. By utilising the Microsoft Teams platform, participants were able to see on their side of the call when the interview was being recorded. They were



given the opportunity before the recording started to ask any questions and to re-affirm their consent to participate.

The content of the questions sought to deepen the researcher's knowledge of journey's into CLD, influencing factors for choosing CLD as a career, and the perception and knowledge and understanding of CLD as a field and, a profession.

### **4.3 Data analysis**

#### 4.3.1 Online survey (Appendix 2)

Data analysis was not carried out for the online survey as there was no response from the target population. As identified by Van Selm and Jankowski (2006, p.436), online surveys are often utilised as a part of research when the target population has internet experience. In determining my initial approach to data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic, I identified young people as a group who are very experienced in their use of online tools and find this an attractive method of engagement and communication (Beebe et al., 1997, p.160).

When deciding upon an alternative approach to engaging with young people that did not involve going through schools, I was keen to ensure my approach would enable me to verify the age and location of the target population. Having previously held the role of support worker for MSYPs in the Scottish Borders, I was aware that they had a centralised means of communication that only they were able to access. However, I am also aware from experience that MSYPs do not always check their SYP email account. In addition to this, while communicating with potential interview participants, I learned that emails sent from my university account were going directly into the spam folder.

The ease at which online surveys can be accessed does not necessarily equate to a high response rate. When undertaking a systematic review of articles



published in 4 counselling journals, Poynton et al., (2019, p.33) found that the average response rate to online recruitment was 34.2%. In the case of my study, this would have produced a sampling size of approximately 54 young people. However, given the technical issues identified above, and those highlighted by Vehovar et al. (2002), even small errors in the recruitment protocol can reduce the response rate significantly.

This study also recognises, that during the current global pandemic, the majority of young people's communication has moved entirely online, including their formal education. As with adults, this is resulting in digital fatigue, "fatigue from constantly being required to be online and plugged in" (Alevizou, 2020, p.1). This was a consideration when deciding to take this approach, and whether it would be adding to overwhelming levels of information being circulated online. It is for this reason that the primary research method used in this study is semi-structured interviews, any data that may have been gathered from the surveys was to support rather than be the focus of the findings.

#### 4.3.2 Semi-structured interviews with Undergraduate Community Learning and Development students

The data collected throughout this research project was analysed using the Narrative Analytical approach (Bryman, 2012, p.582; Kim, 2016) to identify codes in the stories told by participants that relate to the areas of enquiry.

Bryman tells us that in Narrative Analysis "the focus of attention shifts from 'what actually happened?' to 'how do people make sense of what happened and to what effect?'"

Using the survey results and the interview transcripts, I colour coded repeated words, phrases or statements that I identified as important and/or evidenced my areas of enquiry. By utilising this approach, I was able to identify important



codes and categorise them. This approach allowed for connections between the categories to be identified (Löfgren, 2013).

#### **4.4 Sample**

There were two population groups targeted for this study :

Group one (survey group) consisted of 160 young people who were Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs). This group allowed for a diverse range of young people aged 14 to 25 from across all areas of Scotland. The young people were invited through the MSYP newsletter. In acknowledging the barriers to participation for young people in research (Powell and Smith, 2009), particularly during the COVID-19 lockdown, young people were able to take part through an online survey (Dix and Anderson, 2000). The main negative aspect of this approach was that it excluded those without digital access.

The young people would give their consent by beginning the survey after reading the participant information page (Appendix 2) and then again when they submitted the questionnaire.

Group two (Online interviews) consisted of young people currently studying or about to graduate from a CLDSC approved undergraduate degree programme in Scotland. There was no age range set for the participants; however, those who self-selected were all under the age of 25 years.

The approach to sampling taken for group two was an attempt at gaining representation from a wide range of locations across Scotland and also different study routes. Similar barriers to participation in the study were in place for this group as was for the survey group. However, the quality of internet access was also a concern for the video recording of the interviews.



Four students volunteered to take part and gave both written and verbal consent for the use of the data gathered through the interviews to be used in this study. Participants were made aware throughout the process that participation in this research project was voluntary and that consent could be withdrawn at any point.

As this was an open invitation to any student that met the criteria, gender was not a limiting factor. All of the participants identified as female; it is acknowledged that this is not a representative sample of CLD practitioners in terms of gender. The Working with Scotland's Communities report (Rocket Science, 2018, p.6) determined that women make up 75% of the workforce.

#### **4.5 Limitations**

As a researcher, I quickly became aware that there were several limitations inherent in this study and that adaptations were required to undertake the data collection process during a global pandemic.

The first limitation and adaption for this study was the requirement to change the facilitation of the interviews from in-person to online. One of the mitigating, health protection decisions taken by the Scottish Government was to impose a nationwide lockdown, which took effect shortly before the submission of the proposal for this study, this resulted in both the researcher and participants being prevented from travelling and meeting in-person. Due to the university providing access to Microsoft Teams, I was able to make adjustments and conduct the interviews online. In hindsight, this was a beneficial consequence of the situation. I was able to offer participants a broader range of interview times, remove travel as a cost and time factor and reduce concerns over the suitability of the recording equipment.

The second concern was that there is only one source of data. No data was gathered from the online survey. As a result of the pandemic, the target



population for the online survey had to be changed from school pupils to Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament. Unfortunately, due to a range of factors, no young people completed the survey.

The original plan for recruitment was to invite S5 and S6 pupils from secondary schools in one local authority area. However, after having spoken with contacts in the identified areas, it was decided that at this time that would not be appropriate, and staff would not have the capacity to facilitate the distribution of the survey. The Scottish Youth Parliament was selected as it would provide the representative target age range. In recruiting participants from SYP, I had to acknowledge that the young people may have a broader awareness of CLD, due to their support workers being employed/volunteering as CLD practitioners for local authorities or third sector organisations.

Gathering data from young people not currently studying CLD could have provided quantitative data on the awareness levels of CLD as a career and a different perspective on what could be done to attract young people to this profession.

The third concern was the low number of participants for the interview element of this study, which was limited to 4 students. As a result of such a small group, and all of the participants identifying as white and female, it is not possible to know if unique findings would emerge from other demographic groups. Any findings and conclusions drawn from the data collection cannot be applied to the entire population.

The fourth concern is the influence and potential bias of the researcher. I made every attempt to be cognisant of my biases throughout the research process. However, my experience and expectations may have some influence on the interpretation of my data.



A fifth concern is that interviews can be a limiting form of data collection as opinions can be influenced by others involved in the research process such as colleagues, lecturers, parents or myself as the researcher but also as a fellow CLD practitioner.

The sixth concern is that the results will require replication across further studies. Despite these limitations, the findings offer a more in-depth understanding of how to grow the young CLD workforce.

#### **4.6 Ethics**

All decisions made during this research project took into consideration the ethical guidelines as set out by the British Educational Research Association (2018). This research project was designed to meet the requirements of the University of Aberdeen, ethics approvals process and an application (Appendix 1) for ethical approval was submitted as part of the research proposal. An updated application for ethical approval was submitted when the decision to change the online survey target population was made.

Participants were informed of the purpose of the data collection, who it would be shared with as well as how it would be represented within the research. This was done through a participant information (Appendix 3) sheet (Appendix 2) in the online survey and through both written and verbal communication for the interview participants.

All of the information required to participate in the interviews was provided in advance. Participants were given time before the interview to ask questions and make an informed decision before giving consent. All interview participants gave written consent to participate in the study and were all over the age of 18. Throughout the process, participants were made explicitly aware that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time.





Data collected for this research project was done so and stored in accordance with the principles as set out in the General Data Protection Regulations (European Commission, 2016). All of the data collected remains the property of the participant and is used with their consent. To limit any risk to the participants, they are anonymised in this study and pseudonyms have been used. In the case of the online survey, participants were only required to provide their age and location.



## 5. Findings

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the main findings that emerged from the analysis of my interview recordings and transcripts. I have organised my findings according to the seven areas of enquiry. Due to the small number of research participants, the conclusions arrived at as part of this research cannot be applied to the general population and will serve to make initial recommendations with identified areas requiring further study. The quotes presented in this chapter are provided as examples of particular perspectives and issues.

### 5.2 Background to participants

Four participants, aged between 18 and 25 years, took part in this study. Each participant attends/attended a different University covering four out of the five, currently active, Scotland based, undergraduate CLDSC approved programmes. It should be noted, that as of 2021, there will only be four undergraduate CLDSC approved undergraduate programmes accepting students.

Participant No.	Stage of study completed	Higher Education Institution
1	First-year	1
2	Fourth Year	2
3	Second Year	3
4	Fourth Year	4

Table 1 - Background of participants

### 5.3 Area of enquiry 1 – Factors leading to the awareness of Community Learning and Development

During my research interviews, I not only asked the participants to describe how they became aware of CLD as a profession but also how knowledgeable they thought young people were of it; what is described by Gray (2009, p. 31) as 'perspective- or opinion-seeking' research.

In describing the methods by which they became aware of CLD, two distinct pairings emerged. Pairing one, were those practitioners who experienced CLD practice as a young person whether that be in school or the community, through local youth groups.

*"At school, when I worked with a Community Learning and Development worker that's when I became aware of what it was and started working with other people in the (area)" (Participant 1)*

The second pairing consisted of those practitioners who began a course of study in an associated "helping" profession (Graf et al., 2014, p.1) such as social care or psychology. They became aware of CLD midway through their original course of study via careers events and university clubs.

*"I had a passion for social justice and the desire to affect change from within...having considered dropping out, the university careers advisor suggested I complete an online quiz and one of the top 5 results was Community Education Officer, I had never heard of it before. After reading the description, I realised this ticks all the right boxes for me" (Participant 3)*

In following up, the question about their entry point into understanding CLD, with the question about the level of awareness amongst young people,



all four participants were in agreement that young people are not aware of CLD as a profession.

*"Not aware at all, not just young people, everyone" (Participant 2)*

#### **5.4 Area of enquiry 2 - Pathways into Community Learning and Development**

The pathway into CLD can vary widely; however, eventually, the paths will "substantively merge at degree level" (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2020, p.9). As, at present, this is the only method by which to gain recognition as a professionally qualified CLD practitioner.

The paths taken by the participants in this study mirror the method by which they became aware of CLD.

For those who became aware of it as a young person, through school, the community or family members, their path began by volunteering and undertaking part-time work as a youth worker. The influence of this introduction point appears to extend beyond the decision to apply to a CLD degree. Both participants in this group have also continued to work within the youth work strand, and foresee themselves working in it for some time after graduation. Another shared opinion within this pairing was that their age was an influencing factor in their decision to continue within youth work.

*"For now, it was definitely more youth work, but that is partly to do with my age. There is always that awkward power thing when going into the community and adult learning work when you are younger than they are. But that suits where I am in life." (Participant 4)*

For those that were not explicitly aware of CLD as a young person, they have come into the profession through further and higher education. Participant 2



undertook a course at college in health and social care, then working with communities and Participant 3 had just completed the second year of an undergraduate psychology degree.

The initial enquiry into how they entered the degree programme, was followed up with an exploration of why they chose the degree programme rather than developing their practice in the workplace.

The youngest participant in this study had an interesting perspective when answering this question. It is often thought that to enter the CLD programme; applicants should bring with them a wide range of practical experience. However, having gained some volunteering and youth leadership experience through school, Participant 1 felt it was essential to go to university to gain additional experience and knowledge of the theory behind CLD practice. They also identified their age as a reason why it would be better to go to university rather than directly into the workplace:

*"still being young, I don't think it would have been appropriate for me to go straight into the job at 17. I want to get more learning opportunities."* (Participant 1)

Establishing a theoretical basis to their practice served several purposes for the participants. One was to explain why CLD workers took the approach that they did, and another was to establish a parity of esteem with other professions, such as teaching and social work.

Further to this, participants also described the additional accreditation and/or work experience undertaken before entering CLD degree programme.

Participant 1 – Youth Achievement Awards, volunteering as a young leader and Year of Young People 2018 Ambassador

Participants 2 – HNC Working with Communities



Participant 3 – Psychology degree, volunteering in homeless charities, member of social justice and climate justice groups

Participant 4 – Employed as a youth worker.

In deciding which of the degree programmes to choose, factors included:

- ease of transfer from one degree to another,
- recognition of previous experience and qualifications,
- Staff and course description perceived as supportive of those who are less academic
- Staff with recent field experience
- Perception of the programme based on feedback from friends and family
- Option to defer entry to allow for a gap year
- A qualification recognised across the UK

The final factor, which every participant gave was the ability to gain as much practical work-based experience as possible.

### **5.5 Areas of enquiry 3 and 4 - Motivating/Influencing factors for becoming a Community Learning and Development practitioner and Influencing factors in deciding to undertake professional training**

The participants gave very animated responses to this question, showing the passion that they have for CLD as a profession, highlighting the benefit of carrying out the interviews using video conferencing software. A common factor across all four participants regardless of pathway or background was the desire to support individuals and communities to affect change. There was a strong desire to give back to society:



*"Its probably the volunteering experiences that I had and the experiences that impacted me from ... the Community Learning and Development workers that I worked with, I wasn't in the best place, and they changed it around, and I want to do the same for others" (Participant 1)*

*"During the first and second year of my psychology degree, I was volunteering and going to a social justice club. My desire was to get a job and work to affect change from within...., after going to the careers advisor, I found out about Community Education and felt this ticked all the boxes for me." (Participant 3)*

In describing the people that played a role in their decision-making process, Careers Advisors were only mentioned by the participant already studying on an undergraduate programme. Even when they attended the Careers service, it was only through completing an online quiz that CLD was brought to their attention as a possible career.

Further to this, the parental influence in career decisions was predominantly discussed by the participant who had a parent who was a CLD worker. Another participant highlighted parental influence; however, this was in relation to choosing whether to leave in the third or fourth year of the degree programme.

## **5.6 Area of enquiry 5 - Perceptions of a career in Community Learning and Development**

Participants were asked to describe their perceptions of a career in CLD from two points, one, remembering back to what they thought before they started the course and two from the point that they are at now, whether that be still studying or about to graduate.

A commonality across the four participants in this study is that they all entered the undergraduate course in the first year. A common perception at the start of



the course is that much of their work will be very practical, and unless they were able to get a job in a local authority will take place in the third sector and consist of temporary contracts.

For those exposed to CLD for some time before the course, there was a higher level of awareness of local authority CLD roles. However, they also knew that these posts were reducing in number.

*“I thought I knew that there would always be a job, if it wasn’t a council job, you would always be temporary depending on funding, but because I didn’t know what part of Community Learning and Development I wanted to join, I wasn’t aware of what it was like.” (Participant 2)*

In reflecting upon their perception of a CLD career now, having undertaken some degree study those participants who were about to graduate were deeply concerned about the availability of posts, particularly during the pandemic.

*“When I started, I had the vision that there would be lots of jobs in Community Learning and Development, but now that I have finished I can’t get a job. Yes, there are jobs out there, if I knew back at the start what I know now, I would have tried to gain more practical experience either through volunteering or a sessional post. Even with four years of studying and placements, no one is going to take me on because I don’t have enough experience.” (Participant 2)*

*“No idea at the moment. I am on a fixed-term contract on council funding; similarly as is often the case with charities to do with funding I don’t expect to be in the same organisation for my career. It is the nature of going into this sector; it is going to be a while before you have a completely permanent secure job because of everything going on.” – (Participant 4)*





It is unknown as to whether the level of exposure to CLD before the course results in any impact upon the scope of opportunities participants are aware of. However, Participant 3, who had the least amount of exposure to CLD, has the broadest view of where they see their CLD career progressing.

*“I don’t think its just charity work now even though that is still a part of it. I think I could work abroad, learning more about different cultures and how different places do community development. I imagine going into something to do with politics or business (social enterprises).” – Participant 3*

Participants were also asked to consider what they thought their career would look like in 5 – 10 years. In looking forward, there is a shared sense of uncertainty for some of the participants, not just because of the pandemic, but one they were already aware of and preparing for.

*“I think it (my career) will look a lot different to what it does now because we have to keep up to date with what’s going on in society and things like that.” – (Participant 1)*

*“I would like to jump from job to job and experience the three strands (youth work; adult learning; and community development) of Community Learning and Development. I would like to go into them all, but I don’t know where I would be because Community Learning and Development changes so much I don’t really know” – (Participant 2)*

## **5.7 Area of enquiry 6 - Challenges and opportunities of a career in Community Learning and Development**

During the interviews, participants were not asked explicitly about the challenges and opportunities they foresaw arising from a career in CLD. The



participants identified them when discussing what they thought their career would look like in 5 to 10 years time.

Two of the participants discussed the challenge and resulting issues of job titles in the CLD profession. Unlike teaching or social work, there is no set job title for CLD practitioners; these can vary from youth worker, community education officer or development officer. For the participants, they felt that this raised several issues, such as other professions not understanding what it is that we do, roles being incorrectly given the title of CLD worker or Youth Worker when the job description does not match our approach, not being seen as having parity of esteem with other professions and an undervaluing of our profession.

*“I am currently looking for Community Learning and Development posts and often come across ones with the title of Youth Worker, but when I read the job description, it’s a learning support, home school link worker or classroom assistant post. (Participant 4)*

A second challenge was one of job security. All of the participants expected to find themselves on temporary contracts and have a variety of different jobs throughout their career. Where there was once an understanding that a position within a local authority would result in a permanent contract, this is no longer a guarantee. When asked as to whether they thought they would always stay in CLD as a profession one participant said

*“The way I see Community Learning and Development going just now, no” (Participant 2)*

A second participant also was not sure if they would stay in CLD specifically but felt that our values and ethics would be useful in whatever career they chose.



However, it should be highlighted that participants did see having several jobs over one's career as a positive with participants valuing the experience and learning they would gain.

All of the participants found the placements and work-based routes as the best option for developing them as practitioners. Also, the diverse age range should be seen as a positive learning experience.

*“I like the fact the class age range is so big, I really liked learning about what they’ve done in their lives, what experience they are bringing to the course as well.” – (Participant 3)*

However, the younger participants in this study have raised the concern, that because they are under 25, they are being seen as young people on the course and not fellow trainee practitioners.

*“I know from my experience that the younger generation (on the course) are scared because they are classed as the young people. When we are talking about young people in class, they (the older students) always ask us for our opinions, and we don’t like giving them because we think they have more experience than us and know more than we do.” – (Participant 1)*

## **5.8 Area of enquiry 7 - Methods of improving recruitment into Community Learning and Development**

The primary focus for participants in answering the question of “What do you think we could do to encourage more young people to consider a career in Community Learning and Development” centred around raising awareness of the profession. They all felt that unless a young person had been exposed to



CLD approaches and knew that's what it was, they were unlikely to know about the profession.

There were a variety of recommendations of how awareness levels could be raised; these are listed below:

- School talks but delivered using a fun CLD approach
- Getting young people involved in community activity but also linking that with the CLD approach and informing them of what that is
- Linking school clubs that cover community activism, social justice, human rights and environmental justice to CLD.
- Raising awareness of the CLD profession amongst teachers, parents and Careers advisors
- Develop a graduate post similar to the probation year of a teacher. To offer job security after graduate and further develop their work experience. Students are finding that even with the 4-year degree, they are being told they do not have enough experience when applying for jobs.
- Offer funding to employers for internships, young people want to know they are going to be supported during and after their studies

As well as the providing suggestions for different approaches to increase recruitment into CLD, participants were asked: "Is there anything you would like to tell young people about working in Community Learning and Development".

*"Give it a go; you have to be creative, even if you are in a session and it fails you don't give up, you have to keep going and work around the young people and what their needs are."* (Participant 1)

*"There are many jobs; it's always changing, don't worry; there will be opportunities. It is a great course; you learn lots of different things about*



*the community and different approaches. Its made me a different young person. If I didn't study it, I wouldn't have been as optimistic as I am now. I do think it develops a different sense of the world.” (Participant 2)*

*“I love it so much. I am really glad I made the change to do something I really do enjoy. The classes are smaller; there are only 40 people in our class. I even love the way they set up the classroom you're no sitting in rows looking at the lecturer; you are sitting around tables which are often moved about. You can be really active in the class.” (Participant 3)*

*“It's not just playing pool with kids. We value the conversations we have with young people. Young people want someone to listen to them. The course gives you the theory and confidence to ask open-ended questions and challenge people. Being a Community Learning and Development worker is not about fixing people; it's about working with them, asking them questions and challenging them when needed.” (Participant 4)*

## **5.9 Summary of Key Findings**

The process of developing an understanding into we grow the young CLD workforce is straightforward in some areas but complex in others. Key to developing this further is understanding the various points at which young people become aware of CLD whether that be through careers events or their personal involvement in CLD activity (AE1). Once aware of CLD, the pathways into the profession can vary; however, they always converge at the degree qualification as this is the only way in which to gain professionally qualified status in Scotland (AE2).

The main influencing factor on deciding to become a CLD practitioner, for all of the participants was the desire to give back to society and affect change(AE3).



The decision to undertake a CLD degree as opposed to working their way up through paid employment (AE4) had a number of related influencing factors. Those going straight from school felt it would be beneficial for them to study and gain experience at the same time. Being of a similar age to the individuals they may be working with was seen as a barrier. The other factor was the desire to learn the theory behind the practice to ensure they were effective in their roles. Also, with placements being an essential requirement of the degree programmes, the participants were drawn to the opportunity to put the theory into practice almost immediately, encouraging retention and self-reflection.

In reflecting on their perceptions of what a career in CLD would be a similar response emerged (AE5). Generally, they saw themselves working for a variety of third sector organisations and mainly on temporary contracts. There was a little variance in this from the youngest participant, who only had experience of local authority led CLD provision. However, even though they thought, local authority employment is where they may return to upon graduation, they believed that their career would end up in the third sector.

For those at the end of their studies, the perception regarding employment in the third sector remains. One participant did see this as a challenge and that they were not sure whether this would influence their decision to stay in this profession or not for the long term.

From this point, more complex issues were raised by the participants. There is a broad concern over the stability of the job market with temporary contracts and new graduates facing a career of frequent job changes and financial instability. However, this is not necessarily a challenge (AE6). The participants in this study identified this as an option to develop their skills as CLD practitioners further.



The findings suggest working with existing students to explore the broad range of employment opportunities available to them that are not located within the traditional local authority CLD structures.

Job titles continue to pose a challenge, whether that be because people do not know what is meant by CLD worker or that there is not one distinct job title for the profession. This has also raised the issue of the misuse of job titles. For example the title of Youth Worker being used to describe the role of a home school link worker or learning assistant in schools.

Although complex, participants provided practical solutions to the problem raised in this study (AE7). These included the implementation of a raising awareness programme across secondary schools in Scotland and the development of a graduate CLD Worker post. This would be similar to that of the probation year teachers undergo post-degree. Allowing for job security for the first year after university and supporting graduates to develop their skills in a full-time post further, fully preparing them for the job market. The participants thought the this would make CLD a more attractive career option.



## 6. Discussion

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the analysis and interpretation of data. After briefly re-establishing the aims of this study, I will use my research question and related areas of enquiry as a basis to analyse the data collected, placing it within current theoretical debates.

### 6.2 Re-establishing the context and aims of this study

This work-based research project began by seeking to understand how we grow the young CLD workforce. Through the Literature Review, I asked questions regarding the current policy and legislative context within which this profession exists:

- Whether CLD is an approach, profession or both?
- What is the influence of the economic shifts on the stability of the profession? What are the motivating and influencing factors on young people's decision-making process in regards to career choices?
- What role do related adults and peers play in career decision-making?
- What is the influence of subject choices on future careers?
- Finally, I explored whether there was anything we could learn from a related profession?

These questions, supported by the data collected through the semi-structured interviews, allowed me to explore the traditional approach to career development. What if there was something within the traditional decision-making route that was not being utilised by the CLD Profession?

The desire to undertake this area of research arose from a concern in the low number of young people entering the degree programme and "25% of the



profession intending to retire or leave the profession in the next two to five years” (Rocket Science, 2018). The methodological approach taken in this study has allowed me to address the following research questions and areas of enquiry:

Research questions:

1. What factors influence young people to choose a career Community Learning and Development and
2. How does this further develop our understanding of how to grow the young Community Learning and Development workforce.

In order to answer the research questions, certain broad areas of enquiry were examined. These areas of enquiry were the basis for the interview questions. The following broad areas of enquiry provided a suitable response to the research question:

Areas of Enquiry

1. Factors leading to the awareness of Community Learning and Development
2. Pathways into Community Learning and Development
3. Motivating/Influencing factors for becoming a Community Learning and Development practitioner
4. Influencing factors in deciding to undertake professional training
5. Perceptions of a career in Community Learning and Development
6. Challenges and opportunities of a career in Community Learning and Development
7. Methods of improving recruitment into Community Learning and Development



### 6.3 Factors leading to the awareness of Community Learning and Development

In line with the literature, the findings presented two of the factors leading to an awareness of a profession: relational adult role model(s) and lived experience (Taylor, 1992, p.325-326; Borycki and Samuel, 2001). However, in the context of CLD, there is an added requirement for those with lived experience. Participants require an awareness of the approach in which they are participating.

In returning to the literature, Tai et al. (2006) and Schoon et al. (2007) identified that some young people begin to solidify their aspirations during the early stages of becoming a young adult. As a result, it may be possible to draw an inference that it would be advantageous to raise awareness of CLD as early as the first year of secondary school if not before.

However, as identified in Scotland's careers strategy: moving forward (Scottish Government, 2020, p.8), since the implementation of Career Education Standard, (Education Scotland, 2015), there is now:

*“a strong foundation of career services in Scotland, but the system is the sum of many parts. This brings the risk of incoherency, inconsistency and of people falling between the cracks. There are also a number of new challenges emerging”.*

There is an acknowledgement that the broad range of career information, advice and guidance (CIAG) is still variable in its availability across Scotland. Also, CLD plays a role in the delivery of CIAG (2020, p.14). The establishment of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) regional groups (employer-led regional groups, focused on supporting young people into employment by bridging the gap between education and employers (Scottish Government, 2019, p.9)) has supported young people to “broaden their career aspirations”.



Therefore, it is crucial to identify where CLD practitioners are involved not only in the facilitation of the DYW approach but are seen as a future career pathway and potential employers. It would also be useful for a national organisation, such as the CLDSC, (if not already) to be involved in the pan-sectoral leadership body being established as a result of the Scotlands's careers strategy: moving forward (Scottish Government, 2020, p.33). A further recommendation, which would support those identified above, would be for the CLDSC to develop a communications strategy to raise awareness of CLD amongst young people.

#### **6.4 Pathways into Community Learning and Development**

The varied descriptions, provided by the participants in this study, regarding their pathways into CLD, echo previous case studies gathered on the subject (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, undated). However, as was highlighted recently in the Career Pathways for CLD Report (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2020, p.3), their roots can be traced back to their community. In looking at the definition of community through the lens of the five core elements (locus, sharing, joint action, social ties, and diversity) as identified by MacQueen et al. (2001, p.1931). The definition of community for each participant is as follows:

- Participant 1 – Locus (Community in which they grew up)
- Participant 2 – Locus and sharing (community-based approaches to address health inequalities)
- Participant 3 – sharing and joint action (social justice and climate change)
- Participant 4 – Social ties (Parent was a CLD worker)

Once again, a variation has emerged. Participants also described, differing experiences in the additional qualifications and work experience gained before



beginning the programme. There were several decision-making factors which led to the selection of a specific programme. However, all were in agreement that the courses should offer as much work-based experience as possible.

The Career Pathways report (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2020, p.22-24) highlights the number of accredited courses available to participants. However, it is notable that the number of qualifying degree programmes whether that be undergraduate or postgraduate has decreased (in 2014, there were ten undergraduate programmes, and in 2020 there are four (2020, p.8). Leading me to the question of why has this happened? Is it single or multiple factors which have resulted in a decline? If the degree programme is to continue to be the only route which leads to qualified status, this is an area which will require further exploration.

### **6.5 Motivating factors for becoming a Community Learning and Development practitioner and one of the perceived challenges that career may bring**

The initial finding that surfaced when exploring the factors which motivate young people to seek a career in CLD was similar to the one found in the study with social work students (Csikai and Rozensky, 1997), which was a desire to give back to the community. In analysing this finding and the associated themes, through the lens of London's Career Motivation Theory (1983), a link to the perceived challenges of a career in CLD also came into focus.

In particular, this was linked to the element of Career resilience. Participants at both the start and current stage of their studies perceived the key challenge facing them, and their future was the job insecurity a career working mainly in the third sector could bring. They acknowledged that permanent posts, primarily within local government, do still exist. However, they were reduced in number and due to their permanent nature, not a role which was vacated then advertised regularly.



Noe et al. (1990) describe Career resilience as the maintenance component, which plays an important role not only in the individual's ability to cope with disruption in the job market but also their ability to continue in that career path. This was supported by findings published by Grzeda & Prince (1997, p.183), which found that high levels of career resilience were “significantly and positively” related to high levels of persistence and perseverance.

The data also presented the challenge of finding full-time employment post-graduation, highlighting that it might be useful to develop high levels of Career resilience in CLD practitioners during their training in preparation for entering the workforce.

Seibert et al. (2016), determined that initially career resilience could be developed by nurturing a growth mindset (Dweck, 2000) and then applying various “psychological strategies that can support your adaptability”.

Areas not addressed in this study but that could be worthy of further enquiry are; the impact of COVID-19 on the job market for recent CLD graduates, the degree to which students are aware of the employment opportunities available and whether that knowledge is influenced by the strand in which they specialise.

## **6.6 Influencing factors for becoming a Community Learning and Development practitioner and Influencing factors in deciding to undertake professional training**

The findings from this study present a number of factors which influence young people in deciding to become a CLD worker and undertake professional training. For those that experienced CLD as a young person, relational influences such as those explored by Bowlby (1982), Cutrona (1996), Borycki and Samuel (2001) and Schultheiss et al (2001), played a significant role in their decision-making processes.



While the experience and parental influence of Participant 4 supports the theories laid out by Bourdieu (1986), Furlong (2005) and Foskett et al., (2008); in that the parent was a CLD worker, who was able to provide support and opportunities for their child to move from being a participant in CLD activity to a part-time youth worker. The experience of Participant 1 differed, in that the adult providing access to information, networks, opportunities and new experiences was a CLD Worker, of no relation. By supporting the young person to overcome the initial challenges they were experiencing, Participant 4 would then go on to feel a sense of empowerment and chose to take on the role of a young leader. This enabled them to begin to develop the skills and knowledge required to become a CLD worker. For both participants, this relational influence also extended to their choice of University, including but not limited to supporting them to identify what they need to gain from the course and which course would best meet that need.

For those that became aware of CLD at a later stage, careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) from academic staff and CIAG professionals would play a more critical role in their decision making. As was identified by Amundson (1995) and Borgen (1997), career decisions and personal issues are indivisible. For Participants 2 and 3, they had already begun a course of study in further or higher education. Still, both were involved in communities of interest that were related to CLD they just were not aware of the connection. In knowing they were close to the career path, they wanted to follow but not quite knowing how to articulate it, the influence of friends and those involved in providing careers guidance would be how that connection was made.

An additional observation made during this portion of the interviews was that only one participant defined themselves by their social class. One of the participants felt that being from a stable, middle-class family, accompanied by the options and information presented to them by teachers and careers advisers within their school, were the reasons why they were not aware of CLD as a



profession. This raises the question, if we were to associate a specific class stratification with the CLD profession as a whole, what would that be? Bourdieu (1986), suggests that young people's decision making and eventual career destination is a reflection of their social class. However, from this study and the case studies presented by the Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, (undated), practitioners come from a variety of backgrounds and "social classes". The comment provided by Bourdieu is not one which was made in isolation; it also included the levels of social, cultural and economic capital held by someone. Rather than seeing the entrance to CLD profession as a reflection of someone's social class, perhaps capital plays a more critical role? As shown, from the experience of Participant 1, who went from being an individual participating in CLD provision as a means to increase their level of capital to reach a point where they became the facilitator.

This brief exploration of class and its relation to young people's career decision making is also important in highlighting the need to provide a holistic model to CIAG and ensuring that young people are aware of a broad range of career paths. If CIAG professionals decide only to raise awareness of careers that young people from a specific location or school would stereotypically progress onto, then the influence of adults can move from being supportive to negative and limiting. It is therefore essential to raise not only awareness amongst young people of the CLD profession but also those adults who play an influential role in career decision-making processes.



## 6.7 Opportunities for a career in Community Learning and Development

The participants in this research study presented two opportunities for a career in CLD. The first opportunity, which is already in place, and was a recommendation in *Empowered to Practice* (2003, p.12) are work-based/blended learning routes to gaining the degree qualification. The findings supported by the literature (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2020, p.12), determined that a benefit to this route is that it “alleviates some of the financial burden associated with the time and cost of travel “. Also, that it makes it “ easier for students to continue working throughout their studies and to achieve a better working/life/study balance” (ibid); as a result, addressing some of the economic concerns identified as a challenge for this career path, at least for the duration of their studies.

The unprecedented nature of the global pandemic aligned with the professions efforts to move learning into the digital environment has perhaps given scope for a course of online study to be considered by the CLDSC, in partnership with employers, universities and practitioners.

An opportunity which is not in place and one which the participants felt would benefit the profession greatly, involved the introduction of a post-qualifying year/graduate post. Much like the probationary year for teachers, this would act as a guaranteed year of employment. However, when the concept of a probationary year was explored in *Empowered to Practice* (2003, p.17), there was not a profession-wide agreement at this stage that it was required. Perhaps, now that many of the recommendations have either been considered or implemented, this is an area which could be given further consideration?. Or as the participants discussed rather than applying a probationary year, could employers consider the introduction of graduate posts?





## **6.8 Methods of improving recruitment into Community Learning and Development**

When discussing the ways of improving recruitment into CLD, the participants identified three areas which they felt would be useful to address: raising awareness of CLD amongst young people; raising awareness of CLD amongst those who influence young people in their career decisions such as parents, carers, teachers and careers advisors, and methods for improving job security as a means of making a career in CLD more attractive.

### **6.8.1 Raising Awareness of CLD**

Highlighted in the findings from this study is the suggestion that the approaches taken to raise awareness of CLD should be practitioner-led. Participants requested the development of a communications strategy. They did not provide any recommendations on who should lead on this but that whoever took responsibility should develop the plan in partnership with young CLD practitioners/students. This study would recommend that this work is led on by the CLDSC. In keeping with the values and ethos of CLD, this 'top-down' strategic response should also be accompanied by a 'ground-up' response. The participants also felt that CLD practitioners have a responsibility to raise awareness of the profession amongst learners and stakeholders.

However, this is where one of the critical challenges in implementing this approach lies. As described earlier in this study, there is somewhat of an identity crisis across the sector. Not all practitioners associate themselves with the CLD profession. There is also a challenge, in when asked to describe what it is that we do; there is not a consistent response. In marketing terms, an agreed 'elevator pitch' (Denning & Dew, 2012; Katz & Green, 2007) would be helpful in achieving this.



For those that work within a specific strand, but without a strand-specific job title, practitioners will sometimes reduce their role descriptor to one of the three strands (youth work; adult learning; and community development) as there is a broader understanding of what each one means. If describing the broader profession of CLD is found to be challenging or not one in which all practitioners identify with, is there an alternative way of looking at it? If we ensure we have a clear means of describing the three strands, do we develop an additional statement which states that this is part of the broader CLD profession?

As described by Vincent-Wayne and Vassilios (1999, p.320), one of the primary causes of marketing confusion is described as “ambiguous, misleading or inadequate information conveyed through marketing communications.” This highlights the need for us to have a clear communications plan if we are to increase awareness of the CLD profession across young people (those under the age of 35) and those that influence their career decision-making processes.

#### 6.8.2 Raising awareness of CLD amongst those who influence young people in their career decisions such as parents, carers, teachers and careers advisors

Participants highlighted that the responsibility for raising awareness across this specific group has both a local and national aspect that requires addressing. As identified in the literature, CLD has a role to play in the implementation of Scotlands’s careers strategy: moving forward (Scottish Government, 2020, p.14). However, what is not clear is the level of involvement of the CLD workforce in Careers/Developing the Young Workforce events and at what stage this is taking place? Are they just seen as facilitators or are they also included as potential employers?

At a national level, there are a number of opportunities for CLD to be represented and ensure communication around careers includes our profession. One such group is the pan-sectoral leadership body being



established as a result of the Scotlands's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward (Scottish Government, 2020, p.33). There could perhaps be a role for a national organisation, such as the CLDSC, (if not already) to be involved in this group.

### 6.8.3 Methods for improving job security as a means of making a career in CLD more attractive.

The final method and perhaps the most challenging in terms of being able to enact immediate change is improving the job security for CLD. As acknowledged in the literature (Nabarro and Schulz, 2019; Scottish Government, 2020), there has been considerable change in the economy over the last few years. No more so than in the previous few months as a result of the impact of COVID-19.

Participants in this study accept that their career will entail several temporary contracts. When accompanied with the significant challenges faced by the Scottish economy, this study recommends that the most appropriate approach the profession could take to address this problem is to work with students and new practitioners to prepare them for the CLD job market. This might be realised by building their career resilience (London, 1983; Noe et al.,1990; London & Noe, 1997) and increasing their awareness of the variety of roles available to them.

## **Graduate preparedness for the workforce.**

An immediate concern raised in this study, by those about to graduate, was the challenge in finding full-time employment due to not having enough experience. The participants felt that if they had been aware of this earlier in their studies, they would have undertaken additional volunteering/paid experience. However, they also suggested increasing the number of work-based study routes to allow them to gain as much experience as possible, while also being in paid employment. If this option was not viable, they suggested revisiting the



recommendation in “Empowered to Practice” (Scottish Executive, 2003), with the introduction of either a probationary year or graduate level post. They felt that by utilising a similar approach to that taken by teaching, by guaranteeing them one year of full-time employment; they would be better prepared for the job market and professional life. Further research into the needs of employers and whether graduates are meeting those needs is required before being able to make a specific recommendation in this area.

There is the possibility the introduction of graduate-level CLD posts could make CLD a more attractive profession to young people when deciding between related occupations. E.g. Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide social work, CLD and teaching. However, while they are publicly funded professions and public services, CLD does not have the same protection.



## 7. Implications/recommendations



### 7.1 Introduction

This work-based project has influenced my passion for supporting further practitioner-led research in the field of CLD. It has also highlighted the need for us as a sector to engage with and listen more to the voices of new practitioners embarking on this career path. It has provided me with insight into the factors that influence young people's decisions to undertake a degree in CLD and some of the issues facing new graduates.

The main aim of this study was to develop an understanding of how we can grow the young CLD workforce (those under the age of 35). This chapter will provide a discussion of the implications resulting from this study accompanied by a series of recommendations for the profession.

### 7.2 Personal support for this project

As a result of taking up a secondment and later changing employment, support to undertake this work-based research project varied throughout, this has highlighted to me the importance of establishing a critical friendship" (Campbell et al., 2006, p.109) for any future research projects I choose to undertake.

### 7.3 Methodological Implications

Although the Coronavirus pandemic may have severely limited the scope of this study, it has given me insight into some of the challenges but also the benefits of using online video conferencing tools as a method of engaging with research participants. As we move from being a digitally fragile to a digitally agile workforce (YouthLink Scotland, 2014), the use of online communication tools not only supports the continued engagement with our learners but it enables practitioners to connect with others across all areas of Scotland and share

practice. When considering further research, online video conferencing tools should be given equal consideration to in-person interviews. The purpose of which would be to ensure travel or financial restraints are not barriers to participation for both the researcher and the participants (Sullivan, 2012).

#### **7.4 Professional Implications**

As highlighted in the policy context and literature review contained in this study, there is a strong historical influence of the national Government on the field of CLD. However, even with the support of national policy and legislation, CLD continues to experience substantial cuts in funding across both the public and third sector. This leads me to acknowledge that the financial instability across the sector may be having an impact on young people's decision to enter the CLD profession.

This is an area too large for this study to resolve and involves several decision-makers. However, I feel it is of utmost importance that we promote our practice and the benefits to individuals and communities that it brings.

#### **7.5 The implications of COVID-19 on the interpretation of the findings**

In reviewing the impact of COVID-19 on the trustworthiness of this study, I considered the principles set out by Fell et al. (2020). While the methodological approach was able to take account of the physical limitations of the impact of COVID-19, I, as the researcher, acknowledge that this may have influenced participant's responses to questions regarding their future. It is unknown as to whether their experience of the current job market is as a result of the pandemic or whether this is what they would have experienced regardless.



## 7.6 Recommendations

### 7.6.1 Areas for further study

Due to the limitations of this study, it is my recommendation that further research is undertaken to address the original concern. The recruitment of a larger number of participants would allow for data saturation. This, combined with a survey of young people across Scotland to determine levels of awareness of CLD, would provide additional data to either support or refute the findings of this study.

Additional areas for enquiry arising from this study are:

1. What is the level of involvement of the CLD workforce in Careers/Developing the Young Workforce events and at what stage is this taking place?
2. At what stage did current practitioners become aware of CLD as a profession?
3. Are new CLD graduates ready to undertake fully qualified roles?
4. Why have some Universities chosen to cease delivery of CLD degree programmes?
5. What is the impact of COVID-19 on the job market for recent CLD graduates?
6. To what extent are students made aware of the employment opportunities available and is that awareness influenced by the strand of CLD in which they specialise?

### 7.6.2 Recommendations for the sector

1. CLDSC to develop a communications strategy, in partnership with young practitioners and students, to raise awareness of CLD amongst young people (those under the age of 35) and those that influence career decision making.



2. CLD practitioners to explore ways of increasing awareness of CLD in their communicates and with the individuals and communities they work with
3. CLDSC Approvals Committee to scope out the possibilities of an online/distance learning degree qualification
4. CLDSC Professional Learning Committee in partnership with the sector, further and higher education institutions to explore developing a career resilience CPD session.
5. For a national organisation, such as the CLDSC, (if not already) to be involved in the pan-sectoral leadership body being established as a result of the Scotlands's careers strategy (Scottish Government, 2020)

## **7.7 Sharing of findings**

I plan to disseminate the findings from this study in a number of ways.

Initially, I will deliver a presentation to the staff and committee members of the CLDSC (approximately 50 people). A copy of the thesis will then be uploaded to the I-Develop website (online CPD platform for CLD practitioners) and shared with members (approximately 2500 people) through the monthly e-bulletin.

The research will also be made available through the university library.

## **7.8 Leading learning and change in Community Learning and Development**

In my role as an Approvals Committee Member for the CLDSC, I will continue to support the development of the profession. One of the recommendations in the Career Pathways for CLD report (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2020, p.16) was to establish a cross-committee working group to look at assessing local/regional pathways and completing the review started in the Career Pathways report. The remit of this group will





include: establishing detailed information about local professional learning provision, identify gaps in the CLD career pathway and work collaboratively to develop solutions to these gaps. To further my research in this area, I have volunteered to become a member of this group.

I would be interested in progressing further research to address this concern and will explore this with Education Scotland and the CLDSC, who commissioned the original Working with Scotland's Communities 2018 report (Rocket Science).



## 8. Reflections and Conclusion



### 8.1 Introduction

It was over sixteen years ago when it was announced that a Short Life Task Group (SLTG), chaired by Professor Ted Milburn CBE would be established to provide advice to Ministers:

*“regarding the establishment of a **practitioner-led body** responsible for validation, endorsement, accreditation and registration for community learning and development, with enhanced capacity, building upon the work of CeVe (Community Education Validation and Endorsement)”.*  
(Empowered to Practice, February 2003)

It is with the ethos of being a practitioner-led profession that this study sought to engage with young practitioners at the beginning of their CLD career to develop an understanding of how we can grow the young CLD workforce (those under the age of 35). As the findings demonstrate, some of the recommendations made in 2003 still require further exploration in 2020.

### 8.2 Reflections

Through this research project, I have had the opportunity to work with a small group of undergraduate CLD students. Through the use of online interviews, I have been able to gain some insight into their experience of the CLD profession at a very early stage of their career, witnessing them reflect on their practice, and their ability to communicate the importance of putting theory into practice.

On reflection of this research project, I found my experience as a researcher to be challenging, insightful and motivating. In undertaking this research project during a global pandemic, I am somewhat disappointed that I wasn't able to recruit enough participants to achieve data saturation or hear the views of young people on our profession. However, with perseverance, utilising my



digital communication skills and existing professional connections, I have managed to collect data from a group of undergraduate students and maintain the safety of everyone involved.

I acknowledge that this research was carried out with a small group of 4 participants, and therefore, I am unable to apply to the CLD sector as a whole. However, I feel this is an area which requires further research in order to determine whether similar findings would emerge from a larger number of participants and a broader range of demographics. This would allow the profession to develop a strategy for growth and development.

In reflecting upon the rapidly changing and isolating situation which Coronavirus has brought on Scotland and the world, I am conscious that even though I would describe myself as digitally agile, there was some trepidation and concern around using online video conferencing tools. Having to be reliant on my ability to record and store the interviews securely and the participant's level of digital literacy to use the online tools. However, the approach employed proved appropriate to the situation and provided rich visual as well as audio data from which to analyse the findings in keeping with the interpretivist paradigm.

The Standards Council for CLD Scotland is currently undertaking monthly surveys to gather data on the CLD response to COVID-19. One of the strengths of CLD that has been highlighted during the pandemic has been the profession's ability to adapt quickly and ensure individuals and communities continue to be supported (Standards Council for Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2020). The advancement in online tools such as Zoom, Google Meet, or Microsoft Teams has ensured contact has been maintained. This gave me the confidence to continue with interviews as my research method but online instead of in-person.



With the provision of more time and without the lockdown restrictions, I would have liked to follow up on the online survey with a small targeted group of young people in order to include their views in the study. Equally, I would have liked to increase the number of participants involved in the interviews, to achieve data saturation, possibly including CLD practitioners of a similar age who were currently employed full time and have not gone down the degree programme route.

### **8.3 Conclusion**

In setting out on this research journey, I began from a place of self-reflection (Brookfield, 1995) drawing upon my experience of becoming aware of and then entering the CLD profession. I felt it was important, not only as a committee member of the CLDSC but as a practitioner who values the change we can effect with individuals and communities.

The research aimed to develop an understanding of how to grow the young CLD workforce (those under the age of 35). Based on a qualitative analysis of four undergraduate students' journeys into CLD, the influencing factors for choosing CLD as a career, and their perception, knowledge and understanding of CLD as a field and, a profession.

Reflecting upon the main findings through a theoretical, I feel the changes that have to be made are the responsibility of all involved in the CLD profession and not only those in the CLDSC or Scottish Government.

In summary, the key findings of this study indicate it might be useful to raise awareness of CLD amongst young people at an early stage in their secondary education accompanied by those that play an influencing role in young people's career decision-making processes. This approach will ensure that young people equipped with the information required to make an informed decision and feel supported by the adults around them.



The next theme which arose from the findings of this study was that it might be beneficial to ensure CLD students develop and build their career resilience during their studies. This will enable them to cope with the unstable nature of short term grant funded employment and leading on to the final and related area, the request to explore and address the job insecurity experienced by CLD practitioners. While this is a much more significant challenge to solve, participants in this study proposed the introduction of a graduate-level post. To enable them to gain full-time employment, guaranteed for a year and to allow them to build the skills and knowledge required to transfer their undergraduate

I would encourage further research to be undertaken in this area to explore whether these findings would be confirmed or refuted with a larger participant group, and also across a broader range of demographics.

This research project has allowed me to develop my analytical skills, which will support my future research projects. As someone who has recently moved away from being a field practitioner into a policy development role, undertaking this research project has highlighted the importance of continuing to be involved in the current theoretical discourse and to remain active in the profession.



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## Appendices

### 1. Appendix 1 – Master’s Ethical Approval Form

<b>Master’s Ethical Approval Form</b>
---------------------------------------

This form should be completed and submitted to the appropriate supervisor or School Ethics Officer for consideration by the Research Ethics and Governance Committee.

**Important Note:** If your research involves NHS patients, tissue or data, or NHS staff, please email [researchgovernance@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:researchgovernance@abdn.ac.uk) for further guidance on ethical approval procedures.

**BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM APPLICANTS SHOULD REFER TO:**

1. Information on data management, collecting personal data and data protection act requirements can be found at [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/policy-zone-governance-and-compliance/data\\_protection\\_policy\\_April\\_2015.pdf](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/policy-zone-governance-and-compliance/data_protection_policy_April_2015.pdf)
2. Information on University Expectations of researchers can be found in the University’s Framework for Research Governance at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/research-governance-304.php>

**WHEN COMPLETING THE FORM APPLICANTS ARE REQUIRED TO:**

1. Consider each question carefully and provide details of potential ethical issues which might arise, allowing the reviewer to make an informed decision on whether they have been addressed appropriately. Applicants are expected to provide additional

information beyond the initial 'yes'/'no' answer to the questions provided.

Failure to provide enough information to allow the reviewer to provide informed approval of ethical issues within the research might result in the need to restart the review process.

2. For all applications, researchers must provide a brief explanation of the potential ethical issues which might arise when carrying out the research/course (e.g. justification of the need to use certain research methodologies which might raise potential ethical concerns) and how they are to be addressed. This should be provided in a separate Word document appended to the application. For clearly defined research projects/courses, the project proposal or course outline document should also be attached. Any other documents relevant to the research (e.g. consent forms) should also be attached to the application.

**Code and Title of Course/Project: Master of Education WBP**

**Name of Principal Investigator or Course Co-ordinator: Dr David Johnston**

**Project/Course Start Date: September 2017**



## Recruitment procedures

		Yes	No	N/A
1	Does your research activity involve persons less than 18 years of age? If yes, please provide further information.	x		
	<p>My research project will involve young people aged 14 to 25 years participating in an anonymous online survey. The research is opt-in, and all young people will give informed consent and will be provided with a data protection statement. The young people who undertake the survey will not be demographically targeted other than by their age, and therefore the group may include young people from groups identified as 'hard to reach' however they will not be asked to provide any information regarding this and information disclosed will be at their discretion.</p> <p>There is a possibility that there will be young people under the age of 18 taking part in the interview part of this research project. However, they will not be included or excluded solely for this reason and will be provided with the same consent form as the other participants.</p>			
2	Does your research activity involve people with learning or communication difficulties? ( <b>Note:</b> all research involving participants for whom provision is made under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 must be ethically reviewed by NHS NRES). If yes, please provide further information.	x		
	<p>The survey for young people which is part of this project will be sent to the participants via the Scottish Youth Parliament. Therefore the researcher will not know if any of the young people will have learning or communication difficulties. Also, there will be limited, identifiable data collected. The researcher will follow Plain English rules when preparing the survey and where software allows, follow accessibility guidelines when preparing the survey.</p>			
3	Is your research activity likely to involve people involved in illegal activities? If yes, please provide further information.		x	
4	Does your research activity involve people belonging to a vulnerable group, other than those noted above? If yes, please provide further information.	x		
	<p>The survey for young people which is part of this project will be sent to the participants via the Scottish Youth Parliament. Therefore the</p>			





	researcher will not know if any of the young people belong to a vulnerable group. Also, there will be limited, identifiable data collected. Any child protection concerns which arise as part of this study will be passed on to the child protection co-ordinator for the Scottish Youth Parliament.			
<b>5</b>	Does your research activity involve people who are, or are likely to become your clients or clients of the section in which you work? If yes, please provide further information.		<b>x</b>	
<b>6</b>	Does your research activity provide for people for whom English is not their first language? Please provide further information on how this will be provided, or, if it will not be provided, please explain why not.	<b>x</b>		
	The survey for young people which is part of this project will be sent to the participants via the Scottish Youth Parliament. Therefore the researcher will not know if any of the young people do not have English as their first language. Also, there will be limited, identifiable data collected.			
<b>7</b>	Does your research activity require access to personal information about participants from other parties (e.g. teachers, employers), databanks or files? If yes, please explain how you will ensure that use of this data does not contravene the Data Protection Act and protects the anonymity of subjects.		<b>x</b>	
<b>8</b>	Do you plan to conceal your own identity during the course of the research activity? If yes, please provide further information (e.g. that this is necessary for the nature of the research, whether subjects will be contacted directly after the period of observation).		<b>x</b>	

### **Consent Procedures**

<b>9</b>	Please provide details of the consent procedures that you intend to use for obtaining informed consent from all subjects (including parental consent for children). You should provide details of how you will let subjects know that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time. You should also provide details of the processes for giving potential subjects adequate time for considering participation and for obtaining written consent. If research is observational, please advise how subjects will provide consent for being observed. If any of these issues are not applicable to your research or if you do not intend to address them for reasons of research methodology,
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	please provide further information.
	<p>For those young people who participate in the survey element of this study, their consent will be requested at the beginning of the survey. The survey will allow the participants to answer some or all the questions. A question at the end of the survey will also allow them to decide at the end whether the data they provided can be used in the study.</p> <p>For those participants taking part in the interview element of this study, an information for participants sheet will be provided along with a consent form. Throughout the study, participants will be informed that their participation is voluntary, and should they wish to withdraw they can do so at any time. The participant information sheet will also provide them with the contact details of the researcher and the university supervisor. This will allow them to withdraw consent to participating in the study at any time after the interviews have taken place.</p>

**Possible Harm to Researchers/Participants**

<b>10</b>	Are there any safety issues for you in conducting this research? If so, please provide details of what these might be and how you intend to address such issues.
<b>N/A</b>	

<b>11</b>	Is there any realistic risk of any subjects experiencing either physical or psychological discomfort or distress? Or any realistic risk of them experiencing a detriment to their interests as a result of participation? If so, please provide details of what this might be and how you intend to address such issues.
<p>During the interview process, the participants may find the process challenging depending on the personal background they are coming from and what the motivating factors to becoming a Community Learning and Development practitioner are. Should any participants become distressed, I will stop the interview immediately and only resume if the participant is willing to continue.</p> <p>I am aware that through the interview process participants may disclose sensitive information. Through the initial consent participants will be made aware that should this information cause harm to them or others, then I will be obliged to pass that information on the relevant person, e.g. child protection officer.</p>	



## **Data Protection**

**12** Please provide details of how you intend to ensure that data is stored securely and in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. Please give specific consideration to whether any non-anonymised and/or personalised data will be generated and/or stored and what precautions you will put in place regarding access you might have to documents containing sensitive data about living individuals that is not publicly available elsewhere? If your research relates to the latter, please consider the consent of the subjects, including instances where consent is not sought.

All data collected as part of this research project will be collected, handled and stored in line with the Data Protection Act (2018). Any personal or sensitive data collected as part of the research will be stored on an encrypted electronic server. With all paper documents stored in a locked filing cabinet until they can be scanned and stored on the server. Interview participants will be informed that a pseudonym used and not their real name.

**It is the responsibility of all researchers to ensure that they follow the university's various policies designed to ensure good research practice.** This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data. Any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the research activity should be notified to your School Research Ethics Officer and may require a new application for ethics approval.

**Please attach the following with this form:**

- **Full proposal of relevant research project/course elements. In order to speed up the process of review, applicants are advised to pay particular attention to those areas for which a 'Yes' has been ticked in the following form, either by providing an account of the procedures or training to be employed to ensure ethical**



## 2. Appendix 2 - MSYP Survey

### 8.3.1 Participant Information Page

The information you provide in this survey will be studied by Ceri Hunter, a Masters of Education in Community Learning and Development student at the University of Aberdeen.

#### **Who can take part?**

Taking part is open to any current Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament. You must have access to the internet to participate.

#### **What will happen to the details I give you?**

The only personal information I will gather about you is your age, opinion and the local authority area in which you live. This data will be stored on a secure server until the end of 2020, when the research period will be over and the findings published. The researcher respects your trust and aims to protect your privacy, and therefore will never sell or share this data with any third parties. If you have any questions or change your mind, contact the research team

#### **How do I stop taking part?**

You can email the research team at any time. You do not have to give a reason.

#### **Ethics approval**

For University research students in the UK, ethics must be approved by the university before a study is allowed to start. This study was approved by the University of Aberdeen. They have said it is OK for me to do this research.

#### **Why am I doing this research?**

In 2019, the Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland in partnership with Education Scotland published the Working with Scotland's Communities 2018 report (Rocket Science). In this study, they found that "There is an ageing Community Learning and Development workforce and around 25% of the workforce intend to retire or leave the profession in the next two to five years". This research project is being undertaken because I would like to understand how to encourage more young people into choosing Community Learning and Development as a career path. However, before I can do this, I need to find out how much young people know about Community Learning Development.

#### **What is involved?**

For your part in this study, the survey will start by asking a couple of questions about you. I will ask for your age and local authority area. You will then be asked some questions about Community Learning and Development. Please



do not worry if you have never heard of it before today. The survey should take no more than 15mins to complete.

### **How long will my data be stored for?**

Once the study has finished, your answers will be securely stored. They will stay with the University of Aberdeen until December 2020.

### **Concerns**

If you're worried about how your data is looked after, you can find out more by visiting the University of Aberdeen's Privacy Notice for Research Participants, which can be found here: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/about/privacy/research-participants-938.php>

If you have any further worries about the study or wish to ask any questions, you can get in touch with Ceri Hunter at the details below

Researcher - Ceri Hunter – [t02cmh15@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:t02cmh15@abdn.ac.uk) , 07825521304  
Research Supervisor – Rachel Shanks - [r.k.shanks@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:r.k.shanks@abdn.ac.uk) , 01224 274871

To consent to taking part in this survey, please click start to answer the questions. If you do not want to take part in this survey, please close this tab on your browser.

Many thanks

Ceri Hunter

### 8.3.2 About you page

1. What age are you? \*

[Control]

2. Which local authority area do you live in? \*

[Control]

3. Survey



3. Before being asked to take part in this survey, had you heard of Community Learning and Development before? \*

[Control]Yes

[Control]No

4. Describe what you think Community Learning and Development is.

[Control]

5. Community Learning and Development workers sometimes go by other job titles. Please click all of the ones you have heard of:

[Control]Community Learning and Development worker

[Control]Adult Learning Worker

[Control]Youth Worker

[Control]Community Education Worker

[Control]Home school link worker

[Control]ESOL Tutor

[Control]Community Development Worker

[Control]Family learning worker

6. For the job titles you have heard about, tell us where you know them from and what it is that you think/know they do?

[Control]

7. Tell us about the different people you speak to or places that you go to (including online) to find out about different careers?

[Control]



8. Tell us what the best way would be for us to tell you more about Community Learning and Development?

[Control]

9. When thinking about what job you would like to do in the future. What are the top 3 things you would like to know about that job?

1 [Control]

2 [Control]

3 [Control]

10. Which career are you currently thinking about going into?

[Control]

8.3.3 Thank you page

4. Thank you!

Thank you for taking part in this survey. If you would like to find out more about Community Learning and Development, please visit the [Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland](#) website.

To complete this survey and submit your answers, please click finish.



### 3. Appendix 3 – Interview Participant information sheet and consent form



#### Consent form

#### **Understanding how we grow the young Community Learning and Development workforce**

In 2019, the Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland in partnership with Education Scotland published the Working with Scotland's Communities 2018 report (Rocket Science). Along with their 12 key findings, there were also three areas identified as requiring further study. These were:

1. Understanding how to grow the young Community Learning and Development workforce
2. Understanding how to increase the ethnic diversity of the Community Learning and Development workforce
3. Understanding the role of volunteers in the Community Learning and Development sector

In reading the report, a critical finding that stood out was that “There is an ageing Community Learning and Development workforce and around 25% of the workforce intend to retire or leave the profession in the next two to five years”. This research project is being undertaken in order to investigate how to grow our young Community Learning and Development workforce to enable a stronger and sustainable profession for the future?

The study will include short semi-structured interviews with a sample of volunteer participants (1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>-year undergraduate Community Learning and Development students). These interviews will cover the participant's experiences and be conducted by one of the project researchers. They will last approximately 30 - 60 minutes. Interviews may be recorded with the agreement of the interviewee. Participants' names will be anonymised and replaced with a pseudonym.





You are free to withdraw your consent at any time without providing a reason – if you wish to do this, or have any questions about the research, please contact one of the researchers named below.

Researcher - Ceri Hunter - [t02cmh15@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:t02cmh15@abdn.ac.uk),

Research Supervisor – Rachel Shanks - [r.k.shanks@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:r.k.shanks@abdn.ac.uk),

The University of Aberdeen’s Privacy Notice for Research Participants can be found here: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/about/privacy/research-participants-938.php>



**Please delete Yes or No as appropriate**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information above and have had the opportunity to raise any questions with the researchers by email. **Yes/No**
2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. **Yes/No**
3. I understand that my responses will remain anonymous during the analysis. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. **Yes/No**
4. I understand that findings from the project may be published and that in any publication, the identity of participants will remain confidential. **Yes/No**
5. I confirm that I agree to an audio recording of my interview being taken and that I am happy for my interviewer alone to have access to this recording for the purpose of note-taking. **Yes/No**

By typing my name and the date below, I agree to take part in the project.

**Name of participant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

***For completion by researcher***

I confirm that I have discussed the contents of this form with the participant prior to their interview

**Name of researcher:** Ceri Hunter

**Signature:**

**Date:**



## 4. Appendix 4 – Interview questions

1. Tell me about what influenced your decision to undertake a Community Learning and Development degree?
2. **Prompt:** why did you choose the degree programme over developing your practice in the workplace?
3. Tell me about how you became aware of Community Learning and Development as a profession?
4. **Probe:** How aware are young people of Community Learning and Development as a profession?
5. **Probe:** What influences young people to work in the Community Learning and Development sector?
6. Tell me about what you thought a Community Learning and Development career would be like before you started the course?
7. Now that you have finished the course tell me what is different from your thoughts about it when you started
8. Tell me about what you think a Community Learning and Development career will look like now?
9. What do you think your career will look like in 5 and 10 years time?
10. Do you think you will always work in the Community Learning and Development profession?
11. **Probe:** Do you see yourself working in one specific strand of Community Learning and Development, or do you think you will move about?
12. Do you think Community Learning and Development is seen as a lifelong profession?
13. Were there many young people under 35 on your course?
14. Prompt if very few young people, why do you think that is the case?
  - What do you think we could do to encourage more young people to consider a career in Community Learning and Development
16. Prompt what do you think the best way to do that would be



17. Is there anything you would like to tell people about working in Community Learning and Development
18. Is there anything else you would like to add?
19. Do you have any questions for me?

