

No.

1980-81

PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

REPORT
FROM THE
SELECT COMMITTEE
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
UPON
THE SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

Part 1—Report and Minutes of Proceedings

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CONTENTS

TERMS OF REFERENCE	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1 - 2
RECOMMENDATIONS	3 - 10
EXTRACTS FROM SUBMISSIONS	11 - 24
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT POSITION THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1961	25 - 35
CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT POSITION DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1961	36 - 53
CHAPTER 3: THE PRESENT POSITION	54 - 67
The Secondary Schools Board Requirements specified in the Act Requirements determined by the Secondary Schools Board Assessment of student achievement Grades in English and Mathematics	
CHAPTER 4: PROBLEMS IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM	68 - 106
1. Exceptional children	
2. The value of the School Certificate	
3. The effect of an external examination on student motivation	
4. The diversity of the school population	
5. Literacy and numeracy	
6. External examinations and accountability of schools	
7. Age streaming versus ability grouping	
8. First and second class subjects	
9. Timetabling	
10. Private reporting and public reporting	
11. Continuing education and access to education	
12. Comparability of awards	
13. Item banking	
14. Relevance of the curriculum to the needs and interests of the students	
15. The school-based curriculum	
16. The child-centred curriculum	
17. A core of essential learning	
18. Community involvement	
19. Examination versus assessment	
20. Passing and failing	
21. Trusting schools to assess students	
22. Standardized testing	
Summary	
1. Curriculum	
2. Assessment	
3. Organization	
The submission of Professor P. Foster and Professor H. Philp of the School of Education at Macquarie University	
CHAPTER 5: TOWARDS THE ADAPTIVE SCHOOL	107 - 149
THE RECOMMENDATIONS EXPLAINED	

CHAPTER 6: THE SEMESTER COURSE PROPOSAL IN MORE DETAIL 124 - 149

- Comparability of records
- Sequential courses
- Horizontal and vertical courses
- Enrichment or acceleration
- Establishing and maintaining standards
- Standardized testing
- Format of the Certificate of Secondary Education
- Logistics of record keeping
- Costs
- Possible formats

EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY 150 - 151
RELATING TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE

APPENDIX 1 Information Bulletin No 7 - Moderation, 1975

APPENDIX 2 The Aims of Secondary Education in New South Wales, 1974

APPENDIX 3 The Base Paper on the Total Curriculum

APPENDIX 4 Some Comments on the Secondary Schools Board's "Invitation
to the Community to Comment on the School Certificate"

APPENDIX 5 Explanation of the concept of Satisfactory Study (ex 1980
Manual)

APPENDIX 6 How Reference Tests are used

APPENDIX 7 For and Against an External Examination

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

- Minutes of meetings
- Visits of inspection

LIST OF WITNESSES

LIST OF SUBMISSIONS

SELECT COMMITTEE

UPON

THE SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

REPORT

TERMS OF REFERENCE

On Wednesday, 21st November, 1979, on a notice of motion by the Minister for Education the Hon. E.L. Bedford, B.A., M.P., the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales resolved:-

- (1) That a Select Committee be appointed -
 - (a) to examine the requirements and procedures currently governing the award of the School Certificate and to report whether these conditions meet the concerns of the community regarding the education of students in the first four years of secondary school;
 - (b) to develop proposals including costs for the award of the School Certificate.
- (2) That such Committee consist of Mr Duncan, Mr McGowan, Mr Pickard, Mr Rogan and Mr Whelan.
- (3) That the Committee have leave to sit during the sittings or any adjournment of the House, to adjourn from place to place and to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States of Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

Your Committee agreed to the following Report which we beg to submit to your Honourable House.

INTRODUCTION

The Committee held its first meeting on 27th November, 1979, elected Mr Brian McGowan, B.A., M.P., as Chairman, formulated certain procedures, and decided on plans for the inquiry. The Committee

subsequently met on twenty-four occasions, including sixteen visits of inspection.

The first step taken by the Committee was to obtain delivery of all submissions lodged with the Secondary Schools Board following its "Invitation to the Community to Comment on the School Certificate". The Committee also obtained from the Department of Education the services of Mr Glen Coulton as Liaison Officer to the Department and Mr Peter Hall as Research Officer, both of whom attended proceedings of the Committee. Mr Hall was subsequently called to other duties but Mr Coulton has been most helpful in the preparation of this report.

The Committee also obtained from the Secondary Schools Board a statement giving details of the requirements and procedures currently governing the award of the School Certificate and the Committee comments on these in the following chapters.

Written submissions were invited generally by extensive advertisements in newspapers and journals covering the whole of New South Wales during the week commencing 25th January, 1980. In addition, submissions were specifically sought from organizations and individuals with special knowledge relevant to this inquiry. The principals and teachers of all secondary schools in New South Wales were invited to make submissions, as were members of the Secondary Schools Board, Syllabus Committees, Universities and Colleges of Advanced Education. Major organizations of employers, parents, teachers and apprenticeship training officers were also invited to make submissions.

Two hundred and eighty submissions were received and thirty-five witnesses were examined. A list of witnesses and a list of submissions are included at the end of this Report. The Committee was also addressed by Professor K. Keohane, Chairman of the United Kingdom Committee upon Proposals for a Certificate of Extended Education, and by Mr J.E. Penman, Inspector of Schools, on Streaming in New South Wales secondary schools.

In the course of its inquiries the Committee visited Canberra, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Hobart and inspected schools in each of these capital cities, (with the exception of Melbourne as the Committee's visit coincided with school holidays there). The Committee also inspected schools in Lismore, The Entrance and the Sydney metropolitan area. The Committee was also represented at seminars of the Institute of Public Affairs, The World Education Fellowship, The Albury School Community Education Committee and The Entrance Vertical Semester Organization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The School Certificate should be abolished and replaced by a credential of greater value.
- R2. There should be a new credential called the Certificate of Secondary Education which should
- (a) be available to all students beyond the legal leaving age.
 - (b) be issued by schools on behalf of and within guidelines determined by a central authority, such as the Secondary Schools Board.
 - (c) comprise a record of achievement demonstrated by the student in the years leading up to its award.
 - (d) be available to students whenever they leave school, be it in Year 9, 10, 11 or 12.
 - (e) contain two parts, a transcript of approved courses passed and a school-provided cover on which should be recorded any relevant information not included on the transcript.
- R3. Schools should be able to develop courses that take account of the special needs and interests of their students; such courses must gain the approval of the central authority for their implementation. Only approved courses shall be eligible for inclusion on the Certificate of Secondary Education.
- R4. Students should have greater opportunities than at present to include a range of subjects in their courses and to change subjects as their needs and interests develop.
- R5. All courses should be offered in half-yearly semester units. Students should be able to select new courses every semester.
- R6. The first semester of Year 7 should be a time in which students are assisted to adapt to secondary schooling. Approved courses should begin in the second semester of Year 7. Each semester course passed should be added to a student's record-of-achievement.

- R7. There should be a system of checks and balances on the curriculum of secondary schools. This system should provide for at least the following:
- (a) the vesting of ultimate authority for the curriculum of secondary schools in the Minister for Education.
 - (b) a central authority which, within guidelines determined by the Minister will have power to approve school-developed courses, and to develop and promulgate courses. This authority should be subject to the constraint presently described in 8(3) of the Education Act of 1961, namely that it

"shall not exercise any power, authority, duty or function so as to introduce or seek the introduction of any new policy or to change the overall planning, allocation or use of educational resources, unless it has first consulted with the Education Commission of New South Wales concerning the proposed introduction or change of policy."
 - (c) the continuation of the existing practice which requires secondary schools to be registered with the central authority on whose behalf the public certificate of achievement is issued.
 - (d) Within each secondary school a school curriculum committee whose endorsement should be obtained before any school-developed course is submitted for the approval of the central authority. The composition of the school curriculum committee should be determined at the school level, but it should afford opportunities for parents, students and the local community to be represented.
- R8. When tendering advice to the Minister, the central authority should concern itself with the following:
- (a) the registration of secondary schools;
 - (b) the approval of semester courses proposed by schools, and the assessment procedures proposed to be used within the semester courses;

- (c) the withdrawal of approval of courses whose implementation is not as described in the approved course proposal;
 - (d) the maintenance of records of courses successfully completed by all students, and the provision of certified transcripts of those records to schools and students;
 - (e) the courses, if any, which should be compulsory for all students;
 - (f) methods of assisting schools on course construction and on the assessment of student achievement;
 - (g) methods of assisting employers and other interested members of the wider community on interpreting the information contained in Certificates of Secondary Education;
 - (h) research in areas related to the curriculum and to the assessment of student achievement.
- R9. The central authority should command adequate resources to carry out its functions fully and effectively but it should have no power to commit the resources of the government or non-government school systems. The systems themselves must retain full responsibility in areas such as appointing teachers, and distributing resources.
- R10. While all courses should be designed in semester units, in the major subject areas they should be so designed as to provide opportunities for students to engage in sustained study. Therefore, most courses should be part of course sequences.
- R11. Every course that is part of a sequence should be a pre-requisite for every later course in that sequence. Students should not be eligible to choose a course until they have passed all of its pre-requisites or co-requisites.
- R12. In addition to sequences in the major subject areas, schools should provide special courses for special needs. These should not normally be part of sequences, but would be provided to meet the needs of students who require remediation, or who are about to enter the work force, or who have special talents and interests.

- R13. Schools should continue to assist students and their parents by providing advice on both short and long term course selections. While students should be able to reselect courses every semester, they should plan their courses several semesters in advance.
- R14. Schools must publish outlines of the courses they offer, and these outlines should be available to students and their parents in advance of the semester in which they are available for selection.
- R15. Students should know exactly what is required of them and published course outlines should include, inter alia:
- (a) the aims and objectives of the course,
 - (b) the material to be covered and the learning experiences to be provided,
 - (c) what materials would need to be provided by the students, and their cost,
 - (d) what achievements will need to be demonstrated by students in order for them to pass the course,
 - (e) specific details of the assessment procedures and the course requirements.
- R16. Each student should be assessed in each semester course to establish whether or not those requirements which were approved by the central authority when the course was approved, and which were promulgated by the school for the information of all students before they elected the course, have been met.
- R17. The assessment should be carried out by the school.
- R18. Students who do not demonstrate the achievement specified in the approved course proposal should fail that course. There should be two consequences of failure:
- (a) That course should not be added to the student's record-of-achievement.
 - (b) That student should not *normally* be eligible to select a later course for which the failed course was a

pre-requisite until such time as the failed course has been successfully repeated.

R19. Students who fail a semester course should have the right to repeat that course in a later semester.

R20. Schools should provide full and frank reasons for failure to both the students and their parents. Should parents remain unconvinced that their children ought to have failed, they should have the right to request the School Curriculum Committee to convene for the purpose of mediating between themselves and the school. Should there remain any unresolved questions concerning the accuracy of the student's assessment, the parents should be able to refer the matter to the central authority for its determination.

R21. The central authority should have available two kinds of semester courses described as in R15:

(a) courses which, on the advice of the authority, have been declared by the Minister to be compulsory for all students;

(b) other approved courses which schools may choose to offer from those courses approved by the Authority.

When tendering advice pursuant to both (a) and (b) above, the authority should initially make as much use as possible of existing Secondary Schools Board courses so that schools which wish to do so can continue to offer their existing curriculum.

R22. Students should be able to select courses on the basis of their readiness and ability to undertake them rather than on the basis of their age or their Year. That is, it should be possible for classes to reflect ability grouping across Years.

R23. It should be possible for talented students to engage in accelerated progression, that is, moving through a sequence of courses at faster than the normal rate. Accelerated progression should occur as a result of a student's meeting all of the requirements for two or more sequential courses in the one semester. Credit for the two or more sequential courses should be added to the student's record-of-achievement at the end of the semester.

- R24. Accelerated progression should only occur after the student, parents and the school have discussed its implications.
- R25. For students who reach an apparent limit in their progression through course sequences in major subject areas, schools should provide alternative courses. These should provide learning experiences that reflect realistic appraisals of both the needs and abilities of the students concerned. They may involve remedial courses, special interest courses or courses designed to equip students with the specific skills they are most likely to need on leaving school.
- R26. There should be no attempt to categorize students into permanent groups. All students at all times should be free to select either mainstream, academic courses or specific purpose courses, but schools should provide appropriate counselling services to parents and students.
- R27. To enhance the status of all courses, to simplify timetabling, and to make it easier for students with special aptitudes to study subjects of interest in greater depth, all semester courses should be allocated the same number of teaching periods. Subjects which warrant relatively little time overall should be given a full period allocation for one or two semesters rather than a reduced allocation for several years. In subjects which warrant deeper and more sustained study, two or more complementary courses should be offered concurrently enabling appropriate students to devote two or more times the normal attention to the subjects in which they have special needs or interests.
- R28. There should be no sudden disruption of existing procedures for allocating personnel and material resources to schools. In determining the courses they wish to offer, schools should take realistic account of their existing resources as well as the preferences of their students.
- R29. As there is no need to change such concepts as teaching faculties and mastered departments to implement these proposals, there should be no attempt to change them suddenly. The ordinary evolutionary processes should be allowed to operate. However, teachers who are competent and willing to conduct courses outside their normal teaching subjects should be able to do so.

- R30. At the conclusion of each semester, schools should provide the central authority with a list of all approved courses to be added to each student's record-of-achievement, and the central authority should update each student's record. The authority should provide schools with an updated copy of each student's record.
- R31. Students who are about to leave school should be able to request from the school a Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE). The CSE should comprise a transcript of the student's current record-of-achievement (provided to the school by the central authority), and a cover document provided by the school containing additional information about the student's other achievements. The student should be responsible for alerting the school to the other achievements which warrant formal acknowledgment on the Certificate of Secondary Education.
- R32. The central authority should be able to supply a transcript of a student's record-of-achievement at other times including when a student changes schools, or after a student has left school.
- R33. The central authority should monitor the language which schools use to convey information about students' experiences and achievements so that the community will not be needlessly misled by inconsistent terminology. It should ensure that courses of similar content and rigour are identified by similar titles, and that the same terms are used by all schools to report student achievement. We suggest that the terms "Distinction", "Credit" and "Pass" should be used in all schools.
- R34. A clear distinction should be recognized between those school reports which contain private information for the student and the student's family, and those which contain public information for the wider community. The Privacy Committee should be requested to develop guidelines covering the distinction between public and private reporting. Schools which are satisfied with their present procedures for reporting privately should continue with them, but there is no reason why schools which wish to do so should not incorporate the current version of a student's record-of-achievement as part of each report.

- R35. Schools should be encouraged to continue the practice of issuing school diplomas. The conditions of awarding these diplomas should be determined by each school. The Diploma should not be seen as an alternative to the Certificate of Secondary Education.
- R36. An evaluation should be undertaken urgently of the feasibility of developing a test in what the community regards as "basic skills" with a view to making such a test available not only to school students but to adults who may benefit from having their basic skills formally assessed and certified. If such a test can be developed in such a way as not to undermine the other recommendations we have made, then students should be able to require that their results be included as a component on their record-of-achievement.
- R37. Consideration should be given to accrediting courses offered outside of schools with a view to their being included in a student's record-of-achievement.
- R38. Consideration should be given to making provision for persons to add to their records-of-achievement by completing accredited courses as part of a program of continuing education.
- R39. Zoning, the practice which directs all government school students to attend the school designated for the area in which they live, should be abolished. The Committee note that the Department of Education is currently re-examining zoning and should be given every assistance to complete its examination.

EXTRACTS FROM SUBMISSIONS

The following selections have been taken from the submissions placed before the Committee. However, it should be remembered that they are out of context and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or observations of the Committee.

SUBMISSIONS

The wholesale substitution of "modern methods" has been found to be unwise. The defects apparent in school children at the present day are summarized thus:-

- (1) The children are not thoroughly grounded in essentials,
- (2) they are not able to think for themselves,
- (3) they are not accurate in their work.

Business people in Sydney ... find these and similar defects in the children they are at present taking into their employment, and they attribute them largely to the new methods of education.

Catholic Press, 9th October, 1909

(from the submission by Mrs R. Dengate)

External examination would once again kill the initiative of teachers in providing growth activities which are not the subjects of external assessment.

Brother John Moulds, Coordinator, Marist
Brothers' Benedict Community School,
Auburn.

Purely examination-oriented instruction was a poor substitute for a sound education and examinations alone may provide a prop for one unable to convince students of the intrinsic value of a course.

Teaching staff of The Beacon Hill
High School

Education in New South Wales is at the cross-roads. We can over-react ... and turn the clock back ten or even twenty years, or we can analyse the mistakes and exploit among young teachers the initiative, confidence and enthusiasm which have been the most heartening consequence of the new look at the total curricula.

Teaching staff of Blakehurst High School

An externally examined certificate would have no impact in the problem that employers face as a consequence of the size and variability of the group now entering the labour market after year 10.

R. Sweet, Department of Technical and
Further Education

The time has come when a study should be made of the relevance of the whole Secondary School System in New South Wales ... The vast social changes in Australia since the introduction of the Wyndham Scheme surely render futile, efforts to patch up an out-moded educational structure.

Sister Mary Madden, P.B.V.M., Presentation
Convent, "Domremy", Five Dock

During the last few years the lack of prescription has enabled schools to devise their own courses which suit the needs of the local area ... We would like the freedom to continue this work.

Teaching staff of Presbyterian Ladies'
College

We believe that criticisms of the Board's decisions in recent years have been directed at the number of times change has occurred rather than at the extent of the change. If the change had been from full examination to full school assessment the disruption caused by the numerous piecemeal changes could have been avoided.

A. Vo, English-History Faculty Head,
Strathfield South High School

Because students differ considerably in interests, abilities and aspirations, schools should be encouraged to provide a variety of avenues of study within the context of a sound basic education, thus recognising that there are many ways to promote the development of individuals.

A.J.D. Blake, Dean, Riverina College
of Advanced Education

Because of the many differences at present existing between schools and even within schools, secondary schools should be given freedom, within limits, to respond to the needs as they see them.

Teaching staff of De La Salle College,
Marrickville

The problem of a state wide examination is to produce a paper to be completed in a limited time covering up to 4 years of study and catering for up to 67,000 candidates spread over a wide geographical area and to mark it in such a way that no student is unfairly treated and that there is reasonable consistency between students and schools.

L.R. Dicker, Inspector of Schools

The rules governing the award of the School Certificate should allow students to study a wider range of subjects than is currently permitted.

Teaching staff of Murray High School

With the introduction over recent years of school-based curricula, the opportunity for teachers to develop their own subject curriculum suited to the needs of their pupils and yet incorporating the basic skills and objectives necessary for different subjects, there has developed an infinite variety of curricular content in different subjects in different schools. Therefore to set an external examination for one subject on a state-wide basis would seem to be an impossible task.

Teaching staff of "Wenona"

Individual School Assessment would give more accuracy in reporting on abilities and attainments, allow maximum advantage to be taken of local resource material in curriculum construction, and save the considerable time-loss experienced with external examination.

Cowra High School Parents and Citizens
Association

The reintroduction of an external examination for the School Certificate would be contrary to the spirit of the Junior English Syllabus. It would be impossible for a state-wide examination to test all facets of English. The only skills to be tested would be some (not all) reading and writing skills. What of the skills associated with listening and speaking?

English Faculty of Swansea High School

If schools wish to hide behind external exams then perhaps they are unwilling to accept the challenge themselves of promoting the excellence and potential of their students in the manner best suited to them. May we get away from the mentality which equates the quality of a school with its exam results, and continue to promote that particular academic excellence within the whole context of a wider education for a new and hopefully better society.

M. Adams, Principal, St. John's Regional
Girls' High School, Auburn

I would not like to see the reintroduction of an external School Certificate Examination as I feel that many worthwhile projects which are now being carried out in schools would be abandoned as teachers would feel the pressures of teaching towards an examination. The students who are most likely to suffer are those who need remedial help.

J. Edwards, Strathfield South High School

The Hornsby Teachers' Association rejects the idea of a single State-wide examination as the basis for School Certificate awards. Such an examination requires uniformity of curriculum content, and inhibits the adaptation of school programs to the educational needs of individual students, classes and local school communities. The best education is relevant education. Teachers must be free to adapt the curriculum for their students.

Hornsby Teachers' Association

A system of school-based assessment alone would throw the door open to social patronage. Children educated at schools in poorer or less socially esteemed areas would inevitably be discriminated against, whatever their teachers said about them. They must therefore be given the opportunity to demonstrate their achievements in a state-wide test that is worthy of public credit and respect.

E.A. Judge, Professor of History,
Macquarie University

We are at a turning point in educational philosophy. We should come up with creative solutions and not simply opt for examinations we have already rejected once this decade, and for good reason.

H. Wyatt and G. Corban, Teachers developing
programs in media studies

Smaller organizations and self-employed tradesmen who employ the majority of apprentices in New South Wales have not the resources to prepare their own private examinations. They are at a grave disadvantage, often selecting applicants who fail to achieve the required standard. This has contributed to a build-up in resistance toward the offering of apprenticeships within this group of employers which has jeopardised employment opportunities to a large number of prospective apprentices.

Apprentice Training Officers Association

It is essential that all children should be exposed to some law-related education. This should take place before the School Certificate, since a large proportion of students do not go on to Years 11 and 12.

Staff of The High School Education Law
Project

Any system with composite assessment and examination is to all concerned "the worst of both worlds".

Dee Why Branch, Australian Labor Party

There seems no great difficulty in devising tests which can be interpreted to give the community information as to levels of literacy being achieved on a State-wide basis. We would consider that the same kind of tests can be applied to numeracy.

Staff of Manly Girls' High School

The overwhelming opinion is that the community wants some form of external examination in association with teacher assessment. Any variation from this approach means that minority group of experts is imposing its views on the community.

Dr D.S. Biddle, Acting Principal,
Sydney Teachers College

This committee feels that determination of students' awards on a State-wide scale is neither practical nor desirable.

Committee of teachers, Deniliquin High
School

Students leaving school find themselves in a very competitive world and the full assessment system does not in any way prepare them for this situation. Acquiring skills and proving that these skills are attained is surely the aim of any education system. Certain pupils, who are generally in the minority, are not good examination candidates and these are given protection with the 50% - 50% system.

Sylvania High School Parents & Citizens'
Association

Mathematics courses should be offered at three levels When awards are made within a single course those less able students are virtually condemned to grades 4 or 5 from the moment they enter secondary school despite their efforts.

St George Area Mathematics Teachers'
Association

We maintain that the aim and scope of English as required in the syllabus has been severely restricted by the content of the examinations and reference tests.

NSW Teachers Federation representatives
on the English Syllabus Committee

The majority opinion among Illawarra and Shoalhaven Deputy Principals is that the present problems associated with the School Certificate can only be met with major changes in the whole School Certificate structure ...

Once changes have been made, it will be necessary to mount a publicity campaign to make pupils, parents and employers aware of what the School Certificate is based on, what information it gives and what it seeks to achieve.

Having made the changes, a moratorium on further change for a period of at least five years is necessary to give the system a chance of being understood and accepted before confusion is created by further change.

Illawarra and Shoalhaven Government High
School Deputy Principals' Association

The viability of our democracy, its resistance to authoritarian manipulation, can be guaranteed only in the educated civility of its people as a whole.

NSW Teachers Federation Committee,
Gosford High School

The present system of School Certificate marking has the virtue of being confusing and somewhat meaningless. No-one trusts it entirely - this is as it should be, since every teacher knows that a student's school marks frequently bear little or no relation to her or his ability to do well in the situation of a job, training or further education.

J. Kossy, secondary English teacher

What will be given in an exam situation is an assessment of his/her ABILITY TO DO EXAMS ... In an examination situation children are assessed by a method which is simply NOT A VALID METHOD OF ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICAL SUBJECTS.

J. Phillips, Consultant, Australian
Schools Commission, Sydney

Yet it is precisely these academically talented students who least need a School Certificate as such, because they usually continue their education to the Higher School Certificate standard.

J.F. Edwards, History Master,
Merrylands High School

The School Certificate should provide a consistent State-wide measure of standards, while at the same time allowing schools to develop their own curricula appropriate to the interests and needs of their pupils. In an attempt to combine these apparently contradictory roles, the majority of staff recommend a system of 50% external examination and 50% internal assessment.

Staff of Ashcroft High School, Green Valley

Women's Advisory Council FAVOURS the move towards ACCREDITATION of courses and urges that steps necessary to achieve this goal be initiated without further delay.

The New South Wales Women's Advisory
Council to the Premier

School based assessment is a satisfactory compromise between the progressivists who favour a child-centred approach with a minimum of academic assessment and sometimes automatic progression through the school grades, and the traditionalists who desire a rigorous form of external examination which allows pupils to be labelled and teachers to be held accountable.

Dr R.I. Francis and R.W. Kay, Senior
Lecturers in Education, Goulburn
College of Advanced Education

There is a need to expand this enquiry to look into problems that have their root at the primary education level.

Deputy Town Clerk, Windsor Municipal
Council

There of course have been changes at the centre of the system with the provision of Directorate of Studies, Division of Services, Curriculum Development Centres and to some extent at Regional Offices, with the provision of some consultants and In-service - but not at the school level, the very place that they were needed most of all!

J.B. Skinner, Principal, The Henry
Lawson High School, Grenfell

Inner City teachers question whether they could in all professional conscience co-operate with any scheme of external examinations as outlined in discussion proposals by the Secondary Schools Board.

Inner City Teachers' Association

The task (of providing evidence of educational gains) lies with those who clamour for the introduction of examinations for purposes which are, on the face of it, foreign to the needs and interests of the children of N.S.W.

Dr J.E. Gallagher, Lecturer in History,
Northern Rivers College of Advanced
Education, Lismore

I strongly urge the Committee in its deliberation to take into consideration the diversities that exist in the community and in particular the multi-cultural aspect.

W.M.K. Hollani, De la Salle College,
Marrickville

The members of the Lake Cargelligo Teachers Association express the view that Federation policy on the School Certificate does not at all reflect the wishes of the majority of teachers in New South Wales.

Lake Cargelligo Teachers' Association

We are doing our students an injustice by making life too easy for them in the junior school. We do not adequately prepare them for the competitiveness of the H.S.C. or the real world outside the school walls.

F.D. Purcell, Principal, Tumut High School

The current campaign to reintroduce external exams is an attempt to have parents pay to have their children conditioned by their school experience into accepting bad pay and working conditions and to having no say in the productive or service providing processes they are a part of.

Members of the Communist Party of
Australia

An entirely internal assessment for the School Certificate would allow the 'old school tie' principle to become even more dominant.

Staff of St. George Girls' High School,
Kogarah

Tests which are admitted to be invalid as an individual measure cannot be used to distinguish between the last student in (the school's) rank order who should receive one grade, and the first student who should receive the next grade; nor can such tests prescribe that, say, the top student in one school should receive one grade, and the top student in another school should receive another grade.

C. O'Donnell on behalf of the Radical
Education Group, Glebe

Key decisions about the future of the School Certificate are political decisions. The Secondary Schools Board was unable to cope with this task. Whilst some might regard it as politically naive, I thought that the Board was politically mischievous in establishing its own terms of reference for its enquiry, its first attempt at consultation directly with the community. It raised questions which implied an answer quite contrary to the policies of the party in government at the time. By its handling of the issue, the Board ensured that discussion would be superficial and highly subject to influence by the mass media.

The analysis of the results of its enquiry were also politically loaded. It was basically a head count with little discussion about who was being counted. Political issues raised in submissions such as mine were ignored. More importantly, the professional issues, the more fundamental issues, were not discussed in any way by the Board in its report. It was the height of irresponsibility for the Board to report a recommendation to the Minister without any substantial reasons for their decision.

C. Bradley, Chairperson, Secondary
Education Committee, NSW Teachers'
Federation

The re-introduction of external examinations for the N.S.W. School Certificate would be a retrograde step.

I. Toms, Deputy Principal, Correspondence
School

We believe that any problems with the introduction of school-based assessment in New South Wales schools are the result of insufficient commitment of resources by the Education Department.

A.C.T. Teachers' Federation

If teachers are to be given the freedom to develop or select their own curricula they must also take the responsibility for evaluating them.

N. Russell, Canberra College of
Advanced Education

... opposed to the introduction of any external examination for the School Certificate.

Ethnic Communities Council of N.S.W.

Examinations to be externally set but not necessarily externally marked.

The Shortlands County Council

This meeting supports the view that students need some kind of pressure to maintain a high level of motivation and performance. It believes that external examinations introduces a standard of competition to continue that pressure.

Public meeting at Scone

It is significant to note that two and a half years ago this staff was completely in favour of external examinations in all subjects and published the so-called "Scone Survey". The change in position of some segments of the staff reflects experience of greater freedom in curricula and foreseeable difficulties in external examination or assessment based on existing syllabuses.

Staff of Scone High School

The turning of a blind-eye to the basic competitive forces at work throughout our society will in no way change human nature. Such a negative response will only serve to further disadvantage those who are less able or willing to meet the challenge of competition.

Parents & Citizens' Association,
Scone High School

The School Certificate's purpose should be to contain information which is useful to students ... when making decisions or planning their future course of action.

Asia Teachers' Association

Officially only two thirds of the Mathematics syllabus is prescribed and tested in the Moderation test. Yet the Mathematics teachers among us know of no school where the remaining one third is undertaken in the spirit in which it was offered, that is, as an opportunity for the teacher to use his/her professional judgement to undertake mathematical topics for the enrichment of the student. Most schools succumb to the pressure of the public examination and spend this remaining time reinforcing the work in the core examinable section.

Group of teachers, various schools.

A suggestion of much merit is that schools append details of courses completed peripheral, but complementary to, the school context.

The N.S.W. Independent Teachers Association

The study of work, like the study of thinking, is in itself a basic academic skill. Yet, lamentably, neither of these are systematically studied at school. As a result, students learn about work piecemeal, by chance, and usually inaccurately.

Dr J.R. Joyce, Ballina

We are alarmed that the realistic fears and concerns of school leavers, their parents and teachers are being diffused and distracted by false solutions - calls for an externally examined School Certificate.

Members of the Board and Staff, Inner
City Education Centre Co-operative Ltd

External examinations can be conducted without the hysteria and authoritarianism so often ascribed to them.

M. Dyer, Vice Chairman, N.S.W. Chapter
Australian Society for Music Education

The indiscipline of our schools and the perceptions of their failings, just and unjust, have led to demands for the reintroduction of an external component in the School Certificate assessment. This might give the Certificate a much needed credentiality but it will not get at the malaise of our education system.

T.J. Nash, History Master, Turramurra
High School

Thought could be given to a mastery levels scheme as used in the Nelson area of New Zealand. There pupils proceed through levels and master each level before proceeding. The final examination shows the level reached and automatically grades pupils.

K. Slinn, Principal Lecturer, Sydney
Teachers College

We consider that the proposal to reintroduce an external examination for the School Certificate opposes multicultural education and would increase the discrimination that migrant students suffer from in education There should instead be greater support and more adequate guidelines for curriculum development and assessment provided to schools.

Child Migrant and Multicultural Education
Special Interest Groups, N.S.W.
Teachers Federation

Once a decision is made regarding the School Certificate, it is important that the N.S.W. Examination System does not change each year, but remain the same for at least three years.

Parent Probe, Castle Hill

A student can play truant and still receive satisfactory for each subject, unless the student's parents have been notified of the student's absence, through letter by the appropriate school a number of times.

L. Warner, Year Eleven, Bathurst

The Australian Consumers' Association sees consumer topics as an excellent medium for teaching the more academic subjects in a way that is relevant to the experience of the student.

Australian Consumers' Association

I feel that Shorthand, Typewriting and Word Processing techniques should have been included in the School Certificate from the very outset.

Mrs F.S. Moss, Collaroy

We feel the jump from Year 10 to Year 11 is far too great.

Year 11E3 Students of Jesmond High School

Within a student population of diverse character and aptitude, evaluation of performance should be sufficiently flexible in form to give all students the opportunity to present themselves in the most favourable light. While this is certainly an argument against external examination at the School Certificate, it does not imply the abandonment of a State certificate, i.e. one whose awards reflect a common standard between schools across N.S.W.

Pennant Hills Branch, Australian
Labor Party

At present you receive your S.C. with a comment stating you have satisfactorily studied art, music, health, geography, commerce, or whatever you have studied. I feel this is extremely unjust to those students who have literally worked their guts out and done the best they can ...

... a number of tests rather than just one. Perhaps if you combine this with internal assessments a suitable answer may come forth.

... the employer is not given an accurate report on the student. This could make it very difficult for the employer to make a good decision when choosing between a number of applicants.

... I feel a need to distinguish between higher and lower levels achieved in subjects that presently appear as "satisfactorily studied".

I think the method of using Moderators for Maths and English in the School Certificate is a fair one (but) I strongly disagree with the system for the other elective subjects.

Year 11 General Studies Students,
Asquith High School

If the cost of moderating tests in all subjects is prohibitive then I suggest the present system should be supplanted with a standardised type of school report.

Mrs S. Findlay, Jannali

The seminar stressed that adequate support for teachers to assist in the development of school-based curriculum was a very important aspect of any thoughtful consideration of the total School Certificate concept.

The World Education Fellowship (NSW)

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT POSITION

THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1961

The School Certificate was born in the Education Act of 1961 but it was conceived in the Report of the Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education - "The Wyndham Report" - that was submitted to the Government in October, 1957. That report, which was compiled by a committee of prominent educators under the chairmanship of Dr H.S. Wyndham, the Director-General of Education at the time, took four years to produce having been commissioned by the Minister in September, 1953. The Wyndham Report was one of the most important statements ever made about secondary education in New South Wales, and any examination of the current position regarding secondary education in N.S.W. needs to take account of the reforms it brought about.

The most important changes in secondary schooling caused by the Wyndham Report were its extension from 5 to 6 years, and its division into two clearly delineated stages, Years 7 to 10 and Years 11 and 12. The Wyndham Report envisaged many other equally important but more subtle changes in the nature of secondary schooling. It is arguable that many of these were never realized. Perhaps the most important of these concerned the general thrust of secondary education. It is no exaggeration to say that secondary education has always been something of a battleground on which two opposing forces come into conflict. On the one hand, there are those who regard secondary education as first and foremost a period of preparation for university or other tertiary study. On the other, there are those who see it more as a general preparation for life for all students. It is a conflict which was not new in 1957, and which remains unresolved in 1981.

In 1902, a Royal Commission was appointed to enquire into New South Wales schools. Some of the findings of the Commissioners, Messrs G.H. Knibbs and J.W. Turner, make familiar reading. As summarized in the Wyndham Report itself, the two commissioners complained of a lack of co-ordination between the two stages of schooling, elementary (now primary) and secondary. They found a lack of co-ordination within the secondary system itself: "The only factor really tending to give unity to secondary teaching is a common endeavour to meet the requirements of the Public Examinations held by the University and the matriculation standard of that University."⁽¹⁾

They considered that a concentration on attaining success at such examinations led to "cramming" and to a distortion of the curriculum

(1) *Report of the Commissioners, Mainly on Secondary Education*, p. 31.

as well as of the method of its teaching.⁽²⁾ And anticipating 1981, they were moved to note that "... the state of preparation of the average students on entering the University leaves much to be desired and valuable time is frittered away and opportunity wasted by the necessity of imparting elementary forms of knowledge which should have been acquired in the secondary school."⁽³⁾

The period between 1912 and 1957, which is competently summarized in the Wyndham Report, saw a continuation of the conflict between those who wished the secondary school to remain as a period of preparation for university studies and those who wished it to become a period of broader preparation for adult life. It is not proposed to recount the history of that period, but a re-reading of the early chapters of the Wyndham Report is recommended for all who wish to understand the present situation more fully. However, one event deserves mention.

In 1946, the then Board of Secondary School Studies made recommendations to the Minister based on its belief that secondary schools should be governed by the following principles:

- (1) *Secondary education should be adapted to the needs and capacities of adolescents.*
- (2) *It should be related closely to the interests and experiences of life.*
- (3) *It should be 'all round', at the same time providing adequate opportunities for the pursuit of individual interests.*
- (4) *It should not be regarded merely as preparation for tertiary education; it should stimulate in all pupils a desire to go on learning.*

The Board then submitted, as the basis of a new approach to secondary education, the following proposals:

- "(1) *Secondary education should be organized in the two stages: general secondary education and higher secondary education.*
- (2) *The first or general stage should be four years in duration, i.e., from about age 12 to about age 16.*

(2) Cf *Report of the Commissioners, Mainly on Secondary Education Summarized Report*, pp 52-53

(3) *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

- (3) *The first stage should be based for all pupils on a core curriculum comprising English, Social Science, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education, Music, Art, Crafts.*
- (4) *In addition, in the first stage there should be optional subjects such as foreign languages, technical, home science, agricultural and commercial subjects, and subjects of the core curriculum taken to a higher level.*
- (5) *There should be no external examination earlier than the fourth year, i.e., the Intermediate Certificate Examination should be abolished.*
- (6) *At the end of the fourth year, there should be an external examination restricted to English and optional subjects. Not less than five and not more than seven subjects should be taken.*
- (7) *The period of higher secondary education should normally be two years.*
- (8) *At the higher secondary level the only compulsory subject should be English.*
- (9) *At the end of the period of higher secondary education there should be an external examination in five or six subjects, of which one should be English."*

In recounting this event in the history of secondary education in New South Wales, the Wyndham Report concluded simply that "no decision was taken as a result of those recommendations". No decision was to be taken until 1961 when "The Wyndham Scheme" was finally introduced. We found it remarkable that the changes which occurred in secondary schooling in the early sixties had been first mooted nearly 20 years earlier.

Since the Wyndham Report was submitted, many changes have occurred in secondary schooling. Some of these have special significance for today's decision makers.

- * In 1956 there were about 175,000 pupils enrolled in secondary schools of whom about 72% were in government schools. In 1980 there were about 380,000 of whom 75% were in government schools. The retention rate of secondary schools following the introduction of the

Wyndham scheme exceeded all expectations. The secondary enrolment is now expected to peak at 415,000 in 1985, to be followed by a period of decline.

- * In 1956 there were about 320 government and 136 non-government schools that catered for secondary students. In 1980, there were 425 and 225 respectively.
- * In 1956 there were several kinds of special purpose government high school. In 1980, virtually all high schools were comprehensive.
- * In 1956, pupils were allocated to a school, (or in the country to a class within the school) on the basis of their primary school achievements. Now, all pupils who complete primary schooling are entitled to a place in their local high school apart from the handful of remaining partly selective government high schools. Independent schools have constraints brought about by limitations of accommodation.
- * In 1956, about 8,000 candidates sat for the Leaving Certificate examination. For several years now, the candidature for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate have been about 75,000 and 35,000 respectively.
- * In 1956, the proportions of the cohort who stayed on to Years 9 and 11 respectively were about 55% and 16%. They are now in excess of 90% and 40% respectively.

From these figures there is one unmistakable conclusion. Secondary education is now mass education. The principles which guided policy development when secondary education was for an academic or social elite can no longer be relied upon. There is one aspect of secondary education which, more than any other, ought to reflect the way secondary education has adapted to its new role as mass education. This is, the nature of the courses offered to pupils. Even in 1957, the Wyndham Committee was looking for change in the nature of courses offered to the then growing secondary population, and suggesting that the need for change could only be met by making schools more directly responsible for the courses they offered.

School principals may vary courses, but the opportunity of doing so is limited. Furthermore, the general pattern of the secondary curriculum is largely determined by the requirements of the syllabuses approved by the Board of Secondary Studies. These syllabuses are designed, in their senior stages, to prepare candidates for the Leaving Certificate Examination, which may also serve as the basis for university entrance.

The effect of this situation is two-fold. On the one hand, Leaving Certificate requirements have an anticipatory effect upon the work of junior years, though many of the pupils involved have no intention of being Leaving Certificate candidates. On the other, the regard which has had to be paid to less academically inclined candidates for the Intermediate Certificate has probably restricted the scope and content of work for the more able.

(Wyndham Report p 53. Emphases added)

Even though the Wyndham Committee recommended the introduction of a full external examination to mark the end of the junior phase of secondary schooling, it insisted that:

the syllabus of any of the subjects in the 'core' curriculum should be set out in quite general terms. A statement for each subject which is a sufficient guide to teachers, but which is not narrowly prescriptive, should be drawn up by a representative panel working within the framework of a general statement of the aims and spirit of the new curriculum as a whole.

Teachers should have freedom to adapt each syllabus to the needs and capacities of their pupils and to the conditions of a particular school.

(Wyndham Report p. 105. Emphases added)

Most commentators would say that the Wyndham Committee was too optimistic when it proposed that an end-of-course external examination could co-exist with syllabuses that were "not narrowly prescriptive" and which gave teachers "the freedom to adapt each syllabus to the needs and capacities of their pupils." If it is not possible to have school-based curriculum development and external examinations at the same time, then the choice for policy makers seems to be clear cut; they must opt for

either the one or the other. But the decision may not be that clear cut. School-based curriculum development and the external examination are only means to an end. What makes each important to its supporters is the desirable impact it is thought to have on the educational process. It would be more sensible to appraise the impacts than to argue the head-to-head merits of the means. It may turn out that while the means are incompatible, the best effects of each can be harnessed simultaneously. If so, then a system may be found which, at the same time, will enable:

- (a) courses of study to be developed which, in each school, will be ideally suited to the needs, interests and capabilities of all its students;
- (b) the achievement of all students to be certified in a way which will inspire confidence throughout the community.

In essence, these are the goals which the Wyndham Committee set itself.

The Education Act of 1961

The Education Act of 1961 arose from the recommendations of the Wyndham Report. The parliamentary debate on that Bill provides insights into the educational thinking of the policy makers of 20 years ago, and we commend it to all serious students of the history of secondary education in New South Wales. Because of their relevance to the questions confronting today's decision makers, we wish to refer to several issues raised in the second-reading speech of the Minister of the day, the Hon. E. Wetherell.

Speed of Change. The Minister traced three stages in the development of secondary education in New South Wales. He pointed out that it began in the last century as the privilege of a social elite, became the privilege of an academic elite following the reorganization of 1911-12, and became recognized as the right of all adolescents following the Second World War. Speaking of 1955, he pointed out that

while the quantitative demand had been met, the nature of the courses offered and their organization left much to be desired.

and he insisted that

simplified the search for and cultivation of talented students because they comprise a curriculum framework to which all students must conform. Since 1961, those rules have assumed that all School Certificate candidates would follow conceptually similar courses for the same number of years, and be assessed by similar procedures. This seems to us to be a recipe for conformity. We believe that the requirements spelt out in the 1961 Act for candidates for School Certificates were excessively restrictive, and left the Secondary Schools Board with too little discretion in determining the detailed rules. We do not see how talent can easily be discovered, let alone cultivated, when all candidates have to serve their time for at least two years in "normal" courses to qualify for the School Certificate. We believe our recommendations will remove some of the constraints which presently hold talented students back.

Core of Compulsory Studies. The 1961 reform enshrined the concept of a core of compulsory subjects. In the Minister's words

"the curriculum of these four years will comprise two overlapping phases:

- (a) a range of subjects which all pupils should study if they are to be competent citizens;*
- (b) studies of a type and at a level of difficulty which will be suitable for pupils of high general ability or of special talent for the subjects chosen.*

The subjects in the first group will be: English, mathematics, science, social studies - that is history and geography - art and craft, and music.

Experience in all these fields is manifestly necessary if one is to be prepared to live a competent and satisfying life as a citizen in the modern world.

It seems to your Committee that experience gained since 1961 would lead to the questioning of the underlined proposition on several grounds:

- (a) Experience in each of these fields is not "manifestly necessary" for all students, though it may be desirable.

- (b) To the extent that any list of subjects can be described as "necessary if one is to be prepared to live a competent and satisfying life as a citizen of the modern world", this list would appear to be incomplete. Recent evidence suggests many other areas in which experience may be necessary including health, personal development and physical fitness, the law, household management, family relationships, computing, ecology and conservation, industrial relations, consumerism, drugs, anthropology, and a host of others.
- (c) Given the growing complexity of modern life, it is arguable that there is no list of learnings which are so basic that they are "manifestly necessary" for all. It is more likely that each person has his or her own list of "manifestly necessary" experiences.

The very concept of a "core of subjects" now finds little support among educators though there is increasing interest being shown in a "core curriculum". Such a curriculum attempts to say something about what all students should experience, but it no longer expresses those experiences in terms of traditional subjects. We will endorse the view that a central educational authority should have the power to make rules concerning courses of study to be followed by all candidates for public certificates of achievement, but we would argue that these requirements should be as few as possible, that they should not necessarily be expressed in terms of traditional subject disciplines, and that they should be kept constantly under review.

School Organization. In 1961 it was assumed that all secondary schools would implement a 1-3 organization, one year of general, settling down studies followed by three years study of core and elected subjects. Once they entered the second, three-years long phase, students would be able to pursue their studies at a level appropriate to their abilities. The Minister was confident that this organization would allow students of ability to devote an increasing proportion of their time to studies at an advanced level as they progressed through school, and that it would allow students to change their electives if their decisions at the end of the first year had proved to be unwise. Experience since 1961 has indicated that the 1-3 organization was not ideal for either purpose. The demands of the School Certificate examination made it very difficult - if not illegal - for students to change subjects, especially during the last two years, and the total

system was very difficult for schools to timetable. In recent years, many schools have moved to a 2-2 organization in which students are not required to make their final choice of subjects until the "second module" (Years 9 & 10). Following a recent decision of the Secondary Schools Board, it is even possible now for students to present two different one-year courses in lieu of one two-year course during Years 9 and 10.

We believe that students and schools have given ample evidence in the last few years that specific subject courses should be shorter, rather than longer, and we will make recommendations in this direction. More generally, we believe that the more room schools have for manoeuvring when fitting their resources to the students' needs, the better.

Summary. We believe that the guiding principles adopted by the Wyndham Committee are at least still pertinent, and possibly timeless. For example, we agree that the primary purpose of secondary education is not to produce university matriculants, but to give all adolescents the best possible preparation for adult life. Because most students in the junior secondary years have no university aspirations, it follows that there is no basis for assuming that the philosophy, curriculum and organization of the first four years should be oriented towards the Higher School Certificate. Nevertheless, that minority of students who do aspire to a post-school life for which a Higher School Certificate is a pre-requisite are a significant minority whose needs must be considered. We believe that the junior secondary years have for too long been organized with the needs of the potential university student paramount, and that this must change. We also believe that any new organization must protect the rights of the university-bound student while raising to primacy the rights of the majority.

Earlier, we expressed the view that the Wyndham Committee set itself the task of designing a system of secondary schooling which would enable:

- (a) courses of study to be developed which, in each school, would be ideally suited to the needs, interests and capabilities of all its students;
- (b) the achievement of all students to be certified in a way which will inspire confidence throughout the community.

Within the limits of its terms of reference your Committee have set itself the same task, for any close look at the School Certificate involves an equally close look at our schools, their curricula and their organization.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT POSITION

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1961

The following table sets out the main changes which have occurred in the procedures leading to the award of the School Certificate since 1961.

- 1961 The Education Act established two statutory study boards, the Secondary Schools Board responsible for the first four years of secondary schooling, and the Board of Senior School Studies responsible for the final two years of secondary schooling. The responsibilities of the two boards were for determining the curriculum to be followed by candidates for the award of certificates, and for authorizing the granting of those certificates.
- 1962 Secondary Schools Board courses were introduced into Form 1 (now called Year 7)
- 1965 The first School Certificates were awarded. At that time, certificates were awarded solely on the basis of candidates' performance in end-of-course external examinations. Examination papers were available in up to 3 levels within a subject: Ordinary, Credit and Advanced. The Board approved separate syllabuses within each level.
- 1968 The so-called "50/50 composite" system was introduced. Each student's score was a composite of his or her examination mark and school assessment. To ensure that each component exercised equal weight in the composite score, and that the assessments provided by a given school neither over- nor underestimated the overall achievements of its students compared with their performance on the external examination, the assessments were "moderated" by the examination results. The moderating process performed two major functions:
- (a) It increased or decreased all assessments from a given school by a constant amount so that the total of the assessments became equal to the total of the examination marks scored by that school. (This was to ensure that the assessments, overall, were neither too lenient nor too harsh).

(b) It compressed all assessments closer to their average, or stretched them above and below their average, until the assessments displayed the same amount of spread as the examination marks. (This was to ensure that within each school, the assessments and the examination marks exercised equal influence on the composite marks, thereby justifying the term "50/50")

Also in 1968, a new level of study, namely Modified, was examined for the first time. This simpler level was introduced to meet the needs of the many students who were not able to cope with the more academically demanding Ordinary level, and whose staying on to complete the full four years of junior secondary education had not been fully anticipated. The percentage of the Year 7 intake staying on to take the School Certificate had already increased from about 46% in 1965 to about 67% in 1968. "Credit" ceased to be a separate level of award and became instead a superior result at Ordinary level. Courses and examinations existed in Modified, Ordinary, and Advanced levels in the core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography and Social Studies), and at Ordinary and Advanced levels only in the elective subjects.

- 1973 The 50/50 system gave way to the 75/25 system in which the moderated school assessment was accorded three times the weight of the external examination score.
- 1975 The external examination was abolished: awards in all subjects were based entirely on school assessments; four different kinds of moderating procedures were used to ensure comparability of awards from school to school; and grades replaced pass/fail as the method of reporting. In core subjects, there were 12 grades of award: 5 each at Advanced and Ordinary level, and 2 at Modified. In elective subjects, with no Modified level, there were 10 grades of award.
- 1976 Grading within levels was replaced by grading across the whole candidature within each subject. Awards were made within 10 grades (deciles) in each subject.
- 1977 Moderation was abolished in all subjects other than English and Mathematics. In these two subjects, the number of grades was further reduced from 10 to 5. Other subjects were simply

recorded on the School Certificate unless the school judged they had not been "satisfactorily studied". Schools were encouraged to issue supplementary statements to provide the more detailed information about each student's achievements that would no longer be shown on the School Certificate.

1980 No major changes have occurred since 1977. However, the Secondary Schools Board has announced that from 1981, "School Courses" may replace Board courses to some extent without rendering the student ineligible for the award of the School Certificate.

Since 1965, certain requirements for the award of the School Certificate have not altered except in minor details. These may be summarized as follows; candidates must

- (a) display satisfactory conduct, attendance and progress,
- (b) satisfy requirements in English, Mathematics and Science, plus at least one approved Social Science, plus at least one other subject making a total of at least 5 subjects in all. Each subject must be studied for at least 5 consecutive school terms including the whole of Year 10.
- (c) have done sufficient Physical Education, Art, Craft and Music to satisfy the special requirements in these areas.

For some insights into the thinking of the Secondary Schools Board during this period of rapid change, the Committee are indebted to Professor D. Spearritt whose succinct submission is reproduced here, with comments added by the Committee. As pointed out by Professor Spearritt in his opening paragraph, he has not only been a member of the Board since 1970, but is the only member appointed to provide a specified kind of expertise. Under the Act, all other members are either ex-officio officers of the Department of Education, or are the nominees of certain groups or organizations. Professor Spearritt is also a long standing member of the Board of Senior School Studies, having held the equivalent position to that which he now occupies on the Secondary Schools Board.

Submission by Professor D. Spearritt to the Select Committee
of the Legislative Assembly upon the School Certificate

1. I make this submission from the point of view of a member of the Secondary Schools Board who has since 1970 filled the

position of "a person who, in the opinion of the Minister can, by his knowledge and experience advance the full development of the examination procedures of the Secondary Schools Board." I have thought it more appropriate to confine my attention to general issues concerning the award of the School Certificate, and to present general observations and impressions about the development of the School Certificate system over the last ten years, rather than to prepare a documented case for or against particular points of view.

2. The externally examined School Certificate was replaced in 1968 by the 50/50 composite system, the awards in each subject being based on a composite score giving a 50% weighting to the external examination and a 50% weighting to the moderated school assessment for each student. This inclusion of the school assessment component in the award reflected a general trend in educational thinking at the time. External examinations were subject to much criticism on the grounds that they had a restricting effect on the school curriculum and teaching methods, that they lacked validity as measures of the work covered in a complete school course, and that their anxiety-provoking features had adverse effects on students. They were also tending to lose status in an educational climate which was promoting the advantages of school-based curricula as opposed to centrally-prescribed curricula. The external examination at the School Certificate/Intermediate Certificate/Junior Certificate level had been abolished by 1970 in Victoria and South Australia, and was replaced by moderated internal assessment procedures in Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia in 1969, 1971 and 1972 respectively.

The inclusion of a school assessment as a component in each student's composite score had two main advantages:

- (a) It enabled credit to be given for achievement in areas which could not be measured by a pencil-and-paper test. (E.g. oral skills in English and laboratory skills in Science.)
- (b) It gave a measure of protection to the normally able student who might do badly on the single occasion, external examination. Conversely, it ensured that the

student who did nothing except cram for the examination in the final few weeks would not do as well as when the examination was the sole measure.

The hope that there would be a third advantage, namely that the control which the examination exercised over the curriculum would be at least reduced, if not halved, appears not to have been realized. Even though the external examination contributed only half the composite score from 1968, the fact that the examination scores were used to moderate the assessments meant that it was still important for school groups to score as many examination marks as possible.

3. *The third Secondary Schools Board (1970-1974) gave a good deal of consideration to ways in which the external examination component could be further reduced and eventually eliminated. It was looking towards a system of school accreditation, in the long term. There were differences of opinion, however, among Board members about the safeguards, if any, which should accompany such a system. Some proposals for an accrediting system paid too little attention, in my view, to the need for establishing the comparability of awards as between schools if the School Certificate awards were to have statewide currency. The case for comparability had to be re-stated on a number of occasions, both within the third and fourth Boards.*

When there is an external, end-of-course examination, the community tends to judge students solely on the basis of their examination marks. Other information, no matter how relevant, tends to be ignored because examination results are easier to understand. In this climate, students come under intense pressure to obtain good results. The pressure transmits itself to the teachers who feel that in order to do the best that they can for their students they should help them to gain as many examination marks as possible. Teachers feel forced to concentrate on training their students in the narrow set of skills which external examinations can measure, ignoring if necessary other desirable skills which cannot be measured. In this climate, the official syllabus may be ignored, or at least those parts of it which cannot be tested externally may be ignored. In the opinion of many, the poor level of oral expression typical of most Australians is due in part to the fact that speaking skills have never been externally examined. Many teachers have felt that they should not devote time to improving the speech of their students when the external examination has no way of rewarding them for their improvement.

Every hour spent on improving speaking skills was an hour lost, for it was an hour that could have been more profitably spent on something that would be tested. There are, of course, many other worthwhile skills apart from speaking skills which cannot be measured by an external examination, and which may also be ignored or not treated as fully as they might be.

The solution usually posed to this problem is to abolish the external examination, thereby removing its influence on the effective curriculum and making it safe once again for teachers to spend the proper amount of time on those parts of the course which are not likely to be good mark earners. However, removing the external examination makes it difficult to maintain the semblance of comparability of awards throughout the State. Almost since the inception of secondary education in N.S.W., there has been an expectation that similar results should indicate students of comparable achievement irrespective of the schools attended or their socio-economic backgrounds.

What was required was a system which removed the undesirable influence of external examinations on what students were taught without causing the community to lose confidence in the reliability of the results which schools awarded to their students.

4. The merits and demerits of the various procedures which had been used in other states and countries to secure comparability of awards across schools were carefully considered by the third Board, which supported a proposal for an experimental study of moderation procedures in a sample of schools in 1973 and 1974. The Board was sufficiently convinced that suitable moderation procedures could be developed that it was prepared to proceed with the phasing out of the 50/50 system by recommending that it be replaced by a 75/25 system for a two year transition period in 1973 and 1974. During this period, the weight of the school assessment component was increased to 75%, but it was still moderated against an external examination component with a weight of 25%.

While increasing the relative importance of the school assessment vis-à-vis the external examination score certainly gave schools three times more power than the external examiners in determining the final placing of their students within their school groups, it had little or no effect on the degree to which the examination determined what was taught. As the average assessment in each school would be adjusted to the average external

examination mark, it was still important for schools to train their students to do as well as possible on the examination. Even if the weighting had been changed to 99 to 1, schools would have perceived the maximising of their external examination marks as no less important than if there had been no assessment component at all.

5. *Having been satisfied with the results of the experimental study of moderation procedures, the Board recommended the introduction of comprehensive moderating procedures in 1975 and the discontinuation of the external examination. These procedures are fully described in the Board's Information Bulletin No. 7 entitled "Moderation 1975". The procedures were designed to allow schools greater freedom in choice of content and teaching method. The statewide reference tests (Mode A procedure) to be applied in English, Mathematics and Science were to be based "more on syllabus objectives than specific elements of content". The Mode B procedure which applied to most other large candidature subjects, involved school-selected reference tests in which questions could be selected from a larger bank of questions to reflect the particular teaching emphases employed by the school, thus allowing schools considerable freedom in their approach to these subjects. For subjects with a substantial practical component, the Mode C procedure was developed, involving the regional marking of selected work samples. The Mode D procedure, employing assessment by a teacher consortium, was designed for small candidature subjects taught in only a small number of schools.*

Information Bulletin No. 7 appears as Appendix 1 to this report.

The attempt to set Reference Tests that were based "more on syllabus objectives than on specific elements of content" represented a reform for which many teachers were not ready. In History, for example, the test required virtually no knowledge of the "facts of history" which students in earlier years had been expected to memorize and reproduce. It posed numerous unseen historical contexts, and required students to make judgments and draw conclusions from supplied evidence, in the manner spelt out in the aims of the History syllabus. To many teachers, it was more a test of literacy or general intelligence than history. Having finally been given full responsibility for assessing their students' knowledge of the "facts of history", teachers could not adjust to a public test which assumed that that part of the assessing program had already been

done within schools, particularly when their assessments were moderated by a test which did not have their confidence.

Whereas in History, the Reference Test could not test the "facts of history" (for to do so would once again have forced the Board to specify the list of facts to be tested, which in turn would have forced schools to teach identical courses throughout the State), in Mathematics the Reference Test continued to test the "facts of mathematics" to the general satisfaction of the teachers.

One of the difficulties facing the Board (and this Committee) is that identical curriculum and assessment policies cannot be imposed on all subjects. Teachers of Mathematics generally agree on the kinds of mathematics that should be taught in all schools, and welcome tests which ensure that all schools keep on the "right track". In most other subjects, and especially in the humanities and social sciences, teachers justifiably resist moves to impose identical courses on all schools.

In adopting four different modes of moderation, the Board was making an attempt to provide an appropriate kind of moderation for all subjects. Inevitably, there were some teething problems in such a radically new system. It attracted the organized opposition that confronted the Board in 1975/76. Had teachers been prepared to give the 1975 reforms a five-year trial, there may have been no conservative backlash of the kind that swamped the Board in the mid-seventies.

6. *The moderating system outlined in paragraph 5 was an effective system for establishing comparability of awards from different schools, and one which was flexible enough to allow diversity of approach in both the teaching and assessment of subjects. It met with considerable criticism, however, for a number of reasons. Firstly, it represented a substantial change to prevailing ideas about assessment and its practical operation. It involved teachers in much additional work, except in the case of English, Science and Mathematics, where Mode A procedures were employed. The format and content of some of the reference tests predictably attracted some criticism. The acceptability of the system was probably adversely affected by simultaneous changes made in the method of reporting results, in which pass/fail reporting was replaced by a system of numerical grades.*

In retrospect, it is easy to say that the Board compounded its problems by the number of changes it made in 1975-77, especially in the manner of reporting results. In acceding so readily to organized pressures for change, it was intending to give an appearance of reasonableness. It is more likely it gave an appearance of uncertainty, of lack of confidence in its own reforms, and that this in turn encouraged protest.

7. *The uncertainties generated by the new assessment system were compounded by those arising from the broader statement of the aims of secondary education issued in 1974 and the attempts in the Base Paper on the Total Curriculum to spell out the operational implications of these aims and objectives for school programmes. As syllabus statements became more concerned with aims and less with prescribed content, and as schools contemplated the development of school-based courses, the difficulties of comparing the performance of students on a common basis across schools became more apparent.*

8. *In line with its long term aim of school accreditation, and taking account of the criticism directed against the moderating procedures, the Board recommended late in 1976 that as from 1977 the moderation of school assessments should be confined to English and Mathematics only. As other subjects were not moderated, no grade in these subjects was to appear on the Certificate, but only a statement to the effect that the subject had been satisfactorily studied if this were the case. This system of moderating assessments and reporting results has continued from 1977 to the present time. Although schools are encouraged to issue supplementary statements, employers and the public have become concerned about the small amount of useful information presented on the certificate and the difficulty of interpreting the variety of statements of results put out by different schools.*

"The Aims of Secondary Education in N.S.W., 1974" and "The Base Paper on the Total Curriculum" are reproduced in Appendices 2 and 3.

During this period, the Board considered issuing a standard form on which schools should issue their Supplementary Statements, or at least a set of firm guidelines. It was advised by various groups, including organizations of Principals, that to do so could be construed as an intrusion on the newly-won freedom of schools to assess and report achievements as they thought best. It has to be said that in the absence of firm guidelines, Supplementary Statements were generally unimpressive documents which failed to make any impact on the community.

9. Correspondence received by the Board after the mid-1970's from various sections of the community, and in particular from Parents & Citizens Associations and school staffs, strongly suggested that the Board's policy of moving towards a school accreditation system was losing favour. Some correspondents were also concerned about levels of literacy and numeracy, following inquiries instituted by the N.S.W. Department of Education and the Australian Council of Educational Research. The need to ensure that at least part of a subject curriculum (a core curriculum) should be studied by all students was a matter taken up by many of the correspondents. The range of opinions on these various issues was so wide that the Board felt it necessary and decided in March, 1978 to "consult with the schools, parent organisations, employers and the community about the future of the School Certificate" before recommending any further changes.

10. The report on the Board's "Invitation to the Community to Comment on the School Certificate" showed that the weight of opinion in all categories of persons and organisations surveyed was strongly in favour of an examination rather than a non-examination based system and that a composite system involving both an external examination mark and a moderated school assessment mark, usually on a 50/50 weighting was preferred. Discussion of these issues at the New South Wales government seminars on assessment and examinations in September, 1978 seemed to point in the same general direction. With this evidence before it, it would have been difficult, in my opinion, for the Board to have supported any recommendation which did not include a return to some form of an external examination. In December, 1978 it recommended, inter alia, that each School Certificate syllabus should have a "core of essential learning", that the School Certificate should have statewide comparability, and that as soon as practicable, it be awarded on the basis of a composite mark derived from an external examination (50%) and an internal school assessment (50%), the internal assessment component to be moderated by an external examination.

The Board's Report, entitled *Some Comments on the Secondary Schools Board's "Invitation to the Community to Comment on the School Certificate"* appears as Appendix 4.

If, as has been commonly accepted, the organized opposition to the 1975 reform was intended to persuade teachers to reject moderated school assessments in favour of a less restrictive system, then it was at the same time highly successful and unsuccessful. Teachers certainly expressed opposition to the new system but they asked for more restrictions, not less! The reaction was reactionary. Of the 851 submissions received by the Board, 750 supported an assessment system based to some extent on an external examination. Of the 294 school staffs and like groups of ordinary teachers who made submissions, 250 supported an examination-based system.

In the view of your Committee, these results were as unsurprising as the survey was unwise. They were unsurprising because at a time when teachers had been encouraged to reject the new system without having been presented with any viable alternative, their predictable reaction was to look to the past, to the only alternative which most of them had experienced. The survey was unwise because having initiated it with considerable publicity, the Board had virtually relinquished its decision-making role to those with sufficient interest and ability to formulate submissions.

This latter point bears on a basic question which all decision-making groups must answer at the outset. Is the role of a statutory study board to shape opinion, or merely to reflect it, to lead the community's thinking or to follow it? Your present Committee have no doubts on this question. When a group of people is placed in a decision-making role, having been especially chosen because of their fittedness for that role, they should be the leaders of community opinion, not simply its reflectors.

This is not to say that they should be oblivious to public opinion. Obviously, a reform is not feasible unless and until the community will accept it. A decision-making group has a clear responsibility to glean from the community the best and most informed views it can find, but having done so it must then accept the responsibility for making decisions based on that evidence.

In soliciting submissions from everyone who felt inclined to respond, and in not ensuring that those with specific expertise in the appropriate areas were pressed for their view, the Board created an expectation that it was engaging in nothing more than a referendum. This left it with no real alternative but to count the votes and to recommend the most popular system, which, for reasons mentioned above, could not help in this case but be the only other system with which most people were familiar.

11. *Turning now to a more general consideration of the issues underlying the award of the School Certificate, the first question to be decided is whether State-wide certification is necessary or whether schools might award their own certificates. It must be said at the outset that State-wide certification is not a sine qua non of a secondary education system. It is not a characteristic of secondary education in the U.S.A., where in the large majority of states, secondary schools issue their own certificates, without making an attempt to ensure comparability of grades within even their own state. In England, secondary education awards are made not on a state-wide basis, but by eight examining boards for the General Certificate of Education, and by fourteen examining boards for the Certificate of Secondary Education. In Australia, state-wide certification has long been the custom, probably because education has been organised through State systems rather than through a national system or local education authority systems. When state-wide certification has given way to an individual school certification system in Australia, the general experience has been that the award loses its status and value and that the next highest state-wide award becomes the common goal of students. State-wide certification has the advantage of allowing ready comparison between the results of students in all parts of the state. If it were replaced by individual school certification, it seems likely that students from less well-known schools would be at a disadvantage in comparison with those from better-known and better-staffed schools in competing for jobs and for places in post-secondary educational institutions.*

It is already apparent in N.S.W. that the Higher School Certificate is now a prerequisite for many positions for which the School Certificate used to be adequate. Your Committee find this regrettable.

It is also a fact that the history and geography of N.S.W. education provide strong arguments in favour of School Certificates having statewide currency. Education in N.S.W. has always been thought of as a statewide, rather than as a local concern. Students from all parts of the State still look to Sydney, if not as a place to work or further their studies, then at least as the place where the criteria will be determined against which their own achievement certificates will be appraised. If a certificate would be no good in Sydney, then it is

perceived as being no good anywhere else in the state.

It might be feasible to establish the kinds of local education areas that exist in the U.K. and the U.S.A. in, say the Newcastle, Wollongong, and possibly Broken Hill areas, but nowhere else. Realistically it must be said that a School Certificate issued in New South Wales will continue to be only as good as it would be in Sydney.

12. *If State-wide certification is accepted as a desirable principle, the need for achieving comparability of awards across schools is a necessary corollary, and this leads to a second important question: How is comparability of awards to be achieved? Various methods are available for achieving comparability, and the advantages and disadvantages of these can be considered in the context of more detailed questions.*

13. *Are external examinations necessary to achieve comparability of awards? Achieving comparability of awards is facilitated by the use of external examinations, but can be successfully accomplished without their aid. This is readily evident in Queensland, where the Junior Certificate awards are determined on the basis of moderators' meetings in local school regions. Comparability of awards can also be obtained through the use of special tests applied to all of the relevant student group, which may take the form of reference tests in school subject areas as in New South Wales, comparability tests in basic skill areas as in Western Australia, or scholastic aptitude tests. Alternatively, comparability can be attained through consultation processes such as moderators' meetings or teachers consortiums, of the type referred to in paragraph 5.*

14. *It is a point of some note that an external examination is no longer used at the School Certificate level in any of the Australian states or territories. The seemingly popular demand for the reintroduction in New South Wales is probably a result of a number of factors:*

- (i) some general doubts about "standards" of education generated by the literacy and numeracy debate.*

- (ii) *some uneasiness about the fact that schools and teachers have greater freedom in their choice of topics within a syllabus, with less guarantee that all or most pupils will cover "essential" topics or skills.*
- (iii) *some dissatisfaction with the use of broadly-based reference tests to determine the pattern of awards in schools, and with the amount of time and effort involved in the use of the Mode B, C and D moderating procedures in 1975 and 1976.*
- (iv) *some dissatisfaction on the part of students, parents, teachers and employers about the absence of graded awards in subjects other than English and Mathematics.*
- (v) *some lack of confidence among the community in the validity of the school assessments of the level of achievement of students.*

The reintroduction of an external examination would constitute a relatively straightforward way of meeting many of these sources of dissatisfaction, and many teachers and parents would apparently be prepared to trade off these advantages of an external examination against its disadvantages. It is worthy of note that there was not very much support in the Board's survey for basing the School Certificate award entirely on an external examination. The preference for a composite system recognizes the advantages as well as the disadvantages of both external examination and internal assessment systems. Except perhaps in subjects with substantial practical components, the external examination appears to possess greater convenience and credibility as a moderating criterion than most of the other procedures employed. It could be effectively used in this way even if it counted for only 25% of the final award, but the 50/50 weighting would probably be necessary to meet the various sources of dissatisfaction set out earlier in this paragraph.

To the five reasons advanced by Professor Spearritt for the seemingly popular demand for the reintroduction of an examination for the School Certificate in New South Wales, your Committee would add another which we think is very important. As an accident of historical timing,

the abolition of the external examination in New South Wales corresponded very closely with one of the worst periods of youth unemployment since the Depression. When employers are faced with many more applicants than they have jobs available, they are forced to select. Selecting or culling is not easy. Employers like to have the task simplified as much as possible for them, and the more grades or other achievement awards they have to add or juggle in some way the more objective their selection methods appear to be. Parents, too, perceive their children's School Certificates to be potentially valuable documents when they are negotiating with a prospective employer. The present School Certificate, which carries number grades in just two subjects, does not constitute a very impressive set of credentials. Employers, parents and students believe they would be better served by a School Certificate which bears the detail of information that used to be produced when there was an examination. There is a correlation, and therefore an apparent causal connection, between the demise of the examination and the increase in youth unemployment. The naive but understandable reaction is that unemployment might go away if the examination returned.

It is very likely that if the move to full school-based assessment had occurred in a period of full employment, as it did in other States, there would have been much less pressure for a return to an examination. Certainly, reinstating an examination will not lessen unemployment.

The question of examinations and credentials is taken up in the recently released Schools Commission publication: *Schooling for 15 & 16 Year Olds*.

15. *The procedures which have been used in New South Wales and other Australian states for establishing comparability of awards are quite acceptable from a technical point of view. They include school-selected reference tests and item banking procedures, which have the advantage of allowing schools greater freedom in their approach to the syllabus. But the additional time and effort involved in their use is a disadvantage, and they are likely to have less community acceptability because of the less clearly apparent relationship between the syllabus and the assessment measures employed. Regional marking of samples of work and moderators' meetings can also be effective, but are very time-consuming and these procedures are not entirely free of teacher criticism.*

16. *The Select Committee's terms of reference cover a question of broader educational significance concerning the education of students in the first four years of secondary school. Under the Act, the present School Certificate requires that a student complete a four-year course. In Western Australia, provision has been made for students who leave school before completing Year 10 to receive the Board of Secondary Education's Achievement Certificate, showing the student's achievements for every full year completed. This system allows certification to be given for work completed, and presumably has merit if a substantial proportion of students leave school before the end of Year 10, or if the school programme is seen to be falling short of the educational needs of many students. To the extent that the School Certificate courses are seen as providing a comprehensive and well-balanced four-year educational programme for all students in secondary schools, certification at the end of the complete course rather than at intermediate stages seems an appropriate goal for an education system.*

Professor Spearritt's final sentence strikes at a key issue. Since 1961, the first four years of secondary education have been perceived of as comprising a well-balanced, comprehensive and self-contained educational program sufficient for all except those who intend proceeding to tertiary studies. To this extent, it does seem appropriate to let the School Certificate stand as a kind of signal of completeness, as a reward for the student who has successfully negotiated a well-defined stage in life.

Your Committee doubt whether the first four years of secondary education still stand as a well-defined and integral phase in the life of every adolescent, to be entered once and left once at predetermined ages. It is much more likely we have entered a phase in which the kinds of educational experiences previously provided in a self-contained, four-year package should be available in an on-going form for all citizens. The next two decades are likely to see an increase in unemployment to the stage where many people will rarely if ever hold down a permanent job as we knew it, an increase in permanent part-time work, and a need for frequent retraining for most citizens. At the same time, there will be an increase in the number of empty school buildings and unemployed teachers as teenage enrolments decline.

Your Committee believe that there is not only an opportunity, but an imminent need, to change the whole concept of schooling. Instead of remaining places where people are assigned for four years while they grow up, schools could become integral parts of the social fabric, accessible to all. They could become places for the people to enter as the need arises, not only teenage people, but all people. They could become places where people spend part of their time each week, the other parts being devoted to part time work and leisure. They could become places where people spend all of their time for six or twelve months while they acquire the new skills needed for the new jobs, their old skills having been rendered obsolete by the latest technological advance. They could become places upon which leisure is centred, especially at nights when most school buildings do nothing to justify the high cost of their construction. They could become community schools in the full sense of the term.

Should this kind of school ever come about, as surely it must, the concept of a four-year educational program in which everybody follows a conceptually similar course and receives a conceptually similar certificate as a sign of completion will make no sense at all. What would make sense would be a certificate which describes as accurately as possible what the student had achieved or experienced. This kind of certificate would be no less appropriate for the 35-year-old who successfully completed a six month course in using a word processor, and who at the same time took the opportunity to learn the guitar for personal pleasure, than for the sixteen-year-old who spent four unbroken years at school and successfully completed a wide range of courses, or the fifteen-year-old who completed a lesser number of courses and then left school for the time being to take a job which became available, and returned 5 years later to undertake additional training.

Your Committee believe that it is time to take the first tentative steps towards a new concept of secondary schooling in which people above the legal leaving age are free to come and go as needs arise, all the while having their credentials updated by a certificate which grows as the number of successfully completed courses grows. For this reason, your Committee will recommend that the School Certificate should cease to be a document awarded just once on the completion of a self-contained four year program, and that it should be replaced with an accurate, cumulative record of success, always available to its owner, and never complete.

Your Committee would like to acknowledge the great assistance we received from Professor Spearritt's objective and thorough account of the developments since 1961 from the point of view of the Secondary Schools Board. It helped the Committee enormously to improve our understanding of the present position.

CHAPTER 3: THE PRESENT POSITION

Responsibility for the School Certificate is virtually in the hands of the Secondary Schools Board which was established under the Education Act of 1961 with the following functions and duties:

- (a) to make recommendations to the Minister in relation to matters connected with or concerning the conduct of any examinations required to be attempted by candidates for school certificates and the award of such certificates;
- (b) to make such arrangements as may be necessary for the conduct of those examinations, and to regulate the conduct of those examinations;
- (c) to advise the Minister on the courses of study to be followed by pupils in secondary schools and by candidates for school certificates, regard being had to the requirements of a sound general education and to the desirability of providing a variety of curricula adequate to meet the varying aptitudes and abilities of pupils concerned, and to authorise the grant of school certificates;
- (d) to appoint for each subject of the secondary school curriculum committees for the purpose of recommending to the Secondary Schools Board the content of any such course of study.

The original Act provided for a Board of 20 members. Following a 1978 amendment which added two positions to the Board, a nominee of organizations of employees and a nominee of organizations of employers, the full Board now comprises 22 persons who, except in the case of ex-officio members, are appointed by the Governor. The amended Act specifies that of the members so appointed:

- * three shall be appointed from nominations made by the governing bodies of the universities, and by the colleges of advanced education, within this State in the manner prescribed;
- * six shall be persons who are officers of the Department of Education associated with primary and secondary education;

- * one shall be the person for the time being holding office as the Director of Technical and Further Education;
- * one shall be a person who, in the opinion of the Minister, can, by his knowledge and experience, advance the full development of the examination procedures of the Secondary Schools Board;
- * one shall be a principal teacher of secondary schools for boys (other than Roman Catholic Schools) registered under this Act, nominated in the manner prescribed as representative of such schools;
- * one shall be a principal teacher of secondary schools for girls (other than Roman Catholic Schools) registered under this Act, nominated in the manner prescribed as representative of such schools;
- * one shall be a person nominated in the manner prescribed as representative of the Roman Catholic Secondary Schools for boys registered under this Act;
- * one shall be a person nominated in the manner prescribed as representative of the Roman Catholic Secondary Schools for girls registered under this Act;
- * four shall be persons, having the prescribed qualifications, nominated by the Council of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation;
- * one, nominated by the Minister, shall be a person who is a member of a parents and citizens association or a like organisation;
- * one shall be a person nominated in the manner prescribed by the prescribed organisations of employees; and
- * one shall be a person nominated in the manner prescribed by the prescribed organisations of employers.

Since 1961, the Act has undergone several other amendments. With the exception of the following, these have mostly been of a minor nature:

"8. (3) *The Secondary Schools Board shall not exercise any power, authority, duty or function so as to introduce or seek the introduction of any new policy or to change the overall planning, allocation or use of educational*

resources, unless it has first consulted with the Education Commission of New South Wales concerning the proposed introduction or change of policy."

Neither the Secondary Schools Board nor its companion body, The Board of Senior School Studies which is responsible for the Higher School Certificate, is an autonomous body. Each board commands a small secretarial staff provided by the Public Service Board, but otherwise has neither funds nor staffing allocated to it. The Department of Education, working mainly through its Examinations and Scholarships Division, provides the funds and resources necessary to implement the board's policies.

This arrangement is presently under review quite independently of your Committee. In 1978, Dr Keeves and Professor Parkyn were commissioned to conduct an enquiry into the Higher School Certificate. One of their recommendations had major implications for the functioning of the Board of Senior School Studies, and in response to that recommendation certain proposals for reform are currently under consideration. It is not possible for your Committee to say what will be the outcome of those deliberations, but it is possible that change will occur in the manner in which support services are provided to both study boards in the near future.

PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE AWARD OF THE SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

These may be divided into two groups, those specified in the Act, and those determined by the Board in areas where responsibility is devolved on it by the Act.

Requirements Specified in the Act

The requirements specified in the Act can be conveniently regarded as three in number. The first requirement is that all candidates for School Certificates shall

"have attended for a period of at least four years a secondary or composite school, or a school registered as prescribed under this Act, and have participated at that school in courses of studies deemed by the Board to be appropriate in relation to the grant of School Certificates;"

Whereas all government schools are granted the status of a "registered school" automatically, non-government schools have to be inspected before they acquire that status. The fact that these inspections are carried out by inspectors of the Department of Education misleads some people into believing that it is the Department which grants or withholds registration. The fact is that Departmental inspectors are required to manage two hats, and when they inspect non-government schools they do so not as Departmental inspectors, but as agents of the Board. As we have pointed out in other places, the Boards control no personnel or material resources, and they have to rely on the Department of Education to implement their policies. Just as they depend on the Department to provide personnel and funds to conduct examinations, so they must rely on the Department's inspectorate staff to verify that non-government schools meet the requirements for registration. The procedures followed when non-government schools are considered for registration seem to us to work very well. In an area where stress might be expected, the indications are that awkward situations either do not arise or are handled in such a way that potential problems never become real problems. Students are not deprived of opportunities to acquire public credentials because of the school they attend. The relationships which have been established among the various school systems and educational authorities reflect very favourably on those responsible. We believe that the registration procedures presently employed should continue to be employed. However the anomalous situation whereby government schools are automatically granted "registered school" status needs further consideration.

A second requirement on candidates for the School Certificate is that they shall have been

"accepted by the Board as having been assessed, in accordance with rules made under Section 8A, as having satisfactorily completed those courses of studies;"

This requirement says nothing about who should be responsible for carrying out the assessment, nor is Section 8A specific on this point. There is no doubt that the Board was competent to devolve responsibility for assessment on schools, as it has done progressively since 1968. However, the wording of Section 8A suggests that the Act anticipated that the Board would itself carry out the assessment via some form of public examination, as indeed was the practice in one form or another until 1974.

The Committee believe that the reference in the second requirement to students "having satisfactorily completed those courses of studies" has created problems which have not been solved. This reference assumes that the question of whether a certificate should be granted cannot arise until a candidate has "completed" a course, an assumption which is good in a context where the end of a course is marked by a major event such as an external examination. In the absence of such an event, it is difficult to determine when a course has been completed, except arbitrarily, and the Board has felt compelled to make such an arbitrary determination. One result has been that the Board's inability under the Act to grant a certificate to students who fail to complete a course now seems to smack of bureaucratic obstinacy where before 1974 it seemed to be logical. This is an area where change is needed. Your Committee will argue that there is now a need for students to be granted acknowledgment of whatever they have achieved, and that the question of whether they have been able to "complete" a four-year course should not be considered.

The third major requirement on candidates for the School Certificate is contained in Part III 5. (2A) which provides that

"Where a pupil's attendance, conduct or progress at any school referred to in subsection (2) has been of such an unsatisfactory character that the granting of a school certificate to him is not, in the opinion of the Secondary Schools Board, justified, the Board shall not grant the certificate to him."

In discharging its responsibilities under this part of the Act, the Board requires each school principal to certify that the conduct, attendance and progress of all students have been satisfactory. When a principal is not prepared to provide the certification, a report must be submitted to the Board. Each December, the Board engages in the time-consuming task of considering individually each student who is the subject of a "Rule 5 Report". In most cases, the Board is prepared to make a decision on the facts provided by the school principal, but there are always some cases where the decision is delayed while the Board seeks additional information.

"Progress" is seldom cited in Rule 5 Reports, but "attendance" and "conduct" are cited frequently. Because the Board has been unable to determine objective criteria against which students' conduct and attendance should be judged, many difficulties of interpretation are

encountered. In the case of attendance, for example, the Board believes that school principals should be free to judge each case on its merits. A student who has to travel long distances over rough country roads subject to frequent flooding must be judged more leniently than a student who faces only a short walk to school. A student with a chronic medical problem whose absences are supported by medical certificates must be judged differently from a student whose absences remain unexplained, or whose explanations are inadequate.

Conduct and attendance play a very important role in the determination of eligibility for a School Certificate. In the opinion of many, it is too important. There are at least three reasons why their legislated importance may be unacceptable. First, they are not amenable to the specification of objective criteria. Second, as presently handled under the Act, they allow the Board no discretion in respect of the penalty that should be applied. A student who is judged to be unsatisfactory in respect of attendance, conduct and progress receives nothing. The Board is not empowered to grant a lesser credential to the student; it is an all or nothing situation. Third, as conduct and attendance are quite different from achievement, it is not sensible to try to incorporate them all into a single judgment. If a School Certificate is regarded as a certificate of achievement, then what it says should be determined solely on the basis of what the student has achieved. It makes no sense to withhold a certificate of achievement from an able student for a reason that has nothing to do with achievement, for to do so is equivalent to misleading the community. When an able student is denied a certificate because of unsatisfactory conduct or attendance the community is likely to misinterpret the lack of a certificate as evidence of inability to handle school work.

There is a need to define clearly what a School Certificate is meant to be. If it is meant to constitute a record of achievement, then what it reports must not be confounded by attempts to evaluate other attributes simultaneously. Your Committee are not suggesting that conduct and attendance, nor indeed any other personal attributes of students, should not be considered when a credential is being prepared. We are suggesting that if credentials take account of disparate attributes, then each attribute should be assessed independently of the others.

Requirements determined by the Secondary Schools Board

Section 8 of the Act devolves certain functions and duties on the Secondary Schools Board. In performing these functions and discharging these duties, the Board has developed rules and procedures governing the award of the School Certificate, most of which relate to the courses which

candidates must follow, and to the assessment and reporting of student achievement. The Board publishes its rules and requirements each year in a booklet known as "The School Certificate Manual".

Concerning courses, the Board's rules still require all candidates to follow a subjects-based core curriculum quite like that recommended in the Wyndham Report of 1957. The major requirements are listed below.

- (a) Candidates must satisfactorily study at least five subjects.
- (b) English, Mathematics and Science are compulsory.
- (c) It is also compulsory for candidates to present at least one subject from the social studies area. They may choose from History, Geography, Social Science, Asian Social Studies and Commerce; or they may follow a combined course chosen from two or more of these, if the School wishes to offer it.
- (d) In addition to the four compulsory subjects, and the one or two elective subjects which most students present, all candidates must have "adequate experience" in Physical Education, Music, Art and Craft.

The Board requires that all of its subjects shall be studied for at least two years. To overcome certain technical problems caused by students who transfer during Years 9 and 10, and who might miss a couple of weeks study in a course should the transfer necessitate a change in subject choice, the Board in recent years has interpreted "two years study" as "five consecutive terms including the whole of Year 10".

Until 1980, "subject" referred only to disciplines or areas of study in which there was an approved Board syllabus. This meant that all candidates spent virtually all of their time studying from 5 to 7 subjects according to syllabuses issued by the Board; in addition, they usually spent 1 or 2 periods per week studying non-elective courses in Physical Education, Art, Craft and Music, this latter requirement being waived in the case of a student who elected to study a full Board syllabus in Art, Music, or a craft-related subject such as Technics, Industrial Arts, Home Science or Textiles and Design.

This arrangement also meant that, except to the extent that individual syllabuses now allow teachers considerable freedom of interpretation, all students studying a subject were studying the same version

of that subject. No matter where in N.S.W. the subject English, for example, was being taught, it was the Board syllabus in English. Two changes in recent years are of importance here. The first is that Board syllabuses themselves have, since the mid-seventies, allowed teachers so much freedom of interpretation that the English courses offered in two schools can be quite different. There are no longer any prescribed texts; there is no longer any specified grammar. Some schools still offer English courses that resemble closely those that used to be taught in the fifties and sixties; others offer courses which present English more as a dynamic form of immediate communication than as a disciplined form of study. Schools which have accepted the new freedom are more likely to offer students opportunities to gain experience in the modern communications media, or in the specialized language of sub-culture groups including advertisers and propagandists, than to require them to pursue stylised studies of classic works of literature. Similar freedoms exist in most current Board syllabuses.

The second change is the introduction from 1981 of School Courses. The Board will now approve certain courses developed in schools, and grant them the status of School Certificate courses. Candidates for the School Certificate must still present the four compulsory subjects - English, Mathematics, Science and a social science - in accordance with the Board syllabuses, but as their fifth and subsequent subjects they may present School Courses in several different ways. They may present as a "subject":

- i. A School Course studied for at least five consecutive terms including the whole of Year 10.
- ii. A School Course studied for three terms in Year 9 and a different School Course studied for three terms in Year 10.
- iii. A Board Course studied for three terms in Year 9 and a School Course studied for three terms in Year 10.

This reform means not only that for the first time a candidate can gain recognition for a course other than a Board developed course, but that recognition will be given for courses of less than two years' duration.

Assessment of Student Achievement

The Board presently imposes two major assessment requirements on candidates. In all subjects, candidates must satisfactorily study

the course for the minimum specified time, and in English and Mathematics they must be graded on a five-point scale. In both cases, the onus is on the school to carry out the assessment. The Board requires schools to make recommendations concerning each candidate, and in the large majority of cases these recommendations are accepted by the Board, whereupon they become official "results".

In respect of the first requirement, schools have to consider three separate aspects of each candidate's performance: effort, achievement, and whether the candidate has completed the course. For reasons discussed elsewhere, the Board believes it is required to determine a date, usually the last Friday in November or the first Friday in December, on which studies for the School Certificate will be deemed to have been completed. Candidates who leave school before that date, especially if their reason for leaving is to enter employment, are almost always deemed to have failed to complete the School Certificate course. Such students receive no School Certificate, nor any other form of Board certification of achievement. The Board's view is that it is required under the Act to grant certificates to candidates who, among other things, have completed the Board's course, and that it has no power to grant certificates to students who fail to complete its course.

Your Committee see no point in debating whether the Board's interpretation of its statutory requirement is sound. Presumably the Board has taken competent advice in this regard. However, your Committee must comment on what seems to it to be an anomalous situation in that students with an otherwise perfect attendance record over four years can be deprived of all forms of official recognition of their achievement if they leave school a few days before the arbitrarily determined last day of School Certificate studies.

For students who "complete the course" by attending to the last day, schools are required to assess their effort and achievement; that is, to determine in the case of each subject presented whether it has been "satisfactorily studied". In the 1980 School Certificate Manual, the Board provides the following definition of "satisfactorily studied":

A student will be considered to have satisfactorily studied a subject if, in the school's view, there is sufficient evidence that the student has by effort and achievement indicated that he/she has followed the course laid down by the Board. If such evidence does not exist the school will apply the N indicator.

The effect of the N indicator in a subject is to cause that subject not to appear on the School Certificate. A student who receives an N indicator is regarded as never having done the subject.

That the concept of satisfactory study has been recognized by the Board as a difficult one is shown by the fact that nearly three pages of the 1980 Manual are devoted to explaining it. That explanation is reproduced in full in Appendix 5, and your Committee see no point in analysing it in detail. We do wish to say that along with the concept of "completing a course", the concept of "satisfactorily studied" seems to create more problems than it solves, and we suggest each concept should be abandoned.

We wish to spell out part of our concern about the effect of the N-indicator because it relates to our broader concern about the method traditionally used for reporting achievement on public certificates. Results in external examinations have traditionally been reported by what can be called subject-bound, terminal, global indices. They are subject-bound in that they refer to a clearly defined subject that has usually been studied for several years; they are terminal in that they report what the student appeared to be able to do at the end of the course rather than what he or she did during the course; they are global in that they compress into a single result (or index) all of the available information about the student's achievement in all components of the subject. Global indices, especially when they are summed into an aggregate score as occurs in the Higher School Certificate, are very useful when the purpose of the examination is to facilitate selection of students for employment or further study because they enable students to be arranged in orders-of-merit. They do not, however, provide direct information about what students can actually do, especially in the component skills which go to make up the subject. Indeed, they can easily suppress information which in some cases may be most valuable.

For example, when teachers assess the achievement of their students in English they take account of many component skills including *listening, speaking, reading* and *writing*. They may even sub-divide these components; under *writing* they may make separate assessments of the students' ability to write straight forward accounts, to sustain a point of view, to criticize literary works or to write for emotional effect. When all of these separate sources of information are summed into a global index in English, it is no longer possible for the result to identify the student's special strengths and weaknesses. When confronted with an average result, the only conclusion which the consumer can draw is that as the student is average overall, it is probable that he or she is average at every aspect of English. In many cases, this conclusion will be safe,

but it may not be. Further, the more unrelated the components the less safe the conclusion.

The N-indicator is an outstanding example of a global index which tries to do too much. It has to take account not only of *achievement* in all components of a subject, but also of the student's *effort*. "One without the other is not sufficient". We wonder what schools make of students who try very hard for four years but achieve very little, or what is even more worrying, of students who display a high level of achievement at the end of Year 10 with no effort at all! Strictly each should be given the N-indicator in which case the subject would not appear on the School Certificate; if the subject were compulsory, there would not even be a School Certificate.

It may be possible to justify the use of subject-bound, terminal, global indices in the Higher School Certificate because that examination is not compulsory and is intended to have a selection function. The School Certificate is intended mainly for students who remain at school only until shortly after they are old enough to leave. It is an award which largely covers the years of compulsory schooling. We believe that the principles which govern the way in which the achievement of students is reported on that certificate ought to be different from those which govern the present Higher School Certificate.

In general, we believe the earlier certificate should aim to describe what students achieved during the time they were at school under compulsion, that the description should be as straight-forward and in as much detail as possible, and that it should not be concerned with placing students in a terminal order-of-merit. We believe, further, that the certificate should be a record of achievement, not a certificate of involvement, and that it should not allow the assessment of achievement to be confounded with considerations of students' attitudes, of which *effort* is an example. We do not say that students' attitudes are unimportant; we merely say they should not be allowed to get in the way when achievement is being assessed and reported. Attitudes and involvement should be reported in a separate context, if at all.

In summary, we return again to a view we will emphasize throughout this report. The rules which govern the award of the School Certificate assume that that certificate is one of a kind with the Higher School Certificate, and that the appropriate way to report achievement on the School Certificate is to use subject-bound, terminal, global indices of achievement. We reject this view, and therefore we must recommend that the rules for the School Certificate be completely recast.

Grades in English and Mathematics

In any subject, including English and Mathematics, a school may recommend that the N-indicator be applied, in which case the student is deemed not to have presented that subject. The difference with English and Mathematics is that students are also awarded a grade from 1 to 5. A School Certificate therefore lists English and Mathematics with a grade associated with each, and the names only of other subjects presented provided that a subject is not named if the N-indicator was applied. The N-indicator is used sparingly, especially in English and Mathematics where over 99% of those who complete the course qualify for a grade.

The method by which the grades in English and Mathematics are assigned is widely misunderstood. In July, all Year 10 students sit for "Reference Tests" in English and Mathematics. These tests differ from external examinations in the use made of the results. The results of individual students are never divulged and an individual's result on the test is not used directly in determining his or her grade. For each school, a pattern-of-awards is determined by *reference* to the performance of that school on the test. This pattern indicates how many awards the school should make at each of the five grades; it does not indicate which students should receive them. A school might be told to award 7 grade ones. It is entirely up to the school to determine which seven of its students should receive them.

In fact, a school is not told how many awards it *must* make at each grade, but how many it *ought to make* if there are no special conditions applying. As well as the pattern-of-awards, which reflects accurately how many of its students finished in each of the 5 divisions of the population on the Reference Test, each school's Grading Advice contains a tolerance. Schools may invoke the tolerance at each of the grades to vary slightly up or down the number of awards they actually make. The tolerance allows schools to cope with awkward positions such as could arise if strict adherence to the patterns-of-awards forced students of equal achievement to be awarded different grades.

A detailed account of how Reference Tests are used to generate Grading Advice is given in Appendix 6. In brief, a school is entitled to award:

one grade 1 for every one of its students who finishes in the top 10% of the State on the Reference Test;

one grade 2 for every one of its students who finishes in the next 20% of the State on the Reference Test;

the last day of Year 10. The Result Notices do not become an official statement until signed by the Principal of the school. As the results are intended to be terminal indices of achievement accurate as at the last day, principals have the right to change their recommendations up to the time they sign the Result Notice and issue it to the candidate.

After the Result Notices have been issued, students have until the end of the normal school year in which to lodge an appeal against the grades recommended by the school. Whereas School Appeals give schools an opportunity to appeal against the number of awards which the Secondary Schools Board allows them to make, Student Appeals give students an opportunity to appeal against the school's decision concerning which students were most entitled to the available awards. Student Appeals must be lodged through the school, but they are heard by a special executive committee of the Board, usually immediately before Christmas.

Result Notices are not School Certificates. School Certificates are not printed until several months into the New Year when the Board has finalised all outstanding appeals and ruled on all outstanding questions of eligibility under the rules. However, Result Notices for virtually all students contain information identical with that which ultimately appears on the School Certificate. The School Certificate is really a second copy of the Result Notice presented on more impressive paper, and many of those who leave school at the end of Year 10 do not bother to return to school to collect their certificates.

CHAPTER 4: PROBLEMS IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM

Throughout the earlier chapters of this report, we have implied judgments about the present School Certificate system as we discussed its history and mechanics. In this chapter we will attempt to bring together most of the problems which have been raised with us, and following an evaluation of those problems we will develop some principles which we believe should guide any restructuring of the procedures leading to the award of a public certificate of achievement.

1. Exceptional Children. Many witnesses believe that the present system cannot cater adequately for exceptional children. The term *exceptional children* embraces not only those with special learning difficulties including those who are disabled in some way, but those with special talents. It is clear to us that our community is very fortunate in the *calibre* of those teachers who work with disabled students, though not in their *number*. In this regard we can do little more than to applaud the outstanding work which is done for those disabled students fortunate enough to gain access to specialised teaching, and to deplore the fact that so many other equally deserving children are denied access for several reasons including the shortage of specialised teachers. We note that there are important differences of opinion regarding how best to cater for both the disabled and the exceptionally talented. Nevertheless, we are convinced that the existing School Certificate frustrates attempts to deliver appropriate educational care to the very quick and the very slow learners, and we have recommendations to make in this regard.

Even though the School Certificate no longer climaxes in a rigorous, end-of-course external examination, its rules continue to reflect the time when it did. Overlooking the most recent reforms of the Secondary Schools Board which have made it possible for candidates to gain credit for courses developed in schools, it is still a fact that all candidates have to follow largely similar course packages. A restricted number of subjects have to be studied to completion and all students are expected to emerge with similar experiences and achievements. The granting of a School Certificate is still an indication that a student has, with tolerable accuracy, managed to imitate those who in former years would have passed half-a-dozen predictable tests in a restricted range of subjects. It is a system which is completely unsuited to acknowledging those whose achievements do not match the stereotype, either because their achievements are different from those which examinations used to measure, or because they go well beyond them.

It is instructive to trace the way in which slow learners have been dealt with over the years. In the declining years of the Intermediate Certificate, the recognition that many students would not handle the normal academic subjects prompted the development of an Alternative Curriculum. Slower learners were able to be placed in special classes in which they could follow the special curriculum, and they could even acquire an Internal Intermediate Certificate. However, they could not proceed to the Leaving Certificate. For students who could not cope with the Alternative Curriculum, there was a General Activities course. During the late sixties and early seventies, students could enter for the School Certificate at Advanced, Ordinary or Modified Level. Virtually all of those who would previously have followed the General Activities curriculum either left school before completing Year 10, or found a place in a "proper" School Certificate class doing Modified Level. In the latter seventies, School Certificate awards have ceased to acknowledge levels and all candidates have been graded as part of a common population. As the grading is normative, it is inevitable that those who would in earlier systems have followed an Alternative Curriculum or a Modified Level course, *and may have received a credential which acknowledged that fact*, now pre-empt grade 5 and possibly grade 4. Not only is there a depressing inevitability about their result, but in order to gain even it they must follow an approved Secondary Schools Board course in at least Years 9 and 10. In the opinion of many teachers, the courses followed by the slow learners are as inappropriate as their results are soul-destroying. The existing rules force all students to undergo a preparation that is really only appropriate for the large group of middle-order candidates, if indeed it is appropriate for them.

The exceptionally talented students, too, are not well served by the existing system. If the slower learners are disadvantaged by being required to demonstrate kinds of achievement which might not represent the best use of their talents, the talented students are placed in a position where there is at least no immediate recognition of their special achievements, and where it may even be in their best interests to suppress their talents. For example, a student who could finish a Board course in a few months, *and did so*, would not be eligible for a School Certificate by virtue of not having studied it for the required time. We do not for a moment suggest that talented students who worked well beyond the Board course in Years 9 and 10 would be disqualified because of this technicality but we argue that the existing rules do little to encourage talented students to exploit their

special skills.

In general, we are satisfied that many teachers make excellent provision for exceptional students, but that they do so not because of the existing system, but notwithstanding it. We believe a better system would be one which encouraged all teachers to respond to the needs of their exceptional students, and which motivated all students to exploit their talents to the full by holding out the promise of official recognition of all their achievements.

In this year of the disabled person, we point out that the system we will propose makes it possible for disabled persons to receive adequate recognition of their achievements, even if none of those achievements correspond with those normally measured by external examinations and still assumed by the School Certificate.

2. The Value of the School Certificate as a Credential.

This is probably the only issue on which all witnesses agreed. Even the Secondary Schools Board has indicated that substantial change is needed for the School Certificate to regain any value as a credential. However, witnesses differed greatly in their opinion concerning how best to restore its value. For many, the only reform necessary is to reinstate the external examination. Because we have adverted to this possibility throughout the report, and because we have provided a detailed discussion in Appendix 7, we wish only to say at this stage that we cannot recommend that a traditional end-of-course, external examination (such as the so called "50-50" of 1968-74) should be reinstated. Elsewhere in this chapter we will comment on what we believe are mistaken ideas concerning certain specific virtues which external examinations are thought to have. We move straight to one of these.

3. The Effect of an External Examination on Student Motivation

Many witnesses, including teachers, argued that it is impossible to motivate students to work when there is no major, public examination at the end of the period of compulsory schooling. We found this view inadequate. It implies that schooling is nothing more than a kind of drawn-out, mass trial at the end of which rewards and punishments will be duly assigned. Other witnesses were more thoughtful when appraising the effects of the abolition of the external examination for the School Certificate. They pointed out that both recent history and the organization of the first four years of secondary schooling lead students and teachers to expect that there should be a major assessment event at the end of Year 10, and that it is the unrealized expectation that affects student performance and motivation. On this analysis, there seem to be two appropriate reforms available, either reinstate the major assessment event or change the students' expectations.

We favour the latter. We accept many of the detailed points made by witnesses, especially the teachers and students. We accept that students are entitled to have all of the following:

- (a) clear objectives expressed in terms of what achievement they will be expected to demonstrate;
- (b) regular opportunities to measure themselves, to track their own progress and to enjoy the feeling of having succeeded;
- (c) adequate "feed back" and special support when they are assessed so that they can make every instance of assessment a learning experience;
- (d) reasonable opportunities to confront again any challenges which found them wanting initially.

We believe schools already provide most of these, but they do so in a context in which they are overshadowed by the School Certificate. The School Certificate is public and permanent, and therefore is "for real"; the opportunities which schools provide are parochial and transient, and therefore do not matter. Students are not "turned on" by the practices internal to the school, and are "let down" by the School Certificate. (At this stage, we should record our indebtedness to the many students who helped us to understand their reactions to the present system, and who suggested a pertinent terminology for expressing them.) We propose that the way to remove the unsatisfying impact of the School Certificate is to abandon it, and the way to ensure that students are "turned on" by opportunities provided within schools is to make them "for real".

We should also say that the failure of the reforms of the Secondary Schools Board in the late seventies might have been averted if the perceptions described above had not been allowed to develop. In 1977 when the Board resolved to confine moderated grades to English and Mathematics, it requested schools to issue Supplementary Statements which would describe the achievements of students in other subjects in adequate detail. For reasons which it is pointless to discuss, schools' Supplementary Statements made no impact. Had they been perceived as worthwhile documents, the School Certificate would have been perceived as the Board intended it should, namely as just a part of each school leaver's credential. Because of the determination of the community at large to regard the School Certificate as the total credential, the Board felt compelled to restore its value by increasing the range of achievements it referred to, and hence it recommended the return of the 50-50 system last

used in 1974. We share the Board's aim but support a different system for achieving it.

4. The Diversity of the School Population. It is apparent to anybody who looks closely at today's secondary schools that a profound change has come over the student population, even when compared with only 20 years ago. We have pointed out that secondary education is now mass education with virtually 100% of each age cohort staying at school for 3 or 4 years beyond the primary level. This change alone is enough to ensure that the principles which guide decision-making must be revised from those which obtained at the time of the Wyndham Report. We suspect that the community-at-large has still not adjusted to the fact that secondary schools now cater for everybody; that significant proportions of each age group who would previously not have been considered as suitable for secondary education are now receiving it, and are contributing to the community's perception of what secondary schooling achieves. When secondary schools are accused of producing students of lesser achievement than the schools of 20 or 30 years ago, it is not always remembered that today's schools are being judged by the achievement of students who in former years were not available for judging.

There is another very important respect in which today's secondary student population differs from that of 20 or 30 years ago, namely its cultural diversity. Many schools now number substantial ethnic minorities among their enrolments, and schools in which more than half the enrolment come from homes in which English is not the first language are not uncommon. This fact appears to be still not appreciated by many members of the community who are accustomed to schools in which non-Australian students are still a rarity. We are satisfied that many of those who press for the reinstatement of traditional external examinations are motivated by the belief that schools should be as alike as possible, a belief they would not be able to cling to if they were fully aware of how unlike school populations have become. More than ever before, it is true to say that different schools serve quite different communities with quite different needs and values. For schools to be made uniform, one of those sets of needs and values would need to be chosen as the "proper" set, and imposed on all schools. The attempt to impose this kind of uniformity would be as unjust as it would be disastrous.

We cite community languages as a good example of an area in which schools need increased curricular and organizational freedom. There are many students who would benefit from being able to study community languages, but whose needs cannot be met by studying full academic courses in those languages. In many cases, examinable courses

of four years' duration are not available. Even where they are, such courses may have an orientation that does not suit the students. Examinable courses tend to be formal and based on literature. Many students need only the opportunity to develop their conversational skills to facilitate communication with their families. Students who would benefit from a short course that met a specific need might not be prepared to take a full course of several years if to do so would require dropping another subject. At present, short courses in community languages cannot be recognised on the public certificate of achievement, so they tend not to be offered in normal schools. Under our proposal, students who successfully completed one or two approved semester courses in a community language would receive recognition on their transcripts, and therefore they would be more likely to elect them as part of their normal school experience. The opportunity for students to take these courses as part of a normal school day, rather than having to take them as an after-hours or weekend activity, would be of great benefit to many students and their families.

With respect to uniformity of outcome, we believe it may be possible to delineate a core of skills and opportunities which all schools should acknowledge. For the rest, we accept the view, convincingly argued before us, that schools must be allowed to progress towards those common goals in their own ways.

5. Literacy and Numeracy. The opinion that standards of literacy and numeracy are not as high as they used to be is common. Indeed, it always has been! Throughout the last century, the standards of the day were found wanting when compared with a former golden age. Those very same standards then became the former golden age against which the standards of twenty years later were unfavourably compared. Either our educational achievements have steadily declined over more than a century, or else the critics have remembered imperfectly what was really achieved in each former golden age.

It has been argued that there is no reliable evidence about whether standards of literacy and numeracy are declining; that there is no test which has been administered in a comparable form to successive generations of students. Most evidence adduced in support of the view that standards are declining is anecdotal; for example, it is common to hear employers argue that today's school leavers do not read, write, spell and compute as well as they did 30 years ago. Even if their observations are accurate, their evidence takes no account of the kind of employee they attracted. In particular, it takes no account of the effect of the increasing secondary enrolment. Any employer in the habit of

taking on one of the weakest Leaving Certificate (or Higher School Certificate) candidates each year would have attracted the 1,400th best candidate in 1925, the 7,000th best candidate in 1955, but only the 32,000th best candidate in 1980.

Put more bluntly and even allowing for the population increase, the girl who now seeks employment as an unskilled clerical assistant would, in former years, have been put into service. The girl who used to become a shop assistant or typist is now training to be a diplomat, engineer or scientist.

One of the few witnesses to present well-researched evidence on standards was Mr Graham Little, Principal Lecturer in Curriculum Studies (English) of the Canberra College of Advanced Education. Mr Little was able to demonstrate to our satisfaction that higher and higher levels of proficiency are being required of an ever-increasing proportion of the population. That these increasing demands are being largely met suggests that overall the schools are continuing to improve their performance; that in an absolute sense, standards continue to improve. He also pointed out that while this is useful information for educational administrators who have to confront unthinking critics, it provides no justification for schools to rest on their laurels. Schools cannot afford simply to compare their achievements with those of a decade ago, however flattering the comparison, because they must meet today's needs. In particular, Mr Little identified the poor, the Aborigines, the migrants, and the physically and socially handicapped as sub-groups of the total population whose educational needs are not yet being adequately met.

There may well be certain specific skills, for example spelling, in which today's school leavers are no better, or even worse, than their predecessors. Spelling is an example of a skill whose relative importance must be realistically appraised bearing in mind the cost of improving it. The cost of reinstating hours of drill in spelling would be that other opportunities now provided to students would have to be foregone. The length of a school day remains constant, but the demands of society concerning what should be achieved at school continue to increase. We are satisfied that on no cost-benefit analysis could the reinstatement of even one daily mass period of intensive spelling be justified.

However the teaching of spelling within a course aimed specifically at improving a student's standard of written communication for a specific purpose (such as *Business English*) would be entirely justified.

6. External Examinations and Accountability of Schools.

Many witnesses suggested that external examinations provide the best, or even the only means by which schools can make themselves accountable to the community. This is an emotionally-charged issue and we want to say at once we are firmly committed to the view that schools ought to be accountable to the communities they serve. However, we do not accept that external examinations provide the best form of accountability. We do not even accept that they provide an adequate measure of accountability.

In essence, those who argue that external examinations provide a measure of accountability make the following assumptions:

- (a) If a school's examination results are satisfactory, so was the teaching.
- (b) If a school's examination results are not satisfactory, then neither was the teaching.
- (c) The best teaching of all occurs in schools which gain the best examination results.

These are invalid assumptions. They further assume that the only ways in which school populations vary is in the calibre of the teaching they receive, and that external examinations measure all of the worthwhile goals of education and nothing else. Obviously, neither of these is true. If a school obtains better-than-average results in an external examination, there are many other possible causes besides better-than-average teaching; for example, its students may have been well advanced in the examinable skills before entering secondary school, or their home and social environments may have had a greater-than-average impact on their ability to do the things which external examinations require.

If examination results alone were to be used to measure the competence of the teachers, then at the very least it would be necessary to establish not what the students knew by the time of the examination, but how much they had *improved* while in the teachers' care. That is, it would be necessary to examine them at the start of the secondary course as well as at the end, and to establish how much each student had *gained*. External examinations do not provide this kind of information. Even if they did, it would still not be possible to use the gain scores alone to make judgments about the quality of the teaching because there would be no way of establishing how much of the *gain* was due solely to the teaching, and how much to outside influences such as the home.

When all pertinent factors are considered, it is quite possible that a student who has been given the best teaching possible will still gain a poor examination result, and that another student whose teaching was quite ordinary will gain a good result. It is more than possible; it is inevitable, and more common than the community would realize.

Under no circumstances could external examinations alone be said to provide an adequate measure of the skill and dedication of teachers, and therefore it would be totally misleading to propose that examinations can provide the measure of accountability to which the community is entitled.

It is necessary to be cautious in the consideration of examinations and accountability. We do not say that examinations are bad things *per se*. Well-constructed tests remain very useful devices for establishing some of the facts about what students know and can do. What is bad is a naive belief in their ability to provide all of the information which is necessary before students and the teachers can be evaluated. Very often it is not the examination which is at fault, but its misuse. The use of an external examination to measure the worth of the teaching provided in a school would very often be a misuse, in our view.

7. Age Streaming versus Ability Grouping. In New South Wales schools, students have been traditionally placed in classes on the basis of their age. Except in unusual circumstances, it is most unlikely that a student will ever skip a Year, and it has become unlikely that a student will ever be required to repeat a Year. In secondary schools in particular, this has resulted in the progress of students occurring in what is known as "lock-step progression". At the end of each academic year, all Year 7 students move to Year 8, all Year 8's to Year 9, and so on. The move occurs in all subjects, and it occurs irrespectively of whether students are likely to be able to cope with the work normally required in the next Year.

Lock-step progression was criticized by many witnesses who claimed that it offers no incentive for the quicker students and pays no heed to the real needs of the slower students. It must also be said that lock-step progression has strong supporters, especially among those who believe that schools should be socializing institutions first and teaching institutions second. These witnesses typically argued that the primary purpose of schooling is to produce socially-secure adults, people who have well-worked-out belief and value systems, who can exercise judgment and who can establish soundly-based relationships with other people. They tend to see the teacher more as a facilitator of learning than a purveyor of knowledge with the major source of learning being the student's peer group.

They conclude that it is vital for students to be grouped with their age mates, even though this might produce a group displaying a vast range of academic aptitudes, because students of comparable age are most likely to be at equivalent stages of physical and emotional development and have similar interests.

Nevertheless, there were many witnesses who found fault with lock-step progression, and who tended to favour ability-grouping over age-grouping as the basis for organizing classes. There is ample evidence of their influence on school organization in the systems of graded classes within Years which many schools still use. Many schools still form their Year groups into classes graded on ability, and to be placed in the A class is still regarded as the ultimate acknowledgment by many students. Some schools now prefer colours, room numbers or teachers' initials to "A", "B", "C" ... or "1", "2", "3" ... for class names, and it is not immediately apparent whether this non-hierarchical nomenclature reflects an organization in which classes are truly non-graded, or one in which the school seeks to play down the fact that they are graded. Where the latter is the case it is likely that the students see through the device very quickly, whereupon "8 pink" becomes just as desirable as "8A".

Schools which employ graded classes perceive certain advantages. They can use promotion and demotion through the classes within a Year to acknowledge students who improve or decline; this offers a system of rewards and sanctions which some schools believe to be vital for student motivation. They can limit the spread of ability within each class; most teachers operate more efficiently when all students in a class are at roughly the same level of competence. They can tailor the courses which classes are given; when classes contain a wide range of student abilities, it is feared that whatever course is given will frustrate the slowest students and leave the quickest unchallenged.

There are problems also. Because of the need for all classes to be kept close to the minimum allowable size, some students may have to be placed in inappropriate classes. Quick students may have to be moved out of the "A" class because it is full; average students may have to be moved to the bottom class to build up its numbers. Sometimes, the promotion of a student to a higher class has to be at the expense of another student who must be demoted to make room. This can cause emotional tensions. Some witnesses believe that improving students might suppress their achievements to avoid being promoted where promotion could lead to the severing of long-standing friendships and the need to make new ones. When the several classes in a Year are graded, it is likely that high School Certificate grades will go to the top classes and low grades to the bottom classes.

This leads the lower classes in particular to expect that they will get all of the grade 5's no matter how hard they work, and many witnesses believe this has a disastrous effect on their motivation.

Perhaps the worst consequence of graded classes within Years occur in schools where it is necessary to associate elective availability with class or to "block" the timetable by treating parts of each Year as self-contained streams. In order to make the most efficient use possible of the available resources, many large schools used to resort to streaming the Year. The upper and lower halves of the Year, containing probably three classes each, would be treated as self-contained sets. Promotion and relegation was available among the three classes in the upper stream, and among the three classes in the lower stream, but crossing the boundary separating the streams posed considerable difficulties. Whereas any subject department could promote a student from F to G, from E to D, or even from C to A without having to consult other departments, the move from D to C - the move across the stream boundary - could only be made if all departments agreed. A student with special aptitude in one subject could be denied promotion because of weaknesses in other subjects. Sometimes, the move across the stream boundary was impossible because the upper stream and the lower stream followed different elective subjects; the requirement for Board elective subjects to be studied for two years meant that a late developer in Year 9 could not be promoted because the cost of promotion was changing the elective subjects studied which in turn breached the rules of the School Certificate.

In recent years, schools have given a great deal of attention to ways of organizing classes so that students can have maximum freedom of movement between classes and subjects. Yet two administrative barriers remain in the form of the rules for the School Certificate and the lock-step progression from Year to Year. We believe that schools should explore the possibility of forming classes that do not necessarily observe Year groupings; that in certain cases it might be preferable for classes to comprise students drawn from several Years rather than only students from within a Year. That is, we urge schools to consider basing their organization on ability-grouping rather than age-streaming.

The recommendations we have made are compatible with an ability-grouping organization. Indeed we believe that ability-grouping sits very easily with the new kind of school credential we have recommended. Nevertheless, ability-grouping is an organizational method which may not be acceptable in all communities and schools, and we point out that students in schools which use some other organization will be at no disadvantage with respect to gaining a Certificate of Secondary Education.

tendency for certain subjects to be regarded as inferior, not because of their low intrinsic worth but because of the role they play in the total school organization. Schools contribute in many ways to the regard in which students hold subjects. If a certain subject is always accorded fewer teaching periods than "normal" subjects, if it is often taken by a non-specialist member of staff who needs a couple of extra periods to make up a full week's work, if it is never included in school-wide programs of formal assessment, if it does not figure on the Speech Day prize list or if it is always the subject first thought of when volunteers are needed for some urgent job around the school, it is not surprising that students should regard it as relatively unimportant or second-class.

Many witnesses pointed out that subjects such as Physical Education, Art, Craft and Music are regarded as second-class subjects by many students, with a consequent deleterious effect on how well they are taught. The rules of the School Certificate require all candidates to have adequate experience in these subjects, and therefore they are compulsory. For students who do not elect full Board courses in Music, Art, or craft-related subjects, the "adequate experience" requirement is usually met by special "*non-examinable*" courses that occupy at most one or two periods per week. The term *non-examinable* is a leftover from the time when there was an external examination; it referred to subjects which were compulsory but which were not examined.

Sometimes the "non-examinables" provided students with rich and rewarding experiences, but often they posed unrealistic challenges to both students and teachers because of the very factors which operate when students perceive a subject as being of second-class status. Some teachers have expressed real concern about the impossibility of getting to know even the names of students whom they meet only once per week.

There are strong moves towards incorporating more and more non-traditional subjects into the curriculum, moves which we endorse in principle. Many schools have already begun to provide opportunities in areas such as Personal Development, Job Skills, Family Relationships and Consumerism, and because of the existing rules of the School Certificate these courses are often allocated only one or two periods per week. It would be a mistake to make too much of the fact that at this stage these courses are generally both popular and successful for they are still enjoying the benefits of being novel. We are concerned that in time they could also acquire a second-class status and begin to present some of the problems which the *non-examinables* presented.

Some of the causes of certain subjects being regarded as second-class spring from the attitudes of teachers and parents, and it would be naive to suppose that these can be recommended out of existence. There are others which arise from administrative decisions made within a school.

One that concerns us is the unequal allocation of time to subjects. We believe that much of the second-class subject syndrome would disappear if all subjects were allocated the same number of periods per week. We do not suggest that over a period of 3 or 4 years every subject should receive the same allocation of teaching time, but we do suggest that during any semester all subjects should receive the same period allocation. Where one subject needs less time in total than others, it should be offered full time for only one or two semesters rather than part time throughout the secondary years. Students who wish to study a particular subject in depth could take that subject each semester for 3 or 4 years, or even take two or more closely related courses in the one semester. Courses in such subjects as Job Skills or Personal Grooming would work more efficiently if they were made full courses for one semester than if they were allocated only one or two periods per week for a couple of years.

It is also important for all semester courses to be accorded equivalent esteem with respect to assessment. Most witnesses agreed that courses which pose no challenge to students tend to be treated with less respect than those which do. We believe that any course worth offering should specify the achievement which students will be expected to demonstrate, and that the credit which accrues to successful students should be fully acknowledged on the student's record-of-achievement.

9. Timetabling. We have referred to the constraining effect on subject choice and on the allocation of students to classes of certain kinds of school timetable. The community has little understanding of the complexity of the timetable in a typical secondary school. In the majority of schools, an accurate list of the students enrolled and the teachers available cannot be finalised until Term 1 is underway, and the job of constructing the final version of the timetable cannot begin until then. It is not uncommon for schools to be still struggling with the timetable several weeks after teaching began, and it frequently happens that class groupings and teachers' allocations have to be modified at that late stage to produce a workable timetable.

Our recommendations about equal allocations of periods to all courses, and about grouping students into classes on the basis of their ability rather than their age, have implications for school timetables. We have studied the implications and are satisfied that our recommendations will make the task of timetabling simpler rather than more complex.

10. Private Reporting and Public Reporting. Anyone who has to prepare a report must take account of the audience for whom it is intended. Schools are in an invidious position in that they have little control over who will read the reports they prepare on students. Their

reports are intended for parents but often they are handed on to employers and others. This can lead to two undesirable outcomes. Sometimes schools refrain from including valuable information on reports for fear that it might be misunderstood by an employer, thereby damaging the student's employment prospects. Sometimes this very fear is realized, and students' employment prospects are damaged by comments which the school made in the belief that they would not be sighted by an employer.

For many reasons, we believe that employers should not have access to the reports which schools prepare for parents. At the same time, we accept that neither the School Certificate nor a school's Supplementary Statement provides the employers with as much information as they would like, nor as much as they are entitled to. We have recommended that the Certificate of Secondary Education should provide a complete record of a student's achievements in school courses, and we believe that employers should have access to this information. We have also recommended that the Certificate of Secondary Education should contain information about a student's other achievements, and we believe that employers should have access to this information as well. This information will have been prepared by schools in the knowledge that it will become part of a public certificate; in preparing it, schools will have been well aware of its intended audience and will have prepared it accordingly.

We do not believe that employers or anyone else apart from the students' parents should have access to other information provided by a school about the student. Any additional information provided by schools will normally take the form of regular written reports, issued in most cases at half-yearly intervals, or special contacts by way of personal letters to or interviews with parents. In all these cases, schools are entitled to believe that the information is for the private use of the parents, and the parents are entitled to expect full and frank disclosure. Neither of these will be met while the fear persists that information intended for one audience might be made available to another.

We believe it necessary to draw a sharp distinction between private and public reporting, and we recommend that the Privacy Committee be requested to develop guidelines for the assistance of all users of school-provided information. We further recommend that the Certificate of Secondary Education issued to school leavers, and the transcript of a student's record-of-achievement issued at other times, should be the only forms of public reporting required of schools.

Concerning private reporting, we believe that each school should develop the procedures that suit it best secure in the knowledge that private reports should not go beyond the student's parents. Schools which have developed a satisfactory procedure for reporting to parents should not be required to alter it.

11. Continuing Education and Access to Education. The view that a person's education should not cease when the time has come to leave school is now commonplace. Sociologists confidently predict that in the near future people will need to change jobs several times throughout their lives as the onrush of technology renders existing jobs obsolete and creates new ones. Continuing education is also proposed as an approach to the problem of people who may be unemployed for long periods, or perhaps employed only part time. At least two additional tasks, therefore, are being proposed for educational systems in the rest of this century: retraining people for new jobs, and teaching people how to make good use of increased leisure time.

Many witnesses argued that schools could and should help to meet these needs. In general, they proposed that schools should become more involved with their communities. In particular, they pointed to instances where schools already provide their facilities for evening courses, or strike agreements with local businesses so that work experience programs can be conducted. There are even cases where schools take adults into their normal day-time classes. The Department of Education is now giving increasing attention to the needs of the wider community in the design of its buildings. Concord High School, for example, has been designed as a true community facility.

We applaud these initiatives, but we consider that much remains to be done before the adult population in particular has adequate access to education. It is likely that no single agency or system will ever acquire total responsibility for continuing education, and that at the very least the tertiary systems will continue to play the major role. If secondary schools are to be involved in its provision, as we think they should, then the next decade is likely to be a period during which the Department of Education, the Department of Technical and Further Education, the various autonomous tertiary institutions and the numerous private agencies involved in education or training gradually evolve appropriate roles for themselves. We are unable to predict those roles, and therefore we can make no recommendations concerning precisely what kinds of opportunities ought to be provided, and by whom.

We nevertheless point out that the kind of credential we have recommended is one which could continue to grow throughout a person's adult life. Technically, it would be possible for an adult's later achievements to be added to his earlier record-of-achievement, and we believe there are good reasons why this should happen. There would be administrative problems associated with defining those later achievements which would be appropriate for inclusion on an adult's record-of-achievement, but we believe these could be overcome. If the attempt were to be made, we would consider that success in all significant courses should be acknowledged including those courses taken for interest as well as those taken for personal advancement.

One illustration of what we have in mind is readily available. It is possible for people on unemployment benefits to engage in up to 8 hours of formal learning per week. If secondary schools could provide places for the unemployed to take one or two semester courses on a part time basis, then credit for any such courses successfully completed should be added to the student's record-of-achievement. This would provide at least some tangible acknowledgment of the fact that an unemployed person's life was not pointless. The addition of a few well-chosen courses to a person's record-of-achievement might even increase his or her prospects of gaining employment.

It is not within the competence of this Committee to make recommendations on how the existing educational facilities should be pressed into the service of the unemployed, and of adults generally, but it is an area we commend for urgent study.

12. Comparability of Awards. It will already be apparent that our recommendations concerning how courses should be provided, and in particular how student achievement should be assessed and reported, are recommendations for change. In one important respect the change will be regarded as threatening by many people, namely in the apparent loss of comparability of awards which students will receive. There are many who believe that the major purpose of a public certificate of achievement is to convey messages to the community about what school leavers can do, and they point out that for the messages to be trustworthy all certificates must speak a common language. Comparability of awards is a situation which exists when all schools use the language of description in the same way; when "grade 1" describes students of comparable achievement irrespective of the schools they attended.

The expression "comparability of awards" gained currency only when schools were given the right to contribute to public examination results

via assessments or estimates. When public certificates of achievement reported only the results obtained on external examinations, it was assumed that all students had been assessed "comparably" by those who marked the papers. The question of whether the results from different schools were comparable did not arise. When the results had to incorporate assessments or estimates emanating from different schools, it was recognized that there was a need to adjust the school-provided results to take account of the fact that different schools use marks with different meanings. The general term used to connote the methods by which results from different sources are adjusted is "moderation". While the term "moderation" also gained in currency only in the days of the 50/50 School Certificate (1968 onwards), moderation has been a feature of public examinations ever since marks in individual subjects were added together to produce an aggregate. This is because different subjects use marks with different meanings when external examination papers are being marked just as different schools use them with different meanings when they submit assessments or estimates.

Most moderation procedures occur at the end of a course. They are usually statistical procedures that are employed in conjunction with a public test. In the Higher School Certificate, schools' estimates are moderated or adjusted by procedures which take account of the marks gained by each school in the examination itself. In the School Certificate different procedures are employed, but they still comprise an intervention that occurs at the end of course. In fact, apart from English and Mathematics no moderation has occurred in the School Certificate since 1976.

Moderation has a high profile. The community has no doubt that it occurs. Even those with reservations about its efficacy are reassured to know it occurs. It is a tangible sign that some responsible body external to the school is keeping an eye on things. In the absence of such a sign, many witnesses feared that the results which schools produce will not have the confidence of the community, that a grade 1 in some schools will be regarded as inferior to a grade 2 or 3 in another, that once again students will be judged on the reputation of their schools rather than on their individual results. Indeed many witnesses reported that this is already happening. Your Committee are convinced that the kinds of certificate which result when the familiar forms of moderation are employed are less reliable than they are believed to be, and that the Certificate of Secondary Education will provide not only more, but more reliable information about the achievements of students.

We were disturbed to discover that some people thought moderation was intended to secure comparability of schools. The Secondary Schools Board has responsibility for School Certificate courses and for School Certificates. It has no control over the resources which are placed in schools, over the quality and number of their teaching staff nor over the teaching methods they employ. When the Board set itself the task in 1968 of ensuring that School Certificate awards were comparable from school to school, it did not give and could not have given any undertaking that all schools would provide comparable opportunities. It is inaccurate to suppose that external examinations or any other form of end-of-course moderation will remove the inequalities that exist among schools. The Board sought comparability of School Certificate awards not to make schools comparable but to compensate for the fact that they are not. Existing procedures do not operate *directly* on the process of schooling at all but rather on the information about student achievement which comes out of schools at the end of the process. In recommending an end to these end-of-course processes we have not recommended an end to moderation nor to comparability of awards. We are proposing instead procedures that should operate more directly and frequently on the process of schooling itself.

Because the question of comparability of awards was so important for many of the witnesses, we list our conclusions in some detail. They are:

- (a) The community has consistently and forcibly expressed the view that measures of student achievement should be expressed in comparable language irrespective of the schools which provide them. If the community has no confidence in the comparability of awards it will resort to less rational methods for evaluating students probably involving prejudiced views about the standing of the issuing schools. Therefore, all public statements made by schools about student achievement need to be expressed in language which facilitates comparing.
- (b) The methods for securing comparability of awards employed in recent years operate directly at the end of the schooling process. They do not seek to dictate the processes which occur during schooling, and therefore do not claim to remove the undesirable differences in the value of the schooling which schools provide.

- (c) Nevertheless, for better or for worse, they do indirectly influence the processes of schooling, often for several years preceding the issuing of the awards, and therefore it is naive to suppose that comparability of awards can be secured without affecting the nature of the schooling process.
- (d) Coming at the end of a period of schooling, present methods for ensuring comparability of awards cannot take account of the quality of the opportunities which different schools provided for their students. Therefore, when moderated awards are made, all that can be said of two students who receive identical awards is that at a specified time, the levels of achievement which they were able to demonstrate were assessed to be roughly equal. It cannot be said that the two students were equal, nor that they have equal potential. It cannot even be said that their results would still have been equal if each had attended the other's school, or if each had been raised in the other's home.
- (e) Again, because moderation procedures do not operate directly until the end of a course, it is too late for them to afford any protection to students who were subjected to unsatisfactory learning experiences during the course. They can reveal that the students in a certain school were disadvantaged by the quality of opportunity they were provided, but they cannot roll back the clock and rectify the problem.
- (f) However, moderation procedures that operate throughout a course might achieve two desirable goals: they might ensure that when schools certify the achievement of their students they do so in comparable language; and they might provide early warnings about schools where the quality of the learning opportunities provided is unacceptable. Therefore, comparability of awards should be secured not by waiting until the end of Year 10 and subjecting schools to a single occurrence of some form of moderation, but by more frequent monitoring of what actually occurs in schools. In particular, schools should be given frequent opportunities to verify that their courses are at an appropriate level of difficulty, that their teaching methods are as efficient as they could be, and that the standard they require their students to meet is realistic.

- (g) The indirect effects which end-of-course moderation exercises on the learning processes that precede them are regarded as desirable by some, and undesirable by others. We believe they do more harm than good. We believe that the stifling effect they have on courses and teaching causes our secondary schools to evince a drab uniformity and that until that effect is removed, no significant improvement in the quality of secondary education is likely.
- (h) Nevertheless, we understand and accept the concerns of those who plead for the reinstatement of external examinations, or at least the retention of some form of end-of-course moderation. However, we also believe that what motivates most of these is not a commitment to the external examination *per se*, but to what they believe the examination provides for them, namely:
- i. some control over what schools teach;
 - ii. some assurance that schools will teach certain things believed to be important;
 - iii. some guarantee that schools will not offer courses that are frivolous, or objectionable to reasonable parents;
 - iv. some evidence that the school has done its job conscientiously; and
 - v. some form of credential for each student which will report accurately and comprehensibly what he or she has achieved at school.

We believe these are all reasonable expectations. Further, we believe that the community would be very tolerant of curriculum innovation, or of any kind of modernising of secondary schooling, if it could be assured these five expectations would be met.

- (i) Imposing external examinations gives the community to understand that its expectations are being met, but at too high a price. Schools cannot afford to be innovative when there is an end-of-course examination.

- (j) Therefore, schools must give in other ways the assurances to which the community is entitled. If they present their courses and assessment policies for approval and there are regular visits from an authority independent of the school systems, they will retain the confidence of the community while at the same time enjoying the freedom to organize themselves and their curricula so as best to meet the needs of the students they serve.

13. Item Banking. The Committee detected some support for the use of item banks as an alternative to other forms of moderation. In one form, item banks are used in Tasmania to moderate awards made by different schools; in another form, their use is proposed by the New South Wales Teachers' Federation.

An item bank is a large, subject-based collection of short, objective questions (items) which have been calibrated on a target student population. Calibrating consists of establishing certain measurement properties of each item, such as its difficulty and discrimination indices. "Difficulty", for example, is a measure of what proportion of a total population would be unable to answer the item correctly. Calibrating is performed by trying out the items on samples of students representative of the total target population. The properties established for each item are then assumed to be identical with those which would have been established if every student in the target population (i.e. every Year 10 student in N.S.W., say) had attempted every item.

Once an item bank has been calibrated, it is assumed that if a school chooses a test of from 30 to 50 items from the bank, its performance on that test can be interpreted as a measure of how its students would have compared with other students in the State had they all done the same test. It enables schools to moderate their own awards without having to submit their students to a common, statewide test or other statewide procedure. By letting schools choose their own tests, it produces comparability of awards without enforcing common curricula.

Your Committee were impressed by the ingenuity of the model and by the enthusiasm encountered among its supporters in Tasmania. However even in Tasmania, and especially in subjects other than Mathematics, we noted disenchantment as well, and have our own reservations about the procedure, including the following:

16. The Child-Centred Curriculum. The view that the curriculum should be child-centred rather than subject-centred is becoming more common. As used by some, it is a proposition which worried us. We agree that schools exist for the benefit of children and not for the benefit of the teachers or their academic specialities; we agree that if there is any conflict of interest, the interests of the children must be considered first. Yet references to the "child-centred curriculum versus the subject-centred curriculum" assume a necessary conflict between the two when in fact no conflict necessarily exists.

Schools are formal institutions in which children and teachers are brought together for the primary purpose of giving the children an opportunity to learn something of value. The educator who insists his task is to teach *children*, not *subjects* has either not understood the proposition or has not finished it. Children are not taught until they are taught something. There is no escape from the need to say what the children should be taught. We would agree that if the word "subject" were taken to mean only "traditional, academic discipline", then an education which offered students nothing but opportunities to learn subjects would be inappropriate in most cases; we agree that for many secondary students there are other things that are more important. But these other things are just as entitled to be called subjects as history, mathematics and syllogistic logic. We could not avoid the impression that when some witnesses were speaking against subject-centred education, they were really speaking against the provision of any planned learning in any field of enquiry. There are already several schools in which there is no planned subject curriculum - schools in which the teachers and the children tend to let learning take its natural course - and we have no objection to these schools being available for parents who wish to support them. We cannot accept that these schools should be the norm. We believe that schools have an obligation to teach subjects, no matter how broadly that term needs to be regarded, and to say clearly and in advance what those subjects are to be.

17. A Core of Essential Learning. A very large number of witnesses argued that a central authority should specify a core of essential learning; very few had thought out what that core should comprise. We were left to consider whether they really believed that certain things are essential for everybody to know, or whether they merely needed the security of knowing that there were some things that all children would be taught. We do not decry the latter motivation for it is natural for the members of any social group to want to ensure that all members of the group have certain shared attributes which will continue to bind the group together. We were nevertheless left with a confusion of views

from the community concerning what, if anything, should be compulsory learning.

Some suggested there should be certain compulsory subjects; others thought that within every subject there are certain essential components which should be identified by a central body and made compulsory for all who elect that subject. It is plausible to argue that certain subjects are essential, though the chances of gaining substantial agreement on what they are seem low. We could not avoid the impression that those who argued for an essential core to be prescribed within each subject were merely preparing the ground for a return to a composite external examination/internal assessment system. We reject the view that part of each subject should be declared essential (and then made compulsory for all students who elect that subject) simply to make it possible to conduct an external examination in that subject.

We cannot so easily reject the argument that certain subjects should be declared essential. We are aware that many educational systems, including the Wyndham system, rely on the concept of a core of essential subjects. In New South Wales there is still a subjects-based core curriculum in which English, Mathematics, Science, a Social Science, Music, P.E., Art and Craft are all compulsory. We are also aware that most modern curriculum writers insist that a subjects-based core no longer makes sense. It is impossible to speak of learnings being essential without specifying for whom. It is easy to argue that the ability to read, write and calculate are essential to some degree for everybody, but it is not possible to specify how much of these skills are essential for a given person. Each person's needs are different. The Canberra-based Curriculum Development Centre provides a very useful discussion of these questions in its publication Core Curriculum for Australian Schools. It is argued there that there are certain *skills* which are essential, but that these skills do not align themselves neatly with traditional subjects. In part, the Curriculum Development Centre argues as follows:

All individuals, to be educated, need to strive for mastery of basic learning tools and resources. These include:

- * *communicating in spoken and written languages*
- * *number skills, mathematical reasoning and spatial relationships*
- * *scientific processes and their applications*
- * *logical inquiry and analysis*

- * *creative, imaginative and intuitive ways of thinking and experiencing*
- * *the capacity to apply and use knowledge symbols, processes and skills*
- * *perception, expression and appreciation through the arts and crafts*
- * *manual and other physical skills*
- * *management of bodily and mental health*
- * *the personal articulation of experience and thinking into value and belief systems.*

No traditional subject pursues all of these goals; every subject makes a contribution to their attainment. We are not able to settle on any set of subjects which could serve all of these ends with neither repetition nor omission, and therefore we are unable to recommend any core of *essential subjects*. We nevertheless believe that a central authority should be able to prescribe courses for specific purposes, not because they are essential but because they meet a valid community requirement. For example, many witnesses argued that all students in Australian schools should learn Australian History. We do not believe that a knowledge of Australian History can be regarded as *essential*, but we would support the right of the community to press for its being made *compulsory*. More generally, we believe that an important function of a central authority should be to make rules on behalf of the community concerning what students should learn. However, we are concerned at the possibility that a given set of subjects should become enshrined as a permanent, compulsory set, as we believe happened with the compulsory subjects for the School Certificate, and therefore we believe it would be unwise for this Committee to specify such a set. We propose that a central authority should have the power to place constraints on the total curriculum which students follow but we urge that any such constraints be kept under continual review.

18. Community Involvement. The evidence placed before the Committee indicated two differing views on this question. Some argue that curriculum making is so specialised a field that lay people could not be expected to have the expertise necessary to engage in it. Some of these went so far as to predict that the involvement of non-professionals in curriculum construction, especially at the local level, would lead to chaos. Others argue that as lay people provide the students and the funds, they have an inalienable right to influence the curriculum.

Strictly speaking, these are not opposing arguments though they lead to different conclusions. In our view, both arguments have merit, and we believe they can be reconciled. It is possible to give even local communities an opportunity to influence the curriculum without requiring or allowing them to develop specific courses. We favour a situation in which the task of constructing a curriculum would remain the responsibility of the teacher professionals, but in which the local community would play a role in setting the guidelines within which the curriculum is constructed. We propose that schools should set up school curriculum committees which would afford opportunities for the parents, students and the wider local community to join with teachers in making decisions about the areas in which courses should be provided. We suggest two other specific functions these committees could serve. They could be required to endorse newly developed school courses before they are submitted to a central authority for final approval. They could also give opinions on which old courses should be discontinued to make way for new courses. We are aware that the history of this kind of community involvement in New South Wales is not encouraging and we are realistic enough to admit that in many communities parents and other lay people will not be eager to assume any curriculum responsibility at all. However, we believe that schools should at least create opportunities for members of their local communities to assume a measure of responsibility for the local curriculum.

19. Examination versus Assessment. The manner in which candidates for a public certificate of achievement should be assessed was hotly contested by those who gave evidence. Because there was so much disputation on this question, and especially because it seemed to us that many of those in dispute had unsound understandings of the nature of assessment, we have provided a fairly detailed discussion in Appendix 7. In summary, we concluded that the conflict implied by this heading does not exist. Examinations and assessments are not different ways of doing the same thing. Assessing is the process of establishing the facts concerning what students have achieved. An examination is simply one method among many for collecting information about some of the things which students can do. We take it for granted that the achievements of all students should be assessed. The question is not whether students should be examined or assessed; the question is whether an examination can contribute anything useful to the process of assessing. We believe that there are many instances where an examination or test can play a useful role in the assessment process, and therefore we believe that examinations or tests should continue to be used in secondary schools. Whether or not they should be used in a given case depends on the nature of the information which the assessor needs. If a teacher wishes to establish

whether students can write four essays of a certain standard in two hours, it would be sensible to give a four essay, two hour test. On the other hand, it is difficult to see how a test could be used to establish whether students can care for a family of mice for six months, making accurate observations of the growth and development of each generation under various controlled environments. Along with the many other measuring techniques available, tests are suitable techniques for certain purposes. The competent assessor is the one who can make wise decisions concerning whether tests are appropriate information-gathering techniques for given purposes.

20. Passing and Failing. Some claimed that when the boards abolished *failure* they also abolished *success*. We were impressed by this opinion. We have no argument with the motives of the Secondary Schools Board in abolishing that particular concept of *failure* which used to mark large-scale, public examinations for it was both misleading and too severe. It was misleading because it allowed the community to believe that students who failed were incompetent and those who passed were competent. (The pass mark, in fact, was set quite arbitrarily. It was set so that a pre-determined *proportion* of the candidature would pass. It took no account of whether students' work was satisfactory.) It was too severe because it was a permanent judgment that placed a blanket value on the whole of the student's school life. We believe that students should be able to fail, because when failure is not possible success is meaningless, but we could not approve of the reinstatement of the old concept of overall failure that deemed all of a student's schooling to have been a waste. Students should be able to pass or fail specific courses during their schooling. Failure should carry sanctions but they should be neither permanent nor devastating. As far as possible, failure should mean "has not demonstrated the achievement called for" rather than "has not beaten enough of the class." Further, it should mean "has not *yet* demonstrated the necessary achievement" rather than "is incapable of ever demonstrating the necessary achievement." Failure should not be reported on public certificates of achievement, but success should be. If certificates faithfully reported all students' successes it would be in the students' interests to avoid failure during the schooling process.

21. Trusting Schools to Assess Students. Some witnesses were concerned that schools might not be able to handle the responsibility of assessing the achievement of their students. Two sources of concern were cited. It was feared that teachers might lack the expertise which anonymous external examiners are assumed to have, and it was feared that consciously or unconsciously they might give preferential treatment to pleasant, well-behaved students over those who were less tractable. We believe these fears are natural, and that those who have them are entitled to reassurance. We also believe that reassurance can be given.

In the case of the first fear, it should be pointed out that the anonymous experts who marked School Certificate examination papers were classroom teachers. They had no more innate ability in assessing achievement than other teachers. What set them apart from other teachers was the opportunity to work as part of a closely supervised team. We accept that all assessors, whether or not they be experienced external examination markers, need assistance when they have to conform to agreed standards. We believe this assistance will be available, and we cite the impressive performance of the educational systems in recent years in in-service training as part of the evidence for our optimism. We also draw attention to the fact that assessing will be simpler under the semester course system than under the existing system. This matter is discussed more fully in Chapter 6.

In the case of the second fear, we point out that *passing* will depend on a student's demonstrating the achievement previously specified. The question will tend to be, "Has the student done what was required?" (which can be answered on the basis of evidence) rather than, "Has the student done well enough?" (which depends on a largely subjective judgment made by the teacher). Subjective judgment will always figure in assessing but it will be of much lesser significance than under the existing system. Further, especially in large schools it is rare for assessment to be the sole responsibility of the class teacher. The head of the subject department is responsible for supervising assessing throughout the department, and it is common practice for each teacher to clear his or her assessments with the departmental head at least. Parents are always entitled to discuss such matters as assessment with the school, and they should request an explanation from the school if they are concerned about the way their children have been assessed.

We are confident that because of the nature of *failure* as we have defined it, and of the increased contact we believe will occur between school and community, there will be very few instances of parents and students dissenting from the assessments made by schools. Nevertheless the possibility remains that some parents and students may be unconvinced that *failure* was a fair assessment of a student's achievement in a semester course, and there is a consequent need for an avenue through which they can express their concerns. We believe that School Curriculum Committees could provide an appropriate avenue and we believe that parents who remain unconvinced by a school's explanation of why a student failed a semester course should have the right to request the School Curriculum Committee to mediate between parent and school. We believe further that in the unlikely event that the parents remain unconvinced even after a matter has been considered by the School Curriculum Committee, they should have the right to refer that matter to the central authority for its determination.

We point out that this latter provision is similar in many respects to the provision in the existing system for Student Appeals to be lodged with the Secondary Schools Board. That avenue of appeal is rarely invoked, and we are confident that the proposed right of appeal to the central authority would also be rarely invoked, especially in view of the other provisions that would exist for settling disputes at the school level. We nevertheless endorse the view that in any system which relies upon school-based assessment there must be an avenue of appeal for parents who are unconvinced of the accuracy of their children's assessments.

22. Standardized Testing. The evidence of standardized testing was not consistent. Very few witnesses mentioned it and those who did were either avid supporters or strong opponents. One point of view that has been given serious consideration suggests that an increased use of standardized testing is a necessary concomitant of school-based assessment. We believe this view would be especially important if assessment at Year 12 ever became internal because there is a need for comparable statewide measures of achievement at that stage for such purposes as tertiary selection. We are not so convinced there is an equal need in the junior secondary school. On the other hand, we would not oppose an increased use of standardized tests (or similar, statewide measures) in the junior secondary school provided that those tests did not exercise a negative influence on the curriculum or play a role in determining a given student's eligibility for the award of a public certificate of achievement. We are not prepared to recommend that such tests be used but we believe the community should be given an opportunity to express its views on the matter. To assist the community, we will describe in the final sections of this report one possible model for incorporating common tests into our recommended, school-based system.

Summary:

Having considered all of the evidence placed before us, and after taking account of our first-hand observations of junior secondary education in all Australian States and the Australian Capital Territory, we agreed upon certain principles which we believe should guide any re-organization of secondary schooling and the certification of student achievement. These are listed below under the three broad headings: Curriculum, Assessment and School Organizations.

1. Curriculum

- (a) Schools should play a greater role in developing courses so that they can better meet any special needs of their students.

- (b) Before being implemented, all school-developed courses should be approved by a central authority that is representative of all school systems and the wider community.
- (c) The curriculum should be more diverse; it should continue to provide opportunities for students to pursue academically-oriented courses but it should also offer realistic alternatives for students for whom an academic orientation is not appropriate.
- (d) The curriculum should be more flexible; it should enable students to experience a wide range of subjects, and it should be able to accommodate students who wish to change their learning orientations.
- (e) The curriculum should be more relevant to the present and future needs of students, and therefore it should be capable of being changed at short notice.
- (f) The curriculum should be flexible enough to capitalize on the temporary availability of special resources, both personnel and material.
- (g) The curriculum should be based on the primacy of knowledge and skills; attitudinal growth and development should be seen as an important concomitant to cognitive growth.
- (h) At the local level, there should be increased community involvement in curriculum decision-making, and therefore there should be machinery for harnessing community opinion.
- (i) There should be provision for parts of the curriculum to be prescribed but any central authority should impose no more constraints than are needed to reflect widely-held community views.

2. Assessment

- (a) Assessment of student achievement should be the responsibility of the school.

- (b) Each student should be assessed at the end of each semester or half-yearly course.
- (c) The purpose of assessing should be to establish whether students have demonstrated the achievement that was specified before the course began.
- (d) Students who do not demonstrate the specified achievement should fail the course. Failure should carry the meaning "has not demonstrated the necessary achievement yet".
- (e) In general, students who fail a course should be able to repeat it.
- (f) Failure should not be recorded on any public certificate of achievement, but all successes should.
- (g) Every student should receive a public certificate of achievement irrespective of the number of successes it records.
- (h) When schools propose new courses to a central authority, they should set out clearly the achievement which students will be required to demonstrate and how it is proposed to be assessed.
- (i) Schools should be given all necessary assistance to refine their assessment technique.

3. Organization

- (a) All courses should be able to be taught as half-yearly or semester length units.
- (b) Students should be able to move outside of their age or Year cohort when selecting courses.
- (c) Students who fail a particular course should be able to repeat that course without prejudice to their progress in other areas.

- (d) Students who wish to engage in such activities as staging school musical productions or producing the school magazine should be able to do so as part of an approved semester course for which they can be given credit on their certificate of achievement.
- (e) Students who wish to specialize in a specific area of the curriculum should be able to take two or more different but related semester courses during the same half-year.
- (f) Students should be able to take a break from a specific sequence of courses for one or more semesters, and resume study of that sequence at the break point in a later semester.
- (g) Students who wish to take advantage of accelerated progression should be able to be assessed in two or more sequential courses in the same half-year.
- (h) Students for whom work-experience opportunities can be provided should be able to engage in them as an approved semester course for which credit will be given.
- (i) Teachers who are both competent and willing to offer courses outside of their designated subject area should be able to do so.
- (j) Where local resources, either personnel or material, can be legally utilized to provide worthwhile courses, they should be provided as approved courses for which students can be given credit.
- (k) All semester courses should receive equal allocations of teaching time.

* * * * *

Your Committee is very grateful to Professor P. Foster and Professor H. Philp of the School of Education at Macquarie University for their submission which analysed past movements in education in New South Wales and suggested future directions. The Committee considers the submission to be of such importance that the whole of the submission is reproduced here.

At present, the State of New South Wales is laboriously moving from a secondary school pattern dominated by the exigencies of an external system of examinations toward one more geared to internal assessment. We are not here concerned with the details of those assessment procedures which become the happy hunting ground for statisticians but rather with the general proposition that the "compromise" solution now prevailing is inherently unstable and has led to enhanced politicization of the whole issue. Indeed most educational decisions are really political decisions and we accept this as a starting proposition. But the problem is that the State of New South Wales may end up with the worst of both worlds as a result of a series of political compromises based on expediency and inadequate analysis of the needs of children and the demands of our society. Any good system must meet both. Similarly, any system of assessment should certify, implicitly or explicitly that both have been achieved, for any one child.

In one sense the Report of the Wyndham Committee, which resulted eventually in the current system of organization, curriculum and assessment, acknowledged this. For example, in discussing the terminal certificate of the first four years the Committee wrote:

"The School Certificate is designed to recognise the completion of a sound course of secondary education, that is, a course of education for all adolescents."

(Wyndham, Page 97.)

In this there is no hint or suggestion of a predictive task for the assessment; it is concerned with simple certification of completion, no more and no less. There is no need here to trace the vicissitudes of the assessment system since the Committee presented its report in 1957 but it is clear that the pattern of junior secondary school studies has been generally accepted within the community. The implications of the pattern, in terms of curriculum, teaching and assessment have not, however, been carefully considered. There has been inadequate discussion of the logic of the pattern: if schools

are to be community related, if curriculum is to be largely school and teacher designed within broad parameters, then surely assessment of that performance or that curriculum must also be community related and school assessed. That there are weaknesses both in the curriculum and in assessment of pupil performance is patent, but the remedy is not to abandon the logic, it is to improve curriculum and in-school techniques for the assessment of children. The choices are clear: either an externally designed and imposed curriculum externally examined or a school-based curriculum school assessed. Modern theory and practice would be firmly in favour of the latter course as being much more likely to attain the objective of a "sound course of education for all adolescents".

This is not well understood, and it is apparent that the movement to an increasingly teacher controlled and evaluated curriculum is under fire from two somewhat ill-informed major interest groups which do, indeed, have a legitimate concern over what the schools teach and how this is evaluated, viz: parents and employers. For good reason the curricular concerns of these groups are largely a reflection of economic pressures and are not essentially "educational" in origin. Employers are pre-occupied with the quality of youth entering the labour force both in terms of its standards of literacy and numeracy and general "employability". Parents are exercised by the fact that presumed "falling standards", resulting, it is believed, from current internal assessment procedures both limit employment opportunities for their offspring and diminish the chances for occupational mobility contingent upon high educational performance. With the current emphasis upon "accountability" it should be recognized that both groups are interest groups (no less than teachers) whose members are hardly concerned with educational issues *per se* but rather with maximizing their own benefits from the system. Employers are concerned with potential employees and not with pupils while parents are interested in the future of their own children and not children in general. In the latter case the major pressure is from the more articulate group of middle class parents who are concerned with their offsprings' future.

Both groups do not understand the relation between education and the economy. Even in terms of basic literacy and numeracy there is no consistent evidence that standards of performance are falling (indeed it is possible that they are rising): the complaints of a selection of employers are quite worthless in this regard. Second, there is a widespread but erroneous belief that high rates of unemployment among youth are a function of inadequate educational performance and that the schools have "failed" in some manner to relate their endeavours to the needs of the economy. Youth unemployment in Australia has little or nothing to do with what is taught in the schools and its reduction is almost entirely contingent upon new economic policies being undertaken in the market-place. In effect, the whole literacy, numeracy, unemployment question is a red herring that diverts attention away from the substantive educational issues. A third interest group that it is important to mention is the staff of institutions at the tertiary level. Most academics are committed to the maintenance or raising of standards of access into their sector and, historically, the control that they have exercised through a system of externally administered examinations has enabled them to exert a disproportionate influence over what is taught in secondary schools and in some measure how it is taught. This has always been the case in societies where access to university from

secondary school has been linked to external forms of assessment. Moreover, the "downward filtration" effect runs through the earlier years of secondary school and this is why it is argued that it is not very realistic to be examining the first four years of secondary schooling while ignoring what is happening in the last two years. The latter will undoubtedly influence the former.

It is something of a curiosity that most parents and employers and many academics cling pathetically to the myth that the "external examination" *per se* is a guarantee of standards. What is meant by standards? Standards of what and for what purposes? Given general agreement on a basic curriculum it would not be particularly difficult to work out levels of acceptable performance specific to certain occupations - as is already done, admittedly inefficiently and inadequately, for professions like medicine or trades like welding. It may be argued that this is not what schools, especially junior secondary schools are supposed to do. Their task is to provide "a sound course of secondary education", not to equip young people with highly specific marketable skills. The schools are no longer the slave markets of the economy and we must admit this quite frankly. There is a need to define standards quite carefully; at present they exist for the most part in the imaginations of men and women, particularly at the secondary level. Most employers and many parents would be hard put to state precisely what they mean by "falling standards". To a large extent, to most employers at least, the complaint is really that prospective staff are not as readily able as their predecessors of twenty or thirty or forty years ago to cope immediately and without further training with the demands of the office or the factory, while ignoring the fact that those demands have changed vastly in that period. It is probably true that today's young people are not as well prepared as their parents or grandparents for some specific tasks, but they are far better prepared for training for a very wide variety of tasks, and this is to leave aside the issue of education for a much richer, more varied complex society than existed even a quarter of a century ago. It should be noted that the Higher School Certificate is itself a double compromise. First, as has been generally recognised, it is a compromise between a certificate of completion of a satisfactory course of study and a device predictive of tertiary success. Second, in respect of the latter it attempts to predict tertiary performance in subjects like Mathematics and French which have already been studied for some years at school and also to predict performance in areas like psychology, clinical medicine or prosthetic dentistry where there is no school record whatsoever. It is not, predictably, particularly successful at any of these things, which make its influence on the curriculum at all levels the more regrettable. If anything it has a negative effect on overall standards because of its Procrustean effect.

The only real guarantee of high standards rests in a carefully designed and flexible curriculum taught by well educated and effectively trained teachers. It is here, rather than on complex assessment procedures that the weight must fall.

We have not really faced up to the challenge of mass secondary education. Evidence is there that after about a hundred years we have accepted and begun to understand the challenge of mass primary education which works reasonably well, although not as well perhaps as in the United Kingdom or Scandinavia, but we are far from coping adequately with the junior secondary school. It is nearly a quarter of a century since Wyndham but we are still far from accepting its implications. We are still tinkering, as are the English, the Scots and the French, among others, with ways of adapting an elitist structure, curriculum and control to the entirely different demands of a potentially democratic system. In many regrettable ways the present curriculum is a dilution of the old rather than one reflecting an entirely fresh look at the needs of children and the demands of society. The external examination is a nostalgic curtsy to this outmoded elitism.

Having cleared this initial ground, as it were, let us put forward a series of more specific statements:

1. Any attempt to move the present system away from progressively internal modes of assessment to one increasingly dominated by external examinations is to be deprecated. It would represent a loss of nerve and a failure to take advantage of the degree of flexibility and innovation that internal assessment procedures offer. At the same time a community and teacher-based curriculum imposes new demands and pressures upon teachers themselves. One suspects that although many teachers welcome such developments, in principle, they are not always competent enough, in practice, to sustain new levels of responsibility. This is a fact accepted and deplored by many thinking teachers; for an enhancement of true professionalism in the occupation demands nothing less than greater curricular autonomy. The answer must lie in an improvement in the quality of teacher preparation and in-service training. Many, if not most, of the teachers in our schools were educated and trained for an entirely different system from that to which we are apparently moving. Moreover, curriculum must inexorably change with changing demands, just as new technologies open up prospects of more effective teaching methods. Teachers need further education to enable them to use the new techniques at their disposal and to adapt curriculum and this implies a comprehensive bold program of regular in-service work. (Such a program, incidentally, might go some way towards solving the problem of teacher unemployment.)

What the average U.S. or U.K. or Scandinavian teacher might take in his or her stride is difficult in the Australian context since the traditions of individual professional accountability are less embedded and it is useless to expect more of teachers without giving them the kind of training (both pre-service and in-service) that would enable them to function effectively in a new educational environment. This is not to criticise the majority of Australian teachers who are dedicated and hard working men and women, doing very well what they have been trained to do: if we expect them to do difficult things, we must provide additional learning opportunities.

2. The principal thrust of opposition to internal assessment is based on the assumption that "standards" can only be maintained through the use of external examinations. This, as we have said, is an untenable position though it needs to be noted that in one respect current practice in New South Wales has led to abandonment of the assessment of comparative standards: the practice of assessing all subjects apart from English and Mathematics on a single "satisfactory"/"unsatisfactory" basis is to be deprecated. Whether this has arisen from a spurious egalitarianism is not clear but students do need to know where they stand with respect to their peers or in relation to some criterion-based referent and the use of selective letter grading, for example, is worthy of consideration.

In the absence of general external examinations how are relative standards to be maintained? We have stressed above the need for a sound curriculum and good teachers. An additional safeguard is the use of accreditation procedures through which authorities can ensure that levels of staffing and facilities exist sufficient to provide basic offerings as laid down in general curricular guidelines. Periodic accreditation exercises are designed to ensure minimal standards for institutions and to facilitate their progressive upgrading. We hasten to add that the current collaboration between federal and state authorities through the "needs" and other programs is a major welcome step towards such a procedure.

This says nothing about individual student performance, either as a personal yardstick or in comparison with other pupils. Given total internal assessment procedures such performance cannot be calibrated against the achievement of other pupils in other schools. An "A" given

in a history course in a school situated in a relatively disadvantaged urban or rural setting will be "different" from (i.e. not necessarily 'inferior' to) an "A" awarded in a similar course given in a secondary school with a substantially upper middle class clientele. It tells us little about comparative standing and nothing about content. The prospect is not particularly daunting since it is substantially the case now with satisfactory/unsatisfactory rating. The question of calibration, if desired, is probably best dealt with through the development of standardised tests that can be utilized on a State, but more desirably on a national, basis. We are not advocating the universal, compulsory administration of such tests as a substitute for the School Certificate. They should rather be available to students who wish to attempt them for employment or other purposes.

We would not attempt to hide the fact that standardised testing procedures have also their weaknesses. Greatest of these, it is claimed, is the danger that teachers will deliberately prepare children for them; they would thus become, in effect, external examinations with less reliability than current procedures and would exert the same undesirable influence on the curriculum. The research evidence suggests that the danger is exaggerated but real: it may be averted in part by ingenious test construction but, even more, by the trend to increased professionalism among teachers which is enhanced by the measures we have suggested earlier in this paper. Probably, the first place to start is with the further development of such tests in verbal and quantitative skills, but the range of tests can be extended to other subjects. Since students would undertake these tests on a voluntary basis there is little doubt that most would opt to take the verbal and quantitative components while a significant proportion of others (particularly those anticipating tertiary study) would wish to be assessed in other curriculum areas.

3. We come now to the issue of what is to be taught in the first four years of secondary school. There is no such thing as the ideal curriculum and what is taught in schools is usually the outcome of an essentially political process of bargaining among administrators and subject specialists with occasional inputs from other interest groups. The substantive issue in this paper is not what is to be taught, but the development of structural arrangements that will allow students to undertake a range of alternatives consistent with their needs, aptitudes and vocational ambitions, and will permit of the demands of the society being met in general terms. One structure which is facilitative of such a development is a two semester or tri-semester system providing unit courses which carry a credit point rating. Successful completion of the first four years of secondary school is contingent upon the completion of a minimal aggregate of credit points with a variable distribution of these points by subject areas taken in accord with student aptitude and interests.

Here one must emphasize the distinction between "core" and "periphery" in the curriculum. Doubtless there is a general consensus that English and Mathematics have such centrality that all students would take units in these subjects throughout their lower school career with the more able or motivated taking supplementary units of more exacting standard. Likewise, there might be substantial consensus that all students should take some units in Science, History and Geography, Government, though here minimal course requirements might be more truncated. Finally, a third cluster of subjects, e.g. Economics, Music, Art, Modern Languages, "Technics" would be regarded as a less essential part of a core curriculum but students might exercise options in these areas.

The above summary is certainly not prescriptive in nature. There will always be interminable arguments between subject specialists and other interested parties as to what should be in a core or peripheral curriculum. Teachers of Economics might well urge that in this day and

age their subject is of more vital relevance than History and should be a mandatory element in the secondary school curriculum. Specialists in Art or Music will argue forcibly that their subjects are a vital and irremovable element in the curriculum and so on. One thing is clear: every specialist can advance cogent and compelling reasons as to why his or her subject is vital in any curriculum (and should occupy the majority of time in the already overloaded school timetable). Curriculum specialists *per se* really have nothing useful to say concerning the issue of "balance and distribution" since these questions are essentially normative in nature. All that can be hoped is that processes of discussion among interested groups, e.g. subject specialists, parents, employers, academics, (even politicians!) can lead to some degree of consensus concerning core, periphery and, perhaps, curriculum content.

The provenance of the structure that has been outlined should be quite clear: it is unashamedly derived from conventional practice in the United States, where the movement to mass secondary education has gone further than elsewhere. Any comparative educator recognises the fact that the unthinking adoption of exported educational models, like good wine, do not travel well. For example, the viability of American models is connected with a notion of direct local community involvement that is inimical to patterns of traditional bureaucratic decision-making, and to national or even State planning. The situation is made more difficult by the constitutional rights of the States, by the complex centralized financing system, by the methods of teacher employment, training and promotion and a host of other factors unique to Australia and, even more, to New South Wales. Nonetheless, it may be argued that there can be little doubt that New South Wales is cautiously moving away from a central system to a community based one. Moreover, the transition from a highly selective to a mass system of secondary and higher education forces structural changes upon the system. All that is suggested here is that we should carefully consider moving toward some variant of what has been proposed above rather than resuscitate or adopt structural arrangements based upon the assumption that only an elite minority of young people will proceed to or complete a full secondary program.

CHAPTER 5: TOWARDS THE ADAPTIVE SCHOOL

THE RECOMMENDATIONS EXPLAINED

In its publication *Schooling for 15 & 16 Year-Olds* the Schools Commission called for a reappraisal of the program for the compulsory years of secondary schooling⁽¹⁾. Your Committee support this call. We accept the view of the Schools Commission that all schools should *have the opportunity to develop in ways which will enable them to meet more effectively the needs of the whole age group*. We would say that schools need to become "adaptive", and that in doing so they are likely to develop most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- * *warm and friendly relations between students and staff, based on mutual respect;*
- * *a range of course options which gives the emphasis to both practical and theoretical knowledge and to practical and academic skills;*
- * *a comprehensiveness, not merely in the range of students for whom they cater but also in the range of educational services they offer;*
- * *an awareness that the prime purpose of their existence is to serve all students while they are within the compulsory schooling period;*
- * *programs consistent with the notion that all post-school options for students require them to be able to function autonomously and effectively;*
- * *close connections with the community being served and through it with the wider society."*⁽²⁾

To achieve these ends it is necessary to provide schools in New South Wales with the means to respond to change to the extent that they need to do so. Your Committee are aware that there are many very good schools which see no need for any great change in what they presently are achieving and that the parents, teachers and students at these schools are well satisfied with the educational services provided. Your Committee were concerned that any recommendations made should not discommode these institutions or unnecessarily disrupt the education of the students. On

(1) p. 51

(2) *ibid.*

the other hand there are many schools which seek to institute change to provide a better service to their students. It became obvious that a change to the School Certificate would bring about major changes in schools. Your Committee have therefore sought to allow schools to evolve rather than to impose systemic alterations which would, as in the past, force all schools to change in the same way and at the same time. Your Committee in making recommendations have sought to follow these guidelines:

- * each student is a unique individual who varies in ability, talents, physique and ethical development.
- * the rate of learning varies for individuals and does not occur at a constant rate within the individual nor do the various aspects of development occur at the same rate.
- * courses should be so designed that a student may be motivated by the knowledge that they have successfully completed a course which is lengthy enough for achievement to be overt, but short enough for the student to gain a sense of completion and success.
- * schools should be organized to enable them to provide the widest curriculum possible.
- * parents should be entitled to private reports from the school on their child's progress and be able to resist pressures on them to make these reports public by the provision of separate, public reports.
- * employers should be entitled to ask for public reports which show the courses a child has completed, the standard which has been reached, how the assessment was made; these reports should be uniform throughout the State in presentation and grading so an employer can make judgments upon them.
- * The public reporting of a student's progress should be one in which the student is not condemned for past failures since overcome.
- * students who are particularly talented in a subject should be able to learn at their own rate.
- * students who are unsuccessful in a subject should be entitled to remediation.

- * parents and students should have a greater say in what that individual studies so the courses may fit what they see to be the needs of that individual.
- * a credential should be useful to students themselves and should be useful to them in seeking employment and it should be descriptive rather than normative.
- * students should have greater choice in career paths and they should not be limited by choices they made at an early age.
- * students' choice of courses should be much wider than it is at present so students may more easily adapt to the needs of a changing future.

We are convinced that the School Certificate has not only lost its value as a credential, but now stands as a barrier in the way of schools which seek to adapt their curricula to the needs of today's students. We therefore recommend as follows:

- R1. *The School Certificate should be abolished and replaced by a credential of greater value.*

To be of value to the student, the new credential should be available at the time it is most needed which is when the student leaves school, and it should be issued in the name of a responsible, central authority. So that it can reflect fully and accurately what the student achieved irrespective of the nature of the curriculum provided in the school attended, it should be issued by the school. So that it can provide information known only to the school as well as a record of achievement constructed in accordance with policies determined by a central authority, it should contain two easily distinguishable parts. We therefore recommend as follows:

- R2. *There should be a new credential called the Certificate of Secondary Education which should*
- (a) be available to all students beyond the legal leaving age.*
 - (b) be issued by schools on behalf of and within guidelines determined by a central authority, such as the Secondary Schools Board.*
 - (c) comprise a record of achievement demonstrated by the student in the years leading up to its award.*

(d) *be available to students whenever they leave school, be it in Year 9, 10, 11 or 12.*

(e) *contain two parts, a transcript of approved courses passed and a school-provided cover on which should be recorded any relevant information not included on the transcript.*

So that schools can more efficiently meet the changing needs of their students, it is necessary for them to gain increased control over the courses they provide. The concept of school-based curriculum decision-making should be endorsed. In our view, students would benefit from a curriculum which offered them the widest possible choice of worthwhile learning experiences, and opportunities to change their curriculum patterns as the needs arise. Granting students an increased range of learning experiences to choose from would be negated by rules which lock them into their chosen subjects for two or more years. We therefore recommend as follows:

R3. *Schools should be able to develop courses that take account of the special needs and interests of their students; such courses must gain the approval of the central authority for their implementation. Only approved courses shall be eligible for inclusion on the Certificate of Secondary Education.*

R4. *Students should have greater opportunities than at present to include a range of subjects in their courses and to change subjects as their needs and interests develop.*

R5. *All courses should be offered in half-yearly semester units. Students should be able to select new courses every semester.*

R6. *The first semester of Year 7 should be a time in which students are assisted to adapt to secondary schooling. Approved courses should begin in the second semester of Year 7. Each semester course passed should be added to a student's record-of-achievement.*

While schools must be given increased autonomy if they are to meet the needs peculiar to the local communities they serve, the community remains entitled to reassurances concerning what schools do, and how well they do it. Schools must remain accountable to the community, both the

local community and the community at large. There is no single device or procedure which alone provides an adequate measure of accountability. We believe that many of our recommendations will contribute to the provision of an adequate measure of accountability. We also believe that accountability is not a commodity which can be handed around in measured amounts, but a situation which can exist. If the community for instance is determined either to sit back and wait for evidence to be presented, or to rely on its own possibly outdated notions of what schooling ought to be about, and is not prepared to capitalize on opportunities to observe modern schooling at first hand, then it surely weakens its rights to hold schools accountable. In part-fulfilment of our determination to provide the community with adequate reassurances concerning what schools do, we recommend as follows:

R7. *There should be a system of checks and balances on the curriculum of secondary schools. This system should provide for at least the following:*

- (a) the vesting of ultimate authority for the curriculum of secondary schools in the Minister for Education.*
- (b) a central authority which, within guidelines determined by the Minister will have power to approve school-developed courses, and to develop and promulgate courses. This authority should be subject to the constraint presently described in 8(3) of the Education Act of 1961, namely that it*

"shall not exercise any power, authority, duty or function so as to introduce or seek the introduction of any new policy or to change the overall planning, allocation or use of educational resources, unless it has first consulted with the Education Commission of New South Wales concerning the proposed introduction or change of policy."

- (c) the continuation of the existing practice which requires secondary schools to be registered with the central authority on whose behalf the public certificate of achievement is issued.*
- (d) within each secondary school a school curriculum committee whose endorsement should be obtained before any school-developed course is submitted for the approval of the*

central authority. The composition of the school curriculum committee should be determined at the school level, but it should afford opportunities for parents, students and the local community to be represented.

R8. When tendering advice to the Minister, the central authority should concern itself with the following:

- (a) the registration of secondary schools;
- (b) the approval of semester courses proposed by schools, and the assessment procedures proposed to be used within the semester courses;
- (c) the withdrawal of approval of courses whose implementation is not as described in the approved course proposal;
- (d) the maintenance of records of courses successfully completed by all students, and the provision of certified transcripts of those records to schools and students;
- (e) the courses, if any, which should be compulsory for all students;
- (f) methods of assisting schools on course construction and on the assessment of student achievement;
- (g) methods of assisting employers and other interested members of the wider community on interpreting the information contained in Certificates of Secondary Education;
- (h) research in areas related to the curriculum and to the assessment of student achievement.

R9. The central authority should command adequate resources to carry out its functions fully and effectively but it should have no power to commit the resources of the government or non-government school systems. The systems themselves must retain full responsibility in areas such as appointing teachers, and distributing resources.

We believe our primary task is to indicate the broad goals which secondary schools should pursue, and that much of the detailed organization should be left for others to work out. Nevertheless, we should also indicate any essential properties we believe that detailed organization ought to exhibit. Therefore we make the following recommendations concerning the curriculum:

- R10. *While all courses should be designed in semester units, in the major subject areas they should be so designed as to provide opportunities for students to engage in sustained study. Therefore, most courses should be part of course sequences.*
- R11. *Every course that is part of a sequence should be a pre-requisite for every later course in that sequence. Students should not be eligible to choose a course until they have passed all of its pre-requisites or co-requisites.*
- R12. *In addition to sequences in the major subject areas, schools should provide special courses for special needs. These should not normally be part of sequences, but would be provided to meet the needs of students who require remediation, or who are about to enter the work force, or who have special talents and interests.*
- R13. *Schools should continue to assist students and their parents by providing advice on both short and long term course selections. While students should be able to reselect courses every semester, they should plan their courses several semesters in advance.*
- R14. *Schools must publish outlines of the courses they offer, and these outlines should be available to students and their parents in advance of the semester in which they are available for selection.*
- R15. *Students should know exactly what is required of them and published course outlines should include, inter alia:*
- (a) the aims and objectives of the course,*
 - (b) the material to be covered and the learning experiences to be provided,*

- (c) *what materials would need to be provided by the students, and their cost,*
- (d) *what achievements will need to be demonstrated by students in order for them to pass the course,*
- (e) *specific details of the assessment procedures and the course requirements.*

Neither a curriculum philosophy nor a school organization will enjoy the support of the community unless the method of measuring and reporting student achievement has the confidence of the community. The easiest way to secure community confidence is to base the assessing and reporting of student achievement on a traditional, end-of-course, subjects-based external examination. For reasons which we have spelt out in the report we believe that the disadvantages of an external examination outweigh the advantages. As we are not prepared to recommend the reinstatement of a traditional external examination, we are required to recommend other methods of assessing and reporting achievement which will inspire confidence. We believe that schools are already competent to assess the achievement of their students and should be given this responsibility, although we also believe that there will be a continuing need for teachers to be given in-service assistance to refine further their techniques in both course building and assessing. Our level of confidence in the ability of schools and teachers to assess student achievement is so high that we see no reason why schools should be reluctant to publicize their assessment policies or to defend their decisions. We have already recommended that part of each course outline should be a clear statement of the achievement which students will be required to demonstrate in order to pass the course. As failing a course will mean only that the student has not yet demonstrated the achievement previously specified, we see no reason why schools should not be prepared to give full and frank reasons for their decisions to the parents of students who fail. We also believe that the *possibility of failing* a course is essential if *passing* is to have any value. However, as we have explained in more detail elsewhere, we believe that *failure* should attach only to fairly small components of a total school career, small enough for the failing student to be able to recover the situation either by repeating the failed course or switching to another more suitable course. We also believe that *failure* should be a judgment assigned to a stage of a student's school career rather than to the school career itself, and that *failure* should be able to influence only the detail that appears on a student's credential, and most certainly not the student's eligibility for the credential. We therefore recommend as follows:

- R16. *Each student should be assessed in each semester course to establish whether or not those requirements which were approved by the central authority when the course was approved, and which were promulgated by the school for the information of all students before they elected the course, have been met.*
- R17. *The assessment should be carried out by the school.*
- R18. *Students who do not demonstrate the achievement specified in the approved course proposal should fail that course. There should be two consequences of failure:*
- (a) That course should not be added to the student's record-of-achievement.*
 - (b) That student should not normally be eligible to select a later course for which the failed course was a pre-requisite until such time as the failed course has been successfully repeated.*
- R19. *Students who fail a semester course should have the right to repeat that course in a later semester.*
- R20. *Schools should provide full and frank reasons for failure to both the students and their parents. Should parents remain unconvinced that their children ought to have failed, they should have the right to request the School Curriculum Committee to convene for the purpose of mediating between themselves and the school. Should there remain any unresolved questions concerning the accuracy of the student's assessment, the parents should be able to refer the matter to the central authority for its determination.*

Our recommendations have implications for the structure and organization of schools. Their implementation would necessitate some change. Because we are committed to the view that the existing concepts of curriculum and certification of achievement must change, we have tried to make recommendations with real prospects of being implemented.

In respect of school organization, every recommendation we will make has already been successfully implemented in at least one New South Wales government high school using existing resources. In respect of course design, we believe that it should be possible, but not necessary, for schools to assume greatly increased autonomy. It is not necessary

for schools to *develop* their own courses for the principle of school-based decision sharing to be observed; it is necessary only for schools to *select* courses, and therefore we believe there should continue to be available centrally developed courses for schools which wish to use them.

We have no doubt that if our recommendations were implemented, schools would develop new roles and new organizations by a process of evolution during the next decade. This is as it should be. Evolutionary development is manageable and non-threatening; it affords systems time to evaluate change as it occurs, and time to "tool-up". Revolutionary change, on the other hand, is threatening and non-manageable. It is unreasonable to insist that schools should exhibit a completely new set of approaches and characteristics overnight. Policies can be supplanted in an instant; infrastructures must be allowed time to develop.

As an indication of the kind of change which schools should seriously consider, we make the following recommendations:

R21. *The central authority should have available two kinds of semester courses described as in R15:*

(a) *courses which, on the advice of the authority, have been declared by the Minister to be compulsory for all students;*

(b) *other approved courses which schools may choose to offer from those courses approved by the Authority.*

When tendering advice pursuant to both (a) and (b) above, the authority should initially make as much use as possible of existing Secondary Schools Board courses so that schools which wish to do so can continue to offer their existing curriculum.

R22. *Students should be able to select courses on the basis of their readiness and ability to undertake them rather than on the basis of their age or their Year. That is, it should be possible for classes to reflect ability grouping across Years.*

R23. *It should be possible for talented students to engage in accelerated progression, that is, moving through a sequence of courses at faster than the normal rate. Accelerated progression should occur as a result of a student's meeting all of the requirements for two or more sequential courses in the one semester. Credit for the two or more sequential courses should be added to the student's record-of-achievement at the end of the semester.*

- R24. *Accelerated progression should only occur after the student, parents and the school have discussed its implications.*
- R25. *For students who reach an apparent limit in their progression through course sequences in major subject areas, schools should provide alternative courses. These should provide learning experiences that reflect realistic appraisals of both the needs and abilities of the students concerned. They may involve remedial courses, special interest courses or courses designed to equip students with the specific skills they are most likely to need on leaving school.*
- R26. *There should be no attempt to categorize students into permanent groups. All students at all times should be free to select either mainstream, academic courses or specific purpose courses, but schools should provide appropriate counselling services to parents and students.*
- R27. *To enhance the status of all courses, to simplify timetabling, and to make it easier for students with special aptitudes to study subjects of interest in greater depth, all semester courses should be allocated the same number of teaching periods. Subjects which warrant relatively little time overall should be given a full period allocation for one or two semesters rather than a reduced allocation for several years. In subjects which warrant deeper and more sustained study, two or more complementary courses should be offered concurrently enabling appropriate students to devote two or more times the normal attention to the subjects in which they have special needs or interests.*
- R28. *There should be no sudden disruption of existing procedures for allocating personnel and material resources to schools. In determining the courses they wish to offer, schools should take realistic account of their existing resources as well as the preferences of their students.*
- R29. *As there is no need to change such concepts as teaching faculties and mastered departments to implement these proposals, there should be no attempt to change them suddenly. The ordinary evolutionary processes should be allowed to operate. However, teachers who are competent and willing to conduct courses outside their normal teaching subjects should be able to do so.*

While we believe that schools should be responsible for assessing the achievement of their students, we accept that the community looks for some form of external validation of schools' judgments. We have addressed this problem in part in R7 and R8. We are satisfied that the community also expects that students' credentials will be expressed in a common format, and we find this expectation to be wholly reasonable. The point of giving schools responsibility for assessment would be defeated by allowing them to produce an array of report forms which the community would find bewildering. In the absence of a common form of reporting, the information which schools labour conscientiously to produce would make little impact on its intended audience. The effort which will be needed to produce records-of-achievement in a common format can be roughly divided into two kinds: professional and clerical. We believe that schools should be expected to provide the professional input but that they should be freed from the clerical input. We therefore believe that the central authority should be responsible for maintaining each student's record of achievement, and we recommend as follows:

- R30. *At the conclusion of each semester, schools should provide the central authority with a list of all approved courses to be added to each student's record-of-achievement, and the central authority should update each student's record. The authority should provide schools with an updated copy of each student's record.*
- R31. *Students who are about to leave school should be able to request from the school a Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE). The CSE should comprise a transcript of the student's current record-of-achievement (provided to the school by the central authority), and a cover document provided by the school containing additional information about the student's other achievements. The student should be responsible for alerting the school to the other achievements which warrant formal acknowledgment on the Certificate of Secondary Education.*
- R32. *The central authority should be able to supply a transcript of a student's record-of-achievement at other times including when a student changes schools, or after a student has left school.*
- R33. *The central authority should monitor the language which schools use to convey information about students' experiences and achievements so that the community will not be needlessly misled by inconsistent terminology. It should ensure that courses of*

similar content and rigour are identified by similar titles, and that the same terms are used by all schools to report student achievement. We suggest that the terms "Distinction", "Credit" and "Pass" should be used in all schools.

- R34. *A clear distinction should be recognized between those school reports which contain private information for the student and the student's family, and those which contain public information for the wider community. The Privacy Committee should be requested to develop guidelines covering the distinction between public and private reporting. Schools which are satisfied with their present procedures for reporting privately should continue with them, but there is no reason why schools which wish to do so should not incorporate the current version of a student's record-of-achievement as part of each report.*

We have identified at least the following four conflicting interpretations of "School Certificate":

- * the studies which students engage in during the first four years of secondary schooling;
- * the examinations which students take (or used to take) at the end of Year 10;
- * the results which students obtain, and which are thought to record their competence;
- * the piece of paper which formally marks the successful completion of a clearly-defined phase of students' lives.

To resolve the confusion that arises when such conflicting interpretations are abroad, we have determined that the Certificate of Secondary Education should be a record of demonstrated achievement that is brought up-to-date every six months, and which is available to its owner whenever he or she leaves school. One consequence of this is that it will be no longer possible to think of the Certificate as a piece of paper whose award marks the successful completion of a clearly-defined phase of a student's life. This could inconvenience some schools which observe the custom of celebrating the successful completion of the "School Certificate Years" by holding graduation ceremonies and issuing graduation diplomas.

There is no reason why a school should not continue to hold such ceremonies provided that the requirements for "graduation" were determined within the school, were seen to apply only to the students within that school, and did not affect the rights of students to receive credit on their transcripts for all approved semester courses passed. Schools which wish to issue "graduation" diplomas (whether it be at Year 10, Year 12, or at any other time) should recognize that they are certificates of involvement in the life of that school rather than certificates of achievement with statewide currency. They should therefore ensure that their diplomas could not be seen as alternatives to the Certificate of Secondary Education. This implies at least that "graduation" diplomas should not duplicate the information contained on the Certificate of Secondary Education.

For the assurance of schools which see merit in identifying well-defined phases in secondary schooling, and celebrating their successful completion, we recommend as follows.

R35. *Schools should be encouraged to continue the practice of issuing school diplomas. The conditions of awarding these diplomas should be determined by each school. The Diploma should not be seen as an alternative to the Certificate of Secondary Education.*

We believe that the controls we have proposed on the courses which schools offer, and on the methods which they use for assessing and reporting student achievement, will provide ample reassurance for most members of the community. We nevertheless recognize that there will be some who will continue to deplore the absence of a traditional external examination in traditional subjects. As we have indicated throughout the report, we are not opposed to testing and examining *per se*, (indeed we would be disappointed if testing within schools did not continue to be a feature of assessment wherever it is appropriate), and therefore our reason for rejecting a full external examination is not that it is a form of testing. Our opposition is based in the belief that as a total package, a traditional, end-of-course examination in subjects places the total curriculum in a straitjacket, prevents the junior secondary years in particular from being adapted to meet the needs of that majority of students who do not aspire to an academic career, and fails completely to produce the kind of detailed information about what students can actually *do* that is both their entitlement and the community's need.

It follows that we would not oppose any form of testing that avoided the undesirable effects just listed. It has been suggested to us, even by witnesses who share our opposition to traditional, external examination, that there ought to be available for everyone a set of tests in what the community likes to describe as "basic skills". These tests would meet the needs of people who require a credential for any purpose. Obviously, they would fulfil a need among adults who left school with no formal credential and who now need one. Possibly they could fill a need which is presently met by the intimidating array of entrance tests sponsored by numerous government and semi-government agencies, and by private organizations. If a form of testing could be designed which would mean that job applicants need take only one test, all employers being prepared to acknowledge its validity for their purposes, there would be considerable savings throughout the community as well as a considerable reduction in the number of tests which job seekers presently have to take.

The obvious questions, given that such a test could be devised, are why should it not be given to students, and why should the results not be added to their records-of-achievement? Our reaction is that there is no reason provided that the test did not have the undesirable effects on the junior secondary years listed earlier. In more detail, our reactions can be described as follows:

- * There would need to be an assurance that the test would not substantially alter the curriculum which a school would otherwise have implemented. It seems to us that there are likely to be some common goals in all schools - helping students to read is an obvious example - and that it might be possible to design the test so that it will measure the achievement of students in skills which all students ought to possess irrespective of the curriculum they follow. If so, we would have no objection to the test on this score.

- * The test should not stand as the end-point, or even the high-point of a student's school career for if it does it is likely to become the only goal the student pursues. For this reason, students should be able to take the test whenever they are ready, including quite early in their secondary schooling. A test which can be "got out of the way" early in a student's school career is not likely to exercise the same control on a student's goals as a traditional external examination which always threatens from its privileged position at the end of the course.

- * The test should not provide a once-only opportunity for the student to obtain a useful result. Therefore it should be a test which the student can retake.

- * The test result should be only a component in the student's record-of-achievement, and it should play no role in determining the student's eligibility for a credential.

We have considered the feasibility of such a test and we find there are several grounds for doubting whether it can meet all of our requirements. Nevertheless, many witnesses of undoubted integrity and competence have suggested that a satisfactory test could be superimposed on the system we have recommended, and indeed that it ought to be. Therefore, while we are not prepared to recommend such a test, or even to give any assurances about its feasibility, we do recommend as follows:

R36. *An evaluation should be undertaken urgently of the feasibility of developing a test in what the community regards as "basic skills" with a view to making such a test available not only to school students but to adults who may benefit from having their basic skills formally assessed and certified. If such a test can be developed in such a way as not to undermine the other recommendations we have made, then students should be able to require that their results be included as a component on their record-of-achievement.*

There remain several areas in which we have strong opinions, but in which our competence to make firm recommendations is doubtful. We are determined that our firm recommendations should be both realistic and feasible, and we have refrained from making recommendations whose feasibility was low. Leaving those aside, we complete our recommendations as follows:

R37. *Consideration should be given to accrediting courses offered outside of schools with a view to their being included in a student's record-of-achievement.*

R38. *Consideration should be given to making provision for persons to add to their records-of-achievement by completing accredited courses as part of a program of continuing education.*

R39. *Zoning, the practice which directs all government school students to attend the school designated for the area in which they live, should be abolished. The Committee note that the Department of Education is currently re-examining zoning and should be given every assistance to complete its examination.*

CHAPTER 6: THE SEMESTER COURSE PROPOSAL IN MORE DETAIL

We have proposed a new approach altogether to assessing and reporting student achievement. We have recommended that achievement should be described in terms of successful completion of semester-length courses, and that the community should play a bigger part in helping to determine what semester-length courses should be offered. The effect of our recommendation would be to change the nature of the information provided to the parent, the student and the employer. Instead of being a once-only, retrospective measure of what students appear to have achieved over 2 or more years, it should be a complete record of what they actually achieved.

What we are doing is to suggest a procedure for securing comparability-of-records. Such a procedure will require close consideration by people with appropriate expertise before the details can be settled. It is nevertheless a proposal which catches up the properties we believe to be vital if real accountability is to be secured. These properties are:

1. Direct community involvement in the work of the school. It is necessary for parents or their representatives to be party to decisions concerning what courses will be taught and how achievement will be assessed.
2. The production of information which is useful and complete. Those aspects of achievement which public examinations can measure must be included. So must evidence of other kinds of achievement. If the community knows only how well its schools cope with external examinations, it knows very little. It knows far less than it is entitled to know.
3. The information produced must be reliable. The key consideration here is the language of description. All schools must use a language of description which is equally accessible to all members of the community. Otherwise, the community will withhold its trust.

Securing Comparability-of-Records

- (a) The curriculum in each school should be constructed from semester courses which have been approved by a central authority.
- (b) To be granted approval, each course must be submitted to a representative of that authority. The submission should be in the form of a course proposal.
- (c) Proposals should be submitted by principals in the name of the school's curriculum committee. A curriculum committee should be one on which teachers, parents and students are represented, such representation to be decided at the school level. This suggestion looks forward to the time when schools might have a senior person solely responsible for curriculum, as is common already in Canberra.
- (d) School Curriculum Committees should be clearing houses, not course builders. Courses should be developed by teachers, either individually or in groups, and presented to the committee. The major task of the committee is to decide whether a place should be found in that school's total curriculum for each course presented to it. The endorsement of the school curriculum committee should be necessary before a course can be proposed to the central authority.
- (e) Course proposals should be worked up in a manner to be determined by the authority, but each proposal should include:
 - (i) The name of the course.
 - (ii) A full description of the material to be presented and the learning experiences to be provided.
 - (iii) A full description of the achievement which students will need to demonstrate in order to pass the course. Part of the reason for this is the Committee's firm belief that before entering upon a course, students should know exactly what will be required of them. They should know: what assignments they will have to complete, and when; what tests they will have to take; what things they will have to make; what demonstrations they will have to perform. They should also know how each requirement will be assessed, and what weight each component will contribute to the total assessment.

- (iv) An indication of what standard of achievement will be accepted by the school as satisfactory. If something has to be made, the school should indicate by a relevant example or a full description the standard of workmanship required. If a test is to be given, the school should indicate the kinds of response that will be accepted.
- (v) A statement showing all other courses which are pre - or co-requisites for the course in question.
- (vi) A synopsis of (ii) and (iii) above. The synopsis, or course outline, would be published by the school at least a half semester before it first became available for the information of intending students and their parents.

More generally, each school should always have available in printed form an outline for each course offered so that students have reliable information on which to base their course selections. (Your Committee examined a number of such prospectuses when visiting A.C.T. schools; one of the best was the most cheaply produced.)

- (vii) A list of resources available in the school to enable the course to be competently conducted. This list should refer to teaching personnel as well as to material resources.
- (f) Proposals should be submitted to an officer of the central authority, who should be competent to accept the proposal on its behalf. Should it be necessary, the officer should be able to request a meeting with the school curriculum committee to discuss any reservations he or she may have about granting approval. If the reservations are not removed, the officer should refer the proposal to the authority for its decision. The officer should not have power to reject a proposal outright.
- (g) When a proposal has been accepted by the central authority (or by the officer on its behalf), the school should publicise the availability of that course, and students should be able to select it from the ensuing semester onwards.
- (h) At the end of each semester, a judgment should be made by the school in respect of each student's achievement in each course attempted during that semester. Each student's record should be up-dated to include mention of every course successfully completed. There should be three grades of pass: pass, credit and distinction. The majority

of students should pass. Those who display achievement well above average should be awarded credit. Distinction should be reserved for truly outstanding achievement. Students who do not demonstrate the level of achievement specified in the proposal should fail. There should be no mention of failure on the student's public statement of achievement; courses which the student fails should be simply not mentioned.

- (i) The central authority should have the power to verify that courses are presented, and achievement assessed, in terms of the school's own proposal. Where the school's own proposal is not being realized, the authority should have the power to withdraw its approval of the course. Schools should be given one semester's notice of the authority's inclination to withdraw approval, during which time they should be given an opportunity to demonstrate that withdrawal of approval is no longer justified.

There are several aspects of this procedure which require elaboration. Some of them are discussed below.

Sequential Courses

Implicit in this proposal is the assumption that semester courses can be constructed so as to constitute a hierarchy. This concept poses some apparent difficulties, yet schools daily confront and answer questions about what work is appropriate for a given group of students. We believe that the criteria against which teachers daily judge which work is appropriate could also be used to divide subjects into sequential semester courses.

We propose that all semester course titles should include numbers which should indicate the semester in which work of that difficulty would normally be given to average students. "English 5" would therefore indicate work which would normally be given in the second semester of Year 9. This does not mean that "English 5" can be taken only by students in the second half of their third year in secondary school for part of our proposal is that students should take courses when they are ready. A student with special interest and aptitude in a subject might, through acceleration, take a "5" course while in the second year of secondary school. Another might not take it until the fourth year.

Part of the central authority's task will be to ensure that the numbers in course titles indicate work of comparable difficulty in all schools. This does not mean that courses named, say, "Australian History 6" should

contain the same content in all schools; it means that they should be pitched at comparable levels of difficulty. The numbers in course titles therefore have more to do with the achievement which students are required to demonstrate than with the material to be confronted, though the two will often be closely associated.

We envisage that at least in the major subject areas schools will continue to provide courses lasting four years. Under our proposal, it will be necessary for these to be broken into semester length units. The numbers in the semester-length course titles will imply a hierarchy of courses within subjects, and it will be necessary for students to work their way through the hierarchy sequentially. Thus, every course in the hierarchy will be a pre-requisite for every later course.

We also propose that to establish the procedure, the central authority should divide the existing Secondary Schools Board syllabuses into semester length courses and make them available immediately as approved courses. In this way, schools which feel no pressing need to change their curriculum will be able to carry on much as before.

Horizontal and Vertical Courses

By vertical courses we mean a sequence of courses whose titles differ only in the numeral. Thus "Australian History 1", "Australian History 2", ... "Australian History 8" would comprise a vertical sequence in Australian History. By horizontal courses we mean courses with the same numeral and in the same general area of learning, but with different words in the title. For example, "Business English 2" would be horizontal with "English 2" and "Consumer Arithmetic 2" would be horizontal with "Mathematics 2".

Whereas vertical sequences will enable students to study a traditional curriculum pattern, horizontal courses will enable them to choose a more diversified pattern. Many students, especially those who intend to take the Higher School Certificate, will need to persist with a traditional pattern of courses, and it may be necessary for schools or the authority to prescribe courses which all intending HSC candidates should complete by the end of their fourth year in secondary schools.

Horizontal courses will enable schools to serve the needs of many students more efficiently than is possible under the present system. Students whose performances in the early semesters of a mainstream sequence indicate that they are not yet likely to benefit from further courses in that sequence should be offered alternative (horizontal) courses. In

Mathematics, students who cannot cope with the conceptual leap into generalised number systems would be better served by courses involving no algebra. Horizontal courses could be provided in the so-called "consumer arithmetic" dealing with making change, factory or home-handyman arithmetic and geometry, budgeting and account keeping, and so on. Students who cope easily with the mainstream sequences might be offered horizontal courses which enrich the mainstream courses. There may be many students who would like to try out a foreign language via a one semester introductory course for which they could gain credit, but who would not normally even consider electing a language for fear of being locked into a two or three year course in which they prove to have no aptitude.

Well thought-out horizontal courses could do much to bridge some of the gaps that presently exist among subject faculties. There are several subject areas in which students are required to write essays. Students who have minimal essay writing skills pose common problems to teachers in all of these subjects. The best interests of both the teachers and the students might be served by providing a course dealing specifically with essay writing. Schools could require certain students to pass the course in essay writing before admitting them to any mainstream course for which essay writing is a pre-requisite skill.

Horizontal courses pose a naming problem. We believe that the numeral in a course title should convey a useful idea of the difficulty level of the course. It will be much more difficult to settle on the appropriate numeral for horizontal courses than for the courses which comprise sequences. Nevertheless, we believe the problem can be solved given experience, in-service support, and good-will on all sides. The criticism that schools do not try hard enough to make the curriculum diverse and relevant is common. We do not see how the curriculum can be made diverse without introducing new kinds of courses which must carry new names. If schools and the community are not prepared to cope with the difficulties involved in establishing and naming new courses, then the diversification of the curriculum will never be more than an unrealized ideal.

Enrichment or Acceleration

For some time, the standard procedure for meeting the needs of talented students has been to give them enrichment - extra work in the same or in a related area. Many authorities on the talented child are now suggesting that acceleration is preferable to enrichment. The difference is that whereas enrichment gives them more work to do at each stage in their development, acceleration allows them to go through the normal work more quickly. A talented student who was provided with

enrichment would still be in Year 10 at age 15-16, but would have done extra work on the way through. A talented student who had been accelerated would be doing Year 10 work at a much lower age, say 12 or 13; he or she would not have been given any work outside of the normal curriculum for Years 7 to 10, but would have been allowed to do the normal work in less than the normal time. We do not have the answer to the question of whether enrichment is more sensible than acceleration. We suspect that there is no universal answer - that it depends on the student and the subject. There is some evidence that in Mathematics acceleration is preferable to enrichment. In the Humanities, where the experience of the student may be more important than innate ability, enrichment may be preferable to acceleration.

We believe that under the organization of courses which we have proposed either enrichment or acceleration could be provided with equal ease, and that the decision whether to accelerate the student or to enrich the curriculum can be made in each school. This is where we believe it should be made. We believe that acceleration in particular is something which should not be attempted until its ramifications have been thoroughly discussed by the teachers, the student and the student's parents.

The procedure for accelerating students needs to be fully considered and carefully explained to the whole community. We suggest that if a student can cope with two sequential units at the same time, and can demonstrate this by meeting all of the requirements for both courses at the end of the semester, he or she should be credited with having successfully completed them both. There are two main effects of this kind of acceleration:

- (a) The student's record at any stage will be longer than normal, showing more than the normal number of courses passed; and
- (b) the student will have met the pre-requisite for a later course in the sequence earlier than other students, and will be eligible to select a more advanced course in the following semester.

Establishing and Maintaining Standards

If the numbers in course titles are to convey useful ideas concerning the level of achievement required in those courses, teachers will need to be provided with resources which will enable them to acquire a "feel" for standards. We believe that the experience gained in New South Wales since 1975 and the experiences of other States which have

engaged in various forms of moderation, justify our belief that these resources can be produced.

The resources we have in mind do not need to possess sophisticated measurement properties. In most cases, work samples will suffice - sample essays, assignments, tests and test responses, models of objects, even models of performance committed to either video or audio tape. The New South Wales Department of Education already makes available to schools a useful set of such resources: it has published sample responses to English Reference Tests; it regularly mounts exhibitions of major art works done by students; it has provided an impressive collection of test items in most of the more popular School Certificate subjects, and in some cases it has provided expertly constructed topic tests and mastery tests for the guidance of teachers. We believe that the provision of the kind of resources we have in mind would require no new major initiatives, but merely the re-orienting of existing initiatives.

We do not even believe that work samples would be required in all courses. If the range of courses offered in schools were to increase dramatically in the next few years, it would still be a fact that certain methods of assessment would be common to many courses. For example, many courses would require that students engage in sustained writing to demonstrate their achievement. The subject matter might vary sharply from course to course, but the properties of well-written arguments vary little. We believe that a set of sample essays in a restricted range of subject areas could convey useful ideas of standards for all courses which rely on essays for assessment.

Though the evidence is relatively thin on the ground, we also believe that a similar approach would suffice in courses which require students to make things or to perform. We are aware that in Industrial Arts, teachers who worked as travelling moderators in 1975-76 were able to compare constructions in a range of media including not only the traditional woods and metals, but the more modern plastics. Teachers who mark Art major works are convinced of their ability to recognize different levels of worth irrespective of whether the art form be painting, sculpture, weavings, art jewellery, or even something dynamic. We also draw attention to the more advanced communications technology to which schools now have access. We believe that videotape in particular has hardly begun to be exploited, and that this medium would enable ideas of standards in all of the expressive arts to be conveyed to schools.

In conclusion, we wish to highlight four properties of our proposal which we believe will increase the likelihood that standards

in all schools will be maintained.

First, we are not calling for the kind of moderation which was intended to secure comparability-of-awards based on a single measure of achievement that occurred at the end of a long course. Because the worth of each student's certificate depended on the result generated by that process, it was necessary for the process to achieve high levels of measurement validity and reliability. This in turn meant that moderation emerged as a sophisticated intervention that occurred after the students had been assessed. Under our proposal, each student's certificate will be based on the accumulation of many discrete assessments and there will be less need for each instance of assessing to be hedged about with sophisticated procedures designed to secure high levels of measurement validity and reliability.

Secondly, we are not calling for the achievement of individual students to be compared across the State as occurs now with the 5 point grading system in School Certificate English and Mathematics. While we are not proposing a thorough-going system of criterion-referenced assessment, our proposal owes more to criterion-referenced than to norm-referenced practices. In norm-referenced assessment, a student's result says nothing directly about what he or she could do; rather it reports the number of candidates he or she was better than. Under our proposal, it will make more sense to regard the certificate as a list of things the student has done rather than as a measure of the proportion of the population he or she was better than. It will be necessary for schools to work out an overall concept of standards; it will not be disastrous if in respect of a given semester course some schools temporarily lose the concept. A typical student should have credit for some 35 to 60 courses after four years in secondary school. In so large a number, the occasional instance of inaccurate or non-comparable assessing would be relatively unimportant. Certainly, it would be nothing like as important as an instance of inaccurate assessing under the existing system where each student's total credential is constructed on a single occasion.

Thirdly, the kind of comparability we call for has more to do with the way discrete courses are constructed than with instances of common, statewide measurement, and we believe that comparability of courses can be achieved by a procedure which most teachers seem to value and enjoy. This is bringing them together so they can "talk shop". There is no profession whose members are so well known for their propensity to talk shop whenever they come together, irrespective of what the real purpose of the meeting might have been. Many teachers who oppose external examinations nevertheless regret the passing of the opportunity afforded by

has demonstrated the achievement previously prescribed and well publicised rather than to the proportion of the group the student has managed to beat, it will not be regarded as capricious or arbitrary. Because it will be pronounced in six-monthly rests rather than once only at the end of a school career, and in particular because students who fail will have opportunities to retake courses, it will not be regarded as a devastating event. Failure will be inconvenient enough for students to strive to avoid it, but it will not deprive the student of a credential, it will not have a devastating social impact and it will not comprise a tragedy from which there is little hope of recovery.

Standardized Testing

We have stated our view that the central authority should have no power to require candidates for the Certificate of Secondary Education to undertake common, statewide tests as a condition of the award of that certificate. We are strongly agreed on this point. We believe that the control such tests exercise on the curriculum of each school is so great that it alone is sufficient to inhibit, if not prevent, the development of courses which best serve the needs of different students. However, as we have tried to make clear, we are not opposed to testing *per se*. We believe that every school will provide some courses for which tests would be appropriate instruments for establishing which students have met the course requirements, and we believe that any schools which adopted anti-test postures as a matter of policy would be acting irresponsibly.

In Chapter 5, we discussed the view strongly held by some witnesses that there should be a form of external testing superimposed on our proposal. We referred there to our view that all forms of external test have certain potentially undesirable curriculum effects, and we described certain reassurances we would require before we could endorse their case. In summary, we would want to be assured that any external test would not determine a student's eligibility for a school leaver's credential, would not stand as the ultimate goal of schooling, could be taken by students when they were ready, and if necessary retaken several times, and would not force schools to implement a curriculum irrelevant to the needs and interests of their students. We now propose to describe how an external test might be introduced as a starting point for those who undertake the evaluation we have called for in R37.

With respect to content, the test should measure only those skills regarded as important by most of the wider community, and then only if they correspond with the goals generally pursued by schools irrespective of the detail in the curricula they implement. These skills are likely to be in

the area of written and spoken communication and number, but serious thought should be given to including tests of physical co-ordination and manual dexterity. Two other areas would also demand close investigation; *study skills* and what may loosely be called *citizenship*. By *study skills* we mean those skills which enable people to find information for themselves; they could include locating and using resources, and reading graphs, tables, maps and charts. By *citizenship* we mean those skills and understandings which people need, to be able to operate as useful and efficient citizens; they could include knowledge of the judicial and legislative processes, the operation of the major government departments, conditions of work, handling money and the law.

With respect to assessment, the tests should be as unobtrusive as possible. Where possible, they should be objective and brief. They should aim to detect proficiency in basic areas, not deep understanding of weighty concepts. We doubt whether they could be criterion-referenced because we doubt whether the appropriate skills could satisfactorily be rendered in terms of specific criteria. Even if they could, we doubt whether the results could be reported without a mass of detail which would defeat their purpose. We would suggest that for each test in the battery, achievement should be reported by a single index on a scale common to each test, and that the scale should be chosen so as to make the results compatible with the community's understanding of test marks. In the likely event that students in their fourth year of secondary schooling will comprise the largest and most stable sub-group within each year's candidature, it would be sensible to let the mean and standard deviation of that group fix the scale. If the scale were to have a mean and standard deviation of 65 and 10 respectively, then on each test most results would lie between 50 and 80 with only the very weak and the very strong candidates scoring below 50 or above 80. This is a scale which the community finds comprehensible. While the possibility of developing a standardized item bank should be kept in mind, it is likely that for some years the tests would need to be set afresh each year. They should observe a common format each year. It would be consistent both with their purpose and with the level of skill they measure that they should be predictable. Given both a stable scaling group and a common format from year to year, one year's results could be compared with another's with tolerable accuracy. In other words, a student scoring 75 this year is likely to be as competent as a student with the same score in any other year. Further, if the same scaling group is used each year (say the Year 10 sub group), then a score of 75 would indicate comparable achievement not only from year to year, but from Year to Year; no allowance would have to be made for whether the candidate was in Year 7, 8, 9 or 11 or even an adult, post-school candidate.

- (a) Each page could be divided into 2 columns. Each column would be devoted to a chronological year, and would list all of the courses which were passed in that year. Within each column there could be a line dividing first semester courses from second semester courses. This format would provide for a six-year record to be shown.

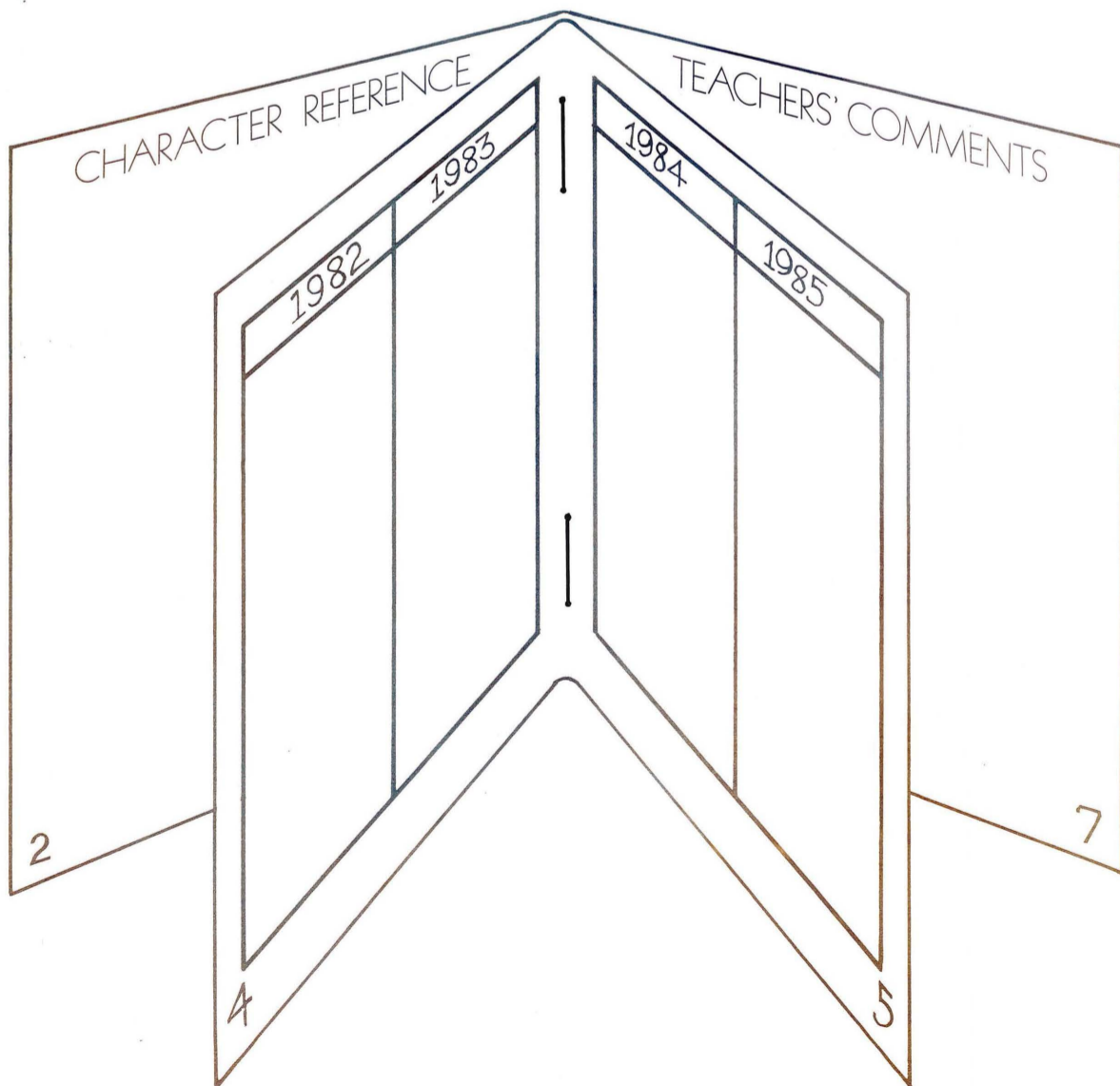
The major advantage of this format is that it enables the reader at a glance to see the order in which the student took courses, and therefore it gives an indication of how the student's interests have developed over the years. Its major disadvantage is that it does not show clearly how far the student progressed within each sequence. This disadvantage could be partly overcome by printing in bold type the most advanced course passed in each sequence.

- (b) Again, each page would be divided into 2 columns, but this time each column would be associated with a broad learning area. This would require that a set of six such areas be agreed to, and that all semester courses be identified as being part of one of these areas.

The Base Paper published by the Secondary Schools Board in 1974 adverted to precisely six general learning areas. They were: Language & Communication; Mathematics; Science & Technology; Man & Society; Arts, Crafts & Music; Personal Development. In the sample transcript shown below, these areas have been assumed.

The main advantage of this format is that it enables the reader to see at a glance the student's achievements in each general area of the curriculum. Its major disadvantage is that it does not enable the reader to reconstruct the sequence in which the courses were taken. This disadvantage could be partly overcome by printing the year and semester in which each course was passed.

- (c) This format would retain the idea of categorizing semester courses into general learning areas but would not use columns. Because the general area headings would appear on different parts of the page from student to student, it may not be as easy to read as (b). Against this it has at least three advantages:

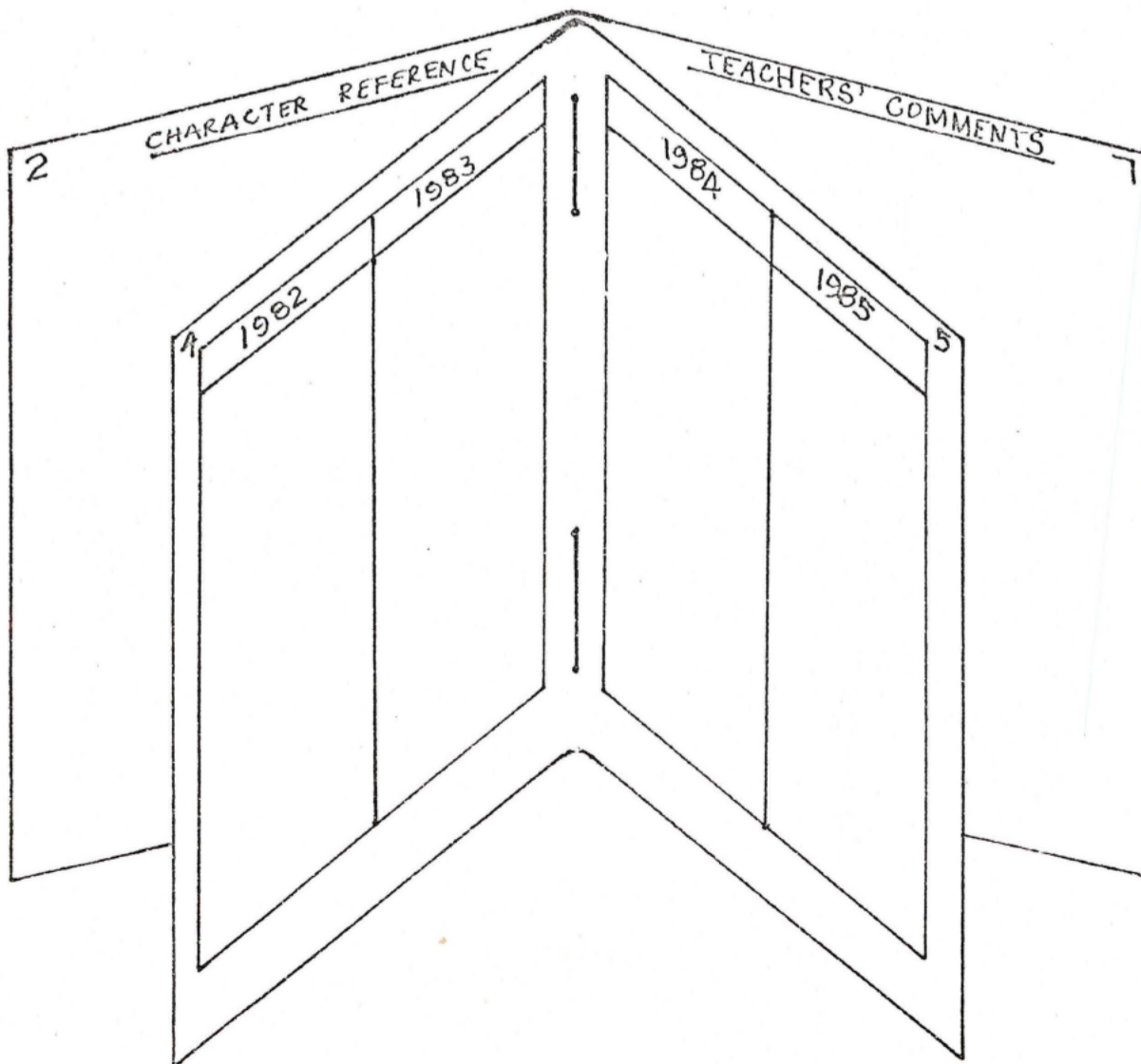


- (i) It does not require that the curriculum be divided into six, or indeed any number of areas. It could easily cope with later developments which might suggest that the number of learning areas ought to be increased.
- (ii) It is immune from "overflow" problems such as might occur if a talented student, specializing in one area, amassed more credits than could be shown in one column. With format (b), it might be necessary for a transcript to run to two sheets.
- (iii) It provides more usable space for listing course titles. The longer titles which are likely to evolve would have less need to be abbreviated.

The following examples illustrate how the Certificate of Secondary Education might be designed.


Overall Appearance

The two sheets (the school-provided cover and the authority-provided transcript) when folded and stapled, would make an 8 page booklet.



The School Provided Cover

While the design of the school-provided cover would be a matter for each school, the following illustrates one approach schools could adopt.

<p>8) <u>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</u></p> <p><u>Music:</u> In 1983, Susan was a member of the chorus in the school's production of "Trial by Jury". In 1984, she performed one of her original compositions in the school concert and in 1985 two of her settings of modern Australian poems were performed by the school choir.</p> <p><u>Writing:</u> Susan has had 3 short stories and 2 poems accepted by the School Magazine. One story was subsequently published in "Youth Writes".</p> <p><u>Personal Development:</u> Susan was one of three co-organizers of a school community service which saw a group of students present short concerts at two homes for the aged and three children's hospitals in 1984-85.</p> <p><u>Sport:</u> Susan does not enjoy competing in inter-school sport so she became a qualified netball umpire instead. Her calm and efficient umpiring throughout 1984-85 was appreciated by all the competitors, including those from opposing schools. She also gained her Water Safety Certificate.</p> <p><u>General:</u> Susan was asked to stand for President of the Junior School Council in 1985, but declined on the grounds that she could not devote the time to the position which she thought was necessary.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (1)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">from EXAMPLE HIGH SCHOOL</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">This Certificate has been issued to</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p>Susan Jane BROWN</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">who was enrolled at this school from January, 1982 until November, 1985.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I hereby certify that it provides an accurate and complete transcript of her achievements in approved semester courses.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The recipient and the school agree that any additional information provided herein is as accurate and as complete as possible.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dated: 30.11.1985</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;"> <hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>Recipient</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;"> <hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>Principal</p> </div> </div>
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<p>2) <u>CHARACTER REFERENCE</u></p> <p>Susan Jane Brown has been a highly valued member of this school for four years. In that time, some of her teachers have commented on her reluctance to accept the views of others on trust, and have suggested she makes life a little harder for herself than it should be by insisting that she work things through for herself. However, there has been no trace of impertinence or disrespect on her part. In fact, she has the rare talent of being able to disagree without giving offence.</p> <p>She is generally a cheerful person, though she finds nothing amusing in what she also might have described as "man's inhumanity to man". Her honesty and integrity are beyond reproach, and she displays incredible perseverance once she has decided a project is worthwhile.</p> <p>If she decides that what you want done is worthwhile, you could not find a stauncher ally.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>TEACHERS' COMMENTS</u> (7)</p> <p><u>English:</u> Susan was a fairly inconspicuous student during her first two years at this school, though her competence was never in doubt. Towards the end of her second year, she began to "come out of herself". She developed a keen interest in social issues, many of which emerged as themes in her writing. I sometimes feared she was becoming too involved, such was the intensity of her writing. With some amusement, she used to tell me not to worry, that she was in the "working-it-out-for-herself" stage, and that I shouldn't take her tentative theories too seriously. She is still searching for answers - she says she always will be - though she seems to me to have found as many as most adults. As a student she was always a challenge. As a young adult she has my respect. (J.S.)</p> <p><u>Mathematics:</u> Susan has a flair for Mathematics. She says she enjoys its neat and tidy solutions. She also says it is largely a game for the mind, and that pure mathematics, at least, does not impinge on the real problems of the world. She regards it as a relaxation, an opportunity to recharge her batteries for coping with the real world. I wish other students could worry about it so little, and do it so well.</p>
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Format (a)

4) 1982	1983	1984	1985 (5)
BASIC READING	ENGLISH 2 C	CREATIVE WRITING 4 C	CREATIVE WRITING 7 C
BASIC WRITING	MATHEMATICS 2 & 3 D	DRAMATIC ARTS 3 C	AUSTRALIAN NOVELS 5
BASIC NUMBER	GENERAL SCIENCE 2	MATHEMATICS 5 C	INTRODUCTORY CALCULUS 9
	AUSTRALIAN HISTORY 2	HISTORY OF MUSIC 3 C	MODERN WORLD HISTORY 5
	TECHNOLOGY 2	CONSUMERISM 1	GUITAR 2 D
	HISTORY OF MUSIC 1 C	HOUSEHOLD REPAIRS 1	LEGAL STUDIES 3
			MUSIC COMPOSITION 4 C
<hr/>			
ENGLISH 1 C	ENGLISH 3	CREATIVE WRITING 5 & 6 D	PUBLIC SPEAKING 3
MATHEMATICS 1 C	CREATIVE WRITING 3 C	DRAMATIC ARTS 4 C	MATHEMATICS 7 & 8
GENERAL SCIENCE 1 C	MATHEMATICS 4 D	MATHEMATICS 6	CALCULUS 10
AUSTRALIAN HISTORY 1 C	GENERAL SCIENCE 3	PRIMITIVE PEOPLES 3 C	GENERAL SCIENCE 5
TECHNOLOGY 1	AUSTRALIAN HISTORY 3	GENERAL SCIENCE 4	MODERN WORLD HISTORY 6
COMMERCE 1	GEOGRAPHY 1	HISTORY OF MUSIC 4 C	GUITAR 3 & 4 D
HEALTH EDUCATION 1	HISTORY OF MUSIC 2 D	GUITAR 1 C	WORLD OF WORK 3
	MUSIC PERFORMANCE 1 C		HEALTH AND GROOMING 3

Explanation of symbols: C indicates CREDIT; D indicates DISTINCTION; & indicates SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF TWO SEQUENTIAL COURSES IN THE SAME SEMESTER.

The Authority-Provided Transcript

Three possible formats are illustrated, corresponding with (a), (b) and (c) as discussed above. For (a) and (c), only one face (i.e. pp 4 and 5) has been shown. Using these formats, page 6 would mostly be blank. In all cases, page 3 would contain the Authority's identification. It is illustrated in (b), in which page 6 would always be used.

Format (b)

6) ARTS, CRAFTS AND MUSIC	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
1982 ----- -----	1982 ----- HEALTH EDUCATION 1 -----
1983 HISTORY OF MUSIC 1 C ----- HISTORY OF MUSIC 2 D MUSIC PERFORMANCE 1 C -----	1983 ----- -----
1984 HISTORY OF MUSIC 3 C MUSIC COMPOSITION 3 ----- HISTORY OF MUSIC 4 C GUITAR 1 C -----	1984 ----- -----
1985 GUITAR 2 D MUSIC COMPOSITION 4 C ----- GUITAR 3 & 4 D	1985 ----- WORLD OF WORK 3 HEALTH AND GROOMING 3

(3)

NEW SOUTH WALES SECONDARY SCHOOLS AUTHORITY

(LOGO)

This is to certify that

SUSAN JANE BROWN (820657)

has successfully completed the semester courses listed on this transcript, which was issued by the Authority on 30.11.85. This transcript replaces any transcripts previously issued to the subject person.

J. Smith
Chairman

For explanation of symbols, see pp 4 and 5.

Format (b)

Format (b)

4) LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION		MATHEMATICS		SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY		MAN & SOCIETY (5)	
1982	BASIC READING BASIC WRITING ----- ENGLISH 1 C -----	1982	BASIC NUMBER ----- MATHEMATICS 1 C -----	1982	----- GENERAL SCIENCE 1 TECHNOLOGY 1 -----	1982	----- AUSTRALIAN HISTORY 1 C COMMERCE 1 -----
1983	ENGLISH 2 C ----- ENGLISH 3 CREATIVE WRITING 3 C -----	1983	MATHEMATICS 2 & 3 D ----- MATHEMATICS 4 D -----	1983	GENERAL SCIENCE 2 TECHNOLOGY 2 -----	1983	AUSTRALIAN HISTORY 2 ----- AUSTRALIAN HISTORY 3 GEOGRAPHY 1 -----
1984	CREATIVE WRITING 4 C DRAMATIC ARTS 3 C ----- CREATIVE WRITING 5 & 6 D DRAMATIC ARTS 4 C -----	1984	MATHEMATICS 5 C ----- MATHEMATICS 6 -----	1984	HOUSEHOLD REPAIRS 1 ----- GENERAL SCIENCE 4 -----	1984	CONSUMERISM 1 ----- PRIMITIVE PEOPLES 3 C -----
1985	CREATIVE WRITING 7 C AUSTRALIAN NOVELS 5 ----- PUBLIC SPEAKING 3 -----	1985	INTRODUCTORY CALCULUS 9 ----- MATHEMATICS 7 & 8 CALCULUS 10 -----	1985	----- GENERAL SCIENCE 5	1985	MODERN WORLD HISTORY 5 LEGAL STUDIES 3 ----- MODERN WORLD HISTORY 6

Explanation of symbols: C indicates CREDIT; D indicates DISTINCTION; & indicates SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF TWO SEQUENTIAL COURSES IN THE SAME SEMESTER

Format (b)

(Continued)

Format (c)

FOUNDATION COURSES

BASIC READING
BASIC WRITING
BASIC NUMBER

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

ENGLISH 1	C	1982
ENGLISH 2	C	1983
ENGLISH 3		1983
CREATIVE WRITING 3	C	1983
CREATIVE WRITING 4	C	1984
DRAMATIC ARTS 3	C	1984
CREATIVE WRITING 5 & 6	D	1984
DRAMATIC ARTS 4	C	1984
CREATIVE WRITING 7	C	1985
AUSTRALIAN NOVELS 5		1985
PUBLIC SPEAKING 3		1985

MATHEMATICS

MATHEMATICS 1	C	1982
MATHEMATICS 2 & 3	D	1983
MATHEMATICS 4	D	1983
MATHEMATICS 5	C	1984
MATHEMATICS 6		1984
INTRODUCTORY CALCULUS 9		1985
MATHEMATICS 7 & 8		1985
CALCULUS 10		1985

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

GENERAL SCIENCE 1		1982
TECHNOLOGY 1		1982
GENERAL SCIENCE 2		1983
TECHNOLOGY 2		1983
GENERAL SCIENCE 3		1983
HOUSEHOLD REPAIRS 1		1984
GENERAL SCIENCE 4		1984
GENERAL SCIENCE 5		1985

MAN AND SOCIETY

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY 1	C	1982
COMMERCE 1		1982
AUSTRALIAN HISTORY 2		1983
AUSTRALIAN HISTORY 3		1983
GEOGRAPHY 1		1983
CONSUMERISM 1		1984
PRIMITIVE PEOPLES 3	C	1984
MODERN WORLD HISTORY 5		1985
LEGAL STUDIES 3		1985
MODERN WORLD HISTORY 6		1985

ARTS, CRAFTS AND MUSIC

HISTORY OF MUSIC 1	C	1983
HISTORY OF MUSIC 2	D	1983
MUSIC PERFORMANCE 1	C	1983

(Note: The remaining 7 credits in ARTS, CRAFTS AND MUSIC, and the 3 credits in PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT would require this transcript to continue on to p. 6. They have been omitted from this sample.)

Explanation of symbols: C indicates CREDIT; D indicates DISTINCTION; & indicates SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF TWO SEQUENTIAL COURSES IN THE SAME SEMESTER

Format (c)

(5)

4)

Logistics of Record Keeping

A question which exercised our minds for some time was who should be responsible for keeping students' records-of-achievement, and how should they be kept. There are persuasive arguments in favour of devolving this responsibility on to schools. We are determined that the Certificate of Secondary Education should be seen as a *school's certificate* rather than a certificate of a bureaucratic institution and we felt that the less a central agency had to do with record-keeping the more likely the certificate would be correctly perceived by the community. There is always a suspicion among some members of the community that when Boards or other central agencies "get their hands" on students' results they do something sinister to them. Unwarranted as this suspicion may be, it is a factor which has to be allowed for. We would have liked to be able to recommend that each school accept responsibility for every stage in the production of the Certificate of Secondary Education, right down to printing or writing out each student's transcript.

We decided that logistical problems would be too great for many schools to solve. The amount of clerical work involved in constructing transcripts is large. Schools without access to substantial resources would not have been able to produce transcripts of comparable appearance to those produced by other schools able to marshal modern computing and printing aids. In one sense, this did not worry us. We believe that it is more valid to judge schools on how they carry out their day-to-day functions than on the results of their candidates in external examinations, and that the care they devote to such matters as preparing students' reports is one manifestation of their competence. More generally, we are not opposed to schools being judged by the community provided that the judgment is on the basis of valid evidence. If a school so conducts itself as to earn the justified displeasure of its community, we believe it would be a healthy situation which allowed that school to come under pressure to improve itself. Conversely, efficient schools deserve community approbation.

We feel that if schools were given responsibility for producing transcripts, individual students could suffer. For reasons that were neither their fault nor their school's, their transcripts could be more difficult to read than comparable transcripts from other schools. The community should evaluate school leavers on the information a transcript contains, not on its appearance, but it is unrealistic to expect the community not to be influenced by appearance. We therefore concluded that all transcripts should be prepared by the central authority on behalf of schools.

There were other reasons which supported this conclusion. For certain students, especially those who change schools frequently, there is a danger that part of their records will be lost. At present when a student changes school, the new school has to contact the old school to arrange for records to be forwarded on. Sometimes, students who change school several times outdistance their records. Under our proposal, it will be possible for a school to approach the central authority directly for a validated, up-to-date record of each student's achievements.

We also hope that citizens will begin to avail themselves of opportunities to update their transcript after leaving school. There needs to be a central register of every citizen's record-of-achievement so that adults can have their post-school successes acknowledged.

We see a clear difference in the functions of the two sheets of paper which comprise the Certificate of Secondary Education. The inner sheet, the transcript, should be a plain account of demonstrated achievement. It should be of uniform appearance from school to school, varying only as the courses available vary from school to school. The outer sheet, the cover, should express the personality of the school. There will need to be some constraints on its appearance: it will need to have dimensions compatible with the transcript, and the information it contains may need to be compatible with guidelines determined by the central authority or the school systems. (We have in mind guidelines that simply reflect the current state of the laws of privacy, or the tenets of good taste or circumspection.) Within those constraints, it should be left to schools to produce their own covers.

The Certificate of Secondary Education, that is, the school-provided cover and the version of the transcript current at the time, will be issued on the occasion of a student's leaving school, and therefore will be issued only once to most students. The exception will be those who return to school and complete at least one additional semester; even then it should be up to the school to decide whether a new cover should be issued. A student who loses his or her Certificate of Secondary Education would be able to obtain a copy of the transcript from the Authority, but the Authority would not keep a copy of the school's cover.

To enable the Authority to maintain a record of each student's achievements, it will be necessary for each school to lodge a return of courses successfully completed each semester. This will involve schools in a form of clerical work which they are not presently required to perform.

Against this, the central authority would be able to return to schools file copies of those records which could serve as schools' *general result lists*. There should be no net increase in schools' clerical work-loads; schools would file away computer-printed result lists instead of the hand-written lists they are presently required to construct and keep.

We have made tentative enquiries through the Educational Testing Centre of the University of New South Wales concerning the logistics of record-keeping and have satisfied ourselves that efficient and convenient procedures are already available for handling the records of up to 400,000 secondary students simultaneously. We do not propose to recommend any one of the several available procedures we have had described to us; that is more properly a task for the central authority. We propose to say only that administering the kind of certificate we have recommended is well within the capacity of existing technology.

Costs

Our terms of reference charged us to consider the costs of our proposals. We wish to emphasize that we were not required to develop proposals that would be inexpensive to implement. The question of costs was very low on our list of priorities; we sought to make recommendations that would best serve the educational needs of our students and the community as a whole.

We understand that many of those who opposed the abolition of the external examination for the School Certificate in 1975 claim that that decision was motivated primarily by costs. We wish to settle this question once and for all. We are satisfied that the recommendation from the Secondary Schools Board to the Minister to abolish the external examination reflected the Board's conviction at the time that secondary education could not improve while the examination remained. That is, the decision was based on educational grounds, not financial.

In discharge of this part of our commission, we obtained from the Department of Education estimates of the costs of conducting in 1981 various forms of the School Certificate, and we obtained from the Educational Testing Centre of the University of New South Wales an estimate of the cost of keeping the records-of-achievement and producing the transcripts that mark our proposal for a Certificate of Secondary Education. We thank both of those organizations for their ready and courteous co-operation.

The estimates are as follows:

- (a) The "50-50" composite system that was last conducted in 1974, with an external examination in all subjects.

Estimated cost in 1981: \$2,800,000

- (b) The system of moderated school-based assessments in all subjects, using four different modes of moderation, that was last conducted in 1975-76.

Estimated cost in 1981: \$2,340,000

- (c) Moderated school-based assessments in English and Mathematics only; that is, the existing system.

Estimated cost in 1981: \$1,100,000

- (d) The Certificate of Secondary Education as proposed:

Estimated cost in 1981: \$ 400,000

Estimated cost in subsequent years: \$ 250,000

Notes on (d):

- (i) No estimate is provided of the cost of providing support to the central authority. As a major, but not predictable component of the support staff would comprise officers transferring from other duties (as opposed to new employees), the net cost cannot be estimated. As a guide only, the component in (c) relating to permanent staff, both professional and clerical, was \$220,000.
- (ii) No estimate has been provided of the cost of conducting an external test each year. This cost would be heavily influenced by the amount of marking, if any, which would need to be done by paid markers. In (c) above where approximately half of each test is teacher-marked, the cost of markers' salaries was about 30% of the total estimate.

- (iii) The figure of \$400,000 refers to the first year of operation in which a record would have to be created for all secondary students. In ensuing years, records would need to be created only for the incoming Year 7 cohort.

- (iv) The estimate in (d) assumes that the total task of maintaining records and producing transcripts would be paid for at commercial rates. As the task is not complex, it could be handled on a much smaller computer dedicated to the purpose. If such a computer were provided, the cost over several years could be even lower on a per-annum basis.

EXTRACTS FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
RELATING TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE

Entry No. 13, Votes and Proceedings No. 32, 21 November, 1979

13. NEW SOUTH WALES SCHOOL CERTIFICATE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES. -
Mr Bedford moved, pursuant to Notice -

- (1) That a Select Committee be appointed -
 - (a) to examine the requirements and procedures currently governing the award of the School Certificate "and to report whether these conditions meet the concerns of the community regarding the education of students in the first four years of secondary school;
 - (b) to develop proposals including costs for the award of the School Certificate."
- (2) That such Committee consist of Mr Duncan, Mr McGowan, Mr Pickard, Mr Rogan and Mr Whelan.
- (3) That the Committee have leave to sit during the sittings or any adjournment of the House, to adjourn from place to place and to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States of Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

Mr Duncan moved, That the question be amended by leaving out all words after the word "Certificate" in subsection (a) of paragraph 1 down to and including "Certificate" in subsection (b) with the view to inserting the following words instead thereof -

"and the Higher School Certificate and to report whether these conditions meet the concerns of the community regarding education of students in secondary school;

- (b) to develop proposals including costs for the award of these Certificates."

Question proposed - That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question.

Debate ensued.

Question - That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question - put and passed.

Original Question put and passed.

Entry No. 10, Votes and Proceedings No. 58, 14 May, 1981

10. SELECT COMMITTEE UPON NEW SOUTH WALES SCHOOL CERTIFICATE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES. - Ordered, on motion by Mr Walker (*by leave*), That should the House stand adjourned or prorogued and the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly upon New South Wales School Certificate Assessment Procedures agree to a report before the House resumes sitting -

(1) The Committee have leave to send the Report, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence taken before them to the Clerk of the House;

(2) The documents shall be printed and published and the Clerk shall forthwith take such action as is necessary to give effect to the order of the House; and

(3) The documents shall be laid upon the Table of the House at its next sitting.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY UPON THE SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

TUESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER, 1979

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 2.30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr DUNCAN	Mr ROGAN
Mr McGOWAN	Mr WHELAN
Mr PICKARD	

The following entry in the *Votes and Proceedings* of the Legislative Assembly was read by the Clerk:

Entry No. 13, *Votes and Proceedings* No. 32,
of Wednesday, 21 November, 1979.

On the motion of Mr Rogan, seconded by Mr Duncan, Mr McGowan was called to the Chair and thereupon made his acknowledgments to the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Whelan, seconded by Mr Pickard: That arrangements for the calling of witnesses and visits of inspection be left in the hands of the Chairman and the Clerk to the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Duncan, seconded by Mr Rogan: That, unless otherwise ordered, parties appearing before the Committee shall not be represented by any member of the legal profession.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Pickard, seconded by Mr Whelan: That, unless otherwise ordered, the press and public (including witnesses after examination) be admitted to the sittings of the Committee, provided that they shall always be excluded when the Committee is deliberating.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Rogan, seconded by Mr Duncan: That departmental officers and/or persons having special knowledge of the matters alluded to in the Terms of Reference may be invited to assist the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Whelan, seconded by Mr Duncan: That press statements concerning the Committee be made only by the Chairman.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Whelan, seconded by Mr Rogan: That, unless otherwise ordered, transcripts of evidence taken by the Committee be not made available to any person, body or organization: provided that witnesses previously examined shall be given a copy of their evidence.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Duncan, seconded by Mr Whelan: That the Chairman and the Clerk to the Committee be empowered to negotiate with the Premier for the provision of funds to meet expenses in connection with travel, accommodation, advertising and approved incidental expenses of the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Rogan, seconded by Mr Pickard:
That this Committee requests the Premier to approve payment of the following:

- (i) A daily allowance to each member when he attends a meeting of the Committee on a day on which the House is not sitting, and for each day he is present at an official visit of inspection;
- (ii) The cost of air travel for visits of inspection when other modes of transport are impracticable;
- (iii) The cost of air travel between electoral district or place of residence and Sydney for Mr Duncan when necessary, for the purpose of attending meetings of the Committee;
- (iv) A living-away-from-home allowance to Mr Duncan when he attends a meeting of the Committee on a day on which the Legislative Assembly is not sitting.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Duncan, seconded by Mr Rogan:
That the Clerk be empowered to write to interested parties requesting written submissions within the Terms of Reference.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Pickard, seconded by Mr Rogan:
That the allowances for the Chairman and Members be paid at the end of each calendar month.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Duncan, seconded by Mr Pickard:
That upon the calling of a Division or Quorum of the House during a meeting of the Committee, the proceedings of the Committee shall be suspended until the termination of the Division and the return of members.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Whelan, seconded by Mr Pickard:
That the Chairman and the Clerk make arrangements for visits of inspection by the Committee as a whole and that individual members wishing to depart from these be required to make their own arrangements.

The Committee deliberated.

Allowances to Members - Agreed that allowances payable for attendance on non-sitting days and during visits of inspection be paid at the end of each calendar month.

Specialist Staff - Agreed that an officer from the Department of Education should be invited to brief the Committee on the history and function of the School Certificate. Technical advisers, both on a permanent basis and as special consultants, and a liaison officer with the Department, will also be required by the Committee.

Advertising - Agreed that advertisements inviting submissions should not be made until early January, 1980 and that they should contain the names of members of the Committee.

Submissions - Agreed that members would submit lists of persons or organizations who might be invited to make written submissions to the Committee.

The Committee adjourned at 3.20 p.m. until Tuesday, 4th December, 1979, at 10.00 a.m.

TUESDAY, 4 DECEMBER, 1979

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN

Mr ROGAN

Mr PICKARD

Mr WHELAN

The Minutes of the previous meeting, as circulated, were confirmed.

Consultant - Agreed that the Chairman will endeavour to obtain authority to engage a specialist consultant not committed to any institution.

Streaming in schools - Agreed that Inspector Ernest Penman should be invited to address the Committee.

Secondary Schools Board - Agreed:

(i) that the Chairman should request the Board for a copy of all submissions lodged with the Board following its "Invitation to the Community to Comment on the School Certificate";

(ii) that a research officer from this Committee extract a very complete cross-sample of the submissions and the Clerk should write to the persons involved asking for any further comment;

(iii) that the Chairman should request the Board for a copy of the reports commissioned by the Board and mentioned in the Introduction to "Some Comments on the Secondary Schools Board's Invitation to the Community to Comment on the School Certificate".

(iv) that the Chairman should also request a copy of the Board's advice to the Minister thereon.

Director-General of Education - Agreed that Mr Swan, the Director-General of Education, should be invited to afternoon tea with the Committee at 3.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 29th January, 1980, so that the Committee could meet him for informal talks.

Written submissions - Agreed that the Clerk compile a list of names and addresses, submitted by Members of the Committee, of persons who should be invited to make written submissions to the Committee. Names and addresses submitted.

Agreed that the principals of all secondary schools in New South Wales should be invited to make written submissions and to convey to their teaching staff a similar invitation on behalf of the Committee.

Public Seminar on Education - Agreed that the Chairman request the Minister for Education for a copy of all submissions and the report of the Public Seminar on Education mentioned by the Minister in the House on 21 November, 1979.

Visits of Inspection - Agreed that a visit of inspection should be made to an area in New South Wales selected by the Chairman from 5th to 7th February, 1980.

The Committee adjourned at 11.30 a.m. until Tuesday, 29 January, 1980, at 10.30 a.m.

TUESDAY, 29 JANUARY, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. MCGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD
Mr WHELAN

An apology was received from Mr Rogan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December, 1980, as circulated, were confirmed.

Agreed that as Parliament will probably be sitting on 15th April next, it be left to the discretion of Committee members to attend the Institute of Public Affairs seminar entitled "Education and the Needs of Business" if their work load allowed them to do so.

Mr J.E. PENMAN, Inspector of Schools, appeared before the Committee and explained streaming in schools. On completion of the explanation Mr Penman withdrew.

The Committee deliberated.

Pending the arrival of Mr D. Swan, Director-General of Education, for informal discussion the meeting adjourned at 3 p.m. until Wednesday, 13th February, 1980, at 10.30 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. MCGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD
Mr WHELAN

An apology was received from Mr Rogan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Dr A.R. Barcan and Mr E.D. Gaskell were summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman, the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman, the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Dr A.R. BARCAN, Associate Professor of Education, University of Newcastle, called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

At 12.30 p.m. Mr Whelan sought leave from the Chairman.

Mr E.D. GASKELL, Principal of Mullumbimby High School called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence proceeded.

At 3.55 p.m. Mr Duncan sought leave from the Chairman and the meeting lapsed through want of a Quorum.

TUESDAY, 18 MARCH, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 4 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. MCGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD

Mr ROGAN
Mr WHELAN

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

PROFESSOR KEVIN KEOHANE, Chairman of the United Kingdom Committee upon Proposals for a Certificate of Extended Education, appeared before the Committee and outlined the British certificate system.

The Committee adjourned at 5.40 p.m. until Wednesday, 26th March, at 4 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, 26 MARCH, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 4 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. MCGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD

Mr ROGAN
Mr WHELAN

The meeting was suspended until termination of a Division of the House and the return of the Members.

At the request of the Chairman Mssrs G. Coulton and P. Hall, Advisers, and Mrs K. Carey, stenographer, withdrew.

The Minutes of the meetings of 29th January, 13th February and 18th March, 1980, as circulated, were confirmed.

The Committee deliberated.

Upon the calling of a Division of the House the proceedings of the Committee were suspended until the termination of the Division and the return of the Members.

Advisers G. Coulton and P. Hall and Mrs K. Carey, stenographer, were admitted.

The Committee deliberated on future meeting days and visits of inspection.

The Committee adjourned at 5.15 p.m. until Tuesday, 15th April, at 10.30 a.m.

TUESDAY, 15 APRIL, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD
Mr WHELAN

An apology was received from Mr Rogan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Dr E.A. Chaples was summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman, the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman, the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Dr E.A. CHAPLES, Senior Lecturer in Government, University of Sydney, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 12.30 p.m. to attend a seminar conducted by the Institute of Public Affairs at 2.15 p.m.

TUESDAY, 20 MAY, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD

Apologies were received from Mr Rogan and Mr Whelan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Mr P. Harrison-Mattley and Mr J. Johnstone were summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Mr P. HARRISON-MATTLEY, English and History Teacher, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Mr J. JOHNSTONE, Inspector of Schools, South Coast Region, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4 p.m. to 9.15 a.m. on Wednesday, 21st May, 1980.

WEDNESDAY, 21 MAY, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 9.15 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P., (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD

Apologies were received from Mr Rogan and Mr Whelan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Professor S. Encel, P.A. Macinnis and L.G. Bladwell were summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

PROFESSOR S. ENCEL, University of New South Wales, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Mr P.A. MACINNIS, Senior Education Officer (Assessment) of the Department of Technical and Further Education, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The press and public were excluded.

The Committee deliberated.

The press and public were re-admitted.

Mr L.G. BLADWELL, School Principal, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4.30 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, 10th June, 1980.

TUESDAY, 10 JUNE, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 2 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD

Apologies were received from Mr Rogan and Mr Whelan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Mr J.L. Lambert was summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Mr J.L. LAMBERT, Executive Officer of the N.S.W. Higher Education Board called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4 p.m. to 10.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 11th June, 1980.

WEDNESDAY, 11 JUNE, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. MCGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD

Apologies were received from Mr Rogan and Mr Whelan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Mr J.M. Mack was summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Mr J.M. MACK, Senior Lecturer in Pure Mathematics, University of Sydney, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 12.15 p.m. to 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 17th June, 1980.

TUESDAY, 17 JUNE, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD

Mr ROGAN
Mr WHELAN

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Mr C.A. Rennie and Mr T.S. Fuller were summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Mr C.A. RENNIE, Deputy President of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Mr T.S. FULLER, Teacher of Katoomba High School, called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4.25 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 18th June, 1980.

WEDNESDAY, 18 JUNE, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 2.00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr PICKARD
Mr ROGAN

Apologies were received from Mr Duncan and Mr Whelan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Mr G. Conomy was summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Mr G. CONOMY, Assistant Director-General of the Department of Education, called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4.30 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. on Thursday, 19th June, 1980.

TUESDAY, 24 JUNE, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. MCGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD

Mr ROGAN
Mr WHELAN

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

The Chairman placed it on record that he gave leave to Mr D.J. Duff not to appear as a witness at the meeting set down for 2.30 p.m. on Thursday, 19th June, 1980, and with the concurrence of Members had deferred the meeting to this hour and day.

The Minutes of the meeting of 15th April, 20th and 21st May, 10th, 11th, 17th and 18th June, 1980, as circulated, were confirmed.

Mr J. Scott, Mr S.R. Heuston, Mr C.W. Bradley and Mr D.J. Duff were summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Mr J. SCOTT, Teacher, of Mosman High School, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Mr S.R. HEUSTON, Research Officer of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Mr C.W. BRADLEY, Teacher, of The Correspondence School, called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Mr D.J. DUFF, Master of Apprentices of The Australian Iron and Steel Corporation called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4.30 p.m. to 9.30 a.m. on 22nd July, 1980.

WEDNESDAY, 23 JULY, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 9.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD

Apologies were received from Mr Rogan and Mr Whelan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

The Minutes of the meeting of 24th June, 1980, as circulated, were confirmed.

Brother P. McIntosh, Professors P.J. Foster and H.W. Philp and Mr W.G. Todd were summonsed by Order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

BROTHER P. MCINTOSH, Principal of Oakhill College and Chairman of the Catholic Secondary Schools Association, called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

PROFESSORS P.J. FOSTER and H.W. PHILP, both of the School of Education, Macquarie University, called as witnesses. Professor Philp was sworn as a witness and Professor Foster elected to make a solemn declaration: The witnesses severally acknowledged having received summonses under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Mr W.G. TODD, Telecommunications Supervising Draftsman called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4.10 p.m. to 10.30 a.m. on Thursday, 24th July, 1980.

THURSDAY, 24 JULY, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. MCGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD
Mr ROGAN

Apologies were received from Mr Whelan.

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Mr H.J. Boyle, Mr K. Ison and Mr A.L. Watson were summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Mr H.J. BOYLE, Mr K. ISON and Mr A.L. WATSON, High School Principals and Members of the Secondary Schools Board, called as witnesses. Mr Boyle and Mr Ison were sworn as witnesses and Mr Watson elected to make a solemn declaration: The witnesses severally acknowledged having received summonses under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Pickard sought leave of the Chair.

Mr G.A. Coulton, Liaison Officer to the Committee, of the School Certificate Development Unit, was summonsed by order of the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Duncan, seconded by Mr Rogan:
That the evidence of Mr Coulton be heard in camera.

The press and public were excluded.

Mr G.A. COULTON called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The committee adjourned at 4 p.m., sine die.

MONDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. MCGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN	Mr ROGAN
Mr PICKARD	Mr WHELAN

Mssrs G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, and P. Hall, Research Officer, were in attendance.

Mr J.P. Jeremy, Mrs D. Encel, Mr S.D. Wimmer, Dr M. Skilbeck, Miss L.M. Fisher and Miss J. Buckley were summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Mr J.P. JEREMY, President of the Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Mrs D. ENCEL, Metropolitan Vice President, and Mr S.D. WIMMER, General Secretary, of the Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales, called as witnesses and elected to make solemn declarations: The witnesses severally acknowledged having received summonses under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Dr M. SKILBECK, Director of the Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra, A.C.T., called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Miss L.M. FISHER and Miss J. BUCKLEY, students of Sydney Girls' High School, called as witnesses and elected to make solemn declarations: The witnesses severally acknowledged having received summonses under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 5 p.m. to 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 7th October, 1980.

TUESDAY, 7 OCTOBER, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr PICKARD
Mr ROGAN
Mr WHELAN

Apologies were received from Mr Duncan.

Mr G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, was in attendance.

Dr D. Cohen, Mr F.B. Bensley, Mr A.O. Kemp and Ms M.D. Wood were summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Dr D. COHEN, Director of Studies of the Department of Education, called as a witness and elected to make a solemn declaration: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

The witness was questioned by the Chairman.

Agreed that the witness be recalled at a later date, to give members the opportunity to study the evidence of the witness.

The witness withdrew.

Mr F.B. BENSLEY, President, and Mr A.O. KEMP, Secretary, of the New South Wales Council of High School Principals, called as witnesses and sworn: The witnesses severally acknowledged having received summonses under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded the witnesses withdrew.

Mr Pickard sought leave from the Chairman.

Ms M.D. WOOD, General Secretary of the Science Teachers' Association of New South Wales, called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4.15 p.m., sine die.

TUESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. MCGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (In the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN
Mr PICKARD
Mr ROGAN

Apologies were received from Mr Whelan.

Mr G. Coulton, Liaison Officer, was in attendance.

Mr A.J. Buchan and Dr D. Cohen were summonsed by order of the Committee.

The press and public were admitted.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read the Committee's Terms of Reference.

By direction of the Chairman the Clerk read Legislative Assembly Standing Order 362 relating to the Examination of Witnesses.

Mr A.J. BUCHAN, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Education, called as a witness and sworn: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Dr D. COHEN, Director of Studies of the Department of Education, already affirmed: The witness acknowledged having received a summons under the Parliamentary Evidence Act, 1901.

The witness was questioned by Mr Pickard.

Mr Duncan sought leave of the Chair.

The witness was questioned by Mr Rogan.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The press and public were excluded.

The Committee deliberated.

The Committee adjourned at 1 p.m., sine die.

TUESDAY, 16 DECEMBER, 1980

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN

Mr ROGAN

Mr WHELAN

Apologies were received from Mr Pickard.

The Minutes of the meeting of 24th July, 8th September, 9th October and 4th November, 1980, as circulated, were confirmed.

The Committee deliberated.

The Committee adjourned at 12.40 p.m. sine die.

TUESDAY, 12 MAY, 1981

At Parliament House, Sydney, at 4 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr B. McGOWAN, B.A., M.P. (in the Chair)

Mr DUNCAN

Mr WHELAN

Apologies were received from Mr Pickard and Mr Rogan.

The Chairman's Draft Report was accepted as read by the Chairman. The Draft Report was circulated amongst the Committee.

Agreed that meetings of the Committee be held on Tuesday, 2nd June and Wednesday, 3rd June, 1981, both at 11 a.m., to consider the Draft Report.

The Committee adjourned at 4.20 p.m. to 11 a.m. on Tuesday, 2nd June, 1981.

Mr Rogan sought leave for the Committee to reconsider the inclusion of sub-paragraph (d). *Moved* Mr Rogan that the amending sub-paragraph (d) be deleted. Carried, on the casting vote of the Chairman.

Recommendation 2 (unamended) read and agreed to, on the casting vote of the Chairman.

Mr Pickard sought leave of the Chair.

Recommendation 7 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 26 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 27 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 28 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 29 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 30 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 31 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 32 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 33 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 34 read and agreed to.

Moved Mr Rogan that a new Recommendation 35 be inserted and later recommendations be appropriately renumbered.

"Schools should be encouraged to continue the practice of issuing school diplomas. The conditions of awarding these diplomas should be determined by each school. The Diploma should not be seen as an alternative to the Certificate of Secondary Education."

New Recommendation 35 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 36 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 37 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 38 read and agreed to.

Renumbered Recommendation 39 read and amended. R39 as amended agreed to.

Chapter Three of the Draft Report was considered paragraph by paragraph. Chapter Three read and amended. Chapter as amended agreed to.

Chapter Four of the Draft Report was considered paragraph by paragraph. Chapter Four read and amended. Chapter as amended agreed to.

Chapter Five of the Draft Report was considered paragraph by paragraph. Chapter Five read and amended. Chapter as amended agreed to.

Chapter Six of the Draft Report was considered paragraph by paragraph. Chapter Six read and amended. Chapter as amended agreed to.

The Committee accepted the appendices to the Report.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Rogan, that appreciation of the assistance of Mrs Carey, stenographer, Messrs Coulton, Hall and Jackson, and Hansard reporters, be placed on record.

VISITS OF INSPECTION OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE
OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY UPON THE SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

WEDNESDAY, 19TH MARCH, 1980
AT ALBURY, N.S.W.

The Chairman attended a seminar of the School Community Education Committee, on The School Certificate.

TUESDAY, 15TH APRIL, 1980
AT SYDNEY, N.S.W.

The Committee attended a seminar of the Institute of Public Affairs at the Science Centre, 35 Clarence Street, Sydney, on The Transition from School to Continuing Employment.

WEDNESDAY, 16TH APRIL, 1980
AT CANBERRA, A.C.T.

The Committee proceeded to inspect educational establishments in the Australian Capital Territory.

Deakin High School - Mr. L. Sheargold, Principal. Discussions with parents, students and staff.

Weston Creek High School - Mr. C. Burnett, Principal. Discussions with Principal, staff and students.

Stirling College - Mr. I. Collier, Principal. Discussions and lunch with Principals from feeder high schools.

O'Connell Education Centre - Discussions with senior staff of the A.C.T. Schools Authority: Messrs. Ketley, Beare, Grant, Gunn, Bairstow and Cleary.

THURSDAY, 17TH APRIL, 1980
AT CANBERRA, A.C.T.

Kaleen High School - Mr. B. Brown, Principal. Discussions with Principal, staff and students. Visited classes.

The Committee returned to O'Connell Education Centre for further discussions with Dr. Hedley Beare, Dr. John Grant, Mr. Neil Russell and Mr. Graham Little.

WEDNESDAY, 30TH APRIL, 1980
AT BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND

The Committee proceeded to inspect education establishments in Brisbane:

Kenmore State High School - Mr. J. Kirkman, Principal.

Kelvin Grove State High School - Mr. A. Fynes-Clinton, Principal.

The Committee proceeded to the Treasury Building and held discussions with Mr. C. Gilmour, Director-General of Education and Messrs. Guy and Warry.

THURSDAY, 1ST MAY, 1980
AT BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND

The Committee proceeded to Parliament House and held discussions with Mr. M.J. Ahern, M.P., Chairman, and members of the Select Committee on Education in Queensland.

The Committee proceeded to the Board of Secondary School Studies and had discussions with Mr. J. Golding, Chairman, and staff.

TUESDAY, 10TH JUNE, 1980
AT SYDNEY, N.S.W.

The Committee proceeded to Cleveland Street Boys' High School - Mr. L. Bladwell, Principal. Visited classes.

Discussions with Principal, staff and students.

WEDNESDAY, 11TH JUNE, 1980
AT SYDNEY, N.S.W.

The Committee held discussions at the Secondary Schools Board.

WEDNESDAY, 18TH JUNE, 1980
AT SYDNEY, N.S.W.

The Committee proceeded to Ashfield Boys' High School - Mr. L. Walpole, Principal. Visited classes.

Discussions with Principal, staff and students.

THURSDAY, 19TH JUNE, 1980
AT SYDNEY, N.S.W.

The Committee proceeded to Leichhardt High School - Mrs. M. Ward, Principal. Visited classes.

Discussions with Principal, staff and students.

MONDAY, 7TH JULY, 1980
AT PERTH, W.A.

The Committee proceeded to the Education Department, Parliament Place, West Perth, and had discussions with Dr. D. Mossenson, Director-General and senior officers - Messrs. Pearson, Vickery, Loudon and Hoffman.

The Committee divided into two groups:

Group A: Lockridge Senior High School - Mr. R. Holloway, Principal.
Public forum with Principal, staff, pupils and parents;

Group B: Churchlands Senior High School - Mr. A. Latham, Principal.
Discussions with Principal, staff and pupils.

TUESDAY, 8TH JULY, 1980

AT PERTH, W.A.

The Committee had discussions with Mr. F. McKenzie and staff of the Board of Secondary Education.

The Committee divided into two groups:

Group A: Wesley College - Mr. C. Hamer, Headmaster. Discussions with Headmaster, staff and students;

Group B: Scotch College - Mr. W. Dickinson, Headmaster. Discussions with Headmaster, staff, parents and students. School inspected.

WEDNESDAY, 9TH JULY, 1980

AT PERTH, W.A.

The Committee proceeded to the University of Western Australia and had discussions with Professor Julian Stanley on the education of gifted children.

THURSDAY, 10TH JULY, 1980

AT ADELAIDE, S.A.

The Committee had discussions with Mr. G. Gosling and Mr. R. Ingram of the Public Examinations Board.

The Committee proceeded to the Education Centre and had discussions with senior staff of the Education Department: Messrs. Smallacombe, Dinning, Longbottom, Beaumont, Russell and Mrs. Nolan.

The Committee divided into two groups:

Group A: Campbelltown High School - Mr. B. George, Principal. Discussions with staff, pupils and parents.

Group B: Ingle Farm High School - Mr. M. Reynolds, Principal. Discussions with staff, pupils and parents.

SATURDAY, 20TH JULY, 1980

AT SYDNEY, N.S.W.

The Clerk of the Committee attended a seminar of World Education Fellowship at the Catholic Education Centre, on Is Anything Wrong with the School Certificate?

TUESDAY, 22ND JULY, 1980

AT SYDNEY, N.S.W.

The Committee proceeded to Normanhurst Boys' High School - Mr. A. Maclean, Principal.

Discussions with Principal, staff, parents and pupils. Visited classes.

FRIDAY, 1ST AUGUST, 1980

AT LISMORE, N.S.W.

The Committee proceeded to inspect schools in Lismore:

Lismore High School - Mr. N. Munro, Principal. Forum discussion with staff, students and parents.

Richmond River High School - Mr. I. Hodge, Principal. Discussions with staff, students and parents.

St Mary's College - Sr. Julianne Murphy, Principal. Bro. Graham and staff of St. Joseph's College joined with staff, students and parents in discussions.

The Committee had discussions with Mr. R. Bass and members of the Far North Coast Education Advisory Council.

TUESDAY, 26TH AUGUST, 1980

AT MELBOURNE, VICTORIA

The Committee had discussions with The Hon. A.J. Hunt, Minister of Education, Dr. L. Shears, Director-General, and senior staff: Messrs. Ford, Krahnert, Neale and Maddocks.

The Committee proceeded to the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education and had discussions with Mrs. McDonnell, Dr. Kelso and Mr. Foyster.

The Committee had discussions with Dr. J. Keeves, Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research.

WEDNESDAY, 27TH AUGUST, 1980

AT HOBART, TASMANIA

The Committee had discussions with Acting Director-General, Mr. J. Scott and Mr. B. Ward.

The Committee divided into two groups:

Group A: Internal Standards Information Service. Discussions with Mr. D. Palmer, Chairman, and Mr. J. Morley;

Group B: Ogilvie High School - Miss G. Brown, Principal. Discussions with staff. Visited classes.

THURSDAY, 28TH AUGUST, 1980

AT HOBART, TASMANIA

The Committee had discussions with Mr. W. Baulch, Secretary, and staff of the Schools Board of Tasmania.

The Committee divided into two groups:

Group A: Rosetta High School - Mr. D. Mourant, Principal. Discussions with staff and students;

Group B: Geilston Bay High School - Mr. R. Hortle, Principal. Discussions with staff and students.

- 5 -

FRIDAY, 14TH NOVEMBER, 1980

AT THE ENTRANCE, N.S.W.

The Committee attended a seminar on The Vertical Semester Organization of The Entrance High School.

LIST OF WITNESSES

	<u>Page</u>
Barcan, A.R., Education Department, University of Newcastle	1
Bensley, F.B., New South Wales Council of High School Principals	241
Bladwell, L.G., Cleveland Street Boys' High School	78
Boyle, H.G., Dulwich High School	194
Bradley, C.W., The Correspondence School	146
Buchan, A.J., Deputy Director-General, Department of Education	262
Buckley, Miss J.R., Sydney Girls' High School	231
Chaples, E.A., Department of Government, University of Sydney	23
Cohen, D., Director of Studies, Department of Education	236, 263
Conomy, G., Assistant Director-General, Department of Education	130
Duff, D.J., Australian Iron & Steel Proprietary Limited	157
Encel, Mrs. D.H., Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations of New South Wales	216
Encel, S., Sociology Department, University of New South Wales	60
Fisher, Miss L.M., Sydney Girls' High School	231
Foster, P.J., Education Department, Macquarie University	170
Fuller, T.S., Katoomba High School	120
Gaskell, E.D., Mullumbimby High School	13
Harrison-Mattley, P., Fairfield Girls' High School	33
Heuston, S.R., New South Wales Teachers' Federation	146
Ison, K., Fairfield Girls' High School	194
Jeremy, J.P., Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations of New South Wales	206
Johnstone, J.W., South Coast Region, Department of Education, Wollongong	49
Kemp, A.O., New South Wales Council of High School Principals	241
Lambert, J.L., New South Wales Higher Education Board	84
Macinnis, P.A., Assessment Research and Development Unit, Department of Technical and Further Education	70
Mack, J.M., Mathematics Department, University of Sydney	96
McIntosh, P.N., Oakhill College, Castle Hill	164

	<u>Page</u>
Philp, H.W., Education Department, Macquarie University	170
Rennie, C.A., New South Wales Teachers' Federation	107
Scott, J., Mosman High School	146
Skilbeck, M., Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra	223
Todd, W.G., Australian Telecommunications Commission	182
Watson, A.L., Baulkham Hills High School	194
Wimmer, S.D., Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations of New South Wales	216
Wood, Ms M.D., Science Teachers' Association of New South Wales	252

LIST OF SUBMISSIONS

Abbotsleigh
Adams, H.G.
Adams, M.
Albury School Community Development Committee
Apprentice Training Officers Association
Ardlethan Central School
Art Education Society (New South Wales)
Ashcroft High School
Asia Teachers' Association
Atkinson, I.P.
Australian Capital Territory Teachers Federation
Australian Consumers' Association
Australian Council for Health Physical Education and Recreation
Australian Council for Health Physical Education and Recreation, South
Coast Sub-Branch
Australian Labor Party, Dee Why Branch
Australian Labor Party, Pennant Hills Branch
Australian Society for Music Education
Ayliffe, R.J.

Bagwill, Mrs I.
Bailey, W.J.
Baker, D., student
Barcan, A.R.
Barellan Central School, teaching staff
Bathurst High School, teaching staff
Batlow Central School
The Beacon Hill High School, teaching staff
Bega High School Parents and Citizens' Association
Belmont Technical and Further Education Committee
Belmont Technical College
Belmore North Public School, teaching staff
Bethlehem College, teaching staff
Biddle, D.S.
Birkett, W.G.
Bladwell, L.G.
Blakehurst High School, teaching staff
Bomaderry High School, teaching staff
Bradley, C.

Broadfoot, R.
Brown, D.L.
Browne, B.
Buchan, A.J.
Bulahdelah Central School, teaching staff

Castle Hill High School Parents and Citizens' Association
Cavanagh, D.M.
Central Coast Adventist School
Central Coast Mathematics Association
Chaples, E.A.
Cheney, C., student
Child Migrant and Multicultural Education Special Interest Groups
Christian Brothers St. Thomas Boys' School, teaching staff
Classical Languages Teachers Association
Cohen, D.
Communist Party of Australia
Conomy, G.
Coonamble High School
Coulton, G.A.
Cowra High School Parents and Citizens' Association
Crawford, M.E.
Crew, Ms J.
Cunningham, Mrs G.F.
Curbishley, D., student

Danebank Church of England School for Girls, teaching staff
Darnley, R.
Dasey, S.T.
Dean, C.J.
Dean, G.
De La Salle College, teaching staff
Dengate, Mrs R.D.
Deniliquin High School, teaching staff
Department of Education, South Coast Region
Dicker, L.R.
Docking, J.
Donlan, A.E.

Earle, C., student

Edwards, J.F.

Edwards, Ms J.

Elcom Collieries Proprietary Limited

Encel, S.

Engadine High School Parents and Citizens' Association

English Teachers' Association of New South Wales

Ethnic Communities' Council of New South Wales

Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales

Figtree High School, students

Figtree High School, teaching staff

Findlay, Ms S.

Foster, P.J. and Philp, H.

Foyer, T., student

Francis, R.I. and Kay, R.W.

Freame, M.C.

Fuller, T.S.

Gallagher, J.E.

Gaskell, E.D.

Geography Teachers' Association of New South Wales

Gibbons, Miss J.D.

Glasson, C.J.

Glenaeon School Limited, teaching staff

Gordon, Ms V.

Gorokan High School, teaching staff (1)

Gorokan High School, teaching staff (2)

Gosford High School, Branch of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation

Gregory, Br.

Greystanes High School, teaching staff

Harrison-Mattley, P.

Headmasters' Conference of the Independent Schools of Australia (New South Wales Branch)

Health and Physical Education Curriculum Development Committee, North West Region

Health and Physical Education Masters' and Mistresses' Council of New South Wales

Henman, J.H.

High School Education Law Project

Holani, W.M.K.

Hornsby Teachers' Association of New South Wales Teachers' Federation

Hutton, B.

Illawarra and Shoalhaven Government High School Deputy Principals'
Association

The Illawarra Grammar School

Illawarra Regional Apprenticeship Committee

Inner City Education Centre Co-operative Limited

Inner City Teachers' Association of the New South Wales Teachers'
Federation

Institute of Public Affairs (New South Wales)

Ison, K.

Jackson, R., student

Jeremy, P.

Jesmond High School, students (1)

Jesmond High School, students (2)

Johnstone, J.W.

Joyce, J.R.

Judge, E.A.

Kadina High School Parents and Citizens' Association

Kirby, S., student

Kirkman, D.J.

Knox Grammar School, teaching staff

Kossy, Ms J.

Kramer, Ms L.

Krause, E.G.

Lake Cargelligo Teachers' Association of the New South Wales Teachers'
Federation

Lambert, J.L.

Lee, P.T.

Leeton High School Teachers' Association of the New South Wales
Teachers' Federation

Lewis, G.L.

Liberal Party of Australia, Education Science and Arts Policy Committee

Liverpool Mathematics Teachers' Association

Lockley, T.H.

Lynch, E.C.

Lyons, D.J.

Macinnis, P.

Mack, J.

Madden, Sr. Mary

Maher, M., student

Manly Girls' High School, Branch of the New South Wales Teachers'
Federation

Marmara, A., student

Marsden High School, teaching staff

Mastus, W.

McFarlane, D.J.

McGarity, Ms B.

McGrath, D.M.

McIntosh, Br Peter

McKenzie, R.

Medway, Ms V.

Millar, Ms M.

Miller, W., student

Monaro High School, Branch of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation

Monaro High School, teaching staff

Moorebank High School

Moss, Mrs F.S.

Moulds, Br John

Mount Austin High School Parents and Citizens' Association

Mount Austin High School, teaching staff

Murphy, J.

Murray High School, teaching staff

Muswellbrook High School

Narrandera High School

Narromine High School

Nash, T.J.

Nelson Bay High School

Nelson, S.

Newcastle and Hunter Region Apprenticeship Advisory Committee

New South Wales Council of High School Principals

New South Wales Independent Teachers Association
New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music, School of Education
New South Wales Teachers' Federation
New South Wales Women's Advisory Council to the Premier
Northmead High School, teaching staff (1)
Northmead High School, teaching staff (2)
North Richmond Teachers' Association
North Ryde High School
Nugent, D., student
Nursery School Teachers' College, teaching staff

Orange High School Parents and Citizens' Association
Orange High School student survey
Orange High School, teaching staff
Ormsby, S., student
Osborne, C.G., M.P.

Parent Probe
Pendle Hill High School
Phillips, B.M.
Phillips, Ms J.
Pitman, D.T.
The Pittwater House Schools
Presbyterian Ladies' College, Armidale
Public Service Board of New South Wales
Public Transport Commission of New South Wales
Purcell, F.D.

Quirindi High School
Quirindi High School Parents and Citizens' Association

Radical Education Group
Randwick Girls' High School, teaching staff
Riverina College of Advanced Education, teaching staff
Riverside Girls' High School, teaching staff
Riverstone High School Parents and Citizens' Association
Robb, W., M.P.
Roman, E.

Resolved on the motion of Mr Rogan that appreciation of the assistance of Mrs Carey, stenographer, Mssrs. Coulton, Hall, Jackson and Hansard writers be placed on record.

(Kingsley Jackson) *
Clerk to the Committee

(Brian McGowan)
Chairman

Roots, D., student
Roseville College Church of England School for Girls
Ross, Ms J.
Rowland, D.
Russell, N.

Salmond, Ms O.G.
Santa Maria College, teaching staff
Science Teachers' Association of New South Wales
School Community Organizations, The New South Wales Federation of
Scone High School
Scone High School Parents and Citizens' Association
Scone Public Meeting
Semmler, B.E.
Shannon, Mrs G.D.
Shortland County Council
Simmons, C., student
Skerritt, H.S.
Skinner, J.B.
Slinn, K.
Smith, Dr S.L.
Smith, Miss H.J.
South Coast Secondary Principals' Council
Spearritt, D.
Specific Learning Difficulties Association of New South Wales
St George Area Mathematics Teachers' Association
St George Girls' High School
St Ignatius College, teaching staff
St Joseph's High School
St Mary's College, Grafton
St Mary's High School, Maitland
St Patrick's High School, teaching staff
Strathfield South High School, teaching staff
Sutherland Shire District Council of Parents and Citizens' Associations
Swansea High School, teaching staff (1)
Swansea High School, teaching staff (2)
Sweet, R.
Sylvania High School Parents and Citizens' Association

Tara School
Taylor, H.W.
Taylor, J.H., M.P.
Taylor, M., student
Teachers, group of
Teachers, group of Physical Education and Health Education teachers
Teachers representing the New South Wales Teachers' Federation on the
English Syllabus Committee of the Secondary Schools Board
Tenterfield High School, teaching staff
Thomas, N.J.A.
Todd, W.G.
Toms, I.
Tumut High School, teaching staff
Turnbull, Mrs N.L.

University of New South Wales, School of Education
Uralla Central School, teaching staff

Walgett High School
Walker, D.Y.
Warner, Miss L., student
Watson, A.L.
Webb, J.
Wee, J., student
Wellham, W.A.
Wenona, teaching staff
Westfields High School, teaching staff
Whalan High School, teaching staff
White, Mr and Mrs R.
Windsor Municipal Council
Withers, W.F.
Wollongong Mathematics Steering Committee
Wood, Ms M.D.
Woodenbong Central School, teaching staff
Woosnam, C.
The World Education Fellowship (New South Wales)
Wyatt, Ms H. and Corban, G.

INDEX

Ability grouping	R22, R26, 7, 8, 76, 78, 99, 116, 117
Within Years	77, 78
Academic education	
And elitism	25, 28, 29, 30
Acceleration	R23, R24, 5, 7
And the community	130
And sequential courses	130
Accountability	
Of schools	75, 87, 110
And examinations	75
And community involvement	124
Of non-examinables	124
And reliable information	124
And language	124
Accreditation	
Of courses outside schools	R37, 10, 122
Long term aim	40
Losing favour	45
Diplomas	R35, 9
Achievements	
And semester courses	124
And accountability	124
And examinations	124
And non-examinables	124
And course descriptions	125
And course numbering	127
And assessment	132, 133
In learning areas	138
School Certificate	62, 64
Adult education	R38, 10, 122
(See also "Continuing education" "Leaving")	
Advisory service	R8(f), 5
Age streaming (lock-step progression)	76, 78
Appeals	
By schools	R22, 7, 66
By students and/or parents	R20, 7, 67, 96, 115

Assessment	
Parity of esteem	80
Versus examination	94, 96
By schools	R17, 6, 95, 99, 115
Achievement-based	95, 98
Semester	R16, 6
Approval	112
And community support	114
Assistance	R18, 6
Distinction	R33, 9
Credit	R33, 9
Pass	R33, 9
And course proposals	125
And resources	131
Criterion-referenced	132, 133, 135
Norm-referenced	132
Multiple	132
Inaccuracy	132
Of tests	135
Global index	136
Fifty-fifty moderation	36, 37, 39, 45
Seventy five-twenty five system	41
"Satisfactorily studied"	57, 61, 61
Grading, Maths & English	62
Assignments	125
Attendance	
Satisfactory	38, 58, 59
Four years	56
Two years' study	60, 61
Board of Secondary School Studies 1946	26, 29
Board of Senior School Studies	36, 56
Central authority	R2, R3, R7, R8, R9, R21, R31, R32, R33, 3-9, 93, 98, 109-112, 116, 118, 125-127, 137, 148
Representative of	125, 126
Course approvals	126
Course supervision	127
Withdrawal of approval	127
Course numbering	127
And transcripts	137, 139
Support costs	148
Certificate of Secondary Education	R2, R31, 3, 9, 109-111, 118, 146, 147
Transcript	R2, R8(c), R31, 3, 4, 9, 110, 118, 137, 145
Cover	R2, R31, 3, 9, 110, 137
Anecdotal information	R31, 9, 118, 137
Other achievements	R31, 9, 118
Basic skills tests	R36, 9, 120-122
Adult education	R38, 10, 122
Standardized testing	134-136

Certificate of Secondary Education (Cont)	
Detailed information	136
Teacher comments	137
A <u>school's</u> certificate	145
Lost certificate	146
Technological feasibility	147
Costs	147
Formats	139-144
Change	
Resistance to	44
Changing schools	R32, R33, 9, 118
Character reference	137, 139
Colleges of advanced education	54
Committees - School curriculum committees	R7(c), 4, 94, 96, 98, 111
And assessments	96
Endorsing courses	R7(c), 4, 111, 125
Of teachers parents and pupils	125
Meetings	126
Committees - Syllabus (subject curriculum) committees	54
Committee upon the School Certificate	1
Shaping opinion	46
Noting opinion	46
See also "practical considerations"	
"Evolution"	
"Procedures"	
Meetings	2
Publicity	2
Submissions to	2
Witnesses to	2
Visits	2
Inspections	2
Seminars	2
Community Involvement	52, 93, 107, 124
School curriculum committee	R7(c), 4, 94, 96, 98, 111
And accountability	30, 124, 145
Community languages	72

Comparability	
Of awards	36, 37, 45, 48, 83, 85, 118
Of schools	85
Of format	118
Of language	R33, 9, 118
Of courses & titles	R33, 9, 118
Of assessments	R33, 9, 118
Of reporting	R33, 9, 118
Of records	124
Central authority approval	125
Multiple	132
Inaccuracy	132
Teacher meetings	132, 133
Of/by tests	48, 135
And accreditation	40
And examinations	41, 48
And comprehensive moderation	48
Conduct satisfactory	38, 58, 59
Continuing education	R32, 9, R38, 10, 82, 118, 121, 122
Core (compulsory)	
Of skills	72, 92
Of essential learning	32, 33, 91
Within a subject	45, 92
Of subjects (courses)	R21(a), 7, 27, 32, 33, 60, 92
Prescribed by a central authority	R8(e), 4, 93, 98, 112
Wyndham description	29
Minister's 1961 description	32
Comment on	32, 33
Co-requisites	R11, 5, 113, 126
Costs	147, 148
Abolition 1975 examination	148
Alternative procedures	148
Initial cost	149
Counselling	
Course selection	R13, R26, 5, 8, 113, 117
Acceleration	R24, 7
Courses	R3, 3, 99, 110
Introduction	36
Length of	34, 108
Approving of Sequences	R8(b) & (d), 4, 112, 125
Pre-requisites	13
Co-requisites	R11, 5, 113, 126
Special	R11, 5, 113, 126
Implementing	R12, 5, 113
Outlines	R3, R8(d), 3, 4, 110, 129
Aims and objectives	R14, R15, 5, 113, 126
	R15(a), 5, 113, 125

Courses (cont.)

Content	R15(b), 5, 128
Material & cost	R15(c), 6, 125
Achievements	R15(d), 6, 125, 126, 128
Assisting teachers in construction of	114
Selection by parents	R26, 8, 117
Selection by students	R26, 8, 117
Selection by schools	R28, 8, 116, 117
Compulsory	R21(a), 7, 116
Central authority	R21, 7, 116, 125
Secondary Schools Board	R21, 7, 54, 56, 60, 116, 128
Alternative courses	R25, 7, 117
Academic	R26, 8, 117
Specific purpose	R26, 8, 117, 129
Parity (status) of	R27, 8, 78, 79, 117
Short	R27, 8
Comparability of titles	R33, 9, 118
Comparability of levels	R33, 9, 118, 131
Outside schools	R37, 10, 122
Proposals	125
And school curriculum committees	125
Developed by teachers	125
Learning experiences	125
Requirements	125
Assignments	125
Tests	125, 126, 134
Demonstrations	125, 131
Assessment	125, 126, 131
Workmanship	125, 126, 131
Synopsis	R14, R15, 5, 113, 126
Resources	126, 130, 131
Publicity	126
Difficulty number	127, 128
Semester number	127, 128
Major subjects	129
Horizontal	129, 130
Vertical	129, 130
Language	72, 129
Interdisciplinary	129
And teacher meetings	133
Standardised testing	134
Half-yearly return	146
The ideal situation	30

Cover, C.S.E.

Provided by school	R2, R31, 3, 9, 110, 118, 137, 146
Personality of school	146

Credentiailling

	70, 83, 99, 100, 107, 118
On leaving school	51, 109
Common format	118
And testing	121
Not subject to basic skills tests	122, 134
Courses outside schools	R37, 10, 122
And failure	133
Not global indices	136
Detailed information	136
The ideal situation	30
State or school certification	47

Credit pass	R33, 9, 119
Criterion-referenced assessment	132, 133, 135
Cultural change	72
Curriculum	
Relevance of	89, 97
School-based	28, 90, 97, 110
Child-centred	91, 107
School curriculum committees	R7(c), 4, 94, 96, 98
Central authority approval	98, 110
Should be diverse	98, 107-109
Should be flexible	98, 109, 139
Knowledge, skills, attitudes	98
Checks and balances	R7, 4, 111
And examinations	120, 121
And basic skills tests	121
School curriculum officer	125
Policies and subjects	43
Base Paper on the Total Curriculum	44, Appendix 3
Demonstrations	125
Department of Education	54, 57
And zoning	R39, 10, 123
And costs	147
Resources for Gifted	31
Department of Technical and Further Education	55
Depth, in depth study	R27, 8, 117
Diplomas	R35, 9
Disabled	70
Distinction pass	R33, 9, 118, 126, 127
Education Act of 1961	25, 31, 36, 54, 56
Education Commission	56
Effort	62, 64
Electives	27, 32, 33

Employers	
And reports	108
And testing basic skills	121
And selection	50
On Secondary Schools Board	55
Enrichment	129, 130
Esteem, parity of	R27, 8, 78, 79, 117
Ethnic change	72
Evolution	R29, 8, 31, 42, 43, 108, 116, 117
Reporting procedures	R34, 9, 119
External examination	
For and against	Appendix 7
On motivation	70
Uniformity	72
Ethnic variation	72
And accountability of schools	75, 121
And accountability	76
And comparability	41, 48, 84, 85
Versus assessment	94
Markers	96
And community support	40, 45, 48-51, 114
And curriculum	40, 42, 120, 121
And adaptation	120
And non-academic students	120
And information	120
And discussion	132
Knibbs-Turner Report	25, 26
1946 recommendations	27
Wyndham Report	29
Introduction, School Certificate	36
Abolition, School Certificate	37
S.S.B. representative	39, 55
Faults	39-41
Teacher reaction	46, 49
No longer used elsewhere	48
Exam only	49
And unemployment	50
Secondary Schools Board	54, 55
Satisfactory completion	58
Terminal global indices	63
Faculties, teaching	R29, 8, 117
Failing	R18, 6, 43, 95, 99, 108, 114, 119, 127, 133
Giving reasons for	R20, 7, 114, 115
Reasons for	R18, 6, 114, 115
And repeating	R19, 6, 115
A semester course	133
School curriculum committee mediation	96

Feasibility	122, 128, 131
Feasibility study of tests	122
Of C.S.E. records	147
Fifty-fifty composite system	
Cost	148
Introduction	36, 40
Community support	45, 49
Foster, Professor P.	101-106
Gifted	R12, R23, 5, 7, 31, 32, 68, 69, 76, 116, 129, 130
Global indices	63, 64, 136
Grading	37, 62-67
Graded classes	77
Lack of	49
Maths & English	62, 65
Grading Advice	65, 66
Higher School Certificate	47, 56, 57, 128
1946 examination	27
recommendation	
Candidature 35,000	28
1978 Keeves-Parkyn inquiry	56
Inspections	
for registration	57
Intermediate Certificate	133
1946 abolish examination	27
Item banking	88
Keohane, Professor K.	2
Knibbs-Turner Royal Commission, 1902	25
Learning	
Rate of	108
Learning areas	138
Leaving, legal leaving age	R2, 3, 109
Leaving school	R2, R25, R31, 3, 7, 9, 110, 117, 118
After leaving school	R3, R32, R38, 3, 9, 110, 118, 121, 122

Leaving Certificate	
1956 candidature 8,000 Examination	28 29
Levels	
School Certificate	36, 37
Literacy & numeracy	45, 48, 73, 74
Minister for Education	R7(a), 4, 54
1961 second-reading speech	30
Moderation	84-87, 131-133, Appendix 1
In all subjects - cost	148
In English & Mathematics - cost	148
Fifty-fifty system	36
Modes	37, 42
Seventy five - twenty five system	41
Comprehensive moderation	42
Dissatisfaction	49, 50
English & Maths	65, Appendix 6
Motivation	70
N Indicator	63-65
Norm-referenced assessment	132
Parents	
And assessments	96
And reports	50, 108
And courses	R13, R14, 5, 109, 113
And failing	114
And acceleration	R24, 7, 117, 130
And unemployment	50
P & C Association	55
Parity of esteem	R27, 8, 78, 79, 117
Pass	R33, 9, 118, 129
Majority should pass	127
Penman, J.E.	2
Philp, Professor H.	101-106
Practical considerations	31, 42, 48, 115, 128, 131, 136, 145

Pre-requisites	R11, 5, 113, 126
Principals	29, 44, 58, 67
Privacy Committee	R34, 9, 119
Procedures, no disruption of	
Personnel and materials	R30, 8, 118
Private reporting	R34, 9, 119
Progress	
Satisfactory	38, 58
Record of achievement	R2, R6, 3, 109, 110
And failure	R18(a), 6, 115, 127
And acceleration	R23, 7, 116, 130
And common format	118
And central authority	R30, R31, 8, 9, 118
Updating	R30, 8, 118
And school reports	R34, 9, 119
Showing basic skills tests	R36, 9, 122
Showing courses outside schools	R37, 10, 122
After leaving school	R38, 10, 122
And tests	136
Central register	145, 146
Records	
Central authority	R8(c), 4, 112
Reference Tests	65, Appendix 6
Registration of schools	R7(b), R8(a), 4, 56, 57, 111
Relevance	
Of the curriculum	89
And examinations	120
Remediation	R12, R25, 5, 7, 108, 113, 117
Repeating courses	R18, R19, 6, 99, 100, 115
Basic skill tests	122
Reporting	
Private	R34, 9, 80, 81, 108, 119
Public	R34, 9, 80, 81, 108, 110, 119
Common format	118
Common language	R33, 9, 118
And record of achievement	R34, 9, 119
And information	124

Reporting (cont)

Complete record	124
General result lists	147
The ideal situation	30
Supplementary Statements	44

Research

Curriculum and assessment	R8(h), 5, 112
---------------------------	---------------

Resources

Of central authority	R9, 5, 112
No sudden disruption of	R28, 8, 117
Available in school	126, 145
Difficulty standards	130, 131
Videotape	131
Teacher meetings	133
For gifted	31

Result Notices	66
----------------	----

Retaking courses	R18, R19, 6, 99, 100, 115
------------------	---------------------------

Retention rates	28
-----------------	----

Rule 5 Report	58
---------------	----

Satisfactorily studied (completed)	38, 57, 58, 62, Appendix 5
------------------------------------	----------------------------

School Certificate

Introduction	36
As a Credential	50, 59, 70, 108
And adaptive schools	109
Abolition of	R1, 3, 64, 109
Secondary Schools Board	54
Candidature 75,000	28
Documents	67, 119
Unsuited to Gifted	32
Recipe for conformity	32
Rigid	33
Compulsory schooling	64
School Courses	34, 38
Requirements	38, 55-62
General issues	39, 64
No longer adequate	47
Set four years	51
Interpretations	119

School Certificate Manual	60, Appendix 5
---------------------------	----------------

School courses	R3, R28, 3, 8, 34, 38, 61, 94, 100, 110, 115, 117
----------------	---

School curriculum committees

(See Committees, school curriculum)

School Leaver Statements (S.A.)	137
School organization	33, 115, 116
School systems (Govt; private)	
Resources	R9, 5, 112
Private schools	28, 55, 57
Vast size	31, 47, 48

Schools

Adaptive schools	107
Changing schools	R32, R33, 9, 118, 199, 146
And communities	146
General result lists	147
Special purpose schools	28
Diplomas	R35, 9
Comprehensive schools	28
Continuing education	52

Schools Commission

Schooling for 15 & 16 Year Olds	50, 107
------------------------------------	---------

Secondary Education (NSW)

Period of	25, 51, 56, 60
Stages of	25-27, 33, 34, 38
Nature of	25-27, 31
Population growth	27
School growth	28
Special purpose schools	28
Comprehensive schools	28
Universal entry	28, 30
Quality of	30
Radical review	31
Purpose of	34, 44
The Aims of Secondary Education in NSW	44, Appendix 2
Some Comments on Invitation to Community to Comment on S.C.	Appendix 4
Future trends	51
Continuing education	52
New concept of schools	52

Secondary Education (other than NSW)	47, 48, 51, 137
---	-----------------

Secondary Schools Board

Base paper, 1974	138
Courses	R21, 7, 116, 128
Abolition 1975 examination	147
Discretionary powers	30, 59
School courses	32, 38

Secondary Schools Board (cont)	
Constitution	36, 54, 55
Reduction of examinations	40
Consultation with community	2, 45, 46
Functions and duties	R2(b), 3, 54-56, 109
Semester organization	
Timetable	R27, 8, 80, 117
Assessment	R16, R17, 6, 96, 99, 115
Courses	R5, R6, R13, R18, R19, R27, 3-8, 110, 113, 115
First semester of Year 7	R6, 3, 110
In detail	Chapter 6
Semester course numbering	127
Seminars	2, 45
Sequential courses	R10, R11, R18(b), R25, 5-7, 113, 115, 117, 127, 129, 138
Major subjects	128
Seventy five - Twenty five system	37
Slow learners	
Alternative courses	R25, 7, 68, 69, 78, 117
Diversified courses	128, 129
Horizontal courses	128, 129
Socialising	76, 77
Spearritt, Professor D.	38-53
Specialization	R26, R27, 8
Standardized testing (see testing)	97, 134
Standards	133
Students	R3, R4, R13, R14, R15, R22, R25, R26, 3-8, 54, 91, 107-110, 113, 116, 117, 130, 145, 146
And grouping	R26, 8, 117
Other achievements	R31, 9, 118
Developing interests	138
And school Reports	140
Supplementary Statements	44, 71
Syllabus Committees	
See Committees - Syllabus	

Talented - see Gifted

Teachers

Meetings	132, 133
Comments on C.S.E.	137, 139
Syllabus interpretation	29, 49, 60
Examination pressure	40
Moderation work	43, 49
Opposition to reform	46, 49
NSW Teachers Federation	55

Teaching R29, 8, 75, 100, 117

Examination pressure 40

Terms of Reference 1

Testing

Standardized testing	97, 134
And assessment	120, 121, 135
Of basic skills	R36, 9, 121, 122, 135, 136
And aptitude tests	121
Not to alter curriculum	121, 134
Not an end-point	121, 134
Whenever students ready	121, 134
Feasibility study	R36, 9, 122
For students and adults	R36, 9, 122
Course descriptions	125
Content	134
Mean & standard deviation	135
Yearly comparability	135
Taken yearly	136
Costs	148

Timetable R27, 8, 79, 80, 99, 100, 117

Transcript R2, R8(c), R33, R34, 3-9, 109, 112, 118, 119, 139

When changing schools	R32, 9, 118, 146
After left school	R32, 9, 118, 146
Recording tests	136
Formats	138-144
Central authority prepares	145, 146

Universities

Knibbs-Turner Royal Commission	25
1902	
Wyndham Report	29
Nominees on SSB	54

Work experience R12, R25, 5, 7, 100, 107, 113, 117

Wyndham Report 25-35

Unemployment 50, 82, 83

Year streaming

78, 99

Zoning

R39, 10, 123