



Education  
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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

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FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Willie Rickett Esq  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street

14 October 1981

*Dear Willie,*

REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL FOR CURRICULUM  
AND EXAMINATIONS

On behalf of my Secretary of State I am sending you a copy of the report by Mrs N K Trenaman following her review of the Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations for information. The report is to be published on 27 October.

The report will be considered carefully by Sir Keith Joseph before any action is decided upon. Copies of this letter and the report go to the Private Secretaries to the Home Secretary, the Lord President of the Council, the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Secretary of State for Industry, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Secretary of State for Employment, and the Paymaster General. A copy of the letter also goes to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Wales.

*Yours sincerely*

*Peter Shaw*

P A SHAW  
Private Secretary



# Review of the Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations

Elizabeth House, York Road, London SE1 7PH  
Telephone 01 928 9222 extn. 2636

Reviewer: Mrs N K Trenaman

Secretary: S T Crowne

The Secretary of State for Education and Science,  
Elizabeth House,  
York Road,  
LONDON SE1 7PH.

Your reference

Our reference

Date

5 October 1981

*Dear Secretary of State,*

Your predecessor asked me on 5 March to undertake a review of the Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations and to report to him, the Secretary of State for Wales, the Association of Metropolitan Authorities and the Association of County Councils by early autumn. I now submit my report, copies of which are being sent simultaneously to the Secretary of State for Wales and to the local authority associations.

Partly because I am a layman myself, in relation not only to the Schools Council but to schools' education generally, partly because the subject seems to me one of wide interest, I have sought to write the report in terms intelligible to the general reader. I trust that the experts will be patient with the rehearsal of matters already well known to them.

I hope that you will feel able to authorise publication of the report.

*Yours sincerely,*

*N K Trenaman*

N K TRENAMAN



# IN CONFIDENCE

## REVIEW OF THE SCHOOLS COUNCIL FOR CURRICULUM AND EXAMINATIONS

### INTRODUCTION

My terms of reference were to review the functions, constitution and methods of work of the Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations, and to make recommendations. In writing to me before my appointment the then Secretary of State for Education and Science said: "We intend the inquiry to look at the nature, need for and conduct of the Council's work from first principles".

2. Four assessors were appointed to assist me: Mr D Libby, Department of Education and Science (DES)\*, Mr L H Hayward, Welsh Office, Mr P J Coles, the Association of County Councils (ACC) and Mr J A Springett, the Association of Municipal Authorities (AMA). Mr S T Crowne, (DES) was the Secretary of the review.

3. The report is divided into five main sections. It begins with a brief history of the background to the creation of the Schools Council in 1964. This is followed by a description of the Council's activities before and after the revised Constitution of 1978. The next section summarizes the evidence submitted and in the following one I give my conclusions on the evidence. The final section summarizes my recommendations.

\* I follow the practice of giving a title in full at first mention, followed by its initials. An alphabetical glossary of the initials is at Annex I.



## I BACKGROUND

4. It is often claimed that the schools' system in England and Wales\* is unusual in two respects. First, its deliberate pluralism: whereas in many other countries central government controls the system, in this country the system is run by a partnership of central government, local government and schools. Secondly, schools here determine what is taught (the curriculum).

5. The local element in school education has a long history. It was by the Forster Act of 1870 that Parliament first assumed responsibility for a general system of education (up to the age of 10 and neither compulsory nor free); the system operated mainly through a large number of local School Boards which had the power to levy rates. The Balfour Act of 1902 was the first serious manifestation of central government's interest in secondary education, Wales having shown the way in the Welsh Intermediate Act, 1889; and it replaced the School Boards mainly by the county councils and county borough councils which had been created by the Local Government Act 1888, though some municipal boroughs and urban districts were given powers in relation to elementary education only. The Butler Act of 1944, subject to comparatively few amendments, is still the legislative basis for the educational system; it established the right of all children to free education and made it compulsory up to the school leaving age (then 15). It made the county and county borough councils (now the non-metropolitan county and the metropolitan district councils) the sole Local Education Authorities (LEAs), and transformed many former powers into duties which in relation to schools education are to secure that there are in their areas schools sufficient in number, character and equipment and offering variety in education and training appropriate to the ages, abilities and aptitudes of pupils. The responsibility of the (then) Minister of Education (now Secretary of State for Education and Science) was however, overriding: it was "to promote

\*For simplicity I shall, in referring to England, imply "and Wales" except where the situation is different in Wales; in such cases I shall specify.



the education of the people of England ..... and to secure the effective execution by local authorities, under his control and direction, of the national policy." The Secretary of State for Wales subsequently acquired equal powers for schools in Wales in 1970. Successive Ministers of Education and Secretaries of State have interpreted these overriding powers variously: some have been 'positive' (or as some would say 'interventionist'), others not. Those who have acted in accordance with either adjective had sufficiently wide powers under the Act to make major changes, such as the introduction of comprehensive education, without Parliamentary decision. The creation of the Schools Council, for example, needed no legislation.

6. There hardly ever was a time when the schools were totally free from constraints on the curriculum. The earliest schools, which trace their origins back for hundreds of years, were restrained by the expressed wishes of their benefactors, individual or corporate. From the 1860's when increasing public funds were being injected into the elementary schools and for forty years afterwards, there was the system of "payment by results." Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), established in 1840, were required to apply tests appropriate to each 'standard' (what we should now call class); the number of children who passed these tests determined the amount of central government money subvented to the school. From 1902 Regulations and subsequently Suggestions were applied to the secondary schools and not abolished until the 1944 Act. After 1902, when with the encouragement of local authorities free places in grammar and equivalent schools became progressively more available, selection was on the basis of competitive examination. There was and is also the constraint of external or 'public' examinations to which I refer later.

7. But there have been quite long periods even in the twentieth century, when schools suffered relatively little constraint on the curriculum. Pupils of the secondary modern schools were not exposed to external examinations; even now, (and still more so before the school leaving age was raised to 16) many pupils left secondary schools without such examinations; in such schools there are still subjects taught but not examined. With the advent of comprehensive schools, the 11+ examination has been progressively discarded and such influence as it ever had on the primary school curriculum consequentially



reduced. The 1944 Act gave the LEAs formal responsibility for secular instruction in county and voluntary schools (although not in aided schools) except as might otherwise be provided in the articles of government of schools. Articles of government have commonly given to the governors general direction and oversight of the curriculum, and responsibility has often in practice devolved upon the head teacher and his staff. What is clear is that schools have had, compared with those in many other countries, unusual freedom in this field. Both central and local government, in fulfilling their duties under the Act, have a legitimate interest in the curriculum but, until recently, they have not often chosen to intervene. (It is the Act itself which requires schools to provide religious education.) In any case, prescription would not be consistent with the policy of 'partnership'. The Schools Council, as it consistently explains, has no power to prescribe the curriculum.

8. Between the two world wars change was in effect in the hands of the teachers. Individual teachers found better ways of interesting pupils in their own subject and passed on their experience to colleagues: where there was sufficient energy and dedication they wrote text books and had them published. The second world war, and its aftermath, put paid to some of that: there were too few teachers and they were preoccupied with problems of reconstruction and the large increase in the number of pupils. By 1960 it was clear that curriculum change was overdue and unlikely to take place without a national initiative.

9. The recognition of this was what led the then Minister of Education to set up in 1962 the Curriculum Study Group (CSG), a small group of Department officials and HMIs together with a Professor of Education, to advise on the urgent needs of the school curriculum. In its short life it established links with the Nuffield Foundation, which was funding a major investigation into science in the schools, did a great deal of preparatory work on projects which were subsequently taken on by the Schools Council and on Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) examinations (see Paragraph 15 below).

10. The life of the CSG was short because both the local authorities and the teachers' associations were hostile to a body of such limited membership as the source of advice to central government. In 1963 the then Minister of Education,



after consulting the various interests, set up a working party under Sir John Lockwood to consider a proposal to establish a Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations on more representative lines. As the result of the Lockwood Committee's report the Council was set up in 1964.

11. External or 'public' examination was a feature of the mid nineteenth century movement to abolish private patronage. The Indian Civil Service first required entry by competitive examination; the Army followed; the Home Civil Service introduced a similar system in 1870. The Trevelyan/Northcote report (1856) which led to the reform in the Home Civil Service makes it clear that the basis for reform was, for its day, egalitarian. Merit, rather than family or other 'pull' was to be the criterion and public examination was to be the test of merit. The schools gradually assimilated the idea, partly in some cases to prepare boys for the civil service examinations, and the universities were moving in the same direction. In the light of some twentieth century comment it is interesting to be reminded that among other things external examinations were seen as a safeguard against the possible prejudice of an individual school or teacher.

12. In 1839 the University of London introduced Matriculation regulations, requiring a matriculation certificate which was at the same time a school leaving certificate (independently adjudicated and so carrying weight with employers) and a guarantee that the candidate was capable of a university education. In 1858 the Oxford and Cambridge local Examination Boards offered examinations for the first time. Five of the present eight General Certificate of Education (GCE) Boards can trace their origins to the period before 1914 and, with a single exception they have links (financial and constitutional) with universities. They have no legislative basis (nor do they need any), they are alike in having the status of charities and they are self financing through fees charged for examinations. While from the outset (as now) schools were eager to enter candidates of sufficient merit for external examinations there was (and is) no obligation to use the examinations of any particular Board of this kind nor to enter candidates in all subjects for one Board exclusively. This introduced some degree of competition between the Boards: it also resulted in a problem of comparability of standards.



13. This problem was recognized by the Government in setting up in 1917 the Secondary Schools Examinations Council (SSEC). Its primary task however was to co-ordinate the new School Certificate (which for many years ran side by side with Matriculation) and the Higher School Certificate: these were characteristically taken at the ages of 16 and 18 respectively. The original composition of the SSEC gave a weight to university representation which subsequently came to be thought excessive. It was reduced in 1930 and eliminated in 1946; the committee thereafter consisted exclusively of representatives of local authorities and teachers.

14. There was growing dissatisfaction with the form of the School Certificate as a 'group' examination; that is, while there was a certain choice of subjects it was obligatory to take one subject in each of three groups: so that, for example, a pupil wishing to read exclusively Arts subjects at a university failed to qualify if he or she - and the requirement fell disproportionately heavily on girls - could offer no pass in Mathematics or Science. (It was a kind of 'core curriculum', examined.) In 1951 on the advice of the SSEC, in consultation with the Examination Boards, the Ministry of Education (as it then was) superseded School and Higher Certificates with the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary (O) and Advanced (A) levels both of which are single subject examinations, so that any combination of subjects may be offered.

15. The SSEC's (and the Boards') policy at that time was to provide examinations only for those of the ability to take the GCE examinations. But since the GCE examinations, whatever the variations between individual boards, alone provided a nationally available system across a fair range of subjects parental pressure, among other pressures, resulted in an increasing number of children attempting them without having the necessary ability. A demand grew for a new examination intended for those of lower ability; the first examinations for the CSE were held in 1965. The CSE Boards, unlike the GCE Boards, were locally based and there was thus no choice between them. By this time the responsibilities for examinations formerly exercised by the SSEC had been taken over by the Schools Council.



## II THE SCHOOLS COUNCIL

16. In what follows, a division into chronological periods is convenient since the present constitution was established in 1978; but there was greater continuity in the work of the Council than this division suggests.

### 1964-78

17. The stated objects of the Schools Council were a direct quotation from the Lockwood Committee's report:-

"The objects of the Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations are to uphold and interpret the principle that each school should have the fullest possible measure of responsibility for its own work, with its own curriculum and teaching methods based on the needs of its own pupils and evolved by its own staff: and to seek, through co-operative study of common problems, to assist all who have individual or joint responsibilities for, or in connection with, the schools' curricula and examinations to co-ordinate their actions in harmony with this principle."

18. So far as curriculum was concerned the Council took over from the CSG a substantial amount of work in progress and rapidly generated a good deal more, which, to begin with at least, characteristically took the form of major 'projects' often but by no means always in a particular subject; the nature of the projects was multifarious, sometimes concerned with such basic matters as how children learn to use language, sometimes deliberately cross curricular, sometimes concerned with problems on the borderline between the educational and the social. It seems to be generally accepted that for the major projects at least the Council mainly responded to suggestions from outside, and work on the projects that it commissioned was based on internationally accepted practice at the time and exemplified by the work commissioned by, for example, the Nuffield Foundation: that is to set up a group, often headed by a member or members based on a university or a teacher training institution who collected a team of school teachers and others to help. These projects needed substantial funding. In this period the Council funded some 172 projects of curriculum development.



Many of these led to the production of materials for the use of teachers or pupils, published by commercial firms. These and the Council's later projects produced the result that about a thousand titles are currently in print. In addition the Council has published a large number of working papers, occasional papers, research studies and bulletins about its work.

19. So far as examinations were concerned, the Council continued the responsibility inherited from the SSEC in relation to GCE O and A levels. In the case of the latter it continued to approve both new subjects and new syllabuses for A level referred to it by the Examination Boards; in 1966 the Council suspended the requirement that the GCE Boards submit new syllabuses for O level for its approval though it remained the case (and still does) that new subjects must be so submitted. No parallel responsibility was taken for CSE examinations, but the Council became responsible for changes in the constitutions of CSE Boards and the arbiter of disputes on individual cases in CSE examinations.

20. The Council inherited from the SSEC responsibility for advising the Secretary of State about examinations in schools, and has devoted a good deal of time and energy to proposing reforms to the system. The Council was an early proponent of a common system of examining at 16+; the technical problems involved were the subject of a report by the Council published in October 1971 and in subsequent years a good deal of work was done by the Schools Council and other bodies. In February 1980 the Government gave support for a single system of examining at 16+.

21. The Council has also been a proponent of a Certificate of Extended Education (CEE). In July 1970 the Governing Council concluded that it was desirable to make an extension to the CSE available to students beyond the age of 16. In May 1976 the Council asked the Secretaries of State to introduce a CEE. They were not prepared to give approval without further consideration, and set up the Keohane Committee to review proposals for a CEE. The Keohane Report, published in December 1979, confirmed the need identified by the Council in its 1976 recommendations. But having considered the Keohane Report along side a report from the Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit (FEU) study group, "A Basis for Choice", the Government favoured the FEU proposals for a curriculum structure for pre-vocational courses and assessment of achievement for young people attending either schools or colleges.



22. In 1966 the Council and the Standing Conference on University Entrance (SCUE) agreed that changes to the sixth form curriculum were necessary. The Council's first major attempt at reform, the "Q and F" proposals (involving 'qualifying' examinations for first year sixth formers and 'further' examinations for second year pupils), did not command sufficient support to be carried by the Council in May 1970. A further proposal in 1970, for a 20 point grading structure for A level, was rejected by the Secretaries of State. The Council's efforts continued with the publication of further working papers, and culminated in widespread discussion of the "N and F" proposals (which were for a five subject sixth form curriculum examined at two levels, 'Normal', 3 subjects, and further, 2 subjects); again these did not command sufficient support in the Council to form the basis for advice. Meanwhile the Secretaries of State having indicated the Government's decision to retain A levels, asked the Council for its views and suggestions regarding alternative proposals over the whole field of 16-19 curricula and examination provision. In response, the Council advised two new examinations; a single subject Intermediate examination and a nationally recognised CEE, together with a range of recommendations designed to rationalise subject titles, identify common cores of content and skills within A level subjects and encourage greater use of different assessment techniques.

23. In terms of organization, the Lockwood Committee had put forward suggestions for a committee structure which was designedly complicated, with the intention of involving as many of the interests as possible. It took the Council a little time to implement these and produce, as the result of an internal review which reported in 1968, a revised version. The system was hierarchical with, at the apex, the largest body (which came to be called the Governing Council and met in public) numbering some 91 members. By contrast, the arrangements for staff responsibility were deliberately dispersed and temporary. There were two, subsequently three, joint secretaries (all seconded from the DES, HMI, and local authorities) a part time Director of Studies and characteristically, few staff at any level with permanent appointments. The rationale of this was first that the Schools Council should always be innovative and a succession of officers would secure this; secondly that the system would produce an ever increasing number of people with experience of the Schools Council who, either returning to their original place in the educational world or passing on to another, would take with them the knowledge of the Council's



work (and the undoubted enthusiasm that it generated in those days) to a wider audience.

#### 1978-81

24. There was considerable external criticism of the Council in the 1970's especially on its difficulties in disseminating the results of its work so as to be of practical help in the schools. The Council itself was dissatisfied with its structure and its staff arrangements. Accordingly in 1977 it set up an internal review to consider:

- "i. how the representation of lay groups such as parents, employers and other bodies having a legitimate interest in the curriculum, might be increased on the Schools Council;
- ii. whether the principle that the majority of the members of Governing Council and the main Council Committees (other than Finance and Staff Committee) shall be teachers, should continue to be a constitutional requirement;
- iii. how best the effective functioning of the Schools Council might be secured both as to the operation of its committees, and as to the work and structure of its staff."

25. The upshot was the new Constitution of 1978 (Annex II); revised arrangements for staff; and a shift of emphasis and method in the Council's work on the curriculum.

#### Constitution

26. The new Constitution did not significantly change the Council's functions. These are expressed in clause 2 and in the descriptions of the various committees' responsibilities and may be summarised as follows:-

- i. to carry out research and development and to publish reports, documents and materials;
- ii. to keep under review



- a. curriculum
  - b. teaching methods
  - c. examinations
  - d. organisation, in so far as it affects the curriculum;
- iii. to advise the Secretaries of State on examinations policy;
- iv. to act as co-ordinating authority for the administration of examinations.

27. The Constitution did however materially alter the organisation of the Council. The principal change was the substitution for the previous hierarchical structure of three independent committees (referred to in the Constitution as "main committees") each with separate but interlocking responsibilities. (Their functions are described in the Constitution but in each case I include the general description given in the Review's report to indicate the general intentions at the time.) The main committees are:-

Convocation, consisting of 56 members, 50 nominated by institutions representing a wide range of interests, the rest individuals representing the community at large. The report reads:

"Convocation will provide a national forum for the discussion of issues affecting education in the schools. It will enable those inside and outside the education service to express and argue their views, often we envisage on the basis of papers of substance contributed by members. But Convocation will not only provide an informed response to views about school education. Convocation will be able to ask for work to be carried out, and call for reports and express opinions on any areas of the Council's activities. Its recommendations for the Council's work and methods of carrying this out will have a powerful influence on other Council committees."

The Finance and Priorities Committee of 28 members all nominated by institutions. The report reads:



"The purpose of the Committee is to draw together the three main partners sharing responsibility for the Council to determine the broad direction of Council's work and the priorities in its implementation. The Committee will have responsibility for ensuring that the Council's resources are used to best advantage, and in doing so will need to work closely with the Professional Committee and take full account of the views of Convocation. In addition to its responsibility for Council expenditure, the Committee will be responsible for staffing, accommodation, and the internal administration of the Council. It will be the responsibility of the Finance and Priorities Committee to forward to the Secretaries of State the advice on matters of examinations policy received from the Professional Committee and from Convocation, together with its own views. Before doing so, it may, if it deems necessary, seek clarification, or seek to reconcile any differences of view."

The Professional Committee of 37 members and 9 observers all nominated by institutions. The report reads:

"The Professional Committee will contribute to decisions to be taken by the Finance and Priorities Committee on the formulation of the Council's programme. It will then be responsible for the detailed working-out of the priorities agreed by the Finance and Priorities Committee, and for the general oversight of the Council's professional work. The advice which the Council gives, and the work it supports, must be related to classroom realities. It will be the task of the Professional Committee to seek to ensure that this is so. The Committee will also take a broad view of the balance of needs within the school curriculum, and it will have responsibility for ensuring that there is good co-ordination between the curriculum and examinations aspects of the Council's work."

28. Whereas under the former Constitution representatives of the teaching interest had been in the majority on all the principal committees, under the present Constitution this applies to only one, the Professional Committee, of



the three main committees. On the Finance and Priorities Committee central and local government interests together are in the majority.

29. Committees subsidiary to the main committees are the Primary Curriculum Committee (20 members and up to 5 observers); the Secondary Curriculum Committee (24 members, up to 5 observers and 1 HMI assessor); the Examinations Committee (32 members, up to 7 observers and 3 HMI assessors); Committee for Wales (22 members, up to 5 co-opted members and 3 observers). In these cases, with the single exception of the Examinations Committee, representatives of the teaching interests are in the majority and are nominated by teacher associations.

30. The Constitution provides for a Publications Committee selected by the Professional and Finance and Priorities Committees - its present membership numbers 10 - and for "such Subject Committees as the Finance and Priorities Committee, after consultation with the Professional Committee, might determine." There are at present 15 Subject Committees. These committees were reconstituted following the report of a working party on the future of Subject Committees to the Finance and Priorities Committee in May 1979. They are limited to 15 members (except the Science Committee, which may have 21), of which a majority must be serving teachers; 3 members must be from the primary sector, and 1 each from a local education authority and the world of work. Two thirds of the members of each committee are appointed by the Professional Committee from nominations invited from the organisations represented on the Council's policy committees and from subject associations.\* The remaining one third are appointed by the individual subject committee concerned from the remaining nominations or nominations made by members of the Committee. All members are appointed for a term of four years in the first instance renewable for two

\*The term 'subject associations' needs some explanation. These are professional bodies of teachers, not confined to school teachers, independent of the Council and which teachers join voluntarily. As associations they are not represented on the Council but the Council has made a practice of inviting them to nominate, not necessarily from their own membership exclusively, persons to serve as individuals on the Subject Committees. Characteristically they are practising teachers.



years. In common with the main committees Subject Committees are required to meet once a year but unlike the main committees which in practice meet once a term they may not meet more frequently than once a year without authority from the Secretary of the Council. Their functions are, broadly, to keep under review, in relation to curricula and examinations, the subjects they are concerned with, to make proposals for future work and, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Council, to undertake work on aspects of their subjects. They are also responsible for making arrangements for scrutinising A level scripts and the approval of new and revised A level syllabuses through their A level subcommittees.

31. The review of 1977 recommended that the Council should set up liaison groups. There are currently three; for parents; for higher and further education; and for the world of work. Their membership includes representatives of Convocation and co-opted individuals representing similar interests. The review also recommended that in future the Council should become more of a "task orientated body" and that the standing committees should set up "quite small" ad hoc working parties which would be disbanded as soon as their tasks were completed. There are currently about 59 lower committees not specified in the Constitution, excluding the committees subordinate to the Committee for Wales; some are set up by the main committees but the majority (43), including the 14 A level subcommittees, are the responsibility of the Subject Committees. In addition there are 4 monitoring and review groups supervising the programmes (other than that for examinations) and some 15 groups monitoring projects still in progress, standing advisory groups, steering committees or consultative committees concerned with completed projects. The Professional Committee has general oversight of the monitoring and advisory machinery for projects and programmes.

32. The Constitution provides that the Chairman of the Schools Council shall be appointed by the Secretaries of State and serve for three years. The post is part time and unpaid.

33. The Constitution provides that the Chairman of the Schools Council shall be the chairman of the trustees, the three main committees and the Publications Committee. The chairmen of the Curriculum Committees and the Examinations



Committee are appointed "in a manner agreed by the Professional Committee"; in practice, these committees choose their own chairman and submit the names for approval to the Professional Committee. The chairman of the Committee for Wales is elected by that committee. The chairmen of Subject Committees are appointed by the Chairman of the Council, in consultation with the Professional Committee and after hearing the views of the Subject Committees. There are no formal arrangements for determining the chairmanship of other committees and ad hoc groups; but in most cases this is agreed between the constituting committee, the committee itself and the Chairman of the Council.

#### Staff

34. Previous joint secretaries of the Schools Council had themselves suggested that both the joint system and the extensive use of secondment was no longer adequate for the Council's work and there was too little continuity and some adverse effect on morale as the result of short term appointments. Accordingly, on the recommendation of the review body, the Council engaged a full time Secretary. Some of the arrangements for staff resulted from the recommendations of a DES management team and from Peat, Marwick and Mitchell engaged as management consultants. The present supporting staff now numbers 161 of whom 25 are seconded and 11 are on short term contracts.

#### Method of work on the curriculum

35. In July 1979 in its publication 'Principles and Programmes', the Council made a comprehensive statement of its policy on curriculum development. This included the following statements. "The Council believes the base for development will be strengthened and much more achieved if it works in partnership with other central and local, public and private agencies" and "The Council is also ready to adopt new methods of working to support local education authorities and schools more effectively, building into LEA management support and development systems, and helping schools and their teachers to clarify and achieve their aims. In particular the Council is committed to supporting local curriculum developments, and to working more closely with advisers, in-service trainers and HMI in developing and disseminating better practice in education." The Council identified for itself a further broad function. "Within the network of curriculum influences, the Council believes it can make a useful contribution by acting as a clearing house for information about curricular developments



funded by other agencies as well as the Council. It will also do more to inform parents, employers, trade unions and others about the curriculum and related matters."

36. This change in approach can be accounted for in part as a response to allegations that the Council was ineffective in influencing the curriculum as taught in schools. In 1976 it had itself commissioned a study on "Impact and Take-Up" in an attempt to determine how far the criticism was justified. There was a growing feeling, not just within the Council, that the comparative success or otherwise of curriculum development depended in some measure at least on the extent to which school teachers had been involved in the work on it. The report of the Review Body contained the statement "we see the Council in future as being very much more concerned with drawing up and commissioning programmes of work than in considering discrete projects although we believe the Council should always remain open to submissions". These two points - commissioning more work within priority areas identified by the Council and less in response to suggestions from outside, and the concept of programmes rather than discrete projects - has governed the selection of new work set in hand by the Council since the revised constitution of 1978.

37. The five programmes drawn up by the Council in 1980 have the following titles:

- i. Purpose and planning in schools;
- ii. Helping individual teachers to become more effective;
- iii. Developing the curriculum in a changing world;
- iv. Individual pupils;
- v. Improving the examination system.

The programmes were devised following suggestions put forward by the bodies represented on the Council for priority within the Council's future curriculum and examinations research and development budget. The Finance and Priorities



Committee agreed the broad aims and framework for the programmes and small working groups of members taken from the Finance and Priorities, and the Professional and Curriculum Committees planned the more detailed content of the first four programmes. These more detailed proposals were approved by the Finance and Priorities Committee following support from Convocation, Professional Committee and the Curriculum Committees. The examinations programme was devised by the Examinations Committee and approved by the Finance and Priorities Committee. It was subsequently endorsed by Convocation and the Professional Committee. Equal funding of about £330,000 each has been allotted by the Finance and Priorities Committee for the period 1980-83.

38. Although the programmes have taken the biggest proportion of the Council's resources devoted to new work on the curriculum they have accounted for less than half the total expenditure on curriculum research and development. The rest of the budget was needed to continue work already in progress on the earlier projects and to provide for further dissemination of the results of many completed before 1978. Moreover in the course of the year 1981/2 the Council has committed £0.5 million to a major new project to review the Secondary Science Curriculum which will account for a substantial proportion of the budget in 1982-4. This is one of the "discrete projects" for which the 1977 review predicted that there would be less room in future. In their evidence to me the Council's Review Group expressed the view that while the Council would expect to continue the technique of programmes beyond 1983, when the funds currently allocated to the existing programmes are exhausted, there should always be the possibility of accommodating discrete projects of this kind.

39. The present Schools Council is a charity and an independent body. It is funded in equal proportion by the Department of Education and Science and the local authorities. In 1980/81 the Schools' Council had an overall budget of just over £3.7m (1980/81 outturn). Of this, £1.615m was contributed by the DES as main grant, together with an additional contribution of £0.062m to cover the additional costs of staff seconded from the DES. £1.615m was contributed by local authorities as a grant (made under what is now Section 56(9) of the 1980 Local Government Act). Income from publications amounted to about £0.28m (from a turnover of the order of £2m to £2.5m); interest and other income accounted for about £0.07m. The Council operates on the expectation of level funding in



real terms from year to year, subject to overall government policy on public expenditure. In settling the level of the grants the DES and the local authorities take into account the Council's earnings from royalties.

40. In 1980/81 the Council spent £3.5m,. This is divided by the Council into 3 major components. Research and development work including work on examinations (£1.36m, 38.6%); central staff costs (operational) in support of the Council's research and development activities (£1.68m, 47.5%); and administrative costs (£0.492m, 13.1%). Within the two latter categories salaries (operational) accounted for £1.015m (28.8%), salaries (administrative) £0.327m (9.2%), publications £0.066m (1.9%), information services etc £0.082m (2.3%), travel and subsistence £0.178m (5.0%) and postage, stationery, telephones, machinery etc £0.15m (4.2%). Accommodation cost the Council £0.352m (10.0%).

41. The distinction between administration and research and development costs is a particularly difficult one to draw; much depends on the judgements made about the allocation of staff costs for those engaged in work which might fairly be placed in either category. As regards the cost of committees themselves, the Council estimate that in 1982/83 (at November 1981 prices) the direct costs of holding committee meetings will be about £315,000. It is estimated that a meeting of a committee with 15 members (eg a subject committee) and the required time of 3 support staff costs the Council about £850. A meeting of a committee with 35 members with the necessary time of 6 support staff costs about £2,200. On the information supplied it is not possible to attach firm figures to what might be called the cost of 'work' on the one hand and of 'establishment' on the other. But a reasonable guess might be that the latter accounts for something of the order of £0.5m of a total budget of £3.7m.

42. In addition to direct income the Council receives support from various other bodies. This includes direct grants toward Council projects and concealed subsidies (for instance projects carried out in institutions which charge only for direct services and not for the full economic cost of their support). In a few cases the Council has acted as grant holder for other organisations.



### III THE EVIDENCE

43. I invited written evidence from the institutions represented on the three main committees. In writing to them I said:

"The Secretary of State has made it clear that he expects the review 'to look at the nature, need for and conduct of the Council's work from first principles'. It follows that I must consider whether the functions at present exercised by the Council\* are necessary or at least highly desirable; and to the extent I conclude that they are, whether other existing bodies (for example central government, local government, Her Majesty's Inspectorate, examining boards) could exercise them satisfactorily, or whether a body specially constituted to carry out all or some of them; as the Council is, is preferable. If I were to conclude that the Schools Council, or something like it, is a necessary institution, I must then consider whether there is scope for improving its effectiveness. I shall be primarily concerned with the Council as it is now, based on the revised constitution from 1 September 1978."

44. To those institutions represented on the Finance and Priorities Committee or the Professional Committee, or both, I offered oral hearings if they so wished, in addition to written evidence. Almost all of those approached in either way responded. At their request I also met representatives of other institutions. The Schools Council had set up a Review Group: I had three meetings with the Group. The Chairman of the Council invited me to be present at any meetings of the Council's committees. I attended meetings of the three main committees, the Examinations Committee and the Committee for Wales. I met the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Director of Studies and many other members of the Council's staff. The Staff Side of the Council wrote to me as did some individual members of the staff. Since I was particularly anxious to give the opportunity of comment to others than what might be called the interested parties, through letters to and advertisements in the press I made it clear that I was open to views and suggestions from the general public. I consulted various individuals with knowledge of the Council's work. In all I received

\*See paragraph 26 of this report.



some 150 written submissions and held over 20 meetings with organisations as well as many informal discussions with individuals.

45. I did not lack evidence. As was to be expected a good deal of it was conflicting. I do not purport to reproduce all of it, but only what seem to me the most important points. While my primary concern has been with the Schools Council as it is and has been from 1978 and I have discounted comments which obviously refer only to the antecedent period, it would have been unreasonable to disregard comments which apply to the Council throughout its life. I quote a good deal of the evidence: I attribute none without express permission.

46. Generally, I was struck by the amount of support for the Council (not only from the interested parties) and at the same time the degree of criticism of aspects of its performance and organization (not least from the interested parties). It is convenient to group the evidence in the following manner:-

fundamental evidence; that is, bearing on the necessity or otherwise of the functions, the need or otherwise for a body to exercise them, the nature and scope of such a body;

evidence on the Council's performance;

evidence on organisation (including representation and staff).

#### Fundamental

47. i. Very few of those who gave evidence questioned the necessity of the functions now exercised by the Schools Council. Of these, some questioned the need for the Council's work in monitoring A level examinations.
- ii. Rather more (but still proportionately few) were in favour of abolishing the Council. Of these some argued that its function of curriculum development could be undertaken by other bodies. Others questioned the need for its function of advising the Secretaries of State on examinations policy (though the nature of the advice given,



and the alleged tendency to "dig up" the examination system perpetually, rather than the need for a source of advice, seemed to be the dominant consideration.) Not all of the relatively few who expressed themselves in favour of abolition based the case on functions so much as on various aspects of performance (see below).

- iii. On the question (which I put particularly to those who gave oral evidence) whether a single body, be it the Council or not, should be concerned with both curriculum and examinations, the strong majority voice was in favour of a single body. To some the answer seemed so self evident as to need no demonstration; but the most common argument was that examination influences curriculum, sometimes to an unjustifiable degree, whereas curriculum should lead examination; and that a single body concerned with both these aspects of education was necessary to hold the proper balance.
- iv. Some recommended a nominated body of eminent persons advising central government (or both central and local government) with the judgement to exercise priorities and the status to be taken seriously by all those concerned with schools education. Some of those who represented that view proposed this solution as though it were a minor modification of the Schools Council; others recognized it as a fundamental departure from the present system.
- v. The overwhelming weight of the evidence was however in favour of maintaining the Schools Council as a body financed by central and local government, somewhat distanced from both but with both represented on it.
- vi. Some wished to extend the Council's present functions to comprehend further education (FE). There was a good deal of conflicting evidence about the role of FE in relation to the Council's work. Among other views the following were expressed:-



- a. It was impractical any longer to differentiate so sharply between school and further education because at the same time some of the pupils of institutions of further education were sitting the same examinations (for example GCE) as pupils in school and school children were increasingly taking vocational courses some of which naturally led to the vocational examinations supervised by, for example, the Business Education Council (BEC), the Technician Education Council (TEC), the City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI) and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA).
- b. The conclusion of some of those who held that view was that the Council's responsibilities should be extended into further education so that it would become (as one who so thought described it) a "National Education Council". Some considered that the Council should absorb the functions of the FEU.
- c. Others however thought that if there were a need for a comparable body in further education it should be a separate institution from the Schools Council and some of these suggested that the Council should be deprived of responsibility for pupils over the age of 16.
- d. Still others thought it would be best, for the time being at least, to leave both the Schools Council and the separate provision for further education undisturbed.

#### Performance

48. This evidence can be summarized under the following headings:-

- a. Curriculum development;
- b. Examinations;
- c. Priorities;
- d. Cost and accountability;
- e. Wales;



- f. Publication;
- g. 'Style';
- h. 'Opinions'.

a. Curriculum development

49. A good deal of evidence on the quality of the Council's work was received; and virtually all of it was expressed in terms of examples. The Council's Review Group referred to several "outstanding successes" among its curriculum projects. Perhaps understandably, it was unwilling to identify any failures. As I proceeded with the evidence generally I observed that certain titles were consistently praised, others, for a variety of reasons criticized. Not everyone would agree with HMI's evidence on the point in every detail, but it reflected fairly well the general impressions that I had received. It reads as follows:-

"There have been a number of outstanding projects which have made a considerable impact in the classroom; these led to observable improvements in motivation and the quality of learning, for example, in classics, geography, history. In the primary school some projects, for example, 'Linguistics and English Teaching', 'Science 5 to 13', 'Health Education 5 to 13', 'Pre-school Education', and 'Communication Skills', have been equally good. They have contributed to teachers' understanding of pupils of this age and indicated the sort of programmes of work and learning which can successfully be mounted in primary schools. 'Transition and Continuity in Early Education', 'Early Mathematical Experience' and 'Structuring of Play' are examples of projects which have made a valuable contribution to the education of young children. A number of projects, for example 'Education of Disturbed Children' and 'Language Development for Deaf Children', have produced useful materials for special schools and classes.

Some past projects have been inadequately planned and carried out, for example, 'Curriculum Needs of Slow Learning Pupils', 'Industriousness and Achievement in Schools' and 'Education in a Multi-Cultural Society'. Others, such as the 'Humanities Curriculum Project', were better executed, within their own terms, but not implemented widely in the



classroom. Some projects of this type, although generally not accepted by teachers, have nevertheless sharpened the views of teachers or have played a part in changing the climate of educational opinion. Some less successful activities were too far ahead of developments and thinking elsewhere in schools or society, for example, 'New Patterns in Sixth Form Modern Language Studies' (1970), 'Integrated Science' (1969) and 'Education of Travelling Children' (1970-2)."

50. As to the effectiveness of the Council's work in this field the critics claimed that many teachers have never heard of the Schools Council and of those that have many have never used the products of its work. Apparently in the Council's early days the assumption was made that if new ideas offered genuine improvement, once published they would be accepted. There was reason to believe that this was not happening, at least on the scale foreseen, which left it open whether the new ideas were in fact improvements or whether there was a flaw in the assumption. The Council became increasingly concerned with this problem in the 1970's with two consequences. In 1976 they funded a research project based on Sussex University entitled "Impact and Take-up" in an attempt to establish as accurately as possible the extent to which the Council's projects on the curriculum had been taken up in schools and what impact they had had on the education system generally; and it paid increasing attention to the dissemination of such projects.

51. Since this review was undertaken the final report of the "Impact and Take-up" project (which produced interim reports in 1978 and 1980) has been received. A summary of the findings is at Annex III.

52. HMI's evidence on effectiveness was as follows:-

"In general, the Council's activities have not had a widespread influence on work in the classroom. Sometimes this is due to the inability of the system and teachers to respond to the initiative; sometimes to the quality of the project/activity and its material. All projects have to a certain extent to be speculative and exploratory and it would be unrealistic to expect all of them to be equally helpful to schools and teachers. Often, however, it has been mainly due to the



absence of appropriate dissemination by the Council and diffusion by others of the results of the activity. In recent years much greater efforts have been made to disseminate the results of the Council's curricular activities and to keep an interest alive after the main development has ended: the dissemination of the 'Geography for the Young School Leaver' project which involves teachers in the preparation of materials through supportive group structures, and the 'History 13 to 16' project appears to have been particularly effective. The primary school project on 'Communication Skills' offers another example of successful dissemination. Efforts of this kind, when combined with diffusion through the enlistment of greater and continuing support from LEAs and advisers, particularly through co-ordinated and focussed in-service training of teachers, with, when appropriate, the development of public examinations seem to be most successful. In the longer term the take up of well produced projects depends entirely on LEA and school initiatives. The problem of disseminating information to individual schools and teachers and helping them to develop their teaching is not one faced by the Council alone and is one that has to be worked at constantly. HMI, in the course of their normal contacts with schools, advisers and teacher training institutions, and particularly in the short courses they mount for teachers, draw attention to work by the Schools Council along with other relevant research studies and publications."

An additional point made in the evidence was that the products of the Schools Council, including materials, were simply too expensive for schools and LEAs.

53. Attention was drawn both to the wide variety of settings in which curriculum development is carried out; and to the diverse and complicated institutional provision for curriculum development and the wider field of educational research. As to settings a good deal of curriculum development takes place for example by collaboration between individual teachers and between groups of teachers and local authority advisory staff, and on courses of initial and in-service teacher training. The various professional subject associations, which encompass much teaching expertise, are also involved. As to institutional provision at national level, there is a number of major bodies funding, commissioning and undertaking curriculum development work; these include the National



Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) and various government departments including the DES. Other bodies, including the Council for Educational Technology (CET), the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT), the Council for Environmental Education and the National Centre for Science and Technology carry out work of review, development and information within their fields of interest. Still others such as the Arts Council, the Craft Council, the Design Council and the Health Education Council have interests in specific aspects of the curriculum; and there are many other active public and charitable agencies directly involved in education.

b. Examinations

54. Some considered the Council's detailed work in relation to existing examinations to be so superficial in comparison with that of the Examination Boards as not to be worthwhile. Others however thought that given the nature and backgrounds of the boards some external check was a necessary safeguard. Some regretted that detailed work was virtually confined to A level examinations.

55. On examinations policy the critics said that the Schools Council had wasted a great deal of time and effort in seeking to reform the examination system, some on the grounds that the proposals were educationally wrong - headed, others on the grounds that the Council had lost "face" by sponsoring so many proposals that the Government had in the end rejected or been exceedingly slow to accept (by implication the latter criticism was directed more at the Government than the Council). Others agreed that change in examination systems was inevitably slow, not least because of the variety of purposes that examinations serve. Several made the point that even in the case of proposals that had in the end been rejected the work itself had been illuminating and valuable to those who had taken part in the discussion. Some suggested that the Council should have "more teeth" in relation to the Examination Boards, by which I think was meant control over them.

c. Priorities

56. The critics said generally that the Council never had much grasp of priorities: and its only discipline was the limit on the funds available to it.



So in the early days when the Council was essentially receptive to ideas from outside it chose what could be fitted into the budget. The criticisms are both more specific and sharper in relation to the present programmes. It is represented that the individual activities (many quite small and inexpensive) that make up the programmes were chosen more with a view to pleasing as many parties as possible than for their intrinsic worth; that many could have as easily been accommodated under one heading as another; that they are underfunded; that the arrangements for 'monitoring' are deficient and the arrangements for 'evaluation' even more inadequate and impractical.

d. Cost and Accountability

57. Some critics thought the Council overfunded (but they were those who wanted it abolished). Others thought it conspicuously underfunded, and suggested that its budget of £3.7m was derisory in relation to total planned expenditure on education in England and Wales in 1980/81 of about £11,000m and on schools education of about £7,000m. Some criticism was expressed at the resources devoted to what might be called, variously 'establishment' and 'work' (see paragraph 41 above). Others took the view that wide representation is fundamental to the Council's existence; that cost of the members' time is no charge on the budget (though there are of course some cases of indirect costs to employers who release them from their normal duties to undertake this work); that a good deal of work done by teachers on the programmes is done in their free time.

58. Some considered that as the Council had freedom to deploy its resources on curriculum and examinations as it wished, it was in no true sense accountable to those who financed it (central and local government).

e. Wales

59. Of those who gave evidence about the Council's work as it affects Wales nearly all gave it a good record. Evidence from HMI and others suggested that while the Council's work on the curriculum generally had had about the same effect on schools in Wales as in England, its work on the Welsh language and related matters had been more influential primarily because of the high level of demand from schools for materials and ideas in these areas. One piece of evidence was in favour of abolishing the Committee, on the grounds that the



money would be better spent on other educational activity in Wales; one expressed the view that the Council's work on examinations in Wales was unnecessary; one recommended that the Committee for Wales should have a separate budget for curriculum development.

f. Publications

60. There were several criticisms of which the most frequent was the delay between completion of a project and the publication of the result. Three main reasons were advanced, of which the first was the normal delay in publication about which any author complains. Secondly it was said that too many of the detailed decisions, for instance about format and design, were taken before bids were invited from the commercial publishers and this led to subsequent discussions with the publishers which would have been unnecessary if they had been consulted at an earlier stage. Thirdly it was said that the Council's Staff concerned with publications had to spend undue time editing the work submitted and this could be avoided if those responsible for the project received guidance at an earlier stage. One suggestion was that the Council should become its own publisher for most of its publications and buy its print direct from printers. Another was that this side of the Council's work is now so extensive that it needs a business manager to ensure proper financial control. If there were such a manager the Council's Publications Committee might no longer be needed.

g. 'Style'

61. The style of the Council is criticized in three respects. Its working papers and general bulletins are thought by many to be 'wordy' and their use of language inaccurate and full of jargon. A tendency to boastfulness about the Council's achievements in public utterances is mentioned by others. Many of those who gave evidence, including several representing member organisations complained of set speeches especially in Convocation which is open to the press, rudeness and lack of consideration (particularly by bodies with multiple representation towards others with single representation) and bad committee manners generally. Some individual representatives seemed to feel intimidated by the big battalions and one said that he despaired of ever making an effective contribution to the Council's work in such an atmosphere and was tempted to resign.



h. 'Opinions'

62. Many people do not care for the opinions expressed by groups that work under Schools Council auspices and get them published under the Council's imprimatur. For example, there has been fairly consistent objection to encouragement to teach about sex and a recent discussion in the House of Commons turned on what was alleged to be the encouragement of strife within the family.

Organisation

Representation

63. There was a substantial volume of complaint against the manner in which the teaching interest is represented on the main committees and other committees the membership of which is specified in the Constitution. In particular the teachers' associations, some of which are formal trade unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC), were thought to be over-represented. The view was expressed that some of these associations did not represent the professional responsibilities of teachers as teachers in the classroom. Those of the teachers' unions to whom I had the opportunity of putting this point from the evidence justified their proportionate representation on the Council's committee by reference to the size of their membership and, in one case, its diversity (from nursery schools up to sixth forms).

64. The Constitution provides that the Chairman of the Schools Council holds office for a period of three years. Chairmen and members of Subject Committees hold office originally for a period of four years and thereafter are eligible for a further period of two years. With these exceptions no term is put to the service of members on committees. It was suggested that the same principle should apply to all the Council's standing committees as a safeguard against the Council's becoming too set in its ways and against a certain 'staleness' which some claimed to detect already.

65. The constitution provides for alternates. Some organisations represented by one member on say, three committees share the work among three individuals: some of these complained that organisations with multiple membership abused the system of alternates so that the same individuals regularly attended several committees, sometimes as members and sometimes as alternates.



### Committee Structure

66. The most common points made under this heading were that:-

- a. The committee structure lacked definition. Under the present Constitution, with its prescribed network of consultation across the 'main' committees it was difficult to judge where final decision rested, save in the case of advice to the Secretaries of State about examinations policy where the Constitution specifically provides that this shall come from the Finance and Priorities Committee.
- b. Although the Constitution deliberately sought to avoid a hierarchical structure, de facto such a structure had emerged, with the Finance and Priorities Committee having assumed the decisive role. There seemed to be fairly wide spread agreement that an overtly hierarchical system would be an improvement.
- c. Most of the committees prescribed in the Constitution were too large for working purposes.
- d. In spite of the Council's own emphasis on the necessity for curriculum and examinations to be considered by the same body any link between the Examinations Committee and the Professional Committee, where the main work on the curriculum is drawn together, was in practice tenuous.
- e. There was a sharp difference of view on the value or otherwise of Convocation. Although some of those who were most in favour of its continuance thought that the quality of its debates was highly variable they nevertheless saw value in its wide representation; and claimed as unique the opportunity that Convocation provides for public debate at which for example the various 'consumer interests' (eg parents, industry, further and higher education) are represented. Some of its supporters referred to Convocation as a 'parliament'. Its detractors used the more pejorative expression 'talking shop' and suggested that there was very little real debate. The presence of the press encouraged set speeches and 'playing to the gallery'.



f. There was also some difference of view on the usefulness in present circumstances of the two Curriculum Committees and the Subject Committees. Since the Council had adopted the technique of programmes the work of all these committees had been diminished. The Curriculum Committees had been consulted in the formulation of programmes, the subject committees not so consulted or not adequately in their view. Once the programmes had been formulated their execution and supervision had passed to ad hoc groups. Opposite conclusions were however drawn: on the one hand if the machinery of the Constitution had been more fully used, the programmes would have been improved; on the other that the nature of the programme approach made the existing machinery inapposite and it was more efficient to resort to ad hoc machinery (in many cases using members of the curriculum and subject committees as the Council had done). A separate point was made in relation to the Subject Committees. It was claimed by some that, irrespective of the programme approach, the Council's work on the curriculum was steadily moving from individual subjects to the various aspects of the 'learning process'. Others pointed out, however, that in the case of secondary schools in particular the curriculum was largely subject based and likely to remain so and if it was part of the Council's purpose to help teachers in such schools there must always be at least some subject element in its work on the curriculum; further, Subject Committees were able to make a useful contribution to cross-curricular studies. In addition there was substantial evidence (both from those who were and were not involved in the Subject Committees' work) that these included some of the most valuable of the Council's members, namely practising teachers who, among other things, were in a strong position to disseminate the Council's work. The advice was therefore on the one hand to abolish the Curriculum or Subject Committees or both (thus freeing a good deal of the staff time required to service them, as well as other resources) and rely on flexible, ad hoc arrangements, with the stress on committees assembled for a specific short term task and stood down when that task was completed; and on the other, especially in relation to Subject Committees, that it would break continuity and it would be difficult to assemble expert advice ad hoc.



- g. Most who gave evidence on the subject were in favour of retaining the Committee for Wales. Not unnaturally these included the Committee itself, which incidentally made the point that its five faculty committees (for Welsh, Humanities, Mathematics/Science, Language, Creative Studies) were able to deal more readily with cross-curricular questions than the Council's own Subject Committees.

67. The evidence on the committee structure given by the Schools Council's Review Group favoured a hierarchical system with the Professional Committee responsible to the Finance and Priorities Committee; and the two Curriculum Committees, the Examinations Committee and the Committee for Wales responsible to the Professional Committee. The written evidence made no specific proposal on the Subject Committees but at my second meeting with the Group it seemed that they were in favour of abolition. However, at my final meeting it was reported that the Finance and Priorities Committee were averse to it.

#### Chairmanship and Staff

68. The chairmanship of the Schools Council is a part time office. Some proposed that it should be full time and paid.

69. There seemed to be unanimous agreement among those who commented on the point that the change introduced in 1978 in staffing arrangements (from shared responsibility at Secretary level and short term contracts generally to a single full time Secretary and a largely permanent staff) had been a great improvement and should continue. Some anxieties were expressed on

- a. what was seen by many as an overload of work. Some ascribed this to an underestimate of the consequences in terms of staff resources of the introduction of programmes;
- b. the ability of the staff to service the present committee structure; there were complaints of late delivery of papers, some of them too lengthy and ill digested; the separate criticism was made that the minutes often failed to record important differences of opinion;



- c. whether the powers and responsibilities of the staff were "right"
  - Some thought them inadequate, others excessive;
- d. where within the Council ultimate responsibility for staffing policy lay and whether the Secretary was sufficiently accountable overall.

70. A great deal of appreciation of the work of Field Officers was expressed but they were thought to be too few and further, the involvement of many of them with the programmes and with other committees, obliging them frequently to go to London, interfered with their local work.



#### IV CONCLUSIONS

71. My terms of reference were to consider the functions, constitution and methods of work of the Schools Council. While the evidence comprehends these three heads some of it goes wider. I was asked to consider the Council from first principles. This seemed to me clearly to imply that I must contemplate as possibilities the abolition of the Council or its transformation into a radically different body. Such questions as the effectiveness of its work and the esteem, or otherwise, in which it is held seemed to me materially to bear on these possibilities. I have therefore interpreted the terms of reference widely and I have summarized above the evidence which this interpretation produced.

72. Before commenting on it I make a general observation. To an extent all education is political and no branch of it more so than schools education in which almost everyone is concerned at some stage or another: as pupil, parent; as taxpayer, ratepayer. Even the more specialized interests are widely diffused: those of teachers, school governors; employers, practitioners in further and higher education; Members of Parliament, Councillors and officers in central and local government in the sectors concerned. What astonished me however on first acquaintance with this subject was the extent to which these interests are institutionalised, and still more the multiplicity of the institutions representing some of them. The membership of the Schools Council as set out in its Constitution (Annex II) illustrates the point, as does the reference in paragraph 53 above to the still further bodies whose work has some bearing on, or some analogies with, that of the Council. To some extent no doubt this multiplicity merely reflects the complexity of the system; but to the extent that it represents rivalry between and within groups, it is also a manifestation of power politics.

73. When I reflect on the evidence as a whole it seems to me that at the root of the criticism of the Schools Council, both from its detractors and its supporters, is dislike of the application of power politics to a matter so important as schools education. It is a dislike that I share. Curriculum and examinations involve academic, social and even technical questions on which there is room for legitimate difference of view on objective grounds and also, as in all educational questions, for difference of individual opinion. But that



is quite another matter. There are many other bodies both within and outside education whose members are nominated as representatives of particular interests but who, once elected, are more successful in combining for common ends than the Council is, are more prepared to engage in frank discussion - it was a frequent criticism in the evidence that representatives of central government on the Council were not - and in a less abrasive atmosphere. I believe that some improvement has taken place in recent years (and certainly many members of the Council have worked for it). But if the Council survives it will never, I believe, command such wide public acceptance as a large part of its work deserves unless it can make considerable further progress in this direction. In its 17 years of existence it has always been the subject of controversy; some would say that if it had not it would not have fulfilled its purpose. Some controversy attaching to a body of this kind is inevitable and even healthy. It is the nature of this particular controversial aspect of the Council which is damaging.

74. Against the background of these preceding paragraphs I state my conclusions on the evidence in the order used in section III.

#### Fundamental

75. I accept the need for curriculum development on a national basis. I do not think that this function could be performed by DES officials or HMIs. While both of them can suggest certain lines of general policy in relation to the curriculum (and both have recently done so) they lack the resources to deal with detailed development. Nor do I think that any of the other bodies mentioned in paragraph 53 above could take over the work at present done by the Council on the curriculum (though I refer in paragraph 91 below to the Council's relations with these bodies).

76. As to examinations I accept that in comparison with the GCE Boards' work in cross-monitoring, the Council's monitoring of A levels has been rather slight. But it does seem to me right, and indeed in the Boards' own interests, that some body external to them should engage in this operation (and indeed I suggest in paragraph 92 below that the Council has not done enough in relation to existing examinations generally). As to examinations policy decisions are



clearly the responsibility of the Secretaries of State but they need expert advice, outside the resources of the Departments, to consider together with the views of the Boards and other interests. I conclude that a national body with these functions in relation to examinations is necessary also.

77. The great weight of the evidence accepts the case made in the Lockwood Report for a single body dealing with curriculum and examinations and I, too, accept it.

#### A nominated body

78. It does not follow that such a body should be of a similar composition to that of the Schools Council. A nominated body, is the main alternative and I have considered the case for it carefully. There is ample precedent in other countries, including Scotland. In England itself there is precedent (though not in schools education) in the FEU, a body nominated by the Secretary of State. There are some evident advantages in such a system. It could be more efficient, would certainly be less costly and might command greater respect (in certain quarters, though not necessarily in others). The concept of a body which settles priorities and then leaves the staff to carry out, and where necessary commission, the work detaches the staff from at any rate a great deal of the political tensions.

79. I see three disadvantages. To my knowledge, bodies of this kind which exist elsewhere are not required to deal with the full range of functions (including detailed work on examinations) at present exercised by the Schools Council, and they tend to exist in systems of schools education less complicated than ours. Secondly, a nominated body would be unacceptable for much the same reasons as the CSG in 1962 to which the local authorities and the teachers' associations objected. Moreover there are by now more interested parties to object. The principle of partnership propounded by the Lockwood Committee was widely accepted at the time; the principle of extending this partnership to a wider circle of interested parties (particularly more of the 'consumers', such as parents and industry) was expressed in the Schools Council's constitution of 1978; and according to the evidence that I have received both principles still command very considerable support. Certain tensions, such as those between teachers, between teaching associations, between Examination Boards and other



parties concerned with examinations, between on occasion, central and local government, to name but a few, are inherent in our system as it is. They would not disappear if the Schools Council were abolished and its work taken over by a nominated body. As I have explained above they seem to me evident to an unnecessary (but I believe curable) degree in the present Schools Council. I cannot but think that they would express themselves in more objectionable ways if a nominated body were imposed (as in practice it would have to be). Thirdly, a nominated body is consistent, but in my view consistent only, with a system of central government control of the curriculum and examinations. It seems to me therefore better to build on the Schools Council as it exists, whatever its shortcomings. It must necessarily reflect the complexity of the system of schools education as it exists at present. If it could divest itself of its power politics it might do so rather well. I do not therefore recommend a nominated committee.

#### Further education

80. The only extension to the Council's functions which received significant backing was in the field of further education. I have described the conflicting evidence I received on the point. At first sight there is a case for extension because of the overlap in both curriculum and examinations described in paragraph 47 (vi) a. It is a matter almost of accident whether a pupil proceeding beyond 16 is receiving instruction in the sixth form of a secondary school or a sixth form college (both classified as schools) or at a college of further education. The division of the two curriculum committees into 5-16 and 17-19 would be a neat arrangement on the face of it. Moreover, some of the institutions concerned with further education are already represented on Schools Council's committees so it can be argued that it would not greatly complicate the Council's structure to extend representation as would be necessary if the Council's function were enlarged as suggested.

81. Nevertheless I do not recommend such an enlargement for the following reasons:-



- a. There are many untidy borderlines in the education system and this one is no worse than some others. In so far as pupils in institutions of further education take GCE examinations their interests are covered by the Council's present work on curriculum and examinations.
- b. An enlargement to include FE would require the Council to be involved with a (to it) whole new order of examinations at a time when its existing work on examinations is likely to increase.
- c. In general I consider the Schools Council overstretched as it is.
- d. Doubts about the role of the Curriculum Committees, explained below.
- e. The enlargement would require fuller representation of FE interests and so would have complicating consequences for the committee structure whereas I believe, as I shall explain later, that an important need for the Council is to simplify and reduce the size of committees.

82. I am persuaded of the need for a body concerned with curriculum development and examinations financed by central and local government, distant to an extent from both but on which both are represented. Arising out of discussion of the further evidence below, I make suggestions and recommendations about the Council's work, none of which however would require any alteration in its functions as summarised in paragraph 26; and about its organisation which would require significant change. Subject to these points;

I recommend that the Schools Council should continue and with its present functions.

#### Performance

a. Curriculum development

83. It was evident to me from an early stage that I could not exercise independent judgement on the question of quality, important as it is. In terms



of projects alone the Council has produced more than 180, in some cases with accompanying teaching materials, not to mention working papers (many of which concern curriculum) and other reports and bulletins. Even if the time allotted had permitted me to read it all, it would have been out of the question for any individual to comment on this range of subject matter. So I am dependent on the evidence which suggests to me that the quality of curriculum development work has been a mixture of good, bad and indifferent, as one might have supposed in the first place.

84. The Council is careful not to promise publication when it commissions work: I think this right. I suspect that it has not always been critical enough in its judgements of what should be published and what not. One of those who gave evidence referred to a specific piece of work, on which his opinion was asked as an assessor; he thought little of it; the Secretariat nevertheless argued that it should be published because "those concerned had put in a great deal of work". I have been unable to check the particular example and I certainly would not wish to generalize from it. So it is not a matter susceptible of recommendation. I hope, however, that the Council may see for itself that weak judgement on such matters endangers its reputation. It would be well advised to be critical.

85. On the effectiveness of the Council's work on curriculum development I note the evidence from HMI quoted in paragraph 52 above which begins. "In general the Council's activities have not had a wide effect in the classroom". I cannot evaluate the statistical and other methods of the Council's "Impact and Take-up" project but its conclusions quoted at Annex III seem to me on the whole reassuring. Expectations were too high; measured against realistic expectations of the contact which might have been made with teachers the majority of projects have fallen below but some have exceeded; the degree of their use compares not unfavourably with Nuffield and other comparable schemes; interestingly enough, the attitudes of teachers to the schools Council's work are more favourable the higher the school age range and "the higher the status of the teachers". Probably the only conclusion on which there would be general agreement is that the work has not been so effective as it was hoped or as it might have been. (It should be borne in mind that the analysis covers the period up to 1976 only.) There are some who consider the pace of change in the curriculum,



irrespective of the influences that bear on it, altogether too slow for what society needs. For myself I would expect change in the curriculum to come about rather slowly, not because of inherent conservatism in the teaching profession as because teachers have to be persuaded that any given change is an improvement. That seems to me a useful and necessary safeguard.

86. I do however consider that the Council needs to take the question of dissemination much more seriously even than it has done in recent years. The means that have been used are various. Some of those who have been responsible for projects have themselves explained them to groups of teachers. Among the services used, are those responsible to local education authorities, in particular local authority inspectors and advisers who are in frequent contact with the schools in their areas and teachers' centres. Colleges of Education and departments of Education in universities and in the maintained and voluntary institutions use some of the Council's products for initial training of teachers. HMI act similarly in the courses they hold for in-service training of teachers. A variety of other agencies including the Open University and BBC Educational Broadcasts, while not promoting the Schools Council's products directly, use them as a basis for educational programmes. The Council's own Field Officers (of whom there are 16 in England and Wales) and their Regional Information Centres (of which there are four) are especially active.

87. It seems to me that the Council urgently needs to do two things. It should review the means of dissemination external to its own officers to make sure it is using the former to the maximum extent and to plan the complement and deployment of its officers. For example, local authorities vary considerably in the resources they are prepared to devote to dissemination and this should have implications for the deployment of Field Officers and information centres. Should these, for instance, be placed in parts of the country where local authorities are relatively less active in this matter? Or, on the contrary, should the Council decide that it is impossible to obtain full national coverage and concentrate on selected areas which seem propitious? (I have had a number of letters from satisfied 'customers' in the north-east area, for example, where the City of Newcastle Upon Tyne is active and helps to finance one of the Council's few Information Centres and where one of its Field Officers is stationed).



88. Secondly the Council ought to devise some guidelines on the question of the use of its own funds for dissemination. I feel tolerably certain that it has not adequately budgeted for this aspect of its present programmes. Ideally this consequential expenditure should be foreseen and budgeted for in the first place; of course in practice this cannot be precisely, though an attempt at it should be made. It seems to me that there are at present no guiding principles about the extent to which the Council itself funds further dissemination of its earlier work. As recently as last term it voted funds for further dissemination of projects completed a decade ago. I do not say that the individual decisions were wrong, but what are the principles on which they are made? Is dissemination to be a continuing charge until the project is obsolete? Are only the very good ones to have such treatment? Is the Council sufficiently hard hearted in withdrawing continued support from the less successful? This is difficult territory, I know, but it seems to me one that it is necessary for the Council to explore in a more purposive fashion than it seems to have done so far.

89. If these two questions are not dealt with soon, the Council will shortly be up against a real dilemma: the choice between 'wasting' work already done and denying itself the power to commission new work. I think, in fact, that the Council is up against that dilemma now in relation to expenditure for 1983/84; and it might in fact be wise to commission no new work in 1983/84.

I recommend that the Finance and Priorities Committee examines future policy on dissemination with a view to establishing principles; considering how better to forecast cost of dissemination in future; considering the consequences for deployment of staff, including in particular Field Officers.

90. I have expressed above my opinion that none of the other bodies concerned with the schools' curriculum could satisfactorily substitute for the Council's work on curriculum development. That is not, of course, to say that I consider that the Council has prescriptive rights in this field (nor, to be fair, has it ever claimed them). Although very little evidence on the point was volunteered, I have felt obliged to consider to what extent the work of the Council and of these other bodies duplicate each other.



91. Short of conducting a review of each of them, which would have been impossible in the time, I cannot be certain that there is no overlap. But, first, a degree of it (provided that it is not downright wasteful) is not necessarily harmful. Secondly, all of these bodies (and also the Council) are short of funds and so have an incentive not to duplicate wastefully. The important thing seems to me to be that all of them should know what work the others are currently engaged in and that the Schools Council has a particular obligation to inform itself, and be the means of informing others, of what work is being undertaken or contemplated.

I recommend that the Director of Studies makes it his particular responsibility to be aware of curricular developments funded by other agencies; and that the Council should give effect to the intention stated in 'Principles and Programmes' 1979 to act as a clearing house for such information.

b. Examinations

92. I think that the Council acts as a useful back stop to the Examinations Boards in approving new subjects and syllabuses for GCE A level. It seems to me a pity that it relinquished this function in relation to syllabuses for O level and an even greater pity that it never assumed it for either subject or syllabus in the case of the CSE, since it is in that area that criticism about proliferation of subjects is strongest. That it abdicated that responsibility, I deduce from the evidence, was for two reasons neither, to my view, justified. It assumed that the CSE Boards would have a majority of school teachers: so they do, but I am assured that, so far as the marking of examination papers is concerned, the GCE Boards also have a majority of school teachers, so it was a false distinction. It was further assumed that the CSE Boards would be 'school based' in the sense that Mode III - the version that teachers in individual schools both set (subject to the validation of the Boards) and mark-would be predominant. I understand that Mode III accounts for only about 25% of CSE examinations. I regret also that the Schools Council abandoned its monitoring function in relation to GCE O level and never assumed it in relation to CSE. In the case of the latter it would have seemed particularly necessary. The school has no choice in the CSE Board used: it is obliged to use the Board appropriate to its locality. In this respect the system differs from that of the GCE Boards



where choice at least introduces a degree of competition, and provides an incentive for cross-monitoring between Boards.

93. However, the Government's acceptance of a common examination at 16+, which will when it is introduced take the place of both O level and CSE, has created a new situation, in which the role of the Schools Council is not yet clear. The present situation is that the Secretaries of State have asked the Boards to devise criteria for the new examinations and the Schools Council is itself considering the subject. Once the criteria have been accepted by the Secretaries of State, taking account of all the advice received, a great deal of detailed work will remain to be done about subjects, syllabuses and monitoring. It is of course for the Secretaries of State to decide how and by whom this is done. Obviously a good deal will be needed from the Boards but it would be surprising if the Schools Council were not invited to do a good deal too.

94. I do not accept the evidence that the lack of success over the years of some of the Schools Council's various proposals on examinations policy of external examinations has caused it to lose 'face' or, in the modern jargon, 'credibility'. An advisory body must expect from time to time that its advice will be rejected. Possibly the Council was somewhat ham handed in the way it set about the discussions with other interests. It rushed the universities and polytechnics on its "N & F" proposals by setting unrealistic time limits and it was arrogant in representing to representatives of higher education that they would be "failing in their duty to the nation" if these proposals were not instantly accepted. Universities and polytechnics, well aware that no government in the foreseeable future is likely to find the means to fund four, instead of characteristically three year, courses, were quite right to fight their corner and were not necessarily merely selfish in doing so, for a lowering of standards can work back through the system to affect standards generally.

95. This is not at all to say that what those pupils who will proceed to higher education need to equip themselves for is necessarily the same as what those need who will not so proceed; nor however is it to say the contrary. To pursue this thought would be to enter into a debate about the value educationally of various kinds of curriculum and corresponding examinations; to do that I should exceed my terms of reference. The point I want to make is that it is



misleading to approach these important matters on the assumption of a conflict of interest. The only interest that matters is that of the pupils themselves. The old notion of "matriculation", at once a school leaving certificate and a guarantee of suitability for higher education, may be outdated, has certainly had to be refined and may have to be refined out of existence. The council has a useful role to play in discussing which examinations can fulfil several purposes as well as examinations designed for more limited purposes.

96. The way forward in my view is not by giving the Council control over Examination Boards. I do not think that this would be generally acceptable to schools or parents and so I doubt whether any government would be prepared to legislate (as would be necessary to bring this about). Nor is it by assuming that the Council's voice can be sole or even predominant. I suspect that rejection (not by any means always at the end of the day sustained) by successive Secretaries of State of the Council's proposals on examinations policy have created unnecessary resentment by many of the Council's members who have worked hard for change because of misconceptions about the Council's role and the position of those of its members who represent the Secretaries of State. This thought leads to my recommendation in paragraph 139 below about the distribution of responsibilities for examinations policy between the Council's committees.

c. Priorities

97. Here I believe that the Council is weak, principally because the committees, and especially the Professional Committee, have been indecisive. Current criticism attaches particularly to the programmes. When I enquired of the Council's Review Group why each of the five programmes mentioned in paragraph 37 above had received the same budget of £330,000 over three years, I received the answer, in effect, that 'each should have its chance'. This immediately suggested to me that none of them had been properly costed, which I believe to be the case. It fortified my suspicion of compromise on what was selected from the many suggestions put forward and what was rejected. Direct observation of some of the Council's meetings reinforced that view. It seemed to me that the Professional Committee having received 'bids' of various kinds (for adding to programmes and financing dissemination of projects) in excess of the finance available was unable to choose between them; and it was therefore necessary for



the Finance and Priorities Committee subsequently to do so. The justification for the teachers' majority on the Professional Committee is its qualification to establish educational priorities. I surmise, therefore, that this lack of grip in relation to priorities explains the way the programmes were devised and carried through the Finance and Priorities Committee and the way in which they were funded. This fortifies my view, which I explain later, that there is need for a clearer definition of function and responsibility in the Council's committees.

98. As to the programmes themselves it is an inconvenience of the timing of this review that neither I nor anyone else can comment with any authority on the outcome of the programmes technique. Clearly, by involving so many practising teachers, it has contributed to what some call 'in-service training', a need which many have recognized both before and after the James Report but some claim has never been adequately organized or funded. But if in-service training were to prove the sole justification for the programmes technique it might have been better to direct the financial resources elsewhere, as some of those giving evidence have suggested. I personally think that the Council was right to take this new and rather adventurous approach, but whether it is successful in terms of useful generalization is yet to be proved. The programmes themselves are funded only until 1983 and it will probably take much longer to establish their usefulness. What is reasonably clear already is that they are all underfunded, especially when dissemination is taken into account, and there must be doubt about the adequacy of the arrangements for monitoring and evaluation. I make no recommendations specifically on these point but I have had them in mind for what I say later about the responsibilities of the Finance and Priorities Committee.

d. Cost and Accountability

99. On this I have to say, first, that work of the kind being done by the Schools Council can to my mind never be shown to be cost effective or non-cost effective (but in this context I mean 'work' as distinct from 'establishment'). Secondly, I have no fault to find with the formal accounting procedures.

100. The criticism that because it is left free to determine how it spends its resources means that the Council is, at the end of the day, not properly accountable to central and local government is to my mind refutable because its



'paymasters', when they combine, are represented by a majority on the Finance and Priorities Committee. That is where accountability should be enforced: if it is not in practice so enforced it is up to the representatives of the 'paymasters' to see that in future it is.

e. Wales

101 The question whether Wales should have a separate budget for curriculum development is one for the Council itself. The position of the Committee for Wales I discuss in paragraph 148 below.

f. Publication

102. I have summarized the evidence. To an extent it is a technical matter. I have neither had the time nor the necessary access to expert advice to form an opinion.

I recommend that the Council's Publications Committee consider the Council's publications policy generally; in particular whether it would be an advantage to have a business manager and in such a case whether there is a continuing need for that committee; and report to the Finance and Priorities Committee.

g. 'Style'

103. I endorse the criticisms in paragraph 61 above and add one of my own. I personally found the anti-intellectual flavour of some of the discussion in the meetings that I attended tiresome and unnecessary; certainly I never heard the word 'academic' used save in a pejorative sense. I believe that public esteem for the Council would be enhanced if its members were better mannered in discussion, and in some cases used language more precisely and less evocatively. However, these are hardly matters for recommendation. The Council alone can be the guardian of its own reputation.

h. 'Opinions'

104. I, too, have my prejudices. But if we are to retain a body (and I have already made it plain that I think we should) for curriculum and examinations, it must have freedom to commission its work and freedom (not obligation) to publish what it commissions. There is no point in seeking to restrain the range



of its enquiries beyond what its common sense and the limit of its resources dictate, or to prescribe the style of its publications. It is bound to be prey from time to time to the fashionable and the sensational. Perhaps some resources are expended in ways which some of us (and we should no doubt disagree among ourselves) consider trivial or unsuitable; these resources will hardly be large. In my view a limited degree of waste is a small price to pay for keeping the system open. The ultimate safeguard is that no teacher is obliged to use the products of the Council's work and here again its reputation is in its own hands.

### Organisation

#### Representation

105. It was proposed to me in evidence that it would be more satisfactory if the teaching interest in those of the Council's committees the membership of which is prescribed in the Constitution could be provided by bodies more representative of teachers professionally, for example the subject associations. The Schools Council Review Group suggested that the help of these associations should be more generally invoked (though not with membership of the main committees in mind) and I agree with that. But they could not in practice represent the whole of the teaching interest on the Council partly because the subject associations are not fully comprehensive. Moreover it seems to me reasonable that a considerable part of the teaching interest should be supplied by representatives of the teachers' associations. The Council needs the experience of various kinds of teachers, for example heads and assistants, and of teachers in various kinds of schools.

106. I do not accept the principle of multiple representation by the teacher associations prescribed for these committees nor the reasons adduced for it. Teachers join trade unions, I suppose, for much the same reasons that other workers join other trade unions; that is, in regard to pay, conditions of service, protection against redundancy, accident and other misadventures. But a trade union of teachers is not a collection of teachers acting primarily in their professional capacity as teachers, and I see no rational argument for multiple representation of teachers' associations by reference to the size of membership, given the reasons for which their members join.



107. Moreover, multiple representation by these associations gives rise to multiple representation by other bodies in order to preserve what the architects of the Constitution of 1978 thought the appropriate balance of interests within certain committees, in particular the Finance and Priorities Committee and the Professional Committee. (The fact that, so far as I could observe, the Council rarely uses votes in practice does not affect the reality of the balance of interests.) The nominating bodies of the members who serve on the principal committees are set out in the Constitution (Annex II). The following table shows for each of them: total number of members; number of institutions with multiple representation; number of members representing those bodies.

(a) <u>Committee</u>	(b) <u>Total</u> <u>Membership</u>	(c) <u>Institutions with</u> <u>multiple membership</u>	(d) <u>No. of Members</u> <u>representing (c)</u>
Convocation	56	9	32
Finance and Priorities	28	5	21
Professional	37	8	28
Examinations	32	6	24
Primary Curriculum	20	4	15
Secondary Curriculum	24	4	13
Committee for Wales	22	5	15

It is perfectly possible to preserve the balance of interests in smaller committees if multiple representation is reduced.

108. On the question of rotation of membership the Council must be open to new ideas; and that implies fresh blood. The original arrangement of a succession of joint secretaries of short tenure was rightly discarded in the present Constitution. But the reason for the original arrangement (paragraph 23 above) was good. Now that there is a permanent staff, the time has come when there should, in my view, be a term to the period of service of all members of standing committees. The balance between the value of experience and the value of fresh approaches is an awkward one in any institution. Any fixed rule will involve some loss of particularly valuable individuals; but no change will ever take place without a fixed rule. The Council should in future allow the institutions concerned to appoint their representatives for all the standing



committees entirely on their own discretion, as now, but for a fixed period of four years; and permit them to nominate the same representative for a further maximum period of four years though the committee concerned should have the power to accept or reject a proposal for renewal. If a proposal for renewal were rejected this should not prevent an institution from nominating the same representative for service on another of the Council's committees for four years. No individual should serve more than eight years in total on the standing committees of the Council.

I recommend that there should be a fixed term to membership on standing committees as described above.

Such a system could not be abruptly introduced. It would be necessary for the Council to arrange "staggering", with some reference to the length of service of its present members but it should agree within a year on how this should be done.

109. I recommend some restriction on the use of alternates, specifically that no member of a standing committee should be an alternate for more than one other standing committee and that the procedure for the rotation of alternates should be the same as that recommended for members.

#### Committee structure

110. In proposing changes in the Council's committee structure I have had in mind the following principles:-

- a. to preserve the spirit of the 1978 Constitution, which sought to provide as open a system as possible in order that ideas might emerge from many sources within the Council; but
- b. to create a hierarchical structure with clearer definitions of powers and advisory functions of the various committees;



- c. to provide the Council with sufficient flexibility to adapt its arrangements as the direction of its policy from time to time requires but at the same time to ensure that conscious decisions are taken (and the cost considered) when such adaptations are made;
- d. to reduce the number of standing committees;
- e. to reduce significantly the number of members of the standing committees while preserving the principle of wide representation;
- f. as far as possible to abolish (and where that is not possible significantly to reduce) multiple representation of institutions on committees;
- g. to maintain the majority of central and local government interests on the Finance and Priorities Committee and of the teaching interest on the Professional Committee;
- h. to bring curriculum and examinations into closer proximity.

111. Before I apply these principles in detail some of them require further explanation.

- a. The principle embodied in the Constitution of 1978 of a division of powers between the three main committees as equal partners was a good one. There seems however a general consensus that it has not worked out in practice as it was intended. Perhaps it demanded too much of a body which needs to take decisions, on occasion quickly. Certainly the technique of programmes which was adopted soon after the Constitution was introduced has had practical effects on the Council's operations, the extent of which could probably not have been foreseen. The result has been the underemployment of some of the machinery prescribed in the Constitution and the use, to my mind not always sufficiently controlled, of ad hoc machinery in its place.



112. b. A careful reading of the Constitution shows that in fact specific functions are assigned to the various Committees. They are not always perhaps sufficiently closely drawn; but the real source of confusion probably lies in the requirements of the main committees to consult each other which creates a rather complex system of 'cross-referencing', the purpose of which was of course to give effect to the equality of powers. In any case it is now clear that there is confusion within the Council, and still more outside, about the source of decisions on given matters. Perhaps because of this a hierarchical structure has emerged with the Finance and Priorities Committee at its apex. It is timely to recognise this, to define more clearly the responsibilities of each committee and their relationship with each other; in a hierarchical system 'cross-referencing' is not needed.
113. c. The Council is not committed to continuing curriculum development by means of the programmes technique indefinitely in the future. It could spend all its resources for new work on curriculum development in that way; it could revert to discrete projects exclusively; it could, as will soon be the case with the introduction of the new project to review the Secondary Science Curriculum, divide the resources between programmes and discrete projects; it might devise techniques different from either, and as yet unforeseen. Sensibly, it wishes to keep its options open. This makes it difficult, however, to suggest a structure which would be suitable for all possibilities. In these circumstances it seems best to provide in a revised Constitution for fewer standing committees and give the Finance and Priorities Committee the power to set up additional machinery as necessary and in the form appropriate for the circumstances at the time.
114. d. The main purpose in seeking to reduce the number of standing committees is that of flexibility, mentioned immediately above. But to do so would have other benefits: it would end the frustration of members called upon to spend their time on meetings for which there is insufficient, or no real, business; reduce the amount of staff



time required to service them; and shift the proportion of resources at present devoted to variously 'establishment' and 'work'.

115. f. I consider that, with the exception of Convocation, the membership of &g. all the Council's standing committees is too large for effective operation. I am more concerned with effectiveness than cost, though a reduction in the number of members would, too, contribute to correcting the balance between 'establishment' and 'work'. I have given (in paragraph 106 above) my views on multiple representation. The way to reduce the size of committees while not reducing the breadth of interest represented is to cut out or, where that is not possible, severely cut down, multiple representation generally.

116. I now apply the principles set out in paragraph 110 above to the Council's present structure. Clearly the provision for Trustees must remain. As to the standing committees, the continued existence of the Finance and Priorities, Professional and Examinations Committees has not been called in question and seems to me essential. The evidence is conflicting on Convocation, the Primary and Secondary Curriculum Committees and the Subject Committees and I give my opinion on each of these, as on the Committee for Wales and the Publications Committee, in turn below.

117. I am in favour of retaining Convocation. I appreciate the arguments against it but it is a novel body which in the nature of the case would need more time than others of the Council's committees to find its feet. I doubt whether it will ever be capable of fulfilling the rather ambitious role originally conceived for it (and I shall say more later about the definition of its functions and about adjustments to its method of work). It is not a parliament, for parliaments legislate and decide: the Schools Council, including Convocation, has no such powers. But parliaments are also 'talking shops' (hence the name); and a forum as widely representative as Convocation is for debate on schools education seems to me potentially, at least, a useful institution.



118. I consider that there is at present insufficient work to justify the existence of the Primary and Secondary Curriculum Committees. I have heard it proposed that they should concern themselves with refining and elaborating 'The Practical Curriculum'. If there is a need for detailed work on the general principles set out in HMI's document 'A View of the Curriculum' (1980) the DES document 'The School Curriculum' (1981) and the Schools Council's document 'The Practical Curriculum' (1981) (and it is not clear to me that there is such a need) it is more likely to call for inclusion in the programmes or projects than to require general exercises by the Curriculum Committees. It has been argued that the Professional Committee is overloaded, with the implication that more work could be delegated to the Curriculum Committees. But it seems to me that in recent years these Committees have not initiated much: most of their business consists of transmitting proposals from ad hoc bodies, or opining on such questions (not very many) as the Professional Committee sends to them. I consider the Professional Committee overloaded not so much by the size of its agenda as by the size of its membership.

119. That is not to say that committees of this kind may not be needed at some time in the future. But they should not have the status of standing committees nor be described in the Constitution. Accordingly,

I recommend that the Primary and Secondary Curriculum Committees be discontinued.

120. The Subject Committees present a slightly different, and more difficult, problem. Between them they represent a considerable body of active teachers and the work that they have done in the past has brought credit to the Council. They have been on what might be called a standby basis for some time, since they are required to meet only once a year and need the Secretary's authority to meet more frequently. This arrangement already causes dissatisfaction to the Subject Committees as well it might.

121. Their A level examination subcommittees clearly have continuing work to do and on one assumption referred to above about the new 16+ examinations considerable further work of this kind may be necessary in future. It is not clear to which body or bodies these subcommittees now report. In future they



should report to the Examinations Committee which should appoint their members from a panel of the present members of the Subject Committees afforded as necessary by nominees of subject associations.

122. However, with the exception of the Science Committee (which will be involved in the review of the Secondary Science Curriculum) it is difficult to see how Subject Committees' work on the curriculum which is defined as "to offer advice ..... on developments and issues within its subject ..... and to make proposals for further work" is to be pursued if the Council continues in future to place the same emphasis as it does at present on the technique of programmes. At the same time it would be wrong to assume that no curriculum development work on individual subjects will be necessary in the future.

123. It is wasteful to keep committees in existence against contingencies and unsatisfactory to members of the Subject Committees to be kept in a state of inanimation. Here again the right course is to set up machinery as and when it is required for a specific purpose. It has been represented that without the Subject Committees there would be no source of initiative for subject curriculum development. But it is open to any organisation (including a subject association) and indeed to individuals to propose to the Professional Committee any subject project for which a good case can be made and if that Committee recommended it the Finance and Priorities Committee would have the power to create an appropriate subject committee. Further I recommend below that the membership of the Professional Committee should in future include nominees of the subject associations.

I recommend that the Finance and Priorities Committee determine which of the present Subject Committees need to be retained for work currently in progress, and for how long, and that with any exceptions so determined the Subject Committees and the meetings of the Chairman of the Subject Committees be discontinued.

124. There is a distinct aspect of schools' education in Wales, deriving from the Welsh language and culture. This distinct aspect is, however, rather small. On the whole the similarities in schools education between England and Wales are greater than the dissimilarities. Some Welsh problems, in so far as they affect



rural areas for example, are the same problems as affect similar areas in England. Naturally, more school children in Wales take examination papers in Welsh language and literature and related subjects than school children in England but the examinations system in the Principality is identical with that in England. Since however there are some distinct interests and since the Secretary of State for Wales has separate powers for education in Wales, it seems right that there should be a committee of the Council specifically concerned with Wales and meeting in Wales, although, as I explain below, I think its scope and complement should be reduced.

I recommend that the Committee for Wales be retained.

125. The continuance or otherwise of the Council's Publications Committee depends on the outcome of the review on the substance of the question that I have recommended in paragraph 89 above. In any case, I do not think that it should be a standing committee: but a body that the Finance and Priorities Committee has the power to call into being or stand down as necessary.

126. I recommend that there should be five standing committees: the Finance and Priorities Committees, the Professional Committee, Convocation, the Examinations Committee and the Committee for Wales: the first three should be 'main' committees.

127. As to the hierarchical structure, the Professional Committee should be responsible to the Finance and Priorities Committee; the Examinations Committee and the Committee for Wales responsible to the Professional Committee. Convocation should be advisory to the Council as a whole but particularly to the Finance and Priorities, Professional and Examinations Committees. When I say 'responsible' I do not of course imply 'responsible on everything'. It is essential that each of the standing committees has defined functions. In what follows I recommend the functions and membership of the five standing committees. The changes in the Constitution needed to give effect to my recommendations on these and earlier points in this section of the report are summarised at the end of this section.



### The Finance and Priorities Committee

128. This committee should be the body which takes final decisions on overall policy (and not only when these are of a nature to result in advice to the Secretaries of State and local authorities). It should not play as passive a role as it seems to me it has done in the initiation of policy: it ought to initiate discussion on important general questions and will have, as it has now, the power to remit them to other committees for advice.

129. An important part of its function will continue to be the allocation of resources, both of money and manpower. On the former it should take a longer view: the idea of a five year "rolling programme" put forward by the Schools Council's Review Group is a good one. The Council, in common with other educational establishments, is hampered in its planning by not knowing its budgetary provision for, at best, a year ahead. But assumptions can and must be made (as they are made now.) I consider that provisional planning for five years ahead is essential and that the Committee should annually review such a rolling programme, as well as controlling the use of the budget from year to year. It should decline to consider any proposals from the Professional Committee unless that Committee makes plain its priorities and the reasons for them.

130. The committee should keep under review the proportion of expenditure allocated to 'establishment' and 'work'. It should have both the power and the obligation to keep under regular review the subsidiary committee structure of the Council. It should stand down committees no longer needed. Its authority should be required for the establishment of new committees or groups and in authorizing them it should specify the task and set a term for its completion. It should have the power to determine the membership, though it may well find it sensible to delegate this power on occasion to the Chairman or the Professional Committee or other bodies.

131. Resources of manpower are at least as important as financial resources (and indeed often have long term financial implications). This committee should keep them under review. For example it should be aware of the obligations that the Council is incurring in relation to staff pensions (and just conceivably, in these hard times, redundancy payments); it should be consulted by the Secretary



on any proposals to convert short term into permanent appointments. It should concern itself with the implications for staff in work commissioned by the Council, in terms both of complement, use of staff and finance. In short it ought to exercise a managerial, as well as a policy role. It is significant that some of those who gave evidence expressed doubt as to where ultimate responsibility for staff lies: under the present Constitution it lies firmly on the Finance and Priorities Committee already. I suspect, however, that the Committee has probably delegated responsibility further than to individual "staff appointments" and probably more than it should have done.

132. The Committee should have the responsibility for determining publication policy.

133. At present changes in the Constitution require the agreement of the three main committees. In future the other two should be consulted by the Finance and Priorities Committee which should have the power of decision.

134. There is one function of the Finance and Priorities Committee that I would modify. The Committee is at present the channel through which advice to the Secretaries of State on examinations policy is given. While it must continue to have an important function in this matter it should in my view, for reasons that I explain under 'The Professional Committee' in paragraph 139 below, be a more limited one.

135. There is one function that I would add to those of the Finance and Priorities Committee and that is to be the authoritative voice publicly in all matters of important Council policy. Many have commented that it is impossible to determine who 'speaks for the Council'. In one sense there must be a multiplicity of voices: for example many of the papers produced for and by the Council are in the nature of working or similar papers put forward for discussion. It would be absurd to suggest that all such papers and all press statements should be approved by the Finance and Priorities Committee beforehand. Moreover I recommend (see paragraph 145 below) that Convocation should continue to meet in public so that the press will have the opportunity to reflect, as they have now, the views of individual members of the Council. But for major matters of policy communicated publicly, whether in Convocation or



elsewhere, the only authoritative voice should be that of the Chairman of the Council, or those acting for him, on the strength of decisions taken by the Finance and Priorities Committee. I include within this general principle statements about advice on examinations policy, even though I recommend below that the channel of communication to the Secretaries of State should be the Professional Committee.

136. In Annex IV I set out my recommendations for membership of the standing committees, showing the existing membership for comparison. In the case of the Finance and Priorities Committee the effect is to reduce the membership from 28 to 17 while preserving the proportions between the teacher interest and that of local and central government combined and between those of local and central government separately.

#### The Professional Committee

137. Although, I have said above, I envisage the Finance and Priorities Committee's initiating more discussion in future on general questions of policy I think it right that the Professional Committee should continue to be the main committee in which proposals for curriculum development are considered. It is essential that in future it must exercise much more rigorous judgement on priorities.

138. In future the Examinations Committee should report annually to the Professional Committee on such recommendations as it has made to the Examinations Boards on subject, syllabus and monitoring activities, and what action the Boards have taken on them. If, as may be the case, the Council is asked to exercise responsibilities in respect of the new 16+ examination, the Examinations Committee should report similarly.

139. On examinations policy the present position (reflected in the Constitution) is that the Examinations Committee submits proposals to the Finance and Priorities Committee and it is the latter that submits advice to the Secretaries of State. The reason for this arrangement was probably that as the Secretaries of State are powerfully represented on that Committee it was assumed that their officials, not dissenting from the Committee's recommendations, would positively recommend them to the Secretaries of State and that Ministers would accept their



advice. This double assumption seems to me a misconception. Given the Secretaries of State's responsibilities under the Education Act, and the variety of other interests which must be taken into account, it would be more realistic to assume that they will take account of the Council's advice as only one part of the total advice that they need and their officials who represent them on the Council will never be in a position to commit them in advance. In terms of function and membership the Professional Committee is better fitted than the Finance and Priorities Committee to consider examinations policy. If it in turn was required to report to the Finance and Priorities Committee two main committees instead of, as now, one would need to be concerned with the proposals as a whole. It is therefore preferable that the Council's advice to the Secretaries of State on examinations policy to be put forward by the Professional Committee. However, cost will always be an important consideration for the Secretaries of State. So the Examinations Committee with the help of its members from the Examinations Boards and the Council's Finance Officer should always prepare estimates of costs of proposals for consideration by the Finance and Priorities Committee, whose comment on these should be quoted by the Professional Committee in submitting its advice.

140. Representatives of the CSE and GCE Boards at present serve on the Professional Committee as observers. So far as curriculum is concerned that seems satisfactory. The present Constitution provides that "when considering questions of examinations policy the Committee shall invite the participation of additional representatives of the GCE and CSE Boards". I understand that this provision has never been invoked, probably because in practice the Committee has hardly ever discussed examinations. With the Professional Committee's enhanced responsibilities in this field it is important that when examinations are discussed two representatives each from the CSE and GCE Boards should attend as members. On membership generally (Annex IV) my proposals do not add to, nor subtract from, the list of bodies represented but do require changes in status as between members and observers in both directions; preserve the overall majority of school teaching interests but create this majority in part by the addition of members nominated by the subject associations as well as by the membership of the chairman of the Examinations Committee ex officio, while reducing the representation of the teachers' associations; they reduce representation of the Secretaries of State to allow only for one DES official



and one HMI, excluding the official interest of the Secretary of State for Wales in compensation for making the chairman of the Committee for Wales an ex officio member (in parallel with the membership ex officio of the chairman of the Examinations Committee) instead of, as before, an observer. Some institutions at present nominating members would in future nominate observers. The effect of the proposals is to reduce the size of the Committee from 37 members and 9 observers to 22 members and 8 observers so that the total would be reduced from 46 to 30. This is still an uncomfortably large body but the Professional Committee is central to the Council's operations and breadth of representation is important. Even with that size it should be possible for the Secretary's staff to circulate better considered papers further in advance of meetings.

#### Convocation

141. Convocation's present functions are set out in clause 11 of the Constitution. Convocation should have the power as now to debate over a wide range. I see its role as essentially advisory, however, and specifically to the Finance and Priorities, Professional and Examinations Committees. While clearly Convocation, as any other committee can ask for information through the Secretariat from other parts of the Council I do not consider it appropriate that it should be able to require reports from other committees. I do not think it appropriate that it should "provide reports .... for general circulation". It is consistent with what I have proposed earlier that Finance and Priorities Committee rather than Convocation should approve the annual report.

142. None of these changes would affect the work for which Convocation is useful or greatly affect what it has been doing in practice. But they would give greater definition to Convocation's role.

143. In common with the other main committees Convocation meets once a term. It is, however, the one body for which, on the evidence of the Council's Review Group, the Chairman and Secretary have on occasion to contrive the agenda. Nobody can justify meetings unless there is genuine business. The other committees will continue to consult Convocation as they see the need. Moreover there is scope at present for its members themselves to initiate business; this will remain. Where, however, on a particular occasion the business generated by other committees together with that proposed by the members themselves does



not produce agenda justifying a particular meeting of Convocation that meeting should be cancelled.

144. This is the more necessary because Convocation seems to me the body of the Council on which the widest representation is desirable and where size is not, as it is in the other committees, an impediment to effective prosecution of business. My recommendations on membership (Annex IV) reduce multiple representation though less drastically than for some of the other standing committees and permit those bodies, which at present "acting jointly" nominate one representative between them, to nominate one each. They reduce the membership of Convocation from 56 to 46.

145. The tradition is that the press are present at meetings of Convocation: many of those giving evidence have suggested that this encourages 'playing to the gallery'. I do not doubt that it does and that this damages to an extent the Council's reputation. On the other hand I think the press quite able to evaluate this element and discount it; it does more harm to the reputation of the organizations who play to the gallery than to the Council itself.

#### The Examinations Committee

146. The present functions are set out in clause 21 of the Constitution. No change is proposed in functions but in consequence of the recommendations at paragraphs 127 and 139 above some rewording is necessary. The sub-committees on examinations should be appointed by the Examinations Committee from a panel of members of the present Subject Committees as afforded by nominees of subject associations and report to the Examinations Committee.

147. The recommendations for membership of the Committee generally follow the present pattern save that the NFER and the local authority advisory service would be represented by members rather than observers. The general principle of reducing multiple representation is applied. The result is to reduce the members of the committee from 32 to 21, the Assessors from 3 to 2, the observers from up to 7 to up to 4; and the maximum size of the Committee therefore from 42 to 27.



### The Committee for Wales

148. The functions of the Committee are set out in clause 25 of the Constitution and I propose no change in them. But the "special needs of the schools and pupils in Wales", though justifying the continuance of the Committee do not justify its present structure which seems to me unnecessarily elaborate. I see no need for primary and secondary curriculum committees: the Committee itself should do their work. Of the five faculty committees I would retain only one (that for Welsh) and even that not on the basis of a standing committee. With the approval of the Finance and Priorities Committee the Committee for Wales could set up groups (either by subject, groups of subjects or any other basis) ad hoc as required. As to membership (Annex IV) I abolish the distinction between members and co-opted members, apply the usual principle of reducing multiple representation and add two members nominated by subject associations. The Committee is reduced from 27 to 20 members and the total size from 30 to 23.

149. I recommend that the functions and membership of the standing committees be as described in paragraphs 128 - 148 above.

### Recommended changes to the Constitution

150. To give effect to these recommendations in paragraphs 108, 109 and 149 the following amendments to the Constitution are required. (The references are to the clauses of the Constitution).

Clause 10 1. Delete "The Primary Curriculum Committee", "The Secondary Curriculum Committee" "The Publications Committee". (If following the review recommended in paragraph 102, the Finance and Priorities Committee decide to retain the Publications Committee, it should not be as a standing committee).

Replace the last subsection by "Such committees, having such functions and composition as the Finance and Priorities Committee shall determine".



2. Substitute "The Finance and Priorities Committee may delegate its functions. The other committees named in sub-clause 1. above may delegate their functions subject to the agreement of the Finance and Priorities Committee".
3. Delete "after consultation with the Professional Committee and Convocation".

Between 3 and 4 insert new subsection: "An appointing body may appoint its representative on any committee named in sub-clause 1. above for a period of four years; it may nominate the same representative to service for a further period of four years on the same committee, but that committee shall have the power to accept or reject. No representative shall serve on any such committee for a period exceeding eight years in aggregate, whether the service is on one committee or more than one in that period."

4. Add "provided that no member of a committee named in sub-clause 1. above shall serve as an alternate to more than one other such committee ."

#### Convocation

Clause 11 b. Delete.

d. Delete "or require reports from".

c. Delete.

#### The Finance and Priorities Committee

Clause 13 Between b. and c. insert a new sub-clause "To authorise any public statement on general policy made on the Council's behalf."



- d. Substitute "To comment to the Professional Committee on the cost of any proposals for examinations policy submitted by the Examinations Committee."
- e. - g. Delete.
- i. Substitute "After consultation with the Professional to Committee to determine" for "To agree with the Professional Committee."
- j. Substitute "To determine the constitution of committees and sub-committees not defined within the Constitution; keep under review any such committees and sub-committees; authorise when it sees fit, on the proposal of any committee named in clause 10 a. the establishment of any such committees or sub-committees; specify the term of office and determine the membership."

#### The Professional Committee

- Clause 15
- c. Delete "and to request ..... Schools Council Publications"  
Substitute "Determined by" for "Agreed with"
  - d. Substitute "To submit to the Secretaries of State any proposals on examinations policy; such proposals shall include the comments of the Finance and Priorities Committee on the estimated cost. When considering questions of examinations policy the Committee shall afforce the representation of the GCE Boards and the CSE Boards; as shown below."
  - e. Delete "by Convocation or". Substitute "other committees of the Council" for "other bodies".

#### The Schools Council Committee for Wales

- Clause 25
- 2. Delete the section beneath the list of membership from "The Committee may appoint ..... Parent Teachers Association".



Add new subsection:-

- "5. Subject to the approval of the Finance and Priorities Committee to set up subcommittees. The Chairman of any such subcommittee, if not a member of the Committee for Wales, shall attend meetings of the Committee as an observer."

Subcommittees of the Committee for Wales

Clause 26 Delete

Amendment of the Constitution

Clause 29 Substitute

- "1. The Finance and Priorities Committee may amend this Constitution provided that
- a. That Committee has first consulted <sup>the</sup> Professional Committee and Convocation;
  - b. Each member of the Finance and Priorities Committee, the Professional Committee and Convocation shall have been given one month's notice in writing of the term of the proposed amendment and the date of the meeting of the respective committees.
2. No amendment shall be valid the effect of which would be that the Schools Council ceased to be a body established for charitable purposes only."

151. The composition of the committees set out in clauses 12 1., 14 1., 16 1., 22 1., and 25 2., should be amended to bring them into line with Annex IV.

152. Although it has nothing to do with my recommendations on the substance. there is a minor error in clause 8 of the Constitution. Sub-clause 1 should read "The Deputy Chairman of the Schools Council hereinafter called the deputy chairman."



153. I recommend the changes to the Constitution described in paragraphs 150 - 152 above.

Chairman and Staff

154. I considered the suggestion made in evidence that the Chairmanship of the Schools Council be a permanent and paid office. I paid particular regard to the present Chairman's opinion that a part time Chairman, carrying out his own permanent job elsewhere in the educational field, and therefore in touch at first hand with educational developments that affect him in that capacity, is likely to carry more weight as an acknowledged 'practitioner' than a full time Chairman would. There is now a full time Secretariat which ought to be capable of carrying the load not only of the day to day work but of a certain amount of thinking ahead about policy; and the recent addition of a part time Director of Studies should help in this respect. I therefore propose no change in the present arrangements.

155. I have no doubt that it has been an improvement to have a largely permanent staff. The consequences of diminishing the number and size of committees should remove undue strain and release more time for servicing essential work of the Council. On the difficult question whether the Secretary and his staff exercise too much or too little power I make two observations. Where there is uncertainty about the functions of committees, staff are always in a difficult position: if action is necessary they will have to act, possibly in excess of what should be considered their proper powers, but they should not be blamed for it. Secondly, I hope and expect that with more precise definition of the responsibilities and powers of the remaining standing committees (and especially those of the Finance and Priorities Committee) the Secretary and his staff will at the same time have greater freedom of action from day to day and greater certainty of the framework within which they act.

156. There is an additional matter which could not be conveniently treated at an earlier point in this report. Many of those who gave evidence, particularly but not exclusively on behalf of organisations represented on the Council, expressed the opinion that this Review was premature. They pointed out that the



present Constitution has been in operation only since September 1978. Some thought that an external review was in any case unnecessary since the Council has the power itself to alter the Constitution. It is not for me to comment on either point. I do however draw attention to the fact that any external review creates uncertainty in an organisation (including the staff) and a good deal of work which must be at the expense of the work that the organisation was set up to do.

I therefore recommend that the Schools Council should not be the subject of another external review for at least five years from the date of this report.



## V SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

157. 1. Subject to the changes in the Constitution recommended below, the Schools Council should continue and with its present functions; (paragraph 82).
2. The Finance and Priorities Committee should examine future policy on dissemination with a view to establishing principles; considering how better to forecast cost of dissemination in future; considering the consequences for deployment of staff, including in particular Field Officers; (paragraph 89).
3. The Director of Studies should make it his particular responsibility to be aware of curricular developments funded by other agencies; and the Council should give effect to the intention stated in 'Principles and Programmes' 1979 to act as a clearing house for such information (paragraph 91).
4. The Publications Committee should consider the Council's publications policy generally; in particular whether it would be an advantage to have a business manager and in such a case whether there is a continuing need for that Committee; and report to the Finance and Priorities Committee (paragraph 102).
4. There should be a fixed term to membership on standing committees (paragraph 108).
6. There should be some restriction on the use of alternates on standing committees (paragraph 109).
7. There should be five standing committees: the Finance and Priorities Committee, the Professional Committee, Convocation, the Examinations Committee and the Committee for Wales, the first three of which should be main committees; (paragraph 126).



8. The Primary and Secondary Curriculum Committees should be discontinued (paragraph 119).
9. The Finance and Priorities Committee should determine which of the present Subject Committees need to be retained for work currently in progress, and for how long, and that with any exceptions so determined the Subject Committees should be discontinued (paragraph 123).
10. The functions and membership of the standing committees should be as described in paragraphs 128 - 148 (paragraph 149).
11. The Constitution should be amended as proposed in paragraphs 150 - 152. (paragraph 153).
12. The Council should not be made the subject of further external review for at least five years from the date of this report. (paragraph 156).

158. Finally, I wish to thank the representatives of the many institutions, as also individuals, who submitted evidence, written and oral. I had much help, and consistent courtesy, from the Schools Council, its Chairman, its Review Group, the members of those committees whose meetings I was able to attend, its Secretary and the members of his staff who supplied me with the great deal of information that I requested. I am especially indebted to the four Assessors, who received and commented on the written evidence as it came in and attended as many oral hearings as their other commitments made possible. While their advice was invaluable and much appreciated, I must make it plain that I alone am responsible for the report. The secretary of the review, Mr S T Crowne, was a model of patience and efficiency: without his very considerable help the work could not have been done in the time allowed.

N K TRENAMAN

October 1981



## GLOSSARY OF INITIALS

ACC	Association of County Councils
AMA	Association of Metropolitan Authorities
CEE	Certification of Extended Education
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
CSG	Curriculum Study Group
DES	Department of Education and Science
FE	Further Education
FEU	Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit
GCE	General Certificate of Education
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector(ate)
LEA	Local Education Authority
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
SSEC	Secondary Schools Examinations Council



## THE SCHOOLS COUNCIL FOR CURRICULUM AND EXAMINATIONS

CONSTITUTION AS FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 1978

Establishment

1. There shall be established a Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations, which Council is hereinafter referred to as the "Schools Council".

Object

2. The object of the Schools Council shall be in the promotion of education by carrying out research into and keeping under review the curricula, teaching methods and examinations in schools, including the organisation of schools so far as it affects their curricula.

Powers

3. In furtherance of its object as hereinbefore specified, but not further or otherwise, the Schools Council may:-
- a. undertake, or assist any person or body undertaking, inquiries, research and development work;
  - b. offer comments and advice to schools and, so far as is practicable, to any other persons and bodies concerned with the work of schools;
  - c. prepare and publish, or assist in the preparation and publications of, reports, articles and pamphlets relating to the activities of the Schools Council;
  - d. purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any real or personal property and construct, alter and maintain any buildings; and
  - e. do all such other lawful acts and things as are incidental to, and necessary for, the attainment of its object.

General Principle

4. In the execution of the provision of this Constitution and in the exercise of all functions conferred hereby, regard shall at all times be had to the general principle that each school should have the fullest possible measure of responsibility for its own work, with its own curriculum and teaching methods based on the needs of its own pupils and evolved by its own staff.

Application of Property for Charitable Purposes Only

5. 1. The property of the Schools Council, whencesoever derived, shall be applied without distinction between capital and income solely towards the promotion of the object of the Schools Council specified in this Constitution and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly to any member of the Schools Council.



2. Nothing in sub-clause 1. above shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration to any member, officer or servant of the Schools Council for any services actually rendered thereto; nor prevent the payment of reasonable and proper interest or rent on money lent or for premises let to the Schools Council by any member, officer or servant thereof.

## TRUSTEES

### Composition and functions

6.
  1. The trustees of the Schools Council shall consist of a chairman, a deputy chairman and five other persons.
  2. The trustees shall secure the implementation of the decisions of the relevant committees of the Schools Council and in particular shall apply the property of the Schools Council in accordance with the directions of the Finance and Priorities Committee and the Professional Committee.

### Chairman

7.
  1. The chairman of the trustees shall be the Chairman of the Schools Council and shall be appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science after consultation with the Secretary of State for Wales.
  2. The chairman shall hold office for a term of three years from the date of his appointment.
  3. The chairman may resign on giving written notice to the Secretary of State for Education and Science.

### Deputy Chairman and Other Trustees

8.
  1. The deputy chairman hereinafter call the Deputy Chairman of the Schools Council shall be appointed by Convocation from its own members and shall hold office for three years. When authorised by the chairman or trustees the deputy chairman shall act for the Chairman of the Council.
  2. Convocation shall appoint one other trustee from among its members. In addition two trustees shall be appointed by the Finance and Priorities Committee and two trustees by the Professional Committee from their own members respectively. Each trustee so appointed shall hold office until he resigns, is removed, or ceases to be a member of the Committee by whom he was appointed.
  3. The deputy chairman and each other trustee may resign on giving written notice to the Committee by which he was appointed and may be removed by resolution of the same committee.

### Proceedings

9. The trustees may from time to time make such rules as to their meetings and proceedings as they shall think fit.



## COMMITTEES

### General

10. 1. The Main Committees of the Schools Council shall be:

Convocation

The Finance and Priorities Committee

The Professional Committee.

In addition, there shall be the following Committees:

The Primary Curriculum Committee

The Secondary Curriculum Committee

The Examinations Committee

The Schools Council Committee for Wales

The Publications Committee.

Such Subject Committees, having such functions as the Finance and Priorities Committee, after consultation with the Professional Committee, shall determine.

2. The Committees named in sub-clause 1. above may delegate their functions.
3. The Finance and Priorities Committee after consultation with the Professional Committee and Convocation may from time to time make such rules (not inconsistent herewith) as to the composition, terms of office, meetings and proceedings of the committees of the Schools Council as it shall think fit.
4. An appointing body may appoint a person to attend a meeting of a committee as an alternate in place of any member thereof appointed by it.
5. Any person designated as 'observer' or 'assessor' shall be entitled to attend and speak, but not to vote, at meetings of committees.
6. There shall be a quorum when one-third of the member of a committee are present.
7. Every question shall be determined by a majority of the members of the committee present and voting. In the case of equality the chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote.
8. Each of the Main Committees shall meet at least once a year.

### Convocation

11. Convocation shall have the following functions:



- a. To keep under review the school curriculum and public examination system in relation to the needs of, and development within, the community as a whole.
  - b. To provide such reports to particular interests, or for general circulation, as it may consider appropriate, after taking account of any view expressed by the Finance and Priorities Committee and the Professional Committee.
  - c. To consider matters referred to it from any source and to consult as appropriate.
  - d. To make recommendations to or require reports from the Finance and Priorities Committee and the Professional Committee.
  - e. To approve the annual report and receive the statement of accounts of the Schools Council.
12. 1. The members of Convocation shall be appointed as follows by the bodies specified:

Trades Union Congress	2
Confederation of British Industry	2
National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations	1
General Synod Board of Education	1
Catholic Education Council	1
Free Church Federal Council	1
Association of County Councils	2
Association of Metropolitan Authorities	2
Welsh Joint Education Committee	1
Society of Education Officers	1
Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales	3
Association of Principals of Colleges and the Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education, acting jointly	1
Association of Univeristy Teachers	1
Business Education Council, the Technician Education Council and the City and Guilds of London Institute, acting jointly	1
Committee of Directors of Polytechnics	1
Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of Universities	1



Council for National Academic Awards	1
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	2
Universities Council for the Education of Teachers	1
CSE Examining Boards, acting jointly	1
GCE Examining Boards, acting jointly	1
Independent Schools Joint Committee	1
Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association	4
Secondary Heads' Association	1
National Association of Head Teachers	1
National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	4
National Union of Teachers	11

In addition there shall be six members drawn from the community at large, including one other representative of parents, appointed by the Finance and Priorities Committee.

2. The Chairman of Convocation shall be the Chairman for the time being of the Schools Council.
3. The Deputy Chairman of Convocation shall be the Deputy Chairman of the Schools Council.

#### The Finance and Priorities Committee

13. The Finance and Priorities Committee shall have the following functions:
  - a. To determine the broad direction and priorities of the work of the Council, taking into account any views or recommendations from Convocation or the Professional Committee and to give advice on these matters to the Secretaries of State, local education authorities and other bodies as appropriate.
  - b. To submit for the approval of local education authorities and the Secretary of State for Education and Science annual estimates of expenditure and forecasts for future years.
  - c. To specify the funds available and the broad uses to which they shall be put, and to receive regular reports on the expenditure of such funds.
  - d. To submit to the Secretaries of State, with its recommendations, advice from Convocation and the Professional Committee on examinations policy.
  - e. After consultation as necessary with the Professional Committee to determine action to be taken on any recommendations from Convocation.



- f. To refer matters for consideration by Convocation or the Professional Committee.
  - g. To comment when appropriate on any reports submitted by Convocation, and to provide such information and reports as are required of it by Convocation.
  - h. To receive or require reports from the Professional Committee on any matter concerned with the work of the Council, and to convey to the Professional Committee its comments thereon.
  - i. To agree with the Professional Committee the general publishing policy of the Council.
  - j. To decide, after consultation with the Professional Committee and Convocation as appropriate, the procedures to be adopted for the constitution of committees and sub-committees not defined within the Constitution.
  - k. To arrange for the yearly audit of the Schools Council's accounts by the Comptroller and Auditor-General, District Auditor or an auditor who is a member of a body of accountants established in the United Kingdom and for the time being recognised by the Department of Trade for the purposes of section 161(1)(a) of the Companies Act 1948.
  - l. To submit the Schools Council's accounts yearly for the approval of the Trustees.
  - m. To be responsible for all matters concerning the Council's staff and accommodation, with the power to delegate the responsibility for appointments.
  - n. To exercise any residual functions not otherwise allocated.
14. 1. The members of the Finance and Priorities Committee shall be appointed as follows by the bodies specified:

National Union of Teachers	5
National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	2
Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association	2
National Association of Head Teachers	1
Secondary Heads' Association	1
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	1
Association of County Councils	3
Association of Metropolitan Authorities	3
Welsh Joint Education Committee	1



Local Authority Associations 1  
(on the nomination of the Society of Education Officers)

Secretaries of State for Education and Science  
and for Wales 8

2. The Chairman of the Finance and Priorities Committee shall be the Chairman for the time being of the Schools Council.
3. The Deputy Chairman of the Finance and Priorities Committee shall be appointed by that Committee from among its own members.

The Professional Committee

15. The Professional Committee shall have the following functions:
  - a. To exercise, within the broad direction and priorities determined by the Finance and Priorities Committee, responsibility for the execution of the work of the Council, and to give professional advice to Council committees; to the Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales; to Local Education Authorities and schools; and to other bodies and individuals as appropriate.
  - b. To authorise expenditure within such limits as may be specified by the Finance and Priorities Committee and to make regular reports on such expenditure.
  - c. To authorise the publication of documents and materials and to request the Publications Committee to make arrangements for publication through Schools Council Publications, within a general policy agreed with the Finance and Priorities Committee.
  - d. To seek the advice of any relevant committees established for the purpose of considering examinations, the curriculum, and publications, and to consult other bodies as appropriate; in particular, when considering questions of examinations policy, the Committee shall invite the participation of additional representatives of the GCE Boards and of the CSE Board, and of representatives of such other interests as it may consider necessary.
  - e. To provide such information and reports as are required of it by Convocation or by the Finance and Priorities Committee, and to make such proposals to those bodies as it considers necessary.
  - f. Within the agreed procedures, to establish such committees and sub-committees not defined within the Constitution as may from time to time be required.
16. 1. The members of the Professional Committee shall be appointed as follows by the bodies specified:

National Union of Teachers 11

National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of  
Women Teachers 4



Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association	4
National Association of Head Teachers	1
Secondary Heads' Association	1
Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of Universities	1
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	2
Universities Council for the Education of Teachers	1
Confederation of British Industry	1
Trades Union Congress	1
National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations	1
Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales	3
Association of County Councils	2
Association of Metropolitan Authorities	2
National Association of Inspectors and Educational Advisers	1
Society of Education Officers	1

In addition, there shall be the following observers:

- 1 being the Chairman of the Schools Council Committee for Wales
  - 1 appointed by the Schools Council Subject Committee Chairmen  
from their number
  - 1 appointed by the CSE Examining Boards, acting jointly
  - 1 appointed by the GCE Examining Boards, acting jointly
  - 1 appointed by the National Foundation for Educational Research
  - 1 appointed by the Further Education Curriculum Review and  
Development Unit
  - 1 appointed by the Independent Schools Joint Committee
  - 2 appointed by the Local Authority Associations.
2. The Chairman of the Professional Committee shall be the Chairman for  
the time being of the Schools Council.
  3. The Deputy Chairman of the Professional Committee shall be appointed  
by that Committee from among its own members.



The Primary Curriculum Committee

17. The functions of the Primary Curriculum Committee shall be:
- a. To provide advice within the Council concerning the educational needs of pupils in the age-range from two to thirteen years.
  - b. To deal with such aspects of the Council's work as the Professional Committee shall delegate to them.
  - c. To co-operate as necessary with the Secondary curriculum and Subject Committees.
18. 1. The members of the Primary Curriculum Committee shall be appointed as follows by the bodies specified:

National Union of Teachers	8
National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	2
National Association of Head Teachers	2
Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association	1
Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools	1
Local Authority Associations	3
Society of Education Officers	1
Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales	1
Schools Council Higher and Further Education Liaison Group, to represent teacher-training interests	1
One of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science as an assessor.	

There shall be the following observers:

- 1 from the National Foundation for Educational Research
- 1 from the Local Authority Advisory Service

There may also be not more than three additional observers.

In addition the Committee shall call in representatives of the Confederation of British Industry, the Trades Union Congress and parents from time to time for the discussion of particular issues of relevance to them.

2. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Primary Curriculum Committee shall be appointed in a manner agreed by the Professional Committee.



The Secondary Curriculum Committee

19. The functions of the Secondary Curriculum Committee shall be:
- a. To provide advice within the Council concerning the educational needs of pupils in the age-range from eleven to nineteen years.
  - b. To consider such aspects of the Council's work as the Professional Committee shall delegate to them.
  - c. To co-operate as necessary with the Primary Curriculum, Examinations, and Subject Committees.

20. 1. The member of the Secondary Curriculum Committee shall be appointed as follows by the bodies specified:

National Union of Teachers	4
National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	3
Assistant Masters' and Mistresses Association	3
National Association of Head Teachers	1
Secondary Heads' Association	1
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	1
Headmasters' Conference	1
Local Authority Associations	3
Society of Education Officers	1
Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales	1
Confederation of British Industry	1
Trades Union Congress	1
Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of Universities	1
Schools Council Higher and Further Education Liaison Group, to represent teacher-training interests	1
Schools Council Higher and Further Education Liaison Group, to represent further education interests	1
One of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science, as an assessor.	



There shall be the following observers:

1 from the National Foundation for Educational research

1 from the Local Authority Advisory Service.

There may also be not more than three additional observers.

In addition, the Committee shall call in representatives of the GCE and CSE Examining Boards, and of parents, from time to time for the discussion of particular issues of relevance to them.

2. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Secondary Curriculum Committee shall be appointed in a manner agreed by the Professional Committee.

#### The Examinations Committee

21. The functions of the Examinations Committee shall be:

- a. To make recommendations to the main committees on matters of examinations policy, and to act as co-ordinating authority for the administration of examinations normally taken by pupils at school subject to such guidance as may be given by the Professional Committee after consulting Convocation and the Finance and Priorities Committee if appropriate.
- b. To co-operate with the subject and curriculum committees in questions concerning the inter-relationship between curriculum and examinations.

22. 1. The members of the Examinations Committee shall be appointed as follows by the bodies specified:

National Union of Teachers	4
National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	3
Assistant Masters' and Mistresses Association	3
National Association of Head Teachers	1
Secondary Heads' Association	1
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	1
Headmasters' Conference	1
Local Authority Associations	4
Society of Education Officers	1
Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales	1



GCE Examining Boards, acting jointly	5
CSE Examining Boards, acting jointly	5
Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of Universities	1
Schools Council Higher and Further Education Liaison Group, to represent teacher-training interests	1
Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science as an assessor.	

There shall be the following observers:

- 1 appointed by the Confederation of British Industry
- 1 appointed by the National Foundation for Educational Research
- 1 appointed by the Trades Union Congress
- 1 from the Local Authority Advisory Service.

There may also be not more than three additional observers.

2. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Examinations Committee shall be appointed in a manner agreed by the Professional Committee.

#### The Publications Committee

23. The functions of the Publications Committee shall be:
  - a. To advise the Professional Committee and the Finance and Priorities Committee on matters of Schools Council publishing policy;
  - b. When so requested to make arrangements through Schools Council Publications for the publication of Schools Council material.
24.
  1. The members of the Publications Committee shall be such number of persons as the Finance and Priorities Committee after consultation with the Professional Committee shall from time to time determine, and shall be appointed by the Finance and Priorities Committee and by the Professional Committee.
  2. The Chairman of the Publications Committee shall be the Chairman for the time being of the Schools Council, and there shall be a deputy chairman appointed by the Committee from among its members.

#### The Schools Council Committee for Wales

25.
  1. The special needs of Schools and pupils in Wales shall be provided for by a Committee for Wales. The functions of the Committee for Wales shall be as follows:
    - a. Within the general policy and priorities indicated by the Council to consider and advise on all matters affecting the curricula and examinations of pupils in schools in Wales.



- b. To authorise expenditure within such limits, and for such broad purposes, as may be specified by the Finance and Priorities Committee, in consultation with the Professional Committee, and to make reports on such expenditure.
2. The membership of the Schools Council Committee for Wales shall be as follows:

National Union of Teachers	6
Secondary Heads' Association	1
Assistant Masters' and Mistresses Association	2
National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	2
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education ( 1 to represent the Association's teacher training interests and 1 its further education interests)	2
Welsh Joint Education Committee (Local Authorities Committee)	3
Universities Council for the Education of Teachers	1
The Secretary of State for Wales	2
Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (The National Association of the Teachers of Wales)	1
The University of Wales	1

The Committee shall appoint not more than 5 co-optative members. There shall be the following observers.

- 1 from the Confederation of British Industry
- 1 from the Trade Union Congress
- 1 from the National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations.

3. The Chairman of the Schools Council Committee for Wales shall be elected by the Committee, not necessarily from among the members thereof, for a term of three years, and shall be eligible for re-appointment for a further three years.
4. The deputy chairman of the Schools Council Committee for Wales shall be elected by the Committee from among its members. The appointment shall be for a term of three years, and may be extended for a further three years, provided that the appointment shall lapse if the deputy chairman ceases to be a member of the Committee.



## Sub-Committees of the Committee for Wales

26. 1. The Schools Council Committee for Wales may constitute sub-committees having such composition and functions as may be determined in agreement with the Finance and Priorities Committee.
2. The Chairmen of any such sub-committees, if not in membership of the Committee for Wales, shall attend its meetings as observers.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Official Custodian

27. The Trustees may cause to be vested in and transferred to the Official Custodian for Charities all freehold and leasehold lands and hereditaments and all stocks, shares and securities at any time held on trust for the purposes of the Schools Council.

### Dissolution

28. 1. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Schools Council there remains after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities any property whatsoever the same shall, in such manner as shall be directed by the Finance and Priorities Committee, be applied for charitable purposes of an educational nature.
2. If within six months of the resolution for the winding up or dissolution of the Schools Council no direction as to the application of such property has been given by the Finance and Priorities Committee it shall be applied for charitable purposes in such manner as shall be determined by the Secretary of State for Education and Science.

### Amendment of Constitution

29. The Finance and Priorities Committee may, by resolution passed at a duly constituted meeting, amend this Constitution:

provided that no such resolution shall be valid-

- a. unless it has also been passed at duly constituted meetings within the preceding 12 months by both the Professional Committee and by Convocation;
- b. unless each member of the Finance and Priorities Committee, the Professional Committee and Convocation shall have been given one month's notice in writing of its terms and of the meeting of their respective committees at which it was to be considered;
- c. if it would cause the Schools Council to cease to be a body established for charitable purposes only.

### Interpretation

30. The Interpretation Act 1889 shall apply for the interpretation of the provisions of this Constitution as it applies for the interpretation of any Act of Parliament.



THE SCHOOLS COUNCIL  
ITS TAKE-UP IN SCHOOLS AND GENERAL IMPACT  
EXTRACT FROM THE FINAL REPORT (FINAL DRAFT)

Findings

1. Generally expectations of what the School Councils could achieve have too high both within and outside the Council. The reality has been that substantial allocations of resources over long periods of time are necessary to develop, disseminate and support the adoption of new teaching methods, and the timing of the dissemination and other activities relative to publication is crucial.
2. The Council has funded many large-scale curriculum development projects which, by general assent, and when judged against the criteria of the ITU\* study, have been successful in gaining acceptance by teachers of the ideas and materials they offer. Those projects which have gained most acceptance by teachers have offered complete courses, including pupil materials; accompanied this with means of assessment or examination links; and have been aimed at easily identifiable "target" groups of teachers within one traditional age range of schooling. They have also had sufficient time and resources in relation to publication and dissemination to establish themselves. They have not crossed the traditional "subject boundaries". Because of the time scales over which such developments need support and come to fruition, typically 7/10 years, the Council has yet to reap the full benefit of some of its large scale projects funded before 1978.
3. The Council's output of Working Papers and other publications which, although sometimes coming from projects, are not part of teaching schemes, are not in general read by heads or teachers. The exceptions are at the level of secondary school heads and "curriculum" deputies, and when documents have a title which identifies the intended readership. Outside school, however, the Council's output of such discussion documents is valued - especially by LEA advisers - for fostering debate and setting standards of what is possible in education.
4. The differences between projects in their successful generation of awareness and persuading of teachers to use their ideas have less to do with the kind of dissemination activities engaged in than it had to do the energy at which high levels of sustained support through personal contact were maintained. This depended crucially on the ability to involve, and obtain support from, local agents. Of all local agents the LEA adviser is the single most important.
5. While LEAs differed in their take-up of Council projects because of differences in general ethos and priorities, there were more specific factors which also explained the differences. "High user" LEAs had advisers who took responsibility for supporting curriculum development. They also had a range of different institutions within the LEA which could provide alternative channels for support. In the kind of curriculum development activities pursued "high user" LEAs did not differ from "low users", but the activities were pursued more purposefully, more frequently and more actively by the "high users".

\* "Impact and Take-Up"



## Findings in Relation to Specific Criteria

### Choice and Contact

6. To consider the level of contact made with teachers in terms of percentages is misleading if not allied with knowledge of the size and position of the audience being approached. However, when the intention is to encourage use of teaching schemes 40% might seem a rough and ready target for contact in a single subject, secondary school context. In a Primary school, "core curriculum" context, or in relation to a cross-disciplinary project this would be too high.

7. Of the large number of projects funded by the Council to produce teaching materials many have made contact with more than 40% of the appropriate teachers and some of these by substantial margins - even at primary level. However, the majority of such projects have not contacted more than 10% of the appropriate teachers in primary schools, 25% in middle schools - with a much smaller system, and 15% in secondary schools.

### Use

8. As a corollary, and because even the most successful curriculum development projects rarely persuade more than two-thirds of those contacted to become users, most Schools Council projects which produced teaching schemes are not used by substantial proportions of the intended audiences. The most successful Council projects tend to be aimed at small or readily defined groups of teachers. But most Council projects have been multi-disciplinary in nature, often crossing the traditional junior-secondary boundary in their age range. The Council has been extremely optimistic about the effects which can be achieved under such pre-set conditions. However, on the measures used in the ITU surveys, many Council projects have achieved high levels of use - comparable in everyway with the level achieved by the best of the non-Council projects.

9. The use of projects described by teachers is partial, with much adaptation by teachers to fit existing courses. While this is not necessarily a criticism of output intended to be exemplars or designed to allow selection of sections, the result is unlikely to affect teaching style. Projects were more often used extensively when they offered a complete course with pupil materials and associated methods of assessment/examination.

### Comparison

10. Overall, this performance shows the same variety of outcome as do the Nuffield and other teaching schemes included in the surveys for comparisons. The Nuffield projects which were mostly single subject in orientation, linked to examinations, and first into the field when LEAs could provide substantial backing, have generally higher levels of use than most Council projects. But some Nuffield and other non-Councils schemes have relatively low levels of use.

### Cost Benefit

11. The cost of the Schools Council's annual budget may be compared with that of running 3 comprehensive schools. There is no doubt that many thousands of teachers have seen sufficient merit in the work of the Council and its projects to join their endeavours. Whether those outcomes and the Council's general impact upon the education system is worth the cost of the Council, and the additional costs incurred by LEAs in supporting Council work, depends upon the values brought to bear upon the question. Verdicts must rest with the readers of the ITU's report.



## Impact

12. Teachers are luke-warm towards the Council, although the attitudes expressed are more favourable the higher one goes through the school age range, and the higher the status of the teachers replying. The general luke-warm attitude probably has much to do with the fact that Council <sup>products</sup> are not prominently labelled as such, and are thus unappreciated in schools. LEA advisers and the other groups consulted, however, acknowledge a general and beneficial impact upon the system. The Council is seen to set standards and expectations of what is possible in education; encourage debates of alternatives; and to be active in keeping the examinations system under review.



## REPRESENTATION ON THE STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOLS COUNCIL

Finance and Priorities Committee

<u>Present</u>		<u>Recommended</u>
5	National Union of Teachers	2
2	National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	1
2	Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association	1
1	National Association of Head Teachers	1
1	Secondary Heads' Association	1
1	National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	1
3	Association of County Councils	2
3	Association of Metropolitan Authorities	2
1	Welsh Joint Education Committee	1
1	Local Authority Associations (nominated by the Society of Education Officers)	-
8	Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales	5
<u>28</u>		<u>17</u>



Professional Committee

<u>Present</u>		<u>Recommended</u>
Members		Members
11	National Union of Teachers	3 (including 1 Primary)
4	National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	1
4	Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association	1
1	National Association of Head Teachers	1
1	Secondary Heads' Association	1
-	Teachers nominated by subject committees	4
1	Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of Universities	1
2	National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	1
1	Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers	1
1	Confederation of British Industry	-
1	Trades Union Congress	-
1	National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations	-
3	Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales	2
2	Association of County Councils	1
2	Association of Metropolitan Authorities	1
1	National Association of Inspectors and Educational Advisers	1
1	Society of Education Officers	1
-	Chairman, Committee for Wales (ex officio)	1
-	Chairman, Examinations Committee (ex officio)	1
<u>37</u>		<u>22</u>

<u>Present</u>		<u>Recommended</u>
Observers		Observers
-	Confederation of British Industry	1
-	Trades Union Congress	1
-	National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations	1
1	Subject Committee chairmen	-
1	CSE Boards, acting jointly	1*
1	GCE Boards, acting jointly	1*
1	National Foundation for Educational Research	1
1	Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit	1
1	Independent Schools' Joint Committee	1
2	Local Authority Associations	
<u>9</u>		<u>8</u>
Total <u>46</u>		Total <u>30</u>

\* When questions of examinations are under discussion the GCE and CSE Boards should be represented by two voting members each.



Convocation

Present

Recommended

2	Trades Union Congress	1
2	Confederation of British Industry	1
1	National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations	1
1	General Synod Board of Education	1
1	Catholic Education Council	1
1	Free Church Federal Council	1
2	Association of County Councils	1
2	Association of Metropolitan Authorities	1
1	Welsh Joint Education Committee	1
1	Society of Education Officers	1
3	Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales	3
1 (acting jointly)	(Association of Principals of Colleges Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education	1
1	Association of University Teachers	1
1 (acting jointly)	(Business Education Council Technician Education Council	1
1	(City and Guilds of London Institute Committee of Directors of Polytechnics	1
1	Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of Universities	1
1	Council for National Academic Awards	1
2	National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	1
1	Universities Council for the Education of Teachers	1
1	CSE Boards (jointly)	1
1	GCE Boards (jointly)	1
1	Independent Schools Joint Committee	1
4	Assistant Masters and Mistresses' Association	2
1	Secondary Heads' Association	1
1	National Association of Head Teachers	1
4	National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	2
11	National Union of Teachers	4
		(1 Primary)
6	Six members drawn from the community at large, including one other representative of parents	6
-	Chairman of Examinations Committee (ex officio)	1
-	Representative of subject committees	1
-	National Foundation for Educational Research	1
-	Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit	1

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46



Examinations Committee

<u>Present</u>		<u>Recommended</u>
Members		Members
4	National Union of Teachers	1
3	National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	1
3	Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association	1
1	National Association of Head Teachers	1
1	Secondary Heads' Association	1
1	National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	1
1	Headmasters' Conference	1
4 (acting jointly)	(Association of County Councils Association of Metropolitan Authorities)	1
1	Society of Education Officers	1
1	Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales	1
5	GCE Boards, jointly	3
5	CSE Boards, jointly	3
1	Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of Universities	1
1	Higher and Further Education liaison group	1
—	Local authority advisory service	1
—	National Foundation for Educational Research	1
<u>32</u>		<u>21</u>
Assessors		Assessors
$\frac{3}{3}$	Her Majesty's Inspectorate	$\frac{2}{2}$
Observers		Observers
1	Confederation of British Industry	1
1	National Foundation for Educational Research	—
1	Trades Union Congress	1
1	Local Authority advisory service	
Up to 3	Additional observers	Up to $\frac{2}{4}$
<u>7</u>		<u>4</u>
Total <u>42</u>		Total <u>27</u>



Committee for Wales

<u>Present</u> Members		<u>Recommended</u> Members
6	National Union of Teachers	2 (1 primary, 1 second- dary)
1	Secondary Heads' Association	1
2	Assistant Masters' and Mistresses' Association	1
2	National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	1
1	National Association of Head Teachers	1
2	National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education	1
3	Welsh Joint Education Committee	1
1	Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers	1
2	Secretary of State for Wales	2
1	Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC)	1
1	[The National Association of Teachers of Wales]	1
1	University of Wales	1

22

Co-optative Members

1	Teacher Centre Wardens	1
1	National Foundation for Educational Research	1
1	National Association of Inspectors and Educational Advisors	1
1	Welsh Secondary Schools Association	1
1	Society of Education Officers (Welsh region)	1
	Teachers nominated by subject associations	2

5

20

Observers

1	Confederation of British Industry	1
1	Trades Union Congress	1
1	National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations	1

3

3

Total 30

Total 23