

**SURVEY-SPECIFIC REPORT (FINAL DRAFT)**

**REFORM TRACKING RESEARCH:  
PARENTS AND CARERS – FEBRUARY/MARCH 2026**

**April 2026 (Published: September 2026)**

**PREPARED FOR: Qualifications Scotland**

**Reform Tracking Research:  
Parents and Carers – Survey-Specific Report  
for February/March 2026**

**Ashbrook Research & Consultancy Ltd**

**April 2026**

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**Report prepared for: Qualifications Scotland**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report details findings to emerge from the second phase of a programme of Reform Tracking Research being undertaken amongst parents and carers of learners in S4 to S6 in Scotland on behalf of Qualifications Scotland by Ashbrook Research & Consultancy Ltd.

The purpose of the research is to elicit a range of views amongst parents/carers with regard to the reform of qualifications and assessment, together with a range of other issues.

This second phase of the Tracking Research was undertaken during February/March 2026.

A total of 386 face-to-face interviews were achieved with parents/carers in the second phase of the research.

The questionnaire administered in February/March 2026 sought information in relation to the following issues:

- The Scottish Government's plans for qualifications and assessment reform
- Attitudes about qualifications and assessment
- Views about Qualifications Scotland

This survey-specific report provides the following outcomes:

- Graphics for each question asked during this survey
- The highlighting of key changes which were apparent for questions which were asked in the latest survey and that undertaken in September/October 2025

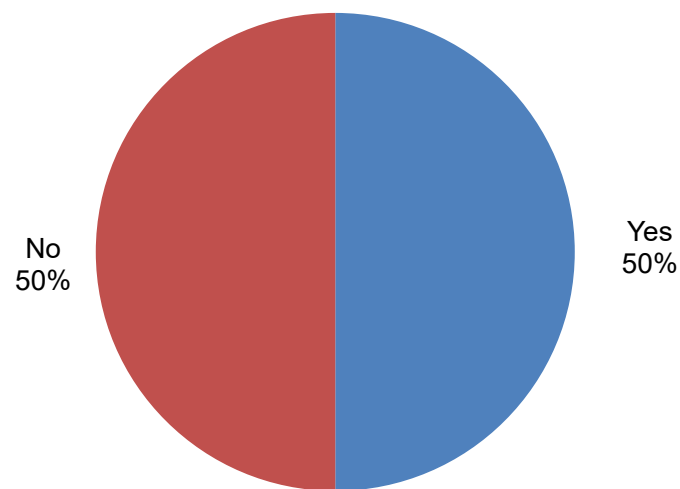
Finally, it should be noted that all variances referred to in this report are statistically significant but that not all statistically significant

variances between the latest and the last survey phases are referred to in order to promote the precise nature of the reporting outputs, as requested by Qualifications Scotland.

## 2.0 THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S PLANS FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND ASSESSMENT REFORM

*“Are you aware of the Scottish Government’s plans for qualifications  
and assessment reform?”*

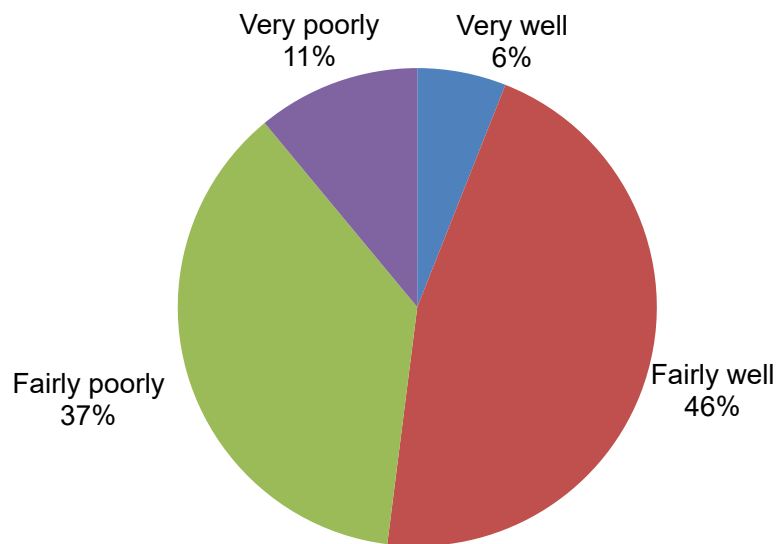
**Figure 1: Aware of the Scottish Government's Plans  
for Qualifications and Assessment Reform?**



**Base: All Respondents**

*“How well do you understand qualifications and assessment reform?”*

**Figure 2: How Well Qualifications and Assessment Reform is Understood?**

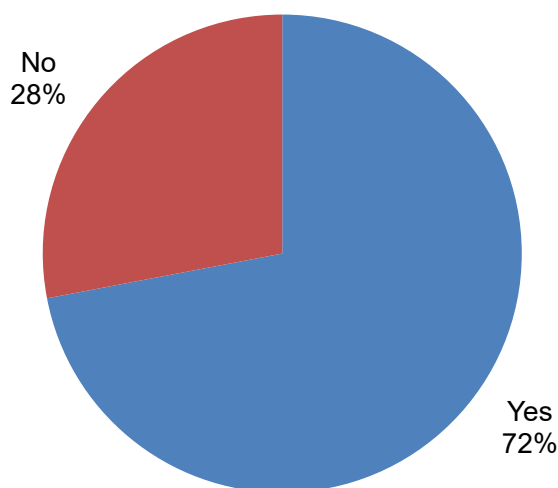


**Base: 'Yes' in Figure 1**

*“Scotland is making important changes to its curriculum, qualifications and assessment system to better support children and young people from ages 3 to 18. This will help ensure every learner is recognised for the knowledge, skills and achievements they develop during their learning journey”.*

*“Would you like to know more about qualifications and assessment reform?”*

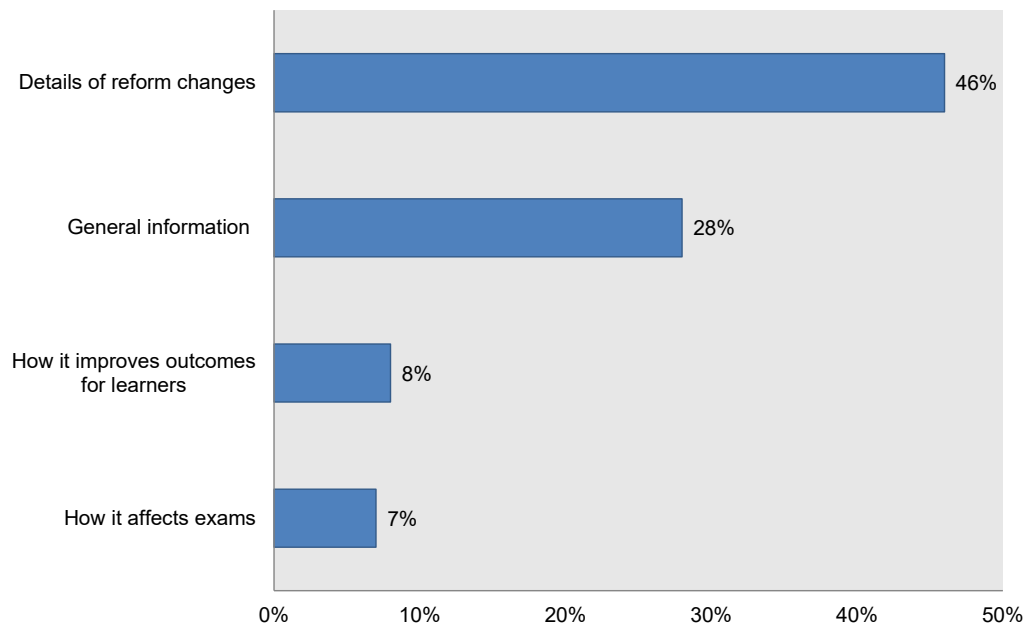
**Figure 3: Like to Know More About Qualifications and Assessment Reform?**



**Base: All Respondents**

*“What types of information would you like about qualifications and assessment reform?”*

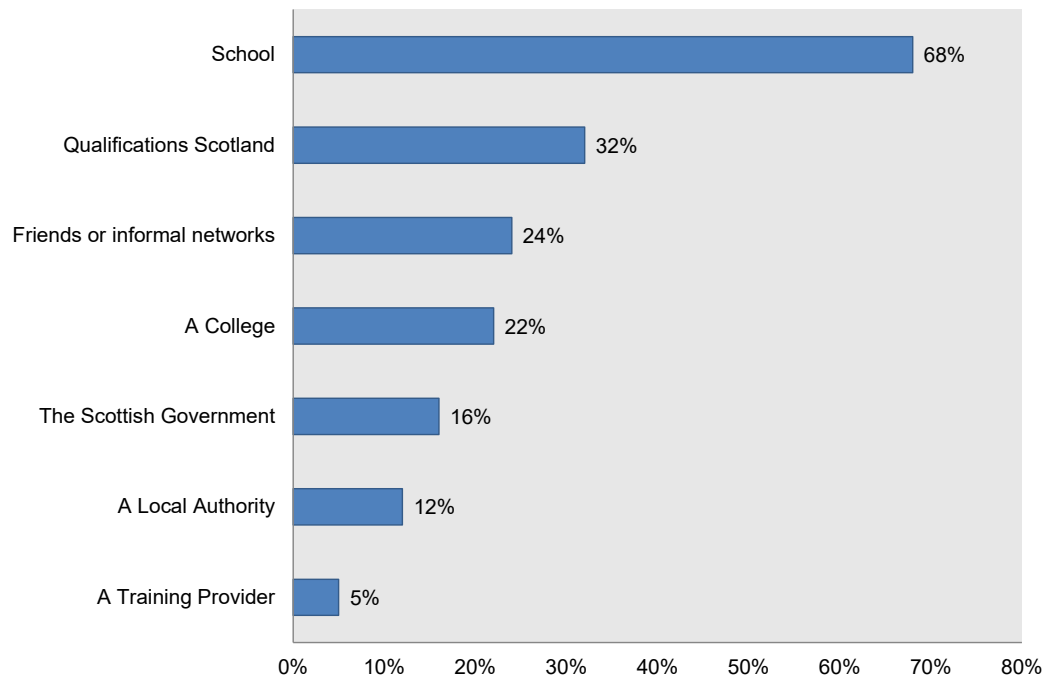
**Figure 4: Information Desires re Qualifications and Assessment Reform  
(Unprompted)**



**Base: 'Yes' in Figure 3**

*“Who would you go to in order to find out more about qualifications and assessment reform?”*

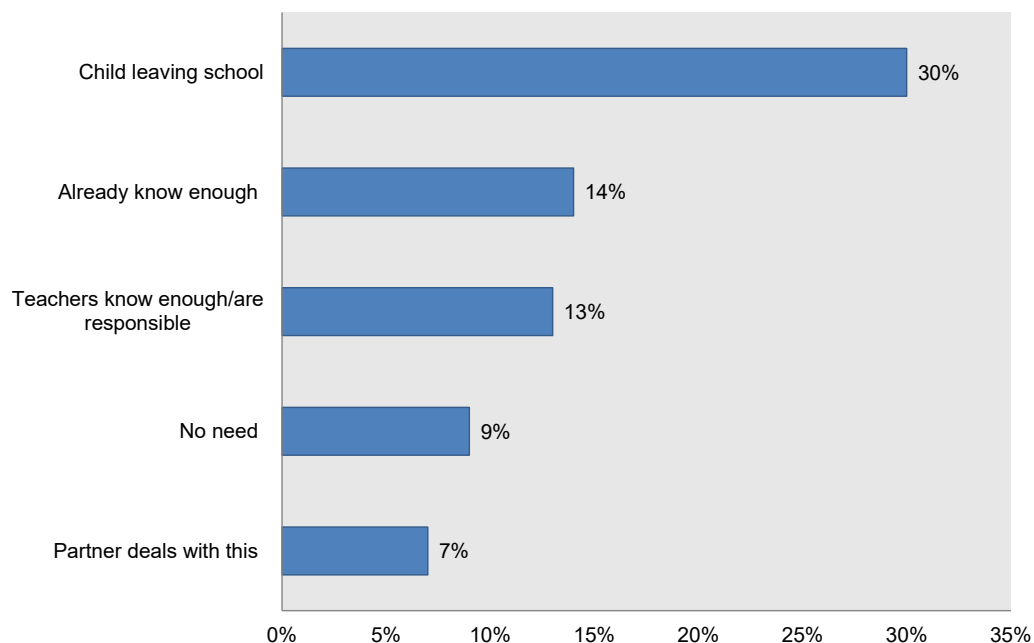
**Figure 5: Who Would be Approached to Find Out More About Qualifications and Assessment Reform**



**Base: 'Yes' in Figure 3**

*“What are the main reasons you would prefer not to know more about qualifications and assessment reform?”*

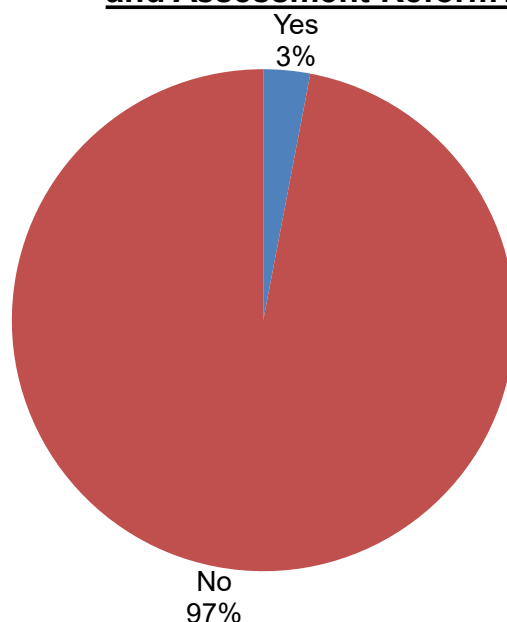
**Figure 6: Reasons for Not Preferring to Know More About Qualifications and Assessment Reform (Unprompted)**



**Base: 'No' in Figure 3**

*“Before taking part in this survey, have you personally taken part in any SQA or Qualifications Scotland consultation, engagement or research relating to qualifications and assessment reform?”*

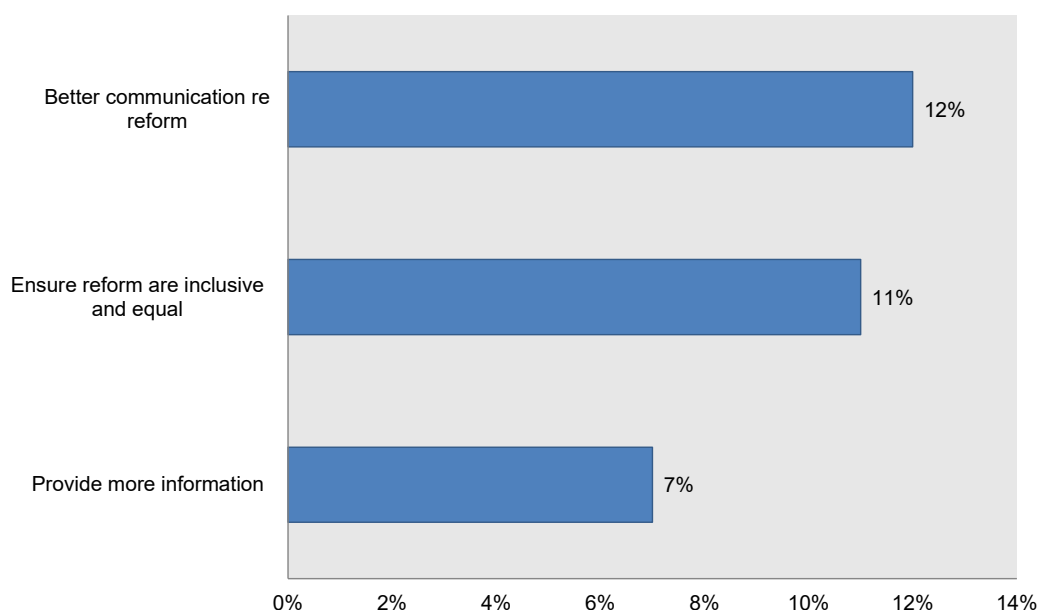
**Figure 7: Previously Taken Part in Consultation, Engagement or Research Relating to Qualifications and Assessment Reform?**



**Base: All Respondents**

*“What **one thing** should Qualifications Scotland focus on to make qualifications and assessment reform a success?”*

**Figure 8: What Should Qualifications Scotland Focus on to Make Qualifications and Assessment Reform a Success (Unprompted)**



**Base: All Respondents**

Between September/October 2025 and February/March 2026, there was a decrease in awareness of the Scottish Government's plans for qualifications and assessment reform, together with a decrease in levels of understanding of these plans amongst those aware of them.

Since the last survey, there was a decrease in the extent to which those desiring to know more about qualifications and assessment reform noted unprompted mention of a desire to know 'how the reforms will improve outcomes for learners'.

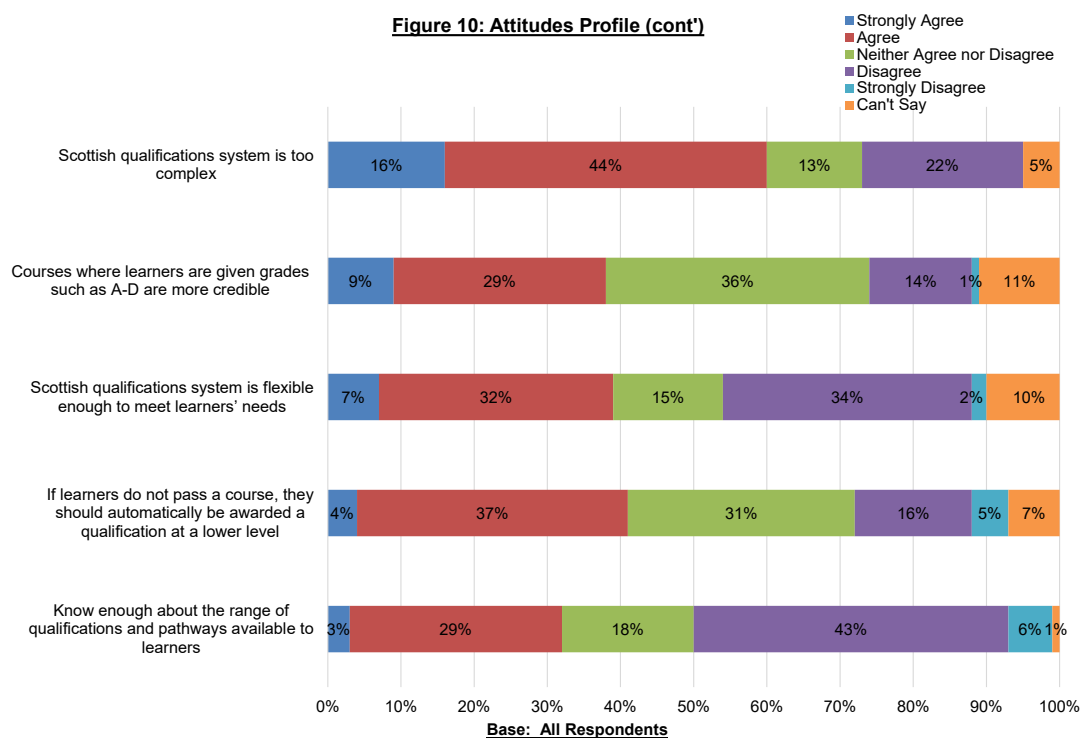
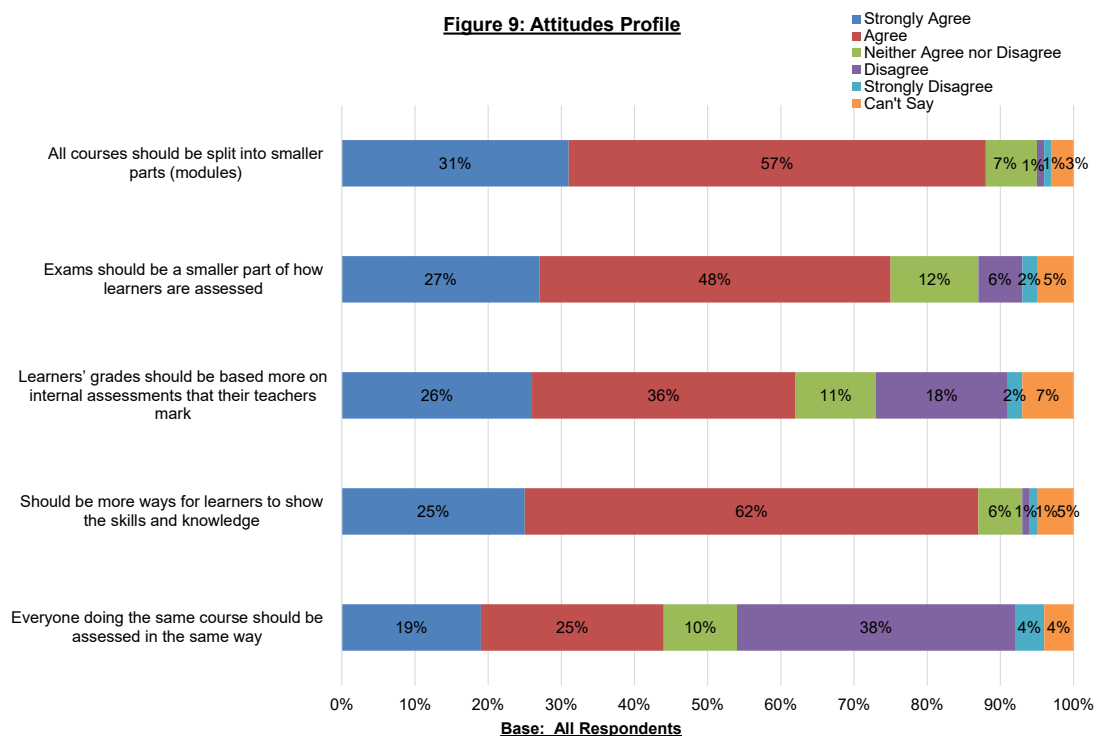
Between September/October 2025 and February/March 2026, there was an increasing reference to finding out more about qualification and assessment reform by approaching 'a school', 'friends or informal networks' and 'a college'.

Since the last survey, increasing unprompted reference was made here to **not** preferring to know more about qualifications and assessment reform 'as a respondent's child was leaving school' and that 'teachers know enough about/are responsible for knowing about qualifications and assessment reform'. However, during that time, decreasing reference was made to respondents having 'no need' to know more about qualifications and assessment reform and respondents having the ability to 'find out themselves' if they required to know more about qualifications and assessment reform.

Between September/October 2025 and February/March 2026, there was increasing unprompted reference being made to beliefs that, in order to make qualifications and assessment reform a success', Qualifications Scotland should focus on 'better communication about the reforms' and 'ensuring reforms are inclusive and equal for all learners'.

### 3.0 ATTITUDES ABOUT QUALIFICATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

*“Please choose the option which most closely matches your views about each of the statements below”*



Between September/October 2025 and February/March 2026, there was decreasing disagreement that 'all courses should be split into smaller parts (modules) that learners can complete one at a time', together with decreasing disagreement that 'there should be more ways for learners to show the skills and knowledge they developed in their courses'. However, during that time, there was increasing disagreement that 'everyone doing the same course should be assessed in the same way'.

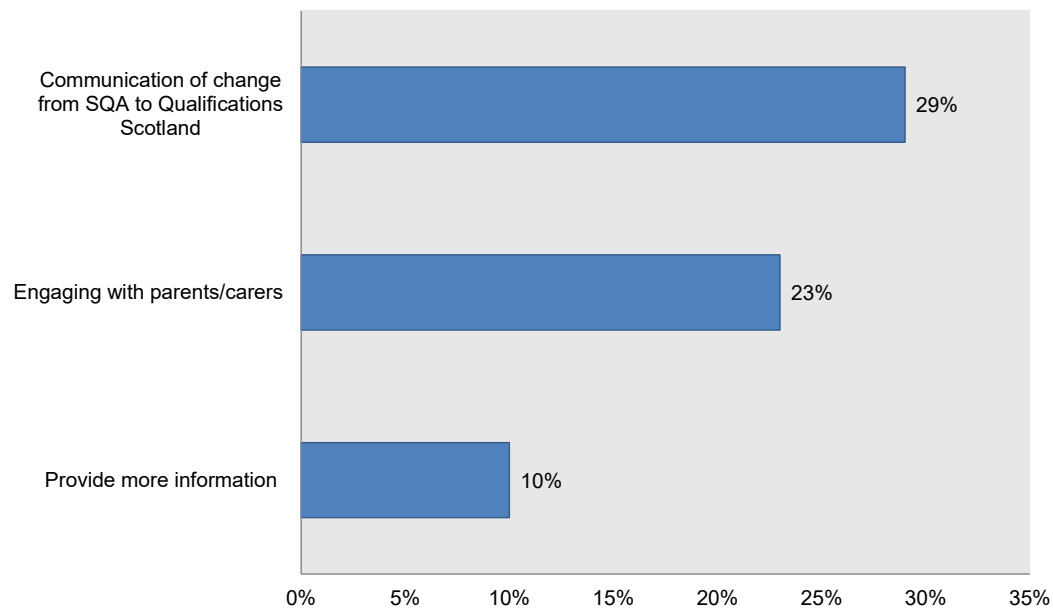
Since the last survey, there was increasing agreement that 'the Scottish qualifications system is too complex', together with decreasing agreement that 'courses where learners are given grades such as A to D are more credible than those which are pass or fail'.

Between September/October 2025 and February/March 2026, there was decreasing agreement that 'the Scottish qualifications system is flexible enough to meet learners' needs', allied to increasing disagreement that this is the case.

## 4.0 VIEWS ABOUT QUALIFICATIONS SCOTLAND

*“What **one thing** do you think Qualifications Scotland needs to do to improve how it works with you?”*

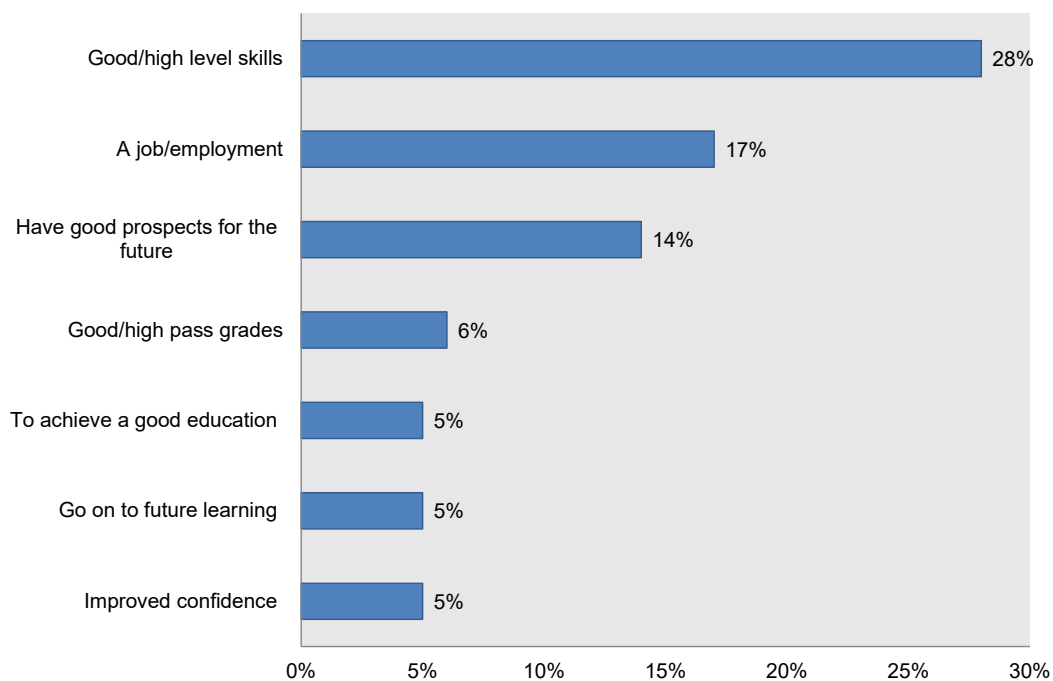
**Figure 11: What Qualifications Scotland Needs to Do to Improve How It Works with You (Unprompted)**



**Base: All Respondents**

*“What are the **key things** you would like learners to gain from qualifications that they are studying?”*

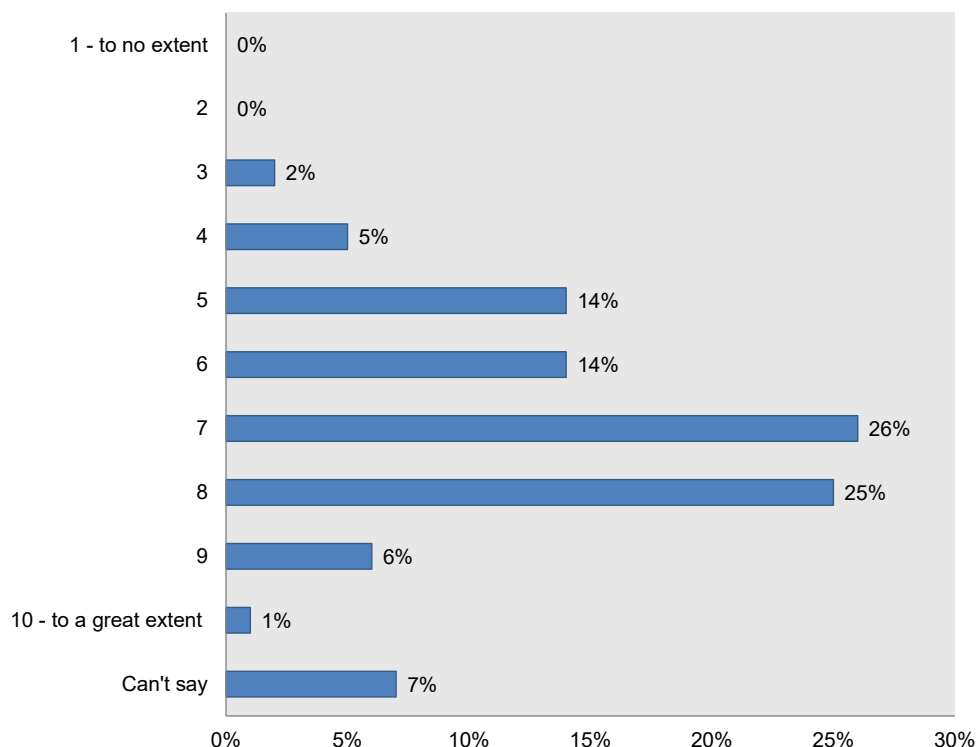
**Figure 12: Key Things That Parents/Carers Would Like Learners to Gain from Qualifications That They Are Studying (Unprompted)**



**Base: All Respondents**

*“On a scale from 1 to 10, where ‘1’ is ‘to no extent’ and ‘10’ is ‘to a great extent’, to what extent do you trust Qualifications Scotland to consult and engage with learners, teachers, lecturers and other stakeholders to create new qualifications?”*

**Figure 13: Extent of Trust that Qualifications Scotland will Consult and Engage with Learners, Teachers, Lecturers and Other Stakeholders to Create New Qualifications**



**Base: All Respondents**  
**Average = 6.7**

Between September/October 2025 and February/March 2026, there were increasing unprompted beliefs that Qualifications Scotland needs to improve how it works with parents/carers through ‘communicating the change to Qualifications Scotland’ and ‘engaging with parents/carers’.