



**Ministerial Review
of Postcompulsory Schooling**

**REPORT
Volume 1**

Margaret Tucker

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Report

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Ministerial Review of Postcompulsory Schooling

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22 March 1985

Dear Minister

In April 1984, the first stage of our review of postcompulsory schooling culminated in the publication of a Discussion Paper as required by the terms of reference you gave us. We acknowledge the assistance provided by the public response to the Discussion Paper and by the working parties which marked the second stage of the review. We are now pleased to present our final report.

Yours sincerely

Jean Blackburn

Jean Blackburn
CHAIRPERSON

Norman G. Curry

Norman Curry

Tom Doyle

Tom Doyle

Peter Kirby

Peter Kirby

Ken McKinnon

Ken McKinnon

Bernard Rechter

Bernard Rechter

Helen Praetz

Helen Praetz

Marion Russell

Marion Russell

The Honourable Ian Cathie M P
Minister for Education
Parliament House
Melbourne 3000

Terms of Reference

- To review the current educational and training provision for 15–19-year-olds who are not in full-time or part-time courses in higher education or in TAFE courses associated with concurrent employment.
- To develop a discussion paper addressing the issues arising in educational provision for this group.
- To organise widespread discussion of the statement and consideration of its implications.
- To establish working parties to explore particular issues raised by the discussion paper and, in the light of the advice of these working parties and of public discussion, formulate proposals for action by those agencies with responsibility for specific activities and by the government in respect of general policies.

Co-ordinating Committee for the Review

Ms Jean Blackburn, Chairperson

Dr Norman Curry, Director-General of Education

Fr Tom Doyle, Director, Catholic Education Office, representing the nongovernment school sector

Mr Peter Kirby, Chairman, Technical and Further Education Board

Dr Ken McKinnon, Chairman, State Board of Education

Mr Bernard Rechter, Chairman, Victorian Institute of Secondary Education

Dr Helen Praetz, Consultant

Ms Marion Russell, Executive Officer

Research assistance

Dr J. K. Matthews (from August 1984)

Secretarial staff

Ms Cheryl Geileskey

Ms Susan Wright (November 1984 to February 1985)

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Glossary

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics.
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research. An independent educational research body funded by state and commonwealth governments.
ASAT	Australian Scholastic Aptitude Test. A test devised by the ACER to determine students' abilities to reason, comprehend, interpret and make inferences from a variety of material in the areas of humanities, social sciences, sciences and mathematics. The questions are not based on any set syllabus, but reflect the range of abilities and aptitudes expected of Year 12 students who intend to pursue further studies.
CAE	College of Advanced Education.
CTEC	Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission.
HSC	Higher School Certificate. The Certificate granted to students who have successfully completed a course of Year 12 studies accredited by the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education. Students can undertake group 1 and/or group 2 subjects or a whole course of studies termed an approved study structure. —Group 1 subjects are assessed by external examination together with a component of moderated internal school assessment. Results can be aggregated. —Group 2 subjects and units are accredited but students are assessed by their teachers with some moderation in some cases. —Approved Study Structures are whole course structures accredited by VISE. Includes STC (see below).
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
PEP	Participation and Equity Program. A Commonwealth Government program which makes funds available to schools and TAFE in order to stimulate change in education. Its goal is to increase participation in schooling and promote equity in outcomes.
STC	Schools' Year Twelve and Tertiary Entrance Certificate. This is the most popular of the Approved Study Structures (see above under HSC). Courses are designed and assessed by individual schools which are accredited by VISE to conduct STC. The processes of teaching and learning are moderated by teachers drawn from the group of schools conducting STC.
SCOPE	Co-operative venture between the TAFE Board, the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission, the Ministry of Employment and Training, the Education Department, IBM and the Myer Foundation. Data was collected relating to the subject combinations and ethnic backgrounds of students in Years 11 and 12 in 1984 in approximately 96 per cent of high, technical and nongovernment schools, and VOP and TOP in TAFE colleges. The aspirations of students for continuing education in schools or postsecondary education, or for work, are also covered in the study.
TAFE	Technical and Further Education. The area of postsecondary education not covered by universities or colleges of advanced education. It includes vocational, preparatory and recreational studies and is provided under the auspices of the TAFE Board.

T12	Technical Year 12 Certificate. A certificate issued by the Education Department to record the successful completion of a course of Year 12 studies in a technical school. Schools are accredited annually by the Education Department to conduct T12, and assessment is internal, with some moderation.
TOP	Tertiary Orientation Program. A course of studies conducted by TAFE and accredited by institutions of higher education to provide entry to postsecondary studies.
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education. Proposed certificate recording satisfactory completion of a two-year course of postcompulsory studies, to replace the range of certificates now available.
VCAB	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board. Proposed statutory authority which will assume responsibility for all curricular development, accreditation, assessment and certification at the postcompulsory level.
WISE	Victorian Institute of Secondary Education. Statutory authority with responsibility for assisting people in the transition from school to work or further study, and conducting such forms of assessment as may be relevant to this transition. Accredits courses, conducts examinations, and issues certificates for the HSC.
VOP	Vocational Orientation Program. Year 11 programs conducted in TAFE colleges.
VPSEC	Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission.
VUAC	Victorian Universities Admissions Committee.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Review of Postcompulsory Schooling is concerned to establish broad policies for the education of young Victorians within a changing context. The task is urgent. Half of all young people in Victoria now complete a Year 12 in either schools or in colleges of Technical and Further Education (TAFE). The courses which they undertake and the certificates which they gain still reflect the time when studies at the upper secondary level were designed for a minority of young people intending to proceed to higher education. The trend to stay at school for the full secondary span is to be welcomed and further encouraged if we believe that participation in education allows for the development of capacities and skills valuable both to the individual and to the society. However, there must be a radical reshaping of the present provision of postcompulsory schooling so that its curriculum, credentials and structures encompass these broader purposes. This Report outlines the changes now needed to make this stage of schooling purposeful and attractive to an increasing proportion of young people into the 1990s and beyond.

1.2 This Review was opened in April 1984 with the publication of a Discussion Paper. It analysed existing patterns of educational provision and proposed general directions for change in the curriculum, credentials and structures of schooling. The issues raised were the subject of widespread discussion at public meetings throughout the state. Almost 400 written responses to the Discussion Paper were received and analysed and the Committee co-ordinating the Review held further consultations with major respondents regarding the nature of the recommendations to be made. By these means, large numbers of Victorians were involved in discussing options for improved educational opportunities for young people.

1.3 Further consideration of options was undertaken by three working parties which operated between May and November 1984 to examine issues relating to curriculum, credentials and organisational forms. Members of the working parties were drawn from panels nominated by educational providers and organisations. The terms of reference of the working parties and the full advice they gave to the Co-ordinating Committee are included in the second volume of this Report. The Co-ordinating Committee wishes publicly to acknowledge the contribution of time, experience, energy and goodwill of the forty-five members of the working parties, and in particular of Professors Fensham and Scott who chaired two of them.

1.4 Throughout the period of this Review, a number of complementary initiatives have been taken at the state and national levels. In Victoria, collaborative arrangements between schools and TAFE have been extended to allow wider curricular options for students at the senior secondary level. The Victorian Institute of Secondary Education (VISE) recommended a series of changes to the Higher School Certificate (HSC) including the replacement of external examinations by 1990 with moderated, letter-graded, teacher assessments for all subjects within the certificate. Some institutions of higher education have reconsidered their selection procedures and introduced modes of entry to admit disadvantaged students. Industrial training arrangements are being reviewed and a Youth Guarantee Scheme has been proposed to offer young people work and training. At national level, a visiting team of OECD experts has completed its review of youth policies, the Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs has reported, a committee has been established to examine quality in education and issues relating to credentials are being considered. The Commonwealth Participation and Equity Program (PEP) is funding initiatives in individual schools and TAFE colleges and also system-wide action to

encourage higher and more equitably distributed levels of participation in schooling. The PEP guidelines note that many of the needed changes require system-wide action to support the development of curriculum appropriate to the upper secondary level, changes in Year 12 certification and the structures of schooling.

1.5 This Review, therefore, is part of the attempt to extend educational opportunities to all young people. Together with these other initiatives, it seeks to transform the postcompulsory level of schooling into a stage in which the great majority of young people can participate. The recommendations have been made after wide consultation and public debate. The changes we advocate in broad policies will enable the Victorian educational response to the needs of young people at postcompulsory level to be improved in terms of its equity and excellence.

2 The Present Position

2.1 Over the past 150 years, Victoria has extended educational opportunities to an increasing proportion of its young people. In colonial times, elementary education was offered to the growing and dispersed population. Until the end of the nineteenth century, most young Victorians pursued studies standardised in form and content, and left school at the end of primary schooling when no longer compelled to attend. Most postprimary education was conducted by private schools but some public continuation schools existed and some primary schools conducted postprimary classes. In 1910, the foundations of the present government secondary system were laid. In subsequent years two types of schools were established. High schools, higher elementary schools and continuation schools offered to selected students an academic curriculum which could lead to the teachers training colleges or the university. Preparatory, trade classes, trade schools and technical schools offered a practically oriented curriculum and a possible route to the technical institutes established in the late nineteenth century.

*Connell
W. Rieker
Melbourn*

2.2 After World War II, education entered a second phase in which secondary schooling was made accessible to all. It was provided in high and technical schools and in nongovernment schools, all of which accommodated a sharply rising number of young people. Students stayed longer at school throughout the 1950s; by the 1960s, the period of compulsory education had been extended to fifteen years of age and four years of secondary schooling had become nearly universal.

2.3 From the middle 1960s substantial changes also occurred in the organisation and funding of postsecondary education. Colleges of advanced education offered degree and diploma courses. Technical colleges, known as TAFE colleges since 1981, offered trade and middle-level courses and devised bridging programs, the forerunners of the Tertiary Orientation Program (TOP), which is now used by students for entry to tertiary education and employment.

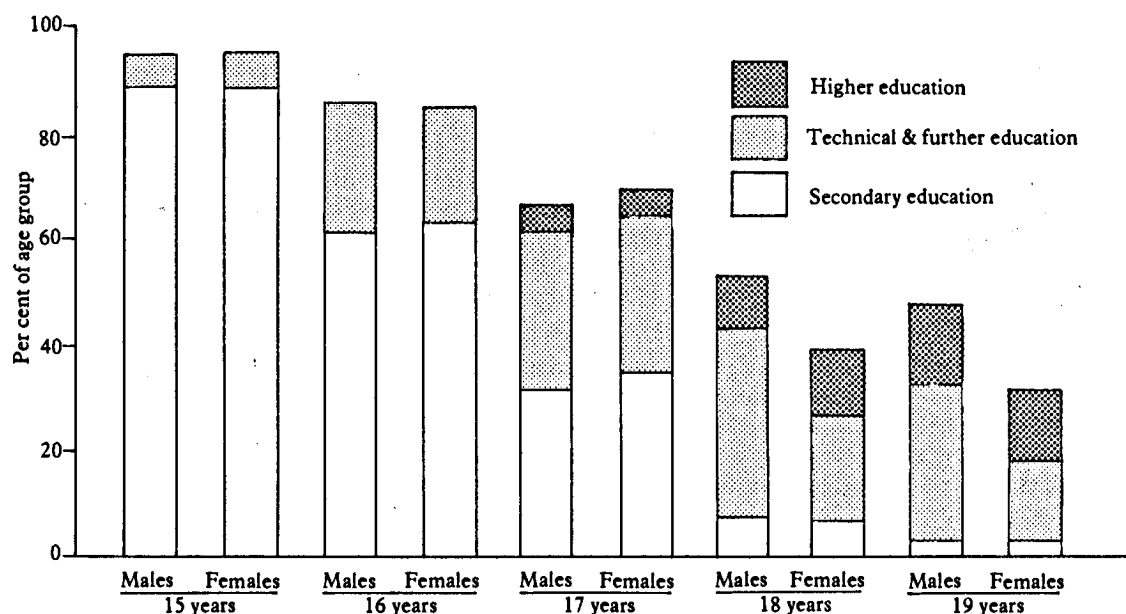
2.4 Since the 1960s, levels of participation in the upper secondary years of schooling have been rising, despite some fluctuation in the 1970s. This trend of increased retention has been pronounced since 1981 and indicates that we are now entering a third phase of education in which most students will complete the full secondary span. It is time to reappraise the postcompulsory years of schooling as they become a stage of education in which the great majority of students participates.

Participation in Education

2.5 In Australia, in 1983, 94 per cent of all young people stayed to Year 10 at school, 64 per cent stayed to Year 11 and 41 per cent stayed to Year 12. Many others continued their education on a full-time or part-time basis in other settings, particularly in TAFE as Figure 1 shows. As teenagers grow older, their participation in full-time or part-time education decreases. In Australia in 1983, 90 per cent of fifteen-sixteen-year-olds, 63 per cent of seventeen-year-olds, 44 per cent of eighteen-year-olds and 38 per cent of nineteen-year-olds were involved in education on a full-time or part-time basis. In Victoria in 1982, 91 per cent of fifteen-and sixteen-year-olds, 71 per cent of seventeen-year-olds, 54 per cent of eighteen-year-olds and 46

per cent of nineteen-year-olds were engaged in full-time or part-time education. Many young full-time students are also part-time workers but young part-time students are usually found in apprenticeship or certificate courses in TAFE. Apprenticeship courses can be entered only by those who have found employment in the trade; and entry to TAFE certificate courses is highly selective, with the number of places available being determined by openings in the labour market. While the inclusion of first-year enrolments in TAFE certificate courses would give a more accurate picture of the levels of full-time educational participation by young Victorians, their purpose, curricula, structure and methods of entry bear a closer relationship to postsecondary forms of vocational education than to the forms of postcompulsory schooling. Postcompulsory schooling covered by this Report is confined to Years 11 and 12 of schools and, in TAFE, to Vocational Orientation Programs (VOP), Tertiary Orientation Programs (TOP) and formal study courses that do not result in the awarding of a recognised credential.

Figure 1: Education participation by sex and age, Australia, 1983



Source: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC)

2.6 Table 1 estimates the proportion of a cohort of young people in schools alone and in schools and non-vocational courses (VOP and TOP) in TAFE in all states in 1982. When schools alone are considered, the participation rate of 33.4 per cent in Victoria is lower than that in four other states, and lower than the national average. The role that TAFE plays in postcompulsory schooling in Victoria is clear, for when full-time TAFE students are added to those in schools, Victoria's participation rate rises a further 11.3 per cent to 44.7 per cent, exceeding that of all other systems except the ACT. On this basis, Victorian levels of participation are high when compared with the other Australian states and with the national average.

Table 1: Age-weighted participation rates* in the final year of schooling, full-time students by state, 1982 (per cent)

<i>State</i>	<i>School only</i>	<i>School and TAFE Stream 5</i>
New South Wales	32.4	34.8
Victoria	33.4	44.7
Queensland	38.9	39.1
South Australia	42.0	43.1
Western Australia	35.6	37.9
Tasmania	22.5	23.9
Northern Territory	15.6	16.2
Australian Capital Territory	68.7	71.4
Australia	35.1	39.3

Source: CTEC

* Age-weighted participation rates attempt to overcome the difficulties associated with retention rates (the proportion of Year 7 students remaining to the last or second-last year of schooling) and participation rates (the proportion of the age group remaining in education). Age-weighted participation rates take into account the overall size of the age cohort and the average age of students in different education systems.

2.7 Levels of participation in postcompulsory schooling have been rising for some time in Victoria but have risen sharply since 1982, especially in government schools. Of the 67 579 Victorian students who began Year 7 in 1980, almost four-fifths remained in school to undertake Year 11 in 1984. Of these, 25 453 or 47.6 per cent attended government high schools, 9885 or 18.5 per cent attended government technical schools and 18 114 or 33.9 per cent attended nongovernment schools. Retention into Year 12 has increased 10 percentage points between 1981 and 1984. Of the 28 946 students in Year 12 in 1984, 51.5 per cent attended government high schools, 4.7 per cent attended technical schools and 43.8 per cent attended nongovernment schools. The small proportion of young people in technical schools reflects the fact that Year 12 and a Technical Year 12 (T12) Certificate were added relatively recently in technical schools. Even now Year 12 is offered in only half of them.

Table 2: Apparent retention rates to Years 11 and 12, Victorian schools, 30 June 1981–30 June 1984

<i>Year</i>	<i>Government schools</i>		<i>Nongovernment schools</i>		<i>All schools</i>	
	<i>Year 11</i>	<i>Year 12</i>	<i>Year 11</i>	<i>Year 12</i>	<i>Year 11</i>	<i>Year 12</i>
1981	63.1	23.8	88.3	60.2	69.7	33.1
1982	65.0	25.1	89.8	59.9	71.7	34.3
1983	71.6	29.0	93.0	65.0	77.6	38.8
1984	73.3	33.8	93.4	67.6	79.1	43.3

Source: Education Department and Commonwealth Schools Commission

2.8 The number of young people who undertake postcompulsory schooling in VOP and TOP in TAFE must also be taken into account. Table 3 shows the enrolment patterns of full-time students aged 15–19 years in these courses since 1981. Enrolments in VOP and TOP peaked in 1983 and have declined somewhat in 1984; preliminary figures show a further decline in 1985. When these TAFE enrolments are added to school enrolments, the apparent retention rate to the second-last year of schooling rises to 80.9 per cent, and to the last year of schooling to 50.7 per cent for 1984. Of those undertaking a Year 12 of full-time schooling in 1984, 85.4 per cent attended schools and 14.6 per cent attended TAFE; 62.6 per cent attended

public institutions. It should be noted, nonetheless, that 12 900 young Victorians did not remain to complete an eleventh year of schooling and that an additional 33 000 did not undertake a twelfth year. While many of these young people found jobs, or entered apprenticeship, certificate courses in TAFE, or the variety of postschool training in the private sector, many others suffer prolonged unemployment and lack the educational requirements for entry into postschool education or training.

Table 3: Number of 15-19-year-olds in full-time VOP and TOP, Victoria, 1981-84

<i>Year</i>	<i>VOP</i>	<i>TOP</i>
1981	1498	4353
1982	1404	4873
1983	1577	5211
1984	1210	4940

Source: TAFE Board

Present Curricula in Schools

2.9 Since the publication of the Discussion Paper, three investigations of the curricula available to students in Years 11 and 12 in schools have been undertaken. The Education Department surveyed all government high schools and a large sample of technical schools in 1984 and calculated the proportion of students studying particular subjects. VISE examined student enrolment patterns in HSC subjects, units and study structures in both government and nongovernment schools. The SCOPE project surveyed all students in Years 11 and 12 in 1984 to determine the number of subjects taken in eight subject categories*, namely English, foreign languages, human studies, performing arts, mathematics, science, commercial studies, and practical studies. While all three investigations show the subjects and courses undertaken by students in the postcompulsory years of schooling in all schools throughout Victoria, the data at present available do not describe the combinations of subjects taken by individual students or the curricular options open to them.

2.10 Table 4 shows the spread of studies of students in Year 11 in 1984 in government high and nongovernment schools. The proportion of students studying between none and three subjects in each of the eight subject areas is shown. At Year 11, almost all students studied English and mathematics, with over 40 per cent taking more than one branch of mathematics. Almost one-third of students studied more than one science subject and one third studied none. Sixty per cent of Year 11 students were undertaking at least one subject in the commercial area and 31.4 per cent two or more. The minority status of students studying the humanities subjects

*At Year 11 the subjects included in the eight categories were:

English: English, English as a second language, literature, remedial

Human studies: History, geography, social studies, environmental studies, general studies, humanities, politics

Performing and creative arts: Art, music, drama, film & TV, pottery/ceramics, craft, photography

Mathematics: Mathematics, terminal mathematics, computer studies

Science: Biology, chemistry, physics, environmental science, agriculture, earth science

Commercial: Economics, accounting, typing and shorthand, secretarial studies, legal studies, general business education

Practical: Graphic communication, home economics, human development and society, technical/trade studies, woodwork, needlework, metalwork.

was most striking with 52.6 per cent of students having no systematic exposure to history, geography, politics, social studies or other subjects in this category. Only 14.9 per cent of students were undertaking more than one humanities subject. Although students enrolled in foreign language studies at the Saturday School of Modern Languages have been omitted, 84 per cent of students at school took no foreign language, 72.3 per cent took no subject in the creative and performing arts and 62.2 per cent took no practical studies, the category which includes home economics, human development and society, technical and trade subjects and graphic communication. The inclusion of home economics and especially of human development and society (an HSC group 1 subject) in the practical studies category is questionable and exaggerates the percentage of students undertaking studies in this category.

Table 4: Percentage of students by subject category and number of subjects taken, Year 11, high and nongovernment schools, Victoria, 1984

<i>Subject category</i>	<i>Number of subjects</i>			
	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3 or more</i>
English	1.1	87.8	9.8	1.3
Foreign languages	84.0	14.9	0.9	0.2
Human studies	52.6	32.5	11.7	3.2
Performing & creative arts	72.3	21.8	4.5	1.4
Mathematics	10.9	48.1	35.5	5.6
Science	34.2	33.6	25.3	6.9
Commercial	39.2	29.3	17.7	13.7
Practical	62.2	28.9	6.6	2.4

Source: SCOPE 1984

2.11 Table 5 shows the pattern of Year 11 studies in technical schools. The most noticeable difference between technical and high schools is that three-quarters of the technical school students were undertaking practical studies in contrast to the much smaller proportion in high schools. Another feature of technical schools was the absence of any study of foreign languages. The Education Department's survey of technical schools showed that the most frequently studied subjects at Year 11 were English, humanities, mathematics, science, woodwork, furniture and building subjects and vehicle group studies.

Table 5: Percentage of students by subject category and number of subjects taken, Year 11, government technical schools, Victoria, 1984*

<i>Subject category</i>	<i>Number of subjects</i>			
	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3 or more</i>
English	3.7	88.5	5.1	2.7
Graphics	50.8	45.0	2.7	1.5
Human studies	40.6	48.6	6.8	4.0
Performing & creative arts	73.0	16.2	6.0	4.8
Mathematics	3.9	66.3	24.0	5.7
Science	28.0	49.9	18.7	3.3
Commercial	73.4	13.1	5.8	7.8
Practical	25.6	30.3	23.5	20.5

Source: SCOPE 1984

*Subject categories are the same as those used for high schools, with the exception of graphics, which replaces foreign languages.

2.12 The pattern of studies in high and nongovernment schools is similar in Year 12 to that in Year 11 as Table 6 shows. As in Year 11, almost all students were studying English, with the great majority taking only one English subject. The small proportion studying foreign languages remained stable, and there was little change in the percentage studying humanities. The major variations from Year 11 were:

- a big decline in the proportion taking mathematics, with 41 per cent of students taking no subject in this category;
- a decline of 12 per cent in the proportion of students studying any of the performing and creative arts, of 13 per cent in those taking practical studies, and of 14 per cent in those studying commercial subjects.

The Education Department survey and the VISE study showed that subjects with high participation rates at Year 12 were English, biology, commercial and legal studies, history, general mathematics, chemistry and accounting.

Table 6: Percentage of students by subject category and number of subjects taken, Year 12, high and nongovernment schools, Victoria, 1984

<i>Subject category</i>	<i>Number of subjects</i>			
	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3 or more</i>
English	1.4	85.5	13.0	0.2
Foreign languages	83.1	15.8	1.0	0.2
Human studies	53.1	32.2	12.5	2.3
Performing & creative arts	84.5	13.1	2.1	0.2
Mathematics	41.0	40.2	18.2	0.6
Science	39.2	31.6	25.6	3.5
Commercial	52.8	26.0	13.7	7.5
Practical	75.3	21.9	2.5	0.2

Source: SCOPE 1984

2.13 Gender differences are also apparent in the subject choices at Years 11 and 12. At Year 11, more males than females took two or more subjects in the mathematics/science areas and more females took two or more subjects in the English, humanities and commercial areas. More females than males studied subjects in the areas of foreign languages, performing and creative arts, and practical studies. At Year 12, specialisation in mathematics/science subjects was largely male and females predominated among those taking two subjects in English and the humanities.

2.14 It is clear that very few students in Year 11 and even fewer at Year 12 in high and nongovernment schools studied the performing and creative arts, practical subjects or languages in 1984. Half studied no humanities subjects and a third no science subjects. While most studied mathematics at Year 11, two-fifths did not in Year 12. At Year 11, specialisation was greatest in mathematics and science but at Year 12 the overall percentage of students studying one or more mathematics subjects declined. VISE has shown that despite the fact that 104 subjects are now accredited for study in the HSC, 80 per cent of the candidates were enrolled in various combinations of just fifteen subjects in both 1953 and 1983. Twenty years ago, the most frequently studied subjects were drawn from the mathematics, science, humanities, commercial, foreign languages and arts areas but, by 1983, the numbers enrolled in foreign languages and the arts had declined to the extent that these categories were no longer represented in the fifteen most popular subjects.

Curricular Options in TAFE

2.15 Students seeking more applied studies may transfer to TAFE for VOP at the end of Year 10 or to TOP at the end of Year 11. The variety of VOP makes curricular analysis difficult as programs can be pre-certificate, pre-TOP, or skill-access courses; and data on student enrolments in fields of study are lacking. In TOP, almost 90 per cent of full-time students in 1983 were enrolled in applied art, applied science, business studies and general studies, with the remaining 10 per cent enrolled in building, drama, electronic data processing, engineering, music, paramedical, personal services, secretarial studies and social science. Apart from the study of English, the subjects that students undertake in these courses are not known.

Availability of Curricular Options

2.16 Students are constrained in their choice of subjects to a large extent by what schools and colleges can offer, which in turn is related to the size of the year group on individual sites. Table 7 shows the distribution of student enrolments in Years 11 and 12 in 1984 and the projected distribution in 1989 for Years 11 and 12 separately and combined. In 1984, 72 per cent of high and technical schools had 120 or fewer Year 11 students and 97.4 per cent had 120 or fewer Year 12 students. Projections for 1989, based on present retention rates, show that 74.9 per cent of Year 11 groups and 96 per cent of Year 12 groups would not exceed 120 students. Although numbers would increase if retention levels rose, the size of the 15-19-year-old group is declining overall. After peaking in 1986 with 361 700 persons, it will decline by 16 000 by 1991 and by 41 000 by 1996 (see Appendix I).

Table 7: Distribution of enrolments in Year 11 and Year 12, government high and technical schools, February 1984, February 1989

Numbers of students enrolled	Number of schools				Years 11 and 12 combined
	1984		1989 (projected)		
	Year 11	Year 12	Year 11	Year 12	
1-20	20	77	23	73	11
21-40	34	71	41	83	26
41-60	46	73	61	59	32
61-80	45	61	53	66	45
81-100	71	37	64	42	42
101-120	71	14	62	14	44
121-140	50	3	48	7	30
141-160	33	4	26	4	32
161-180	17	—	15	1	32
181-200	4	—	8	—	35
201-220	2	—	2	—	24
221-240	1	—	1	—	18
241-260	1	—	—	—	7
261-280	—	—	—	—	8
281-300	—	—	—	1	8
301-320	—	—	1	—	3
321-340	1	2	—	—	6
341-360	—	—	—	—	0
> 360	1	—	1	1	3

Source: Education Department

*Projections are based on 1984 levels of retention.

2.17 A strong correlation exists between the size of the student population in a school or college at Years 11 and 12 and the number of curricular options available to students. At Year 12, surveys have shown that, in 1983, school groups of 20 students were offered eleven subjects while school groups of 120 students or more were offered twenty-seven subjects. A study by VISE showed that most schools offered between fifteen and seventeen subjects at Year 12 and that the same sixteen HSC group 1 subjects were offered in half the schools. Almost every school offered subjects within the categories of humanities, mathematics/science and commerce, and 60 per cent of schools also offered art, which was more widely available than its total candidature would indicate. However, only one-third of the schools offered any other creative or performing arts option, and less than one-quarter offered physical education. Where school enrolments fell, schools tended to maintain the number of mathematics/science subjects, but to limit the range of subjects offered in other areas. No single HSC group 2 subject was offered in sufficient numbers of schools to represent a generally available curricular option. Only 15 per cent of the options notionally available cater for the great majority of HSC students. Surveys show that usually one or two HSC group 2 subjects are offered alongside a group 1 core. Students in country schools face an even more restricted choice of HSC group 1 subjects.

Table 8: Number and proportion of full-time students in HSC, TOP and T12, 1984

<i>Course</i>	<i>Number of students</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
HSC group 1 and 2 subjects	24 986	75.5
HSC approved study structures (including STC)	1 267	3.8
TOP	5 953	18.0
T12	892	2.7
Total	33 098	100.0

Source: VISE, Education Department and TAFE Board

Certification at Year 12

2.18 The range of the certificates available at Year 12 shapes the curricular options for students. The number and percentage of all candidates in all Year 12 certificates in 1984 is shown in Table 8. The vast majority of full-time students at Year 12 is enrolled in either HSC subjects or TOP and alternative courses remain small. When all HSC candidates are considered (see Table 9), group 1 subjects in students' choices predominate. Overall, in 1984, 92.9 per cent of HSC candidates were enrolled in at least one group 1 subject, and a high proportion of the 15.5 per cent of candidates taking both group 1 and group 2 subjects added a single group 2 subject to a basic group 1 course; 3.1 per cent were enrolled in group 2 subjects only and of the 4.1 per cent in approved study structures, the great majority was enrolled in STC. There has been a movement towards group 2 subjects and approved study structures between 1982 and 1984 but the proportion of students in those subjects and courses remains small overall.

Table 9: Number and percentage of HSC candidates by type of course, 1982-84

<i>Course</i>	<i>1982</i>		<i>1983</i>		<i>1984</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Group 1 subjects only	24 087	90.0	23 671	82.5	24 309	77.3
Group 1 and 2 subjects	1 715	6.4	3 500	12.2	4 873	15.5
Group 2 subjects only	243	0.9	515	1.8	959	3.1
Approved study structures	725	2.7	1 008	3.5	1 277	4.1
Total	26 770	100.0	28 694	100.0	31 418	100.0

Source: VISE

Transition to Higher Education

2.19 The number of students who continue their education on a full-time basis in colleges of advanced education and universities has fluctuated over the past few years in Victoria. In 1976, 12 145 Year 12 students went straight on to higher education, and in that same year 18.3 per cent of those Victorians who were aged seventeen in 1975 went straight on. The number and proportion of Year 12 students immediately entering higher education fell steadily until 1982, when 10 532, or 15.5 per cent of seventeen-year-olds entered higher education. In 1984, 12 485 students or 18.5 per cent of the age group continued their studies in higher education. This represents 19 per cent of those who started in secondary school seven years earlier.

3 Changes Are Needed

3.1 Within secondary schools Years 11 and 12 are in important respects tied to each other and distinguished in significant ways from the compulsory years preceding them. The major certificate, the HSC, nominally relates only to studies in Year 12, but it also shapes options at Year 11. Many Year 11 subjects are prerequisites for Year 12 studies and Year 11 is often used as a kind of trial run in which some students are eliminated or change direction and plans. The strong movement by students from nongovernment and government schools into TOP in TAFE after Year 11 is in part an aspect of this predictive process; another is the departure of great numbers at the end of Year 11 for whom the major purpose of the HSC is irrelevant or for whom success in those competitive terms is unlikely. Those going on and those not going on to higher education must more equally be served in the postcompulsory phase. To do that the purposes of the final two years of secondary schooling taken together must be reconsidered.

Purposes of the Phase

3.2 Years 11 and 12 are in important senses the culmination of an educational process that begins with the students' first entry to school. For those who complete the full twelve years the latter years build in more sophisticated and specialised ways on the foundations laid over the span of compulsory attendance. Most students, however, do not at present complete the full twelve years, and so fail to experience the culmination of any planned curricular sequence. Significant discontinuities in the educational progression occur at the completion of Year 10, a point coinciding for most students in the Victorian system with the end of compulsory attendance. Beyond this level, elements of curriculum compulsory in earlier years become optional; broad areas of the curriculum are fragmented into a number of more specialised offerings; and new studies can be undertaken. These changes underline the fact that the postcompulsory years have purposes somewhat different in emphasis from those of the compulsory years of schooling. This is recognised in the recent Ministerial Paper Number 6 which provides the framework for curriculum over the compulsory years in Victorian schools. Furthermore, the postcompulsory years have distinctive purposes arising from their being at the point where schooling meets the wider community, from differences in aptitude and interest within the student group and from the age of students themselves.

3.3 The 'community' to which schooling relates changes at postcompulsory levels from that closely associated with the school itself towards a broader reference group. Because this phase of schooling stands at the interface with further study in postsecondary institutions, with employment and with full legal citizenship, the form of its public mandate can no longer be so open, so locally responsive as that of the compulsory years. This is recognised in the processes of accreditation and certification that now shape curricular offerings and assessment at upper secondary levels. At Year 12 subjects for most students are accredited by an independent and representative statutory body, VISE, or through arrangement with postsecondary institutions. The users of the certificates to which these studies lead, as well as the society at large, have an important and legitimate interest in the nature of studies

and standards of achievement which they represent. The certificates are a form of quality assurance, affirming that the studies themselves are well designed and worthwhile and that the assessments given are comparable across students and institutions, and represent significant standards of achievement. This is the only stage throughout schooling at which a form of quality assurance within a total community framework operates, and the certificates themselves provide a basis for selection into further studies and employment as well as being a record of students' achievements in study.

3.4 At the postcompulsory level, the students' wide differences in capacities, interests and intentions about their futures must be taken into account. It is no longer possible or desirable to hold all students within common studies for the greater part of their curriculum, or to assume that a single standard or the same range and types of achievement may be a common goal. Differentiation in courses and levels of study not appropriate over the compulsory years become appropriate on the basis of differences among students and on the basis of the differing competencies relevant to varying postschool activities. These differentiations must be accommodated within a framework that expands rather than restricts subsequent options for all students and continues to emphasise their common humanity and citizenship. Both the distinctive characteristics and the distinctive tensions of the postcompulsory phase hinge around the need to respond more actively to a variety of student aspirations and capacities while at the same time resisting the pull of too strong a differentiation.

3.5 Provision at the postcompulsory level must recognise that students have options other than continued schooling open to them. Their own purposes in continuing study must then find a strong place in the justification of curriculum; what is offered must be attractive to them in terms of those purposes and be responsive to the voluntary nature of their continued participation. This necessarily involves a wider range of study options and orientations than those available during compulsory schooling. There is much evidence that students at this level definitely want their studies to contribute to their preparedness for the next stage of their lives, to their improved understanding of the adult world they are entering, and to the development of skills valuable in working life (Collins and Hughes 1982, OECD 1983, Sturman 1979, Williams and others 1980). If more students are to be encouraged to stay in school rather than attempt early entry into the workforce, the curriculum at this level must respond to these desires. It cannot simply float up to postcompulsory levels the forms of general education of the compulsory years.

3.6 The age of students requires that institutional practices which are part of the curriculum be markedly different from those considered suitable for young adolescents. Continuing students are on the verge of full legal adulthood (if they have not already passed it) at Year 12. The arrangements within which they learn should move decisively over the two-year period towards those of tertiary education and of task-oriented adult activities within work situations and beyond them.

3.7 For all these reasons, the Committee believes it is important to recognise the distinctive new elements that enter consideration at the postcompulsory level. This perspective has implications for the framing of an appropriate curriculum and options within it, for the shape and legitimation of the certificate marking successful completion of the phase and for the institutional arrangements within which it is provided.

Encouraging Higher Participation in the Postcompulsory Years

3.8 The proportion of students staying into the postcompulsory levels of secondary schooling has been rising, largely in response to the changed and uncertain employment situation (see Chapter 2). In 1981, 70 per cent of the students who had entered secondary schools at Year 7 four years earlier stayed into Year 11. By 1984 this percentage had risen to 79 per cent. Those staying to Year 12 in secondary schools of all types rose from 33 per cent in 1981 to 43 per cent by 1984; and when parallel TAFE courses at Year 12 are also included, about 50 per cent of students were participating at that level in 1984. This is higher than at any previous time in the state's history, and the increases may be expected to continue.

Equity Reasons

3.9 For equity reasons, the Committee believes that rises in retention should actively and urgently be encouraged beyond the level that will automatically occur given changed circumstances. At present those from more advantaged families and districts already participate to very high levels to the end of Year 12, the first step towards professional training. This additional advantage helps to explain why 20 per cent of children born to fathers in the highest three classifications of occupations are by age 19 attending university, compared with only 7 per cent of those in the lowest three. Overall, a smaller proportion of that highest group (34 per cent) than of the lowest (54 per cent) is engaged in no postschool study of any kind at age 19 (CTEC 1982). Successful schooling to the end of Year 12 is a key factor in more socially equal postschool opportunities.

Labour Market Considerations

3.10 For many years now, full-time openings for young people in the workforce have been falling. Higher participation in postcompulsory schooling has been, at least in part, a result of that. The more recent decline in the rate of growth of the economy has resulted in persistent unemployment, particularly high among the young. At any one time, some 22 to 25 per cent of 15-19-year-olds seeking work are unable to find it. While for many of these, unemployment is temporary and part of the pattern of high turnover characteristic of the youth employment market, intervals of unemployment between jobs are lengthening. With every extension of the interval of unemployment, young people run a greater risk of being permanently excluded from jobs. Many young people have great difficulty in getting a foot in the labour market at all.

3.11 This situation is unlikely to change markedly. At any likely growth rate in the level of economic activity, total job openings will, on all predictions, fall short of the numbers seeking work. Moreover, since the numbers of people actively seeking work also rise as overall employment increases, the pool of unemployed is reduced only marginally. In these circumstances, the young, inexperienced and unqualified will continue to experience difficulties in finding work, and the position of those who have long sought, but not found, their first employment will be improved only slightly, if at all. The education system cannot directly do anything about increasing the number of job openings for young people. But it does have an obligation to ensure that it does not, by intent or default, exclude young people who could be given developmental opportunities within it. More positively, it needs to ensure that it is making such opportunities available, given the destructive nature of the alternative for many young people.

3.12 Those attempting to enter the workforce with minimal schooling and without work-related qualifications will in present and probable future circumstances be confined throughout life to a secondary labour market characterised by intermittent and part-time employment and low income. They are unlikely through experience on the job to move into better paid and more secure positions. While holding qualifications is no longer a guarantee of continuous employment or of employment appropriate to them, the absence of qualifications is a serious disadvantage as an increasingly higher proportion of the population comes to hold them.

3.13 The benefit of competencies gained through acquiring qualifications is not entirely dependent on being employed by someone else. These competencies may also serve in other income-earning and income-substitute activities and are often in fact used in a wider range of activities and employment than the apparent specificity of the training often suggests. It is, quite simply, better to have some potentially income-earning competency than to have none, and better to be equipped to enter postschool education and training than to be excluded from such possibilities.

3.14 The case for higher participation should not rest too heavily on improved individual chances of employment or of employment appropriate to qualifications gained. It is risky to associate continued learning too closely with individual employment prospects because the gains are uncertain, and not necessarily connected with the individual's capacities and achievements. It is risky also if its major result is to heighten competition for limited places in professional training courses at universities and colleges and employment-associated courses in TAFE. It is, moreover, undesirable. Closely associating continued learning with improved employment prospects promotes false beliefs, attributing unemployment and poverty to individual deficiencies. It thus pretends that individuals can control what is only marginally under their control, without placing on all individuals the responsibility for participating in the design and implementation of social solutions. That path can only lead to a more polarised society.

3.15 To link continued learning too closely with employment prospects is also undesirable in more narrowly educational terms. It reinforces a belief already strong among students that the major or only reason for engaging in demanding studies is to use the acquired knowledge and skills in income earning. The corollary is that those who are unlikely to use them in work do not need to know much about such things as science, mathematics or history. A productive approach to the dilemmas involved could be to make the study of work in its changing forms, definitions and availability, and as it is affected by technological change, a common element of curriculum at postcompulsory levels. This would enlarge the perspective beyond that of the individual, as well as provide an essential backdrop to students' own work and study plans.

Benefits to the Society and the Individual

3.16 It is not possible to assert with any confidence that the overall skills of the workforce will need to be higher as a result of technological changes, since such changes could equally result in an even wider polarisation of workforce skills than already exists with a de-skilling of many middle-level jobs and the elimination of many unskilled ones. It is, however, possible to assert that, in the face of uncertainty, the best policy is to ensure that as many young people as possible have a sufficiently high level of initial educational achievement to possess a flexible basis for the acquisition of specific skills, to have some conceptual understanding of technology and of productive processes, and to take their place confidently as participants in the work environment.

3.17 Better educated individuals have broader options in employment and beyond it than do less educated people. Working life will remain important as a source of income, identity and social contact for individuals. The time involved in it, however, has been steadily if gradually declining over a century, and is likely to do so further, giving expanded time for other pursuits more freely chosen. Personal resources developed through education can increase the satisfaction to which people potentially have access and give them confidence in exploring new fields.

3.18 While the number of informal channels through which information and ideas can be gained is increasing, the schools' distinctive purpose is the systematic development of a framework of time, values, ordered information, concepts and theory to which casually acquired information and ideas can be related throughout life, and the framework itself modified. A commitment to the disinterested pursuit of knowledge and the testing of hypotheses and belief against evidence where appropriate is built into this educative purpose. Putting knowledge into a context of action and commitment by demonstrating its significance in ordinary lives, its relevance to social issues and socially valuable tasks not only gives it reality but removes it from being a specialist pursuit and makes it part of life itself. Knowledge becomes the rightful property of all reflective and reasoning people, whether the object of reflection and reasoning is a practical task, the development and reconsideration of personal identity or perennial human experiences and dilemmas. Many important ingredients of the educational purpose are not useful in any narrowly instrumental sense. Imagination fed by access to written and spoken literature, music, art and other cultural forms representing "humanity holding a great continuous discussion throughout the ages and across the world" is not narrowly useful. It does, however, contribute greatly to the quality of many lives.

3.19 The rising complexity of moral and political issues in the contemporary world and the dangerous consequences of allowing those issues to be annexed as the exclusive province of technical experts emphasise the need for a better educated society. Individual economic prospects have their place in motivations to continue in education, but the struggle for competitive advantage needs to be tempered by a sober appreciation that fates inescapably shared may well be more important to prospects of survival and to the possibility of individually satisfying lives than anything individuals can control. The hazards of living in a nuclear age are only the most dramatic example of these inescapably shared fates. We do not claim that education necessarily makes people more moral or more humane. We do believe, however, that it potentially does provide a basis for sharing the collective experience of the human race, for gaining a sense of identity with it, and for gaining access to its best validated knowledge and artistic achievements. Such a basis provides a common background important in binding a society, in making possible more equal and reasoned discourse within it and confident participation in its affairs. Learning environments which themselves build a sense of mutual responsibility and co-operation can additionally contribute to the effectiveness of democratic processes.

Ways of Encouraging Higher and More Equitably Distributed Participation

3.20 The Committee believes that Victoria should set itself a target of achieving, by 1995, 70 per cent participation to the end of Year 12 of schooling and be committed to making the necessary changes in educational provision to enable that to happen in ways promoting both equity and excellence. The reasons for urging this arise equally out of developments occurring in work and society and out of a

belief in the potential of well conceived and well conducted education to expand the resources individuals bring to living and to the operation of a democracy. The target of 70 per cent participation to the end of Year 12 is both desirable and possible to achieve by 1995 provided that appropriate changes in the structure of financial support for young people and in the nature of postcompulsory provision itself are made. While this 70 per cent level has already been reached in some schools and localities, the challenge is to make it widely spread. Such a level of participation in 1984 would have involved an increase of 12 900 students on those actually enrolled in Year 12. If the target of 70 per cent participation in schooling to the end of Year 12 is to be achieved by 1995, the proportion remaining in school would have to rise at an average of 2.4 per cent per annum.

3.21 Higher participation to the end of Year 12 will depend mainly on young people from lower income families continuing their education and will be achieved basically in districts where participation is now lowest. It will occur only if certain steps are taken which deliberately seek to promote higher participation by less advantaged groups. Policies of youth support followed by the Commonwealth Government are crucial if less advantaged youth are to participate in the full span of schooling to a target level already surpassed among more advantaged groups. The OECD team which recently reviewed youth policies in Australia claimed that income support should provide opportunities as well as money for young people. Its primary purpose should be to increase the proportion of young persons from disadvantaged backgrounds participating in education and training, making sure that all young people are assured of at least an adequate preparation for work and adulthood (OECD 1984).

3.22 Many inquiries over a number of years have analysed and recommended change in the pattern of financial support for young people. These need now to be followed by action. If our society believes that continued education is preferable to unemployment for teenagers, and that young people should not be trapped in the precarious secondary labour market by inadequate qualifications, it should ensure that, especially for those in financial need, continued learning is made more attractive than unemployment or entry into dead-end jobs. Changes in this direction are fundamental to increased participation and to its more equitable spread, both at upper secondary and postsecondary levels. The Committee believes that the importance of this proposition must emphatically be asserted.

3.23 Changes in the basis of financial support for continuing education are a necessary condition for higher and more equitably distributed educational participation to the end of Year 12 and beyond. They are, however, of themselves insufficient. Postcompulsory provision must itself change significantly if it is to become a phase appropriate for the great majority of the age group. The goal of 70 per cent participation to the end of Year 12 by 1995 is attainable provided that provision of schooling is designed with that objective in mind, and that developments are not restricted to the essentially *ad hoc* adaptations that have characterised past responses to rising enrolments. The courses in which many students will be enrolled will not be identical with those now predominating. There will be an increase in the number of ways in which those who have left school and are without work can combine training in the workforce with part-time formal training. These alternatives to full-time schooling should include opportunities for part-time and discontinuous participation in postcompulsory schooling and extended provision of training shared between workplaces and TAFE. Two further conditions must apply to the encouragement of higher participation to the end of Year 12: schooling must offer students distinctive benefits which they cannot equally well or better gain by other

means; and there must be no conscription of participants, as that would have destructive effects not only on the unwilling students but also on the capacity of schools seriously to advance their own distinctive purposes. We recommend:

Recommendation 1: That increased participation in schooling to the end of Year 12 energetically be pursued with the objective that by 1995, 70 per cent of an age group will complete Year 12 of schooling. The Victorian Government should commit itself to the realisation of this target and to the support of changes necessary to make it effective.

Recommendation 2: That the Victorian Government pursue with all urgency changes in the Commonwealth policies of financial support for young people so that, for those in financial need, continued educational participation, at least to the end of Year 12, be made as attractive as unemployment benefits.

New Directions Proposed

3.24 The balance of this Report lays out proposals for action designed to make provision at postcompulsory levels more congruent with contemporary needs. Continuing into a twelfth year of schooling must be made attractive to students presently seeing little point in doing so, or alienated by the terms on which it is offered. Postcompulsory provision must equip students who will follow more advanced and more specialised studies beyond Year 12. It must ensure that those who will move directly from school into the workforce have broadly useful skills and a significant credential which has wide currency and forms a basis for return to study at a later date. It must do all this without cementing distinctions between students of varying aptitudes and different immediate futures, both because the claims of common humanity and common citizenship are stronger than those of occupational distinction and because the type of course followed and achievements registered in youth can no longer be allowed to curtail opportunities for life. Over a lifetime, all who desire to do so should be enabled to improve upon base qualifications, to change occupational direction and to engage in further formal learning as and when they desire or need to do so. The notion of the once-for-all chance in youth is already being eroded by the return to study by older people, and this tendency may be expected to accelerate. Arrangements must provide fast and slow means of acquiring higher qualifications and not erect barriers to further education.

* 3.25 Postcompulsory provision now needs to be conceived and planned as a whole rather than in segments determined by different future paths. The distinctions between practical and theoretical studies, and between vocational training and education, had their origins in a different economic structure and in a less open society than now exists. The present four-way competition between nongovernment schools, government high and technical schools and TAFE at this level results in insufficient numbers of students on most sites to offer a comprehensive curricular range. Priority is being given to maintaining an adequate number and range of HSC group 1 subjects in order to keep open the widest subsequent options for students in postsecondary education and employment. Courses and subjects that cater for students with other purposes and interests use the resources left over after these mainstream curricular options have been provided. As a result, despite the increased numbers of subjects and courses accredited within HSC over recent years, the actual curricular options to which most high school students have access have become

narrower rather than wider over the past thirty years. Further, the type of institution attended also circumscribes the kinds of studies undertaken. Technical studies and the resources necessary to mount them are present in technical schools and in TAFE—but not in high schools or most nongovernment schools. Government schools are poorly provided with resources needed to mount a range of high-quality studies in the creative and performing arts. TAFE has those. In major TAFE colleges enrolling relatively large numbers of students in TOP, a wide variety of applied studies is offered, but preparatory studies for courses of a theoretical type in higher education are typically absent.

Technical
options!
distance
Ed &
vocational
studies

3.26 Bringing together all the public resources devoted to Years 11 and 12 in an area in an overall provision plan would give all students wider opportunities and curricular options, and result in the more effective use of the resources themselves. For such developments to be effected in ways promoting both excellence and equity, a single agency must bear responsibility for the postcompulsory phase within the public sector and command all the resources devoted to it. Schools and TAFE colleges, in attempting to increase student options through linking course offerings, have often encountered problems in negotiating each other's services from separate budgetary allocations. For this reason, and because of the need to view provision as a whole, the Committee recommends that the Education Department should assume responsibility for all public-sector provision at Years 11 and 12. A transfer of resources should be made between schools and TAFE to reflect the distinctive responsibilities of each sector. The schools should be funded to enable them to contract services from TAFE and from other sources, where needed, so that a comprehensive curricular range can be offered at Years 11 and 12. In this way, resources could be shared where appropriate by several providers rather than being unnecessarily duplicated in each. Further consideration should also be given to the position of TAFE courses currently offered in schools with the possibility of the TAFE Board gaining direct responsibility for them.

Recommendation 3: That within the public sector the Education Department be responsible for all schooling at Years 11 and 12 and that the allocation of resources between the Education Department and TAFE reflect this responsibility. Resources used to provide Years 11 and 12 courses in TAFE should be frozen at present levels pending evaluation and transfer.

4 Shaping Postcompulsory Curriculum

4.1 The links between curricular, credentialling and structural issues are obvious. The certificate which marks graduation from secondary schooling and entry to the next phase of students' lives is the public expression of the acceptability of the curriculum at senior levels. The structures needed at that level and the public acceptance itself depend on the range and kinds of studies to which it is believed all students should have access. Within this apparently seamless web, curricular policies are, however, basic. They drive the system.

4.2 In the broadest and most general terms, the overall curricular analysis of the Review's Discussion Paper won wide support. There was overwhelming agreement on the need to give students wider curricular options than they have at present beyond Year 10, and to develop more explicit connections between academic study and its applications and between theory and practice. Both the curriculum and credentials working parties supported the organisation of curricular offerings over Years 11 and 12 as a course of study covering two years. They recommended that semester-length units over the two years would permit greater flexibility than do existing annual subjects. Both favoured inclusion of some common studies, allowing considerable latitude for local design of content, learning modes and assessment within an overall framework. Each suggested a framing of units into common studies and two other groupings, each of which would contain a considerable variety of options. The working parties wished to affirm but limit degrees of specialisation within the continuing general education of all students at this level and to allow for differing modes of assessment within a common certificate. This chapter draws heavily on the working parties' reports, though it does not endorse the detailed advice of either. The full reports of the working parties should be read by those interested in details of agreement and differences among the three sets of recommendations.

Combining Years 11 and 12

4.3 There are many advantages in regarding Years 11 and 12 as a phase of schooling distinguished by a somewhat different balance of considerations from the compulsory years. The organisation of curricular offerings across the two years in semester-length rather than year-long units enables a greater variety of combinations and options to be offered. Varying depths of study can be provided. The opportunities for students to change direction, redeem failure, and experiment with new areas and kinds of study are increased. Since semester-length units give students twice as many choices over the two years as do year-long units, clear specification and justification of prerequisites could result. Discontinuous attendance is more readily accommodated and credits toward the certificate can be cumulative over the two years. The introduction of the four-term year in Victorian schools in 1987 facilitates the development of semester-length units of study at upper secondary level.

Recommendation 4: That from the beginning of 1987, courses in Years 11 and 12 be organised as a course of study over two years in semester-length units, not assigned to a particular year level except as required by sequential studies composed of more than two semester units.

A Comprehensive Curricular Range

4.4 A curricular rationale within which systematic options can be designed and made available to students should replace continued reliance on *ad hoc* extensions to subject offerings. The remainder of this chapter sets out an extended discussion of the main aspects of such a rationale. Many additional subjects and study programs added to the postcompulsory curriculum over recent years have been due to initiatives taken by teachers in individual schools and in subject associations. These offerings have been restricted by the type of institution in which they are taught, since they vary in facilities, equipment and teacher expertise. Complete study programs such as the STC have been as much a response to the problem of providing a more appropriate curriculum for a limited number of students in a particular place within given facilities as a consequence of any consideration of a curricular range to which all students should have access. The distinction between group 1 and group 2 HSC subjects often reflects historical accident rather than definitions of what is needed as preparation for higher education. Many group 2 HSC subjects are extremely valuable contributions towards a wider curricular range. Despite their high quality, they have proved less attractive to students because they open up narrower subsequent options than do group 1 subjects, on which selection into higher education is primarily based. T12 does not lead into most subsequent study options. TOP in TAFE provides some valuable extensions to studies at upper secondary level but their availability is confined to students taking the full program in TAFE.

Sharing the Culture

4.5 Any discussion of curriculum must begin by asserting the primacy of essentially common and cultural purposes. In present circumstances, high levels of anxiety about individual employment prospects are leading to the ascendancy of narrowly instrumental views about schooling and to a preoccupation with skills at the expense of content. Young people are culturally deprived if they emerge from twelve years of schooling without even the most rudimentary knowledge of the history, art forms and philosophical underpinnings of their own society, or if they are terrorised by situations requiring quantitative or scientific reasoning. They are economically, culturally and socially deprived if over the twelve years of schooling they have not developed, through studies having significant content, relatively high levels of competence in the skills of oral and written communication and in mathematical operations. Views about the content of the curriculum, desired common and optional studies and the spread of studies all should pursue, relate not only to individual differences in capacities and interests. They also concern those elements of the culture that are considered important to share. The continuing process of cultural formation should be part of the studies undertaken by all students at postcompulsory levels and be seen as crucial for their full and confident participation as adults in a democratic society.

4.6 The art of teaching is to seek out ways of making important knowledge interesting and real to students of varying experience, capacities and backgrounds and to ensure that each student reaches the most sophisticated mastery possible. The task encounters problems at the stage where schooling meets the outside world. At that stage, competitive pressures heighten as achievements are compared within a single frame of reference. Teachers who believe in the importance of substantial progress in learning by all students face great difficulties within present arrangements. Large

numbers of students unlikely to reach standards appropriate for entry into higher education in mathematics, science and humanities can nevertheless significantly improve their levels of competence and gain much from courses which enable them to do so. The existence of a single reference point for judging achievements, which must be registered over a fixed period of time and assessed within a single mode, effectively prevents such students from advancing in study and can persuade them that there is little point in attempting to do so.

Redefined and Strengthened Academic Studies

4.7 The first and basic ingredient of the comprehensive curricular range to which all students should have access is a variety of studies within each of the major curricular areas: the study of their own society, arts/humanities, science/technology and mathematics. This apparently traditional view does not require all students to follow those courses usually prescribed as preparation for higher education. Rather, it calls for a reconsideration of such studies in contemporary terms. While not denying that abstract studies are important, it challenges the notion that only those studies confined within accepted definitions of the academic disciplines can be intellectually demanding and rigorous.

4.8 Some types of traditional studies were originally designed for a minority of students, especially males occupying high social positions. Such studies were associated with the way of life of a limited social group. They were deliberately abstracted from the concerns of ordinary people's lives and from productive activities, since most of those engaging in them were by birth and definition not involved in either. As the productive significance of science and mathematics became evident in the nineteenth century, and as the functions of government extended and its basis became more democratic, a struggle was waged which resulted in the introduction of a wider number of vocational courses and of new social groups into the universities. The admission of women was long delayed and bitterly fought. These struggles, with the exception of the admission of women, were already over when Australian higher education took shape, but their echoes are still heard. The separation of theoretical and applied studies and the lower prestige of the latter except when located in universities is one of these echoes. Another is the assumption that whole classes of people are incapable of sustained intellectual effort. The fact that, until this century, women were seen as by nature to constitute such a group reveals and challenges unstated assumptions still widely current about other groups, often disguised within theories of individual difference. A third echo is the tendency towards mystification of key concepts that makes important insights inaccessible to non-specialists even at a general level.

4.9 Traditional academic studies are nevertheless important for all in giving access to structured, substantiated knowledge. Such knowledge not only enables people to act more powerfully in the world on the basis of a better understanding of it, it also represents important achievements of the human mind, imagination and spirit to which all have the right of access. Enabling people to move confidently within a cultural mainstream of ideas and discourse is an aspect of social participation for which schools have major responsibility. Those who follow no further studies in science, mathematics, history and literature should have gained, through sustained and well structured study at upper secondary levels, a framework of ideas and range of interests valued throughout life.

4.10 Nonetheless, traditional academic studies need careful review if access to the insights they potentially can give is to become more generally shared. Those that consist of specialist preparation for a limited number of occupations must be justified in the secondary curriculum on the same basis as other vocational studies. Although such specialist preparation is necessary for some, it must be clearly identified as preparatory to very specific occupations rather than widely applicable in subsequent studies or contributing to the general education of non-specialists. Further, some traditional academic studies are abstracted from an historical and social context, from their applications in productive activities and from major issues of the contemporary world. Studies at upper secondary level in mathematics, physics and chemistry designed to give students a theoretical base for later applications in higher education hold little appeal for many students. Most of them do not continue those studies into higher education and so presumably never get to the point of seeing the application of the theory. This is a further important reason why concepts should at school be associated with their areas of applications.

4.11 The Committee believes that the quality and rigour of academic studies should be strengthened for all students at upper secondary levels. Students already committed to such studies should be extended to their full capacity. Those not yet so committed should receive every encouragement to become so. At the same time there is a need to expand the avenues of acquisition of intellectual competence by developing studies having more applied orientations. Theoretically based vocational studies should be linked to the development of identified skills. Content within the major study areas should link with issues of the contemporary world and of student concern.

4.12 All studies should offer students serious engagement with serious ideas. No particular selection of knowledge from mathematics, the sciences, technology, history or literature can any longer be regarded as self evidently more fundamental than any other. For inclusion in the curriculum the content must be significant in itself and in terms of extending insights into important ideas, techniques, cultural achievements and human experience. Provided that such studies are as well structured as the examples given later in this chapter, draw on theories having relevance beyond the particular area of application, and develop critical judgement and the testing of belief through evidence where appropriate, they should be regarded as intellectually respectable and demanding.

4.13 The integrity of the culture with which the school is concerned is questionable if it fails to acknowledge the contributions of all major social groups to the collective experience, identity and operation of the society. Academic study of the social world often neglects the history and experience of women, of ordinary people and of ethnic minorities in definitions of human identity in general and Australian identity in particular. Changes making such studies socially inclusive are also needed.

4.14 The insistence on study in arts/humanities, science/technology and mathematics in the comprehensive curricular range to which all students should have access may seem at first sight a conservative view of the major purpose of schooling. In some ways it is. In two ways it is radical. First it asserts that the sustained, structured development of knowledge and skills should provide access to major areas of the culture for all students, not just for those intending to engage in related studies in higher education. Secondly it challenges the definitions of culture that exclude applied studies, the application of important ideas to contemporary life and the experience and contribution of major social groups.

Activity-based Studies

4.15 For many students, the inclusion of significant practical, work-related studies in the upper secondary curriculum is vital for their continued participation, employment prospects and further study plans. Vocationally oriented applied studies should suit a broad group of occupations rather than be specific to particular jobs. Such studies should include the acquisition of competence in practical work-related skills, although associated with theory where relevant. While work experience and community service should also be included in a comprehensive curricular range, the Committee believes that these experiences should be integrated into wider studies. The objective of all activity-based studies should be mastery in doing something as well as thinking and writing about it. Vocationally related activity-based studies will be only part of the range of activity-based studies offered. The creative and performing arts, at present sparsely represented in upper secondary curricula, also come into this category.

Recommendation 5: That all students in Years 11 and 12 have access to a comprehensive curricular range, including a variety of optional studies within each of the major areas of arts/humanities, science/technology and mathematics; and to a range of activity-based studies.

Specialisation and Spread of Studies

4.16 The analysis of the curriculum undertaken by students in 1984 which is presented in Chapter 2 must give cause for concern. Although almost all students take English over the two years, only 16 per cent in each year study any other language. More than half in both years do not take any human studies (which include history, geography, politics and social studies) and more than a third take no science. Mathematics shows the greatest variation over the two years. Only 10 per cent of students in Year 11 but 41 per cent of students in Year 12 take no mathematics. The proportion taking two mathematics subjects falls from 36 to 18 per cent between Years 11 and 12, while 25 per cent take two science subjects over both years. The group of students is not identical over the two years because of the relatively high proportion of students leaving at the end of Year 11. Nevertheless, some aspects of the picture are clear. Specialisation within mathematics/science or humanities/commercial studies strengthens at Year 12. A higher proportion of female than of male students takes neither mathematics nor science at Year 12. The proportion of young women taking two studies in both areas is relatively low, limiting their subsequent study options. Very low proportions of students in schools undertake studies in foreign languages, the performing arts and practical studies.

4.17 The Committee believes that all students should continue studies in all the major areas of the curriculum. Although specialisation is important at this level, it should not preclude further and more sophisticated engagement with the major areas of human endeavour and achievement. Science and mathematics are significant areas of the culture to be followed in some form by all, but those particularly drawn to them should have their horizons extended through other studies bearing on the human condition. The reverse is equally true. At present all students are obliged to study the equivalent of four semester-length units of English over the two years, but studies in science or mathematics are not compulsory. This results in an unbalanced form of cultural literacy and forecloses future options.

4.18 Mathematics, taken broadly, is a language having relevance comparable with that of literacy. Very few, if any, studies in higher education or other vocational fields can now be taken successfully by those having only basic arithmetical competencies. The relevance of mathematical concepts to all technical and technological studies is obvious, but statistics and a grasp of quantitative reasoning are also required in most areas of the humanities, and in social and behavioural sciences. Those lacking such a base are at a disadvantage in many aspects of living.

4.19 As participation increases, we expect that single and sequential units in activity-based studies will become increasingly popular with students, provided that the framing of the credential and the methods of selection for higher education do not preclude them. Some studies of these kinds are important for all students, and those following a strongly academic path should particularly be encouraged to undertake units in them. At least some of these units, particularly in the creative and performing arts and in vocational skill areas, should be available within two-unit and three-unit sequences, the latter including related units of theoretical study.

4.20 Sequential studies building to high levels of mastery are also essential. Students would take more than half of all studies over the two years in sequential studies. These prepare students for higher education and TAFE courses, accommodate the differing interests and capacities of students and provide unique satisfaction associated with high involvement. Without them, the curricular experience of students could become trivial and fragmented. Nonetheless, a variety of options within each field must be available for study at varying levels of depth. The major offerings, including those in mathematics and physical science, must become a vehicle for the education of all students, including those not intending to pursue these studies further. The competing claims of specialisation and breadth can be reconciled more easily when the curriculum is organised in semester units and extends over two years.

4.21 The Committee recommends that all students should take three sequential semester-length units within each of the three major areas of arts/humanities, science/technology (including various forms of applied science as well as traditional studies of an academic kind) and mathematics (with similar extensions to existing studies). To increase flexibility in the framing of curriculum over the two years, it is further recommended that each student should take a total of twenty-four semester-length units in order to qualify for the full Certificate marking successful completion of postcompulsory schooling.

Recommendation 6: That all students, within twenty-four units of semester length taken over Years 11 and 12, follow at least one three-unit sequence of study in each of the areas of arts/humanities, science/technology and mathematics.

Recommendation 7: That all students be strongly encouraged to take at least one unit over the two years in activity-based studies; and that units within these areas be associated with related theoretical units to form the basis of some two-unit and three-unit sequences.

Curricular Implications

4.22 Sequences in any area of study designed to have wide applicability should not exceed three units. This should not result in lesser preparation of students undertaking studies in higher education. Nevertheless, given the very broad range of courses in higher education involving science and mathematics, some agreement must be reached with those conducting such courses about essential preparation for

these studies. At present, it is widely alleged that the special requirements of tertiary engineering courses dominate school subjects in the physical sciences and mathematics to an unwarranted degree. One solution to the need for this specialised preparation could lie in providing an additional special unit of study taken for engineering courses, or other courses having highly specific prerequisites. The three-unit sequences should provide the normal basis for ranking and admitting students to particular courses in higher education although admission might be made conditional on the completion of additional special units in the final semester. On the other hand, those who were not admitted on the grounds of results achieved by the end of the third semester could be reconsidered for entry because of their work in additional special units, but this later work should not count for ranking.

4.23 Extending options within the major curricular areas is an essential aspect of encouraging a spread of studies for all students. Each major curricular area will provide forms of study that are not concentrated in a single study mode. At present, the high degree of specialisation in mathematics and physics and their orientation towards higher education effectively excludes students not following this path from these studies at school. They often have limited relevance except for particular subsequent studies and are abstracted from applications. One serious outcome is that the overwhelming majority of primary teachers—those entrusted with imparting the basic stages of mathematical and scientific learning—has no serious background in these areas, having ceased to study them at the earliest possible level. More girls should also be encouraged to continue study in mathematics and the basic sciences in order to broaden their subsequent options, but present courses may not be the most suitable for this purpose. Finally, apart from some relatively low-level courses in business mathematics and mathematics for technicians in technical schools, intellectually demanding forms of applied mathematics and physics with productive, social and vocational significance are lacking.

4.24 This calls for the development of some new courses, and the rationalisation of others. Applications in broad fields will be needed. Some examples of innovative approaches are being developed within the Reality in Mathematics Education Project of the Curriculum Branch of the Education Department and for the Australian Institute of Engineers under the title of Mathematics and Careers. Another is the text for Years 11 and 12, *Elements of Chemistry*, published by the Australian Academy of Sciences. In the United Kingdom, a statistically based approach to mathematics education involves the analyses of contemporary social issues, including social and economic trends, comparative living standards and the terms of trade between developed and Third World countries. Statistical approaches could be attractive to those whose major interest is in the humanities. The use of calculators with intermediate memories further opens up the possibility that many mathematical concepts once thought accessible only to a talented few could become more broadly understood.

4.25 Similarly, the development of courses in the humanities and social sciences that connect more directly with the major concerns of young people and with the issues facing us all can give these studies reality for many students. Such studies include social history bearing on the life and work of ordinary men and women and the study of Australian culture drawing on the experience of all migrant groups. The project in Australian Studies recently initiated by the Curriculum Development Centre is an example of what is needed to provide a study of society and culture in which many young people will find echoes of their own experiences.

Recommendation 8: That studies in the major curricular areas in Years 11 and 12 be so designed as not to prevent students from taking only the first unit of a sequence. No sequence should exceed three units although provision can be made for additional specialist units.

Recommendation 9: That a major curricular project be mounted by the new Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board (the establishment of which is later recommended), in each of the areas of mathematics and science/technology; and that each project survey and evaluate present courses in its area of reference, and propose and develop a number of courses in each to include both applied courses and courses suited to the general education of students not following further specialist studies in either area.

Recommendation 10: That the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board negotiate with major providers of postsecondary courses to establish agreement about the content of studies in mathematics, physics and chemistry commonly applicable to the range of courses they offer, and to make special arrangements for any additional prerequisites for particular courses.

Broad Vocational Specialisms

4.26 As far as possible, all upper secondary studies should open up pathways for further education and training. In the past those leading into TAFE courses have received less attention than those leading into higher education. A possible form of specialisation within the major curricular areas which was suggested in the Discussion Paper was that of broad vocational specialisms. As in the case of preparation for higher education, particular three-unit sequences should be developed in these specialisms. They should involve combinations of practical and theoretical study which could provide entry into vocational training within TAFE. They could also be cross-credited into certificate courses in TAFE and perhaps into apprenticeship, as well as being accredited as part of the Victorian Certificate of Education. Openings for apprentices have diminished overall and some 'apprentices' now follow full-time studies before finding employment. As the trend towards more broadly-based initial apprenticeship training develops, the case for including units counting towards apprenticeship within the context of general secondary courses should be examined.

Recommendation 11: That cross-crediting of units of study in the upper secondary curriculum into TAFE certificate courses and apprenticeship be further encouraged, and that the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board negotiate with the Industrial Training Commission and the TAFE Accreditation Board with the objective of reaching agreements facilitating such arrangements.

4.27 Studies at upper secondary level should provide opportunities for students seeking entry to the workforce to acquire widely applicable work-related skills. If they are to have serious purchase in employment terms, the skills will need to be developed to higher levels than can be obtained through such existing arrangements as link courses. The Committee does not favour the framing of all options in the major curricular areas within an occupational orientation, however broad. That would be too restrictive and could result in divisive tracking. It could also impede rather than encourage regeneration in the major academic areas themselves, consolidating their perceived major purpose as preparation for higher education. We also oppose a degree of specialisation in practically oriented vocational studies that does not open up windows on a wider world. However, we share the view of

the two working parties that mathematics and science in particular should include orientations applying them to broad fields of use, including occupational areas, and that groupings of occupations which might be used as a basis for such developments should be investigated further.

Recommendation 12: That groupings of occupations which could provide a basis for practically oriented vocational studies having relevance for a number of occupations and for the development of applied studies within the area of mathematics and science/technology be investigated by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board.

Common Studies

4.28 All students at the postcompulsory level should engage in some common studies. At this stage, students are pursuing a variety of paths and differences in the aptitudes and interests of students have widened. Common studies affirm the value of certain learnings for all students and provide the meeting point for the members of a generation. They are the means through which all students encounter issues of human, social and personal concern. In the present HSC, English is compulsory for all students and although loosely framed and admitting wide choices within it, brings all students together for reading, discussion and reflection on experience. While such a compulsory course does fulfil some of the aims of common studies, another path is to require that all students undertake a spread of studies in several designated broad curricular areas. These areas of curriculum are important for all since they are the means by which knowledge of major areas of human achievement is gained and widely applicable skills can be developed. This approach has been followed by the Committee which has recommended that the curriculum should be framed in ways which ensure that all students engage in some studies in each of the major curricular areas. We also believe that certain subjects should be taken by all.

4.29 Both the curriculum and credentials working parties recommended that all students should follow some studies in common areas of the curriculum as well as undertaking subjects in common. The credentials working party saw common studies as a significant part of the overall curriculum, involving up to one-third of studies over the two years in communication and numeracy (both broadly defined), and the study of society. On the other hand, the curriculum working party saw commonality as a common spread of studies within which there would be numerous options, and a relatively small component of studies actually undertaken in common. It recommended that a commonly undertaken study should bear on a major social issue varying in focus over time and be backed by intensive curricular development. Our own position is close to that of the curriculum working party and we believe that English and the study of work in society should be studied by all.

The Study of Work in Society

4.30 The study of work in society seems to us to be a meeting point for all students at postcompulsory level, and to provide the substance of what should be studied by all. There was considerable support for this idea among respondents to the Discussion Paper. This common study should have a social frame of reference and be placed

within the context of life situations. It should bear particularly on the stage of life of students at postcompulsory level, who are moving into adult participation in the society and contemplating their own futures. This subject would not replace the more discipline-oriented studies in the social sciences, just as the study of literature is still available despite the existence of compulsory English. Such studies as history, geography and legal studies would continue to be offered separately within the arts/humanities part of the curricular framing.

4.31 The study of work in society could give an overview of changes in the nature and organisation of work since the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century and cover the impact of present changes in technology and in the structure of the workforce. It could illustrate the variety of ways in which people in Australia acquire incomes and engage in income-substitute activities, including unpaid services and do-it-yourself work. Within this focus the impact of changes within work and on life patterns in general could be highlighted. Particular attention could be given to the impact of changes on the lives and employment of women, on child-rearing and the care of other dependent people, and to the unresolved issues surrounding the separation of income-earning activities from the domestic unit. In this way, inclusive social history would be related to technological change. Such an approach would assist students towards better informed choices about their own futures and offer broader perspectives on employment and unemployment, and paid and unpaid labour, than can be given by either career counselling, with its focus on individuals and particular occupations, or by experience in unskilled work.

4.32 The relevance of the study of work for the postcompulsory years has other dimensions. It would broaden the perspective of the upper secondary curriculum. It would promote equity by giving students of all backgrounds, and particularly young women, a more informed basis for thinking about and planning their own life directions. It would provide a vehicle for research and for purposeful contact with the adult community, as well as giving a motivational framework for the development of communication skills and quantitative reasoning. Individualised approaches to career planning have little relevance to a high proportion of students and, unless underpinned by better social understanding, can help to sustain the belief that the employed and secure owe nothing to those not so fortunately placed. The study of work could additionally illustrate that being employed by someone else is not the only way that skills gained in education can be used to improve one's standard of living.

4.33 A study so focussed will clearly require considerable curricular development. It essentially represents a form of socio-economic history brought forward into the present, interacting with the history of technology and involving contact with work places and the life experiences of various older men and women. A framework for the study and some special materials would need to be developed, and existing materials recommended for optional use (including printed materials and such television series as 'Out of the Fiery Furnace' and 'Shoulder to Shoulder'). In addition, part of the course should involve direct observation and experience of work, including child-care, and oral history.

Recommendation 13: That the study of work in society occupy two compulsory and sequential semester units over Years 11 and 12; that it be pursued in the contexts of technological change since the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century and in present day Australia; that it involve direct observation and experience; and that it include the study of work undertaken in domestic units, in unpaid and paid capacities, and affecting women and men.

Recommendation 14: That a major curricular development project underwriting the above study be mounted, beginning in 1985.

Ensuring High Literacy Standards

4.34 The amount of time devoted to common studies at present in Years 11 and 12 should not be reduced overall. Almost all students take the equivalent of four semester-length units of English over Years 11 and 12. The study of English provides a more open focus for wide reading and for the consideration of human and personal concerns than is possible within the logico-rational requirements of other studies. It also provides the major means of ensuring that standards in literacy are met. However, we do not believe that the study of English is the only basis for ensuring high literacy standards. The study of work in society recommended above would also serve as a medium through which literacy and broader communication skills could be developed and tested, with the additional advantage of building skills in social research. Reading, discussion and writing are features of most other subjects and forms of writing appropriate to each area of study should be considered integral to teaching, learning and assessment in them. For some students, competency in organising and expressing ideas and correct and appropriate language use can equally well be developed and tested through those subjects. Nonetheless, we are aware of the general public belief that a pass grading in compulsory English assures that certain standards of literacy have been met. Other studies do not cover the kinds of reading that the present compulsory study of English does.

Recommendation 15: That the study of English occupy two compulsory and sequential semester-length units over Years 11 and 12 for all students.

4.35 This Committee is concerned that improved measures should be taken to ensure that all students have sufficient competence in literacy and number to take their place confidently in the society and to have access to further study. The Discussion Paper suggested that some form of assessing competence in these areas, based on content familiar to students, should be introduced at the end of Year 10. The credentials working party, while sharing the concern, did not agree with this proposal. It advised that all students should undertake compulsory and common studies in the areas of communication skills and numeracy as part of the Certificate. We do not endorse this, since we believe that skills are an inadequate basis for curricular design. It also recommended, however, that steps should be taken to ensure that, by the end of compulsory schooling, all students had competence in communication skills and number operations adequate to be able to engage in postcompulsory studies. This the Committee favours strongly.

4.36 Teachers need more assistance than they now have in the identification of students falling seriously behind their peers in the skills of literacy and numeracy at all stages of schooling, particularly over the compulsory years, and in identifying and remediating these difficulties. No well based case exists for claiming that the level of performance in basic skills is declining. The available Australian evidence points to improvements. Nevertheless, the standards needed by everyone for full social participation are rising and within overall improvements in standard there is still legitimate reason for concern that an unacceptably high proportion of students fails to reach those standards. Both establishing and testing minimal standards of competence are fraught with difficulties not well understood by many advocating such moves. Nor are there any established ways for overcoming difficulties experienced by some students in either area. We support the recommendation of

the credentials working party that tests should further be developed and consistently used to ensure that individual students, their parents and teachers are conscious of levels of achievement attained. These tests could assist teachers in ensuring that all students (with minor and justifiable exceptions) emerge from their period of compulsory schooling competent in oral and written communication and in the basic mathematical processes.

Recommendation 16: That standardised tests in oral and written communication and in the basic mathematical processes be developed and used consistently over the period of schooling to enable teachers and parents to identify and assist in rectifying deficiencies in students' achievement in these areas.

Orientation Towards the Adult World

4.37 The Committee is particularly concerned about the institutional arrangements and climate within which students approaching full adult status, or having already attained it, continue their studies. The preceding discussion of the curricular content of the upper secondary years has emphasised its orientation towards the next stage of students' lives—as workers, citizens, and continuing students. Institutional arrangements are a prominent aspect of students' curricular experience, playing an important part in orienting them towards adult roles, and could be influential in encouraging the continued participation of those now alienated by their experience of schooling. It is neither appropriate nor developmental for students to constrain them at senior secondary levels within rules and arrangements appropriate to early adolescence. That is, of course, an important additional reason for favouring provision of upper secondary schooling on a separate campus where feasible. Within this more appropriate educational environment students should, of course, have access to counselling and other support services. An adult atmosphere does not involve indifference to students.

Recommendation 17: That in content, learning modes and institutional practices, curriculum over the postcompulsory years be oriented towards the adulthood students are entering. In particular, institutional practices should enable students to:

- Contract voluntarily into courses with the acceptance of requirements associated with them.
- Increasingly over the two years be obliged to be present on campus only for contracted sessions.
- Assume active responsibility for their own learning.
- Move across locations for different aspects of study as needed.
- Assume collective responsibility for the organisation and rule of their own adult community outside areas of teachers' professional responsibility.
- Contribute routinely to curricular review through their responses to courses, learning modes and assessment practices.

4.38 The reforms proposed could be facilitated or frustrated by the nature of the credentialling process and by the ways of providing for selection into higher education within it. Offering broader options for all students can only result in more appropriate and satisfying choices by students if the shape and operation of the credential allow and encourage them. It is to these issues that we now turn.

5 The Common Credential

5.1 The emergence of a Year 12 certificate as highly significant to the individual futures of the majority of an age cohort is a relatively recent phenomenon. Progression through secondary school was once marked by a series of exit points at Years 9, 10, 11 and 12, each giving access to particular levels of employment and further training. Apprenticeship was entered after Year 8 or Year 9; the public service required a Year 10 certificate; entry to teachers college and nursing required the satisfactory completion of Year 11. Entry into university was once open on the completion of Year 11, then of Year 12, to all those who had satisfactorily followed a prescribed range of studies and who were able to afford it. Competition at this point was confined to seeking a limited number of scholarships. Now, however, Year 12 is needed for access to options formerly spread over a number of exit points, and competition for places in higher education is now strong. A Year 12 certificate has become crucial for a wide range of opportunities and for large numbers of students. Its nature must be changed to reflect its changed significance.

5.2 The variety of Year 12 certificates that now exists in Victoria must be replaced by a single certificate within which achievements in the comprehensive curricular range recommended in the last chapter can be legitimated, assessed and recorded. The number of certificates and their differing modes of assessment have led to public confusion, to unequal subsequent opportunities for students and to the worsening of difficulties associated with selection into higher education. As participation in postcompulsory schooling rises, the necessary variety of content and forms of achievement should be brought together in a single certificate which should mark the successful completion of upper secondary schooling and become the basic qualification required for subsequent studies.

Existing Year 12 Certificates

5.3 The mainstream Year 12 certificate continues to be the HSC based on group 1 subjects. Students generally complete four or five accredited subjects in which results are determined by a combination of external examinations and externally moderated assessment of student work by their teachers. The certificate issued by VISE shows the subject, year of completion and grades obtained on a six-point (A-F) scale with marks standardised on a 100-point scale.

5.4 Attempts in Victoria to reconcile the educational and selecting functions of certificates have resulted in the development of a number of Year 12 certificates alternative to the HSC based on group 1 subjects. These alternatives reflect the variety of purposes of postcompulsory schooling beyond the preparation of a minority of young people for further participation in education. Within the HSC program, alternatives include seven approved study structures, including STC, and a broad range of group 2 subjects and units. Of these, the STC poses the most fundamental alternative to mainstream certificates: courses vary from year to year and are designed by individual schools and teachers with substantial participation by students. Schools are accredited to conduct STC and the processes of teaching and learning, but not the content, are moderated by teachers drawn from the group of schools undertaking

STC. Students are assessed by their teachers and the subsequent HSC certificate issued by VISE states that the candidate has satisfactorily completed a Year 12 course of study. The achievements attained by the student throughout the course and in subject areas are described and teachers' recommendations regarding the suitability of the student for further study are included. Arrangements are rather different for HSC group 2 subjects and for single units where course content is centrally accredited, students are assessed by their teachers, and external moderation of this assessment takes place in some subjects. Results are reported on a two-point (pass/fail) or six-point (A–F) scale and the certificate sometimes supplies descriptive assessments, designed to provide additional information for the range of users of the certificate, including employers and institutions of further and higher education.

5.5 Outside the HSC program, Technical Year 12 certificates issued by the Education Department also record the units successfully completed by students on a two-or six-point scale, together with a descriptive statement of achievement in each unit. Schools are accredited annually by the Education Department to conduct T12, students are assessed by their teachers and some moderation occurs. Finally, TOP certificates, issued by the higher education institution which accredits TOP courses and moderates its assessments, state that the successful student has met the requirements for admission to a degree course. Subjects are listed and results usually recorded according to a six-point scale. Although TOP has become the most popular Year 12 certificate among the alternatives to the HSC group 1 mode, the number of students enrolling in the other school-assessed programs described above has grown slowly but steadily.

5.6 The broadest range of options is open to those who have completed HSC group 1 subjects, that is, those subjects which involve a component of external examination and from which scores can be aggregated. The scores of those seeking entry to higher education on the basis of other qualifications, especially TOP, are now discounted by a certain percentage by many institutions, although TOP is a preferred mode of entry into a few courses in colleges of advanced education. The abundance of qualified applicants for coveted courses, the shortage of places overall, the administrative ease and the apparent objectivity of aggregated scores for selection have intensified competition among the young and entrenched the dominance of the HSC group 1 subjects. Other users of certificates—students, parents and the community—are confused by the variety of certificates awarded and their different modes of assessing students and recording results. Many employers favour applicants holding certificates with grades or marks in subjects with which they are familiar, which have been externally examined and which rank the performance of applicants. The popularity of the HSC group 1 mode as a selection device in the labour market has increased in times when the number of applicants exceeds job vacancies.

5.7 Students' preferences for remaining in a familiar school and accepting the courses it offers have certifying as well as curricular consequences. Gaining a T12 certificate, for example, opens few opportunities in higher education, and remaining at school rather than transferring to TOP can exclude the option of pursuing studies in, for example, art and design. Those who lack access to reliable information and whose friends and contacts have little experience of extended education are most victimised by the present system. If hampered by previous decisions, students often seek to use certificates designed for one purpose for a variety of other purposes. For example, although TOP was intended originally to prepare students for and give access to only those courses conducted by the college or university that accredited and moderated it, it was almost immediately used to gain entry to the full range of courses in other institutions. T12 was introduced as a

final year of schooling for those in technical schools and not as a means of entry to further education, but recently T12 students have sought entry to institutions of higher education. There is now pressure for all certificates to include information to assist students gain admission to further educational opportunities and to become multi-purpose certificates alternative to the HSC. Thus the variety of certificates contributes both to the inequity and the inefficiency of the present system.

A Single Certificate

5.8 The introduction of a single certificate to mark the completion of the full span of schooling would overcome many of these difficulties. There was overwhelming support in the responses to the Discussion Paper and unanimity in the working party on credentials for the introduction at the earliest possible date of a single certificate to replace all existing certificates at the Year 12 level. We recommend:

Recommendation 18: That a single certificate marking the completion of secondary schooling and named the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) be introduced in Victoria in 1987.

The Purposes of the New Certificate

5.9 The primary purpose of the certificate gained at the Year 12 level should be to mark the successful completion of schooling and record achievements over the postcompulsory years. The present (and past) emphasis on comparing students' achievements to determine their fitness for higher education has caused large numbers of students to be excluded from participating in the full span of schooling. A certificate encouraging higher retention into Year 12 must favour and record achievements over a much wider range of studies and activities than those covered by any existing certificate. Such a development has consequences for assessment practices, since activity-based aspects of curriculum such as dance and drama, or automotive practice, cannot be assessed in the same way as can achievements amenable to written tests. No single standard of performance adjudging preparedness for higher study can apply even to all studies amenable to written testing, and assessment difficulties will increase if achievements in different types of studies within the major curricular areas are to be ranked in relation to each other, or aggregated into a single score. There is no valid method of comparing achievements varying widely in kind or of aggregating the results of such comparisons.

5.10 The second important purpose of the certificate is to assure the quality of courses and of standards, and the impartiality of assessments. At this point of schooling it is appropriate that interests beyond those of providers and participants are able more directly to influence the curriculum through the accreditation process than is possible at earlier stages. Accreditation of programs opens the aims, scope, content and modes of assessments, within subject areas and overall, to public scrutiny and thereby acts as an important guarantee of quality in schooling. Central accreditation of courses, including their content and learning processes, and central responsibility for assessment provide reassurance that similar grades in similar studies represent similar achievements throughout the state and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged on the basis of institution attended or area of residence. These points were strongly emphasised in responses to the Discussion

Paper, and were often associated with a desire to preserve or extend external examination as well as to insist on the importance of the central accreditation of all units contained within the certificate. Experience elsewhere, both in Australia and overseas, shows that external examining is not a necessary component of the guarantee of standards and impartiality. However, the central accreditation of units and the moderation of assessments by individual teachers and schools are both essential features of a certificate having wide currency. A strong body of opinion among responses also supported this position.

5.11 A third purpose of the certificate is to attest preparedness for further study, to assist in the selection of students for higher education and in the cross-creditation of elements of the common certificate into TAFE courses. As already argued, senior secondary studies must include in-depth courses giving a good basis for higher education. But this preparation should not be highly specific to a narrow band of postsecondary courses, nor so pervasive as to preclude the student's continued general education. The Committee sees no disadvantage associated with the greater attractiveness to students of courses that also prepare them for higher education. On the contrary, such choices are rational from a student's perspective since they keep open the widest subsequent options. This endorsement, however, has two provisos. The first is that these courses should provide avenues of achievement for more young people than just those preparing for higher education. The second is that the courses themselves should deepen and refine students' understanding of a field of knowledge, and of the world, in ways that are valuable for those who do not take them further as well as for those who do. There seems, regrettably, no way of eliminating the competitive pressures associated with selection for higher education while places there are so severely rationed. These pressures can however be reduced. The next chapter discusses these matters in detail.

5.12 The cross-crediting of units of the Victorian Certificate of Education into TAFE courses and the inclusion of some vocational studies within the Certificate will require changes in the accrediting authority and the teaching of some units of the Certificate in TAFE under contract to the Education Department.

Recommendation 19: That all units within the Victorian Certificate of Education be accredited by a central agency which should also oversee modes of assessment and the moderation of assessments across wider groups of students than those in individual institutions.

Framing the Certificate

5.13 The Certificate will be framed in accordance with the curricular recommendations of the preceding chapter. It would therefore be organised in semester units. Greater flexibility in student choices would result from a certificate composed of twenty-four units, rather than of eleven subjects which are now undertaken by students over Years 11 and 12. While leaving details of the design open for further consultation and decision by the new accrediting and certifying agency, a certificate framed along the lines recommended in the previous chapter would have something like the following form:

- It would be composed of twenty-four units cumulative over Years 11 and 12.
- It would include a range of studies in the major curricular areas of arts/humanities, science/technology, mathematics, and a range of vocational and activity-based studies.

- It would oblige all students to have at least one three-unit sequence in each of the three areas of arts/humanities, science/technology and mathematics.
- It would also oblige all students to follow a common two-unit study in the study of work in society and two units of compulsory English.
- It would restrict any formal sequence to no more than three units while providing scope for further specialist single units which might build upon the sequences. Such specialist units could be undertaken as preparation for certain courses in higher education or as part of certificate courses and other studies in TAFE.

5.14 Such a pattern would mean that a student with strong interests in mathematics and science and seeking to pursue subsequent studies in science or engineering, for example, could take four three-unit sequences in science and mathematics. These would form a partial basis for ranking for selection into postsecondary education and would be sequential. Two units of the study of work in society and a further two in English would be obligatory for all students. To meet the requirements of the Certificate, this student would complete a three-unit sequence over the two-year period in arts/humanities, leaving the balance of five units to be chosen from any other accredited units. As these other units could include specialised preparation for subsequent studies in TAFE or higher education such a student could take further units in mathematics and science. A student specialising in arts/humanities would follow a similar pattern, with major sequences in arts/humanities, and a three-unit sequence in each of mathematics and science/technology. Of course, specialist opportunities would not be confined to the major curricular areas, nor need students be highly specialist at all. Within the overall requirements of the Certificate for breadth and depth of study, there is scope for both the specialists and those with wider interests. The units in the sequences would relate to each other in any of several ways. A first unit of some sequences would provide a general overview of an area of study; others would not. Units in some sequences would build directly upon the previous one(s) as might a particular sequence in mathematics; other sequences would require that expertise be developed through the combination of several units, as might a sequence in materials technology comprising units of practical and associated theoretical studies in each of wood, metal and plastics technology.

Recommendation 20: That the Victorian Certificate of Education be awarded to students who successfully complete twenty-four units within prescribed patterns which include sequential units, common studies and other studies.

5.15 The Committee believes that this framing is consistent with the principles advised by both the credentials and curriculum working parties, in a form which is more flexible and open than the detailed recommendations of either group. The principles commonly espoused, and endorsed by this Committee, are that:

- Years 11 and 12 should be regarded as a curricular entity.
- Units of study should be based on a semester rather than a year.
- Over Years 11 and 12 some framed spread of studies allowing degrees of specialisation should form the basis of curricular options for all students.
- Within this framework there should be some common studies.
- The specialisations followed should include sequential studies for academic preparation, and others articulating into further studies in TAFE and into employment.

- The studies should not be so strongly framed as to prevent students exploring areas of established or possible interest beyond their common studies and general study orientation.
- The association between theoretical and applied studies should be strengthened.

Accumulating Units

5.16 It is a matter of concern that the majority of students who leave school at the end of Year 11 do not gain a widely accepted certificate from the education system. While we expect that more of these students will in future stay to complete the full Victorian Certificate of Education, certificates indicating partial completion should be made available to students who leave at any time after completing any unit, giving a basis on which later credits towards the Certificate can build. This would also allow the completion of the Certificate on a part-time basis. In addition, students who find difficulty in completing the Certificate within two years could spend longer time gaining it. This would have particular advantages for those changing future plans over the two years, for those experiencing learning difficulties and for immigrant students who have little or no English. The semester-length units enable failure more readily to be redeemed, and the Committee, along with the credentials working party, believes that when students repeat units, the Certificate should record only the highest assessment gained.

Recommendation 21: That those leaving at any stage after the completion of any unit be issued with a certificate indicating partial completion of the credential and recording units satisfactorily completed.

Recommendation 22: That the Certificate record only the highest level of achievement gained in units attempted more than once.

Assessment within the Certificate

5.17 There are both advantages and problems associated with applying different modes of assessment to different studies within a common certificate. When some studies are fully or partly externally examined and others are not, greater prestige attaches to the former, largely because many employers, community members and some institutions of higher education believe that comparisons of performance are more reliably and impartially recorded through this mode of assessment. When courses used as a basis for selection into higher education are the only ones with external examinations, this problem is intensified, often leading to a belief among students and the public that courses not so distinguished do not represent achievements significant in kind or standard. Research has shown that assessment by writing under pressure, as represented by external examinations, is no more reliable in ranking students and measuring achievement than are teachers' assessments, provided these are moderated across a larger number of students than those of a single institution. Many significant achievements are evident in products

or activities; written testing is inappropriate for them. Nor is it appropriate to apply measures designed to test competence to participate in higher education to other studies. Although they may be amenable to written assessment, these studies have other primary intentions and applications. Because assessment is inextricably part of the teaching and learning process, practising teachers should play the major role in it. They do of course in institutions of higher education. Those who obtain degrees and diplomas are not externally examined and results are not moderated across universities and colleges.

5.18 All studies within the common Certificate will be accredited by a central agency to ensure quality, to contain variety within a given field in the interests of users of the Certificate, and to ensure that all studies are rigorous and challenging. This accreditation, as is now the case, will include appropriate ways of assessing studies and activities different from each other in intent and kind, and provide for moderation across schools. The inclusion in the moderation process of other people having special and relevant experience as well as practising teachers could strengthen this moderation process and act as a further assurance of standards. Present indications are, however, that important and influential groups in the community, including some users of the Certificate, do not yet have sufficient trust in the outcome of assessments made by teachers even when moderated across a wider group. The Committee acknowledges this and considers that, at least in the short term, there should be a continuance of partial external assessment in some of the studies within the Certificate which are to be used as the basis for ranking students for selection into higher education (see Chapter 6).

Transition to the New Certificate

5.19 The new Certificate will subsume all existing Year 12 certificates and should be introduced at the earliest possible date. In phasing out existing certificates and replacing them with the Victorian Certificate of Education in 1987, the co-operation of all agencies that now accredit courses and issue certificates will be essential. During 1986, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board will determine the requirements of the Certificate on the basis of consultations with all parties involved and in accordance with the principles enunciated in this report. For 1987, the subjects now available in the HSC and in TOP will be categorised into fields of study and accredited as two-semester units on an interim basis. While whole courses of study, including STC, T12 and other approved study structures will not be included as such, the units which make up such courses can be accredited on an interim basis and form part of the overall offerings. Until 1990, students will be able to select units from all these options and the Certificate will be based on Year 12 only. In 1990 the new Certificate will come into full operation. In preparation, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board will need immediately to commence developing the new common studies with a societal orientation, accrediting a wide range of studies with a great variety of modes of assessment and, where appropriate, arranging for cross-crediting into postsecondary courses.

5.20 Elements of TOP which require specialist facilities and expertise only present in TAFE will continue to be offered there under contract to the Education Department. However, it is recommended that TOP as such cease to operate at the end of 1986.

Recommendation 23: That all studies presently included in the Higher School Certificate, the Tertiary Orientation Program and Technical Year 12 become part of the Victorian Certificate of Education in 1987 and over 1986 be accredited on an interim basis.

Recommendation 24: That by 1990 the new Certificate be fully operational and be based on the curricular policies recommended in this Report.

Recommendation 25: That elements of the Tertiary Orientation Program where they involve facilities and expertise available only in TAFE continue to be offered under interim accreditation and under contract to the Education Department; but that the Program as such cease to operate at the end of 1986.

6 Selection into Higher Education

6.1 Institutions of higher education face serious selection problems as higher proportions of the age group complete secondary schooling and seek admission to limited numbers of places in them. The schools face the difficulty of ensuring that students entering higher studies are well prepared for them, while also diversifying curricula to accommodate students having a wide range of capacities and moving into a wide variety of activities in the society. Seeking a reasonable and equitable solution to the problems faced by both parties is now urgent.

6.2 It is not entirely true to claim that the dilemmas faced by the school sector would be eliminated by a considerable increase in places in higher education, or that this would solve the difficulties of selection faced by the institutions themselves. This increase would, however, considerably reduce problems on both sides. The demand for places in higher education among those who have completed secondary schooling in the previous year is difficult to quantify with any precision. The notion of being 'qualified' to enter is itself imprecise, since when there is a shortage of places, 'qualification' is in effect synonymous with being offered a place. The estimate is further complicated by the pooling of applications for places in most institutions. Students may apply for more than one institution and/or type of course and many students making application are not serious contenders on the basis of their Year 12 achievements. Estimates of demand can be inflated by these means. Nonetheless, although it is by no means established that the demand for higher education necessarily rises commensurately with increased enrolments in Year 12, it is abundantly clear that competition for places in higher education is intensifying, and that students who could be successful in higher studies are denied access. At the very least, overall numbers of places in higher education should be provided at a level accommodating a fixed proportion of those completing Year 12 in the previous year, while also providing for the considerable number of older and overseas students who now participate. The proportion of Year 12 students immediately transferring to higher education has fallen from 54 per cent to 42 per cent between 1973 and 1984. This proportion is likely to decline further, unless more places are provided in higher education, given the projected increases in the numbers of students completing Year 12. The Committee believes that the present proportion should be enlarged to some agreed level.

Recommendation 26: That the Victorian Government urge the Commonwealth Government to restore the level of places in higher education to that representing at least 50 per cent of students enrolled in Year 12 in the previous year after allowance has been made for mature-aged and overseas students.

Reducing Competition for Entry

6.3 The problems of selection are not confined to those arising from an overall shortage of places in relation to demand. They are intensified by the fact that demand is not simply for 'a place', but for a place in a preferred institution and course. This increases the competition among students and encourages course choices based on the level of aggregate score achieved in the selection process rather than on inclination or particular suitability for the related profession. To deal with quota-driven competition for particular professional courses and to ensure that the students who end up in them are well placed there, action within institutions of higher education themselves is required. Benefits to both students and institutions

would result if entry into highly coveted professional courses were delayed until after a year or more of initial postsecondary study common to a number of courses. Students could make more informed career choices, thereby lessening failure in and withdrawal from these highly desired courses. Such changes would involve delayed specialisation in courses but whether they would involve lengthening the period of professional courses is a matter of dispute among those in higher education. Some reallocation of students across institutions would be necessary at the end of the initial study since professional courses are not available in all institutions. Such arrangements already exist in some countries, and are favoured by the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission and by the vice-chancellors of Australian universities.

6.4 The speed with which the selection process is now operated also causes difficulties. Offers of places are made and accepted within a few weeks of the availability of HSC results and precede the commencement date of courses by only a short interval. The process of selection is further complicated because of the pooling of applications and by the hierarchy of institutions and courses. Places in institutions and courses placed low in this pecking order are most frequently taken by those students who have not been offered places of their first preference. The shuffling process gives no real opportunity for the consideration of any information relevant to student suitability beyond that conveyed by an aggregated three-digit score, dubious in reliability and validity, but attractive because of its apparent objectivity.

6.5 This haste and the exclusion of other relevant data from the selection process can be overcome, as it is in many other countries, by a prior sifting process, based on school assessment of student suitability and likely success in studies. This assessment can be made known as early as the middle of the preceding year and can be followed by supplementary assessment, interviews and demonstrated competence in any prerequisites highly specific to particular courses. The present extreme pressure on places results in an obligation publicly to demonstrate some apparently objective way of admitting or rejecting particular students at the margin. It therefore sustains the present arrangements, even though their imperfections are manifest. If it could be accepted that the real difficulty lies in trying to select students from the middle of the continuum ranging from those clearly likely to those unlikely to be successful, more leisurely and satisfactory means could be used to distinguish among those in that middle group. This could also allow moderated teacher assessments more readily to be accepted as the first step in the selection process, with resulting benefits to school-level education. More open movement and cross-crediting across courses and institutions in the whole tertiary sector would reduce the significance of a first placement and serve the interests of equity at the same time.

6.6 There is growing consciousness of the need to reduce the influence exerted by selection into higher education on curriculum in upper secondary schools. A more rounded and less highly pressured educational experience in schools is beneficial for those wishing to enter higher education. Too heavy an emphasis on selection inhibits the development of the broader curricular range now needed. Many tertiary educators are conscious of this need and of the importance of encouraging higher and more socially representative participation in Year 12 as a necessary basis for improved equity in higher education itself. Better methods of selection into higher education are also actively being sought. A number of national inquiries are already in progress since similar problems exist in all states. The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, a committee of the Australian Vice-Chancellors, the Commonwealth Curriculum Development Centre and some institutions of higher education are discussing, or experimenting with, new

arrangements. The overall climate is such as to admit the consideration of radical changes, leading over time to improvements in what is admittedly a complex field. There are no perfect answers, particularly while a shortage of places makes the act of selection so significant and while public faith in the possibility of a precise and objective ranking of applicants is strong.

6.7 We believe that a new climate of opinion in institutions of higher education and beyond, and improved techniques arrived at through experimentation, will lead to desirable changes in selection procedures occurring over a reasonably short period of time. The rationale presented in the proposal to establish a multi-sector institution, the Western Melbourne Institute of Post Secondary Education, is an example of the ways in which the significance of initial selection could be reduced by enabling freer movement across courses in the postsecondary sector, including TAFE. As a result, the Committee has confined itself to a statement of principles which should inform negotiated changes and interim arrangements for selection within the common Certificate.

6.8 The first of these principles is that *selection should be based on a limited number of studies within the Year 12 certificate* rather than being based on the full range of studies undertaken by students at postcompulsory level. This would reduce the salience of selection within the upper secondary curriculum while retaining specialist preparation as an element in it.

6.9 The second is that *the aggregated score of performance at Year 12 should be abandoned*. The unreliability of the aggregate score is widely acknowledged but it is retained for want of a better method of selection. In some countries, for example England which has much more intense competition than has Victoria for entry to higher education, students' performance in subjects is ranked on just a five-point (A-E) scale. Students gain a place in an institution of higher education if they obtain certain grades. While letter grades are less spuriously precise than percentage scores, a single grade covers a range of student achievement and masks differences within that grade. On the other hand, the aggregate score, formed from standardised assessments from schools and external examinations, ranks students in order of merit but does not represent fixed standards of achievement or of preparation for later studies. The subjects from which the score is compiled are to a great extent ignored and serious incompetencies can be concealed. Students of the humanities, in which results are less well inter-correlated, are penalised relative to students of mathematics and science, in which results are significantly inter-correlated. The aggregate score has become a global measure of academic aptitude that makes no concession to the possibility that high-level aptitudes may be moderately specialised and that qualities other than those measured by the score are important for success in further studies and professional life. Obtaining high scores becomes a major focus at the upper secondary level, resulting in rivalry between students, didactic methods of teaching and rote learning. The school's role in the allocation of life chances is enhanced at the expense of the continuing education of all students and appreciation of a wide range of valued capacities.

6.10 The third principle is that *teachers' assessments of student performance should form the major component of selection procedures and that school-assessed student performance should be moderated by panels of appropriate experts drawn from schools and postsecondary institutions*. Teachers' assessments of students' work produced throughout the year now form at least part of the assessment procedures at Year 12 throughout Australia. These assessments can be based on a substantial amount of student performance at a number of points throughout the course and can assess features that cannot be measured by a brief examination. With the expansion of the

range of studies and increased diversity of learning approaches, teachers' assessments will grow in importance as more aspects of student performance will not be amenable to written tests. School assessments can, however, be affected by the relationship between student and teacher, increase the pressure on students throughout the year, and vary according to the criteria employed by the teacher and the school. External moderation of assessments can overcome these shortcomings and guarantee that standards are maintained. Many teachers at secondary and postsecondary institutions already engage in this form of quality control, which has greater validity than statistical moderation and which results in the professional development of all involved. Under this system, assessments given by individual teachers are adjusted by their peers who consider the assessments given in relation to agreed common standards of performance. The Queensland education system relies on this process to ensure equitable comparisons between students.

6.11 The fourth principle is that *the selection process should extend over a longer period of time than it does now*. The granting of provisional entry in the middle of Year 12 with opportunity to tap other relevant information, delayed entry into highly specialised professional courses, the possibility of mid-year entry to higher education (as practised in some countries) and bridging courses within the higher education sector for highly specialised prerequisites should all be investigated and advanced. Success in postsecondary studies depends on factors other than academic performance at Year 12, including motivation for undertaking and liking of the course, emotional stability, financial situation, age and personal maturity. Specialised rather than all-round competencies are also often involved. The high attrition rates in postsecondary courses suggest that these factors may be important determinants of success. However, if institutions are to draw on a variety of additional sources of relevant information about students, including profiles of student achievements, school recommendations and data gathered from auditions, interviews, workshops and supplementary testing, greater time must be available for the selection process and greater resources allocated to it by institutions.

6.12 The fifth principle is that *alternative methods of admitting continuing students to postsecondary institutions should be encouraged*. The dangers should not be ignored of concentrating this phase of education too strongly around the achievements gained by students at Years 11 and 12 and the pathways opened up or closed off by them. In the light also of the longer term goals of more flexibly scheduled and higher levels of participation in all forms of education, institutions should experiment with alternative modes of entry. Some institutions have already initiated experiments designed to admit people who experience some disadvantage under the present arrangements and who are therefore underrepresented in the institution. Bridging courses could be devised to provide an adequate background for those who desire entry to certain specialised courses, for example, science courses, but who lack school studies in the area. If additional cognitive data is thought to be appropriate, some forms of testing, such as the Australian Scholastic Aptitude Test (ASAT), provide reliable and valid data on academic aptitude without affecting the curriculum of schools. ASAT is used in Queensland, Western Australia and the ACT as part of the selection process. Similar tests are used in the United States to rank applicants for entry to postsecondary institutions.

Recommendation 27: That funds from the Tertiary Participation and Equity Program be allocated to institutions of higher education to assist them to develop, implement and evaluate approved alternative means of selecting students and of assisting them to complete successfully the courses undertaken.

Selection within the Common Certificate

6.13 The Committee acknowledges that institutions of higher education have legitimate claims for access to comparable measures of the achievements of students seeking to pursue further studies. It is difficult to work out ways of providing for that within a certificate designed for a majority of the age group, most of whom do not immediately proceed to further studies. The Committee's recommendations are guided by the principles outlined above and by the view that the longer term future will hold more flexible and open educational pathways than those now existing. Possible options are, however, constrained by community attitudes and by existing arrangements. We therefore propose steps that in the short term would provide very considerable improvements to the present situation and would not impede the implementation of more far-reaching changes over the longer term.

6.14 Attitudes to the worth and value of external examinations are polarised. The working party on credentials unanimously opposed the retention of external examinations at Year 12, drawing attention to the abandonment of almost all external examinations in schooling in Australia. It suggested that, over time, community attitudes now supporting external examinations at Year 12 would change. Many of the responses to the Discussion Paper also opposed the continuation of external examinations. VISE has indicated its intention to eliminate all external examinations from the assessment process by 1990. External examinations have been abolished in many countries which continue to select students for admission to higher education and to compare students across schools. Closer to home, Queensland and the ACT do not have external examinations and they are optional in New Zealand for students seeking to improve their school-based assessments.

6.15 On the other hand, many of the responses to the Discussion Paper supported external examinations at Year 12. Some universities and colleges sought to retain them believing them to be an objective measure of student performance. Support for their continuation came from some employers, some nongovernment schools, and parents and school councils in rural areas who considered that their students would be stigmatised or their achievements overlooked without an external objective measure of performance. Other responses expressed the fear that the abolition of external examinations could mean that institutions of higher education would introduce separate examinations which would impose both greater constraints on the curriculum and demands on students than exist now; or that these institutions would recruit selectively from particular schools, especially nongovernment schools with approved curricular orientations.

6.16 The Committee proposes that external examinations be retained for the present. However, we propose that their use be confined to a limited number of three-unit sequences classified as 'preparatory studies', assessed equally by external examinations and by externally moderated teacher assessments. Students seeking to pursue studies in higher education need take *no more than three* of these three-unit preparatory studies. These will be developed by the new accreditation authority in collaboration with the postsecondary institutions. It is possible that external examination of some studies which require the sequential development of knowledge and skills would span the content of the three-unit sequence but in other cases it would be based on the work covered in fewer units. We envisage that assessment results would be available to postsecondary institutions soon after the end of the third semester. This would lengthen the time for the selection process and allow students to undertake at school further specialist or prerequisite studies for admission

to courses in the final semester of Year 12. Tests such as ASAT could be used, if desired, to supplement the various achievement assessments.

6.17 Eligibility for admission to institutions of higher education should depend on the satisfactory completion of the full Certificate of Education. Students must have completed all requirements for the Certificate, including the common studies in the study of work in society and in English and three-unit sequences in each of arts/humanities, mathematics and science/technology.

6.18 As students' results in the preparatory studies would be known soon after the middle of the year, institutions of higher education would have time to seek other relevant information about applicants. They would be encouraged to develop further and evaluate reliable admission procedures. It is proposed that school assessment be used in the majority of units required for the completion of the Certificate. This considerably reduces the significance of external examinations for all students and confines this form of competition to those who wish to enter higher education on leaving school. We believe that as a result of our recommendations in this area some broadening of student choices would occur, the preparation of students for higher education would be improved, a fairer basis of selection would be provided, and completion of the Certificate would open up a range of work and further study options. We recommend:

Recommendation 28: That students be deemed to be eligible for admission to institutions of higher education only if they have

- (i) satisfactorily completed the requirements for the Victorian Certificate of Education, as specified in Recommendation 20;
- (ii) satisfactorily completed three accredited preparatory studies assessed in equal proportions by external examinations and externally moderated teachers' assessment.

7 The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board

7.1 A new statutory body should be created to take overall responsibility for curricula and credentialling at the postcompulsory level. Significant problems have arisen because the development of curricula, its accreditation and assessment at the upper secondary level are undertaken by several different, autonomous agencies, including VISE, the Education Department, TAFE and schools. This overlap has led to the duplication of effort and the evolution of different perspectives which have impeded the articulation and implementation of a curricular rationale for the postcompulsory period. The new authority must encompass all interested parties to ensure that the Certificate of Education is comprehensive and common to all students. Since we are proposing that curriculum at this level should include practical and vocational studies, some units of which will be taught in TAFE, and because we hope that arrangements for cross-crediting courses into TAFE certificates may be extended, TAFE will need to play an important role in the accrediting authority, along with technical school teachers whose Year 11 and Year 12 courses will now become part of the Certificate. A significant proportion of students at senior secondary levels is enrolled in nongovernment schools and these schools should also play a major role.

7.2 The authority of this new body and public confidence in the Certificate it issues will derive in part from its independence from the major providers or beneficiaries of upper secondary education. It should not be part of, or directly linked with, any provider, organisational structure or major interest group; or dominated by any particular sectoral or ideological interests. A single authority with responsibility for curriculum and certification at this level is now the pattern in all Australian states.

7.3 This new authority would replace VISE which was established in 1976, when a minority of young Victorians stayed to Year 12. VISE does not encompass all forms of Year 12 certification available to students, especially the forms developed for those not seeking entry to postsecondary education. These other certificates, especially TOP and more recently T12, have not been brought into VISE's ambit. Their separate existence outside VISE has impeded the incorporation of all forms of Year 12 accreditation and certification within a common framework.

7.4 It was the view of the working party on credentials that the introduction of a new curricular rationale and a Certificate of Education for Years 11 and 12 to replace the range of certificates currently available brings with it the necessity to establish a new authority to replace all those handling present certificates. Although VISE could be revamped and given new terms of reference to handle more specifically the development and accreditation of curricula and the certification of students at the upper secondary levels, the introduction of a new authority signifies a break with former patterns. We recommend:

Recommendation 29: That a Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board be established with overall responsibility for the development and accreditation of curricula and for certification at the senior secondary level.

Curricular Leadership

7.5 The implementation of the recommended policy changes in curriculum and certification at the upper secondary level would become the primary responsibility of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board. Strong curricular leadership at the central level is needed if all upper secondary courses are to be transformed within a reasonable time so as to relate theory and practice where appropriate and to accommodate the needs of the wider group of students. Although the full impact of the changes proposed will extend over a number of years, priority should be given to an overall review of present offerings in major curricular fields and to the development within them of study schemes providing a wider, more applied and more socially inclusive approach. The new compulsory study of work will need to be developed and vocational courses reviewed and regenerated. The proposed spread of studies will also require innovative approaches for students who at present restrict their courses to highly specialised areas. Subjects bearing on major issues of the contemporary world will necessitate the formation of interdisciplinary courses presently rare at upper secondary levels. Many, if not most, existing curricular offerings will remain, but over time a range of new courses will eventuate, and courses closely related in substance and learning modes will be rationalised.

7.6 The challenging curricular changes now needed at the postcompulsory level will be undertaken by teams of staff seconded to the Board on a short-term basis. The majority of those involved in curricular development would be outstanding teachers in schools who would bring to the task their experiences of learning processes and expertise in curricular design and its implementation. Curricular development should also involve the secondment of suitably accomplished personnel from TAFE colleges, institutions of higher education, the business community and the Curriculum Branch of the Education Department. Rather than duplicating the resources of the Curriculum Branch the Board should draw on them for specified purposes of curricular development and maintain a sufficiently close liaison with the people in charge of curricular development for the compulsory years to ensure continuity where appropriate. Within the overall budget of the Board, a sum should be allocated for the secondment of personnel, with the expectation that significant numbers of people will be seconded for particular purposes. Curricular projects identified by the Board will also be contracted to education providers. It is envisaged that, on the basis of its expertise and resources, the Curriculum Branch would be a major recipient of such contracts.

7.7 Central initiatives in curriculum support rather than usurp the teacher's role. Over recent years, it has become apparent that the responsibility for determining the content of courses has become an added burden to many teachers. Those who teach at a number of levels of the secondary school have limited time to give to the development of courses, and the small size of schools results in the formation of too small a professional peer group at any one site for the collective development of curricular initiatives or proposals for accreditation. We believe that teachers would be greatly assisted by the availability of curricular guidelines sufficiently precise and concrete to offer them guidance regarding the structure and content of courses, favoured processes for learning and criteria for assessment. These guidelines would not involve restrictive detail but would be flexible and open enough to allow teachers to make choices among materials, approaches and applications on the basis of their own professional judgement. The processes of learning remain teachers' professional domain, as they alone are able to determine optimal approaches and modes of learning in view of relevant circumstances and in relation to particular groups of students.

Professional Development

7.8 The Board will also play a major role in teacher support and development, which is essential to the success of new curricular initiatives. Without the active involvement and commitment of teachers and of school councils to new perspectives on upper secondary schooling, nothing of significance can happen. Teachers, students, school councillors and others concerned will need time and opportunity to consider the direction of the new policies and to review existing offerings and arrangements so that, ultimately, curricular perspectives can become explicit, public and to the maximum degree, common. Evidence has firmly established that teachers learn best from other practitioners. A productive approach would involve the release of outstanding teachers to participate with their peers in curricular development. Participation in the moderation of school assessments at Year 12 has proved a most significant and influential means of teacher development and is one which should be strongly pursued. The major contribution of teacher training institutions to the transformation of upper secondary curricula would be in the expansion of task forces through which experienced teachers undertaking higher degrees would work with teachers in schools on curricular development and other appropriate tasks.

Certification

7.9 The new Board will assume overall responsibility for the new Certificate marking the end of postcompulsory schooling. It will authorise this common certificate for all students at this level. As a result, all young people in Victoria, regardless of school attended or area of residence, will receive a statement of their achievements during the postcompulsory years. Public confidence in and acceptance of the new Certificate will be enhanced by the existence of a single, central authority responsible for ensuring that high and uniform standards of quality are met in all subject areas. The Board will recommend appropriate assessment procedures for units and determine the mode and form of the final assessment to appear on the Certificate of Education. Eventually, the Board will develop more flexible patterns of certification linking schools, institutions of higher education and TAFE. Bringing accreditation arrangements for both TAFE and schools together could be a first step in forging closer relationships between accrediting authorities in all educational sectors. This would enable the transferring of credits between sectors, the opening up of more varied pathways between them and a more honest consideration of the best location for particular courses.

Structure and Membership

7.10 The membership of the Board and the manner of its appointment are crucial to its credibility and its successful operation. The Board will provide a forum for all major groupings with an involvement or interest in postcompulsory schooling. These include most importantly those in the education sector, especially the Education Department, other education authorities and those teaching at this level of schooling. Others with a claim to representation include postsecondary institutions of all types, students, employers, employees, parents, school councils and members of the wider community. It is important that those appointed should have the full confidence of those they represent, and that they carry a degree of authority and

responsibility within their own sector. This would suggest that some members ought to be appointed to the Board by virtue of their positions as chief administrators of educational sectors. The representatives of secondary education would then include the Director-General of Education, the Chairperson of the State Board of Education, the chief administrator of the Catholic school system, and the presidents of the relevant teachers' union and principals' association. Leading administrators of the TAFE and higher education sectors would also be included in a postsecondary category. The inclusion of the heads of major agencies and organisations on the Board will lend it authority and credibility and ensure that the interests of these bodies are represented. However, it must be balanced by the representation of the actual practitioners, particularly classroom teachers, who will be affected by the decisions the Board makes. The best way to ensure that these members are genuinely representative is to make provision for them to be elected by their professional peers.

7.11 Greater difficulties attend the adequate representation of those who are to be the voice of the community. Members of parliament are perhaps a logical choice and could be recommended by the government and opposition parties respectively. Parents and school councils can be represented by their associations. However, the membership of those who are not collectively organised, including students and employers, is more difficult. While some direct representation may be desirable, the Board could be required to engage in regular consultations with groups of young people and with groups of employers. These consultations could provide opportunities for more disparate views to be discussed with the Board. Overall, there should be an appropriate balance between members appointed automatically by virtue of their position as heads of major agencies or interest groups, members elected by their colleagues or peers in a particular field of endeavour, and members appointed by the Minister on the basis of expertise or other relevant factors. We would expect that appointments would reflect an appropriate gender balance and the inclusion of minority groups. Although the Board would seek to provide a forum for all interested parties, the Board itself should meet no more frequently than quarterly.

7.12 The Board should be chaired by a full-time director with overall responsibility for its operations. It is envisaged that the work of the Board in the major areas of curricular development, accreditation, assessment and certification would be undertaken by small expert committees which would be appointed by the Board and would operate within the framework of policy it has devised. Below this level there would be a range of smaller committees working in specified areas. The Board and its committees would be serviced by a small secretariat which would not itself engage in any curricular or policy development. We believe that the authority should not duplicate in size, or in conditions of tenure, the large resources in curriculum already present in the Education Department. We further propose that the permanent staff of the accrediting and assessment authority should be kept as small as may be consistent with its special obligations, in the expectation that major curricular development projects will be contracted or will be operated through staff seconded on a temporary basis, mainly from schools and from the Curriculum Branch. The career paths of the small permanent staff of the Board should be articulated into the mainstream of education and public service. It is envisaged that the staff of the Board would be career members of the Victorian Public Service under the auspices of the Public Service Board, with the same conditions of service and career opportunities as all other public servants.

Changeover Arrangements

7.13 Appropriate arrangements will need to be made to continue the present pattern of certificates while preparing for the introduction of the new Certificate, and to deal with the problems of transition from old to new. The process would be expedited if the position of the Director of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board were to be filled with all possible speed. This person will bear a major responsibility for the implementation of this Review overall and will need to be involved at the earliest possible point in any new arrangements. We recommend:

Recommendation 30: That the Director of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board be appointed by the end of 1985 and assume responsibility for the operation of VISE in 1986.

7.14 Under its broader legislative responsibility to assist those completing school, VISE is in the process of investigating the development of computer-based information for those seeking entry to postsecondary courses. At present, information about the nature and content of postsecondary courses is not collated. Each provider publishes a separate handbook. In a complex and rapidly changing field, careers teachers in schools cannot provide comprehensive information or counselling to students regarding course options within chosen areas of interest. The need for accurate, up-to-date and impartial information about education and work will increase in a future characterised by more discontinuous patterns of participation in both. The Victorian Government's proposed Youth Guarantee Scheme recognises the necessity for providing information and counselling to young people regarding options in education and employment. Co-ordination of information and advice is required across all sectors of education and across the labour market if young people are to gain access to broader opportunities. The co-ordination of information regarding educational opportunities is an important task and responsibility for it should be seen as part of the implementation of the Review.

Recommendation 31: That the group charged with oversight of the implementation of the Review, as recommended in Chapter 9, in liaison with the Youth Affairs Bureau, advise the Minister regarding the location and structure of a well based and openly accessible education information service to assist young people and displaced workers in formulating study and training plans.

7.15 It is apparent that relevant expertise already present to a high degree in VISE will be essential in order to deal with the more focussed responsibilities of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board. Staff employed in VISE have extensive experience in the accreditation of curricula at this level and in the range of assessment procedures that can be employed. The transition period and the changeover process will require continued co-operation from the staff at VISE. They will be indispensable in handling the temporary accreditation of existing subjects within the new Certificate for the interim period from 1987 to 1990. All staff already employed should be given the opportunity, after individual counselling, for redeployment at present salary levels within the public sector. All positions within the new authority will be advertised and present VISE staff will, of course, be eligible for appointment to the new agency.

8 Organisational Forms for Postcompulsory Schooling

8.1 Curricular reforms have frequently been associated with the reshaping of educational structures. Organisational forms are not ends in themselves but are the means of meeting educational and societal purposes which change over time. Present curricula at postcompulsory levels are the result of attempts to respond to rising participation by modifying the original intent of each separate segment of provision. When the opportunity to participate in secondary education was extended to all, Victoria continued until 1983 its practice of maintaining, in the public sector, small separate high schools and technical schools. Since that year, all new secondary schools have been comprehensive, combining the features of high and technical schools. The Committee believes that existing high and technical schools should be amalgamated to give all students access to a more comprehensive curriculum and to broaden the opportunities of students in technical schools. The workforce structure to which technical schools originally related no longer exists. In the interests of developing a higher theoretical basis for technical pursuits, and of giving more students the experience of relating practical and theoretical studies, we are recommending that all public-sector secondary provision become comprehensive. As a first step in the process, wherever there are high and technical schools in the same country town or metropolitan area, a joint council should be established charged with the task of integrating the activities and programs of the two schools. We recommend:

Recommendation 32: That the concept of comprehensive postprimary education be extended through the integration of the activities and programs of neighbouring high and technical schools under a single council from 1 January 1987; that all existing high technical or technical high schools should become postprimary schools from that date; and that by January 1988 all schools become comprehensive rather than being designated, equipped or staffed as technical or high schools.

8.2 The report of the working party on organisational forms, published in the second volume of this Report, outlines many of the attempts being made to increase participation and to broaden curricular options for students in the postcompulsory phase. Modifications to school organisational arrangements include the vertical grouping of students across Years 7-12 or Years 11-12 and the development of a unit-based curriculum shared by all students. The introduction of off-campus studies has been assisted by the use of electronic media, one-way and two-way audio and video and teleconferencing. Visiting specialist teachers and mobile resource centres, such as libraries, workshops and craft centres, extend local resources. Linkages have been made between schools and specialist facilities. Resource centres provide services to a number of schools and often to the wider community. Shared resource programs enable students at high schools to undertake programs at adjacent technical schools. Pairs or groups of adjacent schools are also being formed into networks or clusters which share resources and special projects. Some of these linkages associate government and nongovernment schools and many have access to the programs and resources of TAFE colleges. Throughout the period of this Review the increase in this inter-organisational co-operation has been notable. There appears to be widespread agreement that some restructuring of present provision is necessary, and is urgent in those areas strongly affected by demographic changes.

Isolated Schools

8.3 The situation of students in isolated schools warrants particular attention. These young people already travel considerable distances to school and parents are reluctant to send them away to larger centres to complete their education. Levels of unemployment are high, resulting in the forced migration of many to the cities for work or further education after completion of their schooling.

8.4 The lack of curricular options beyond traditionally academic ones has contributed to the low levels of participation in education in rural areas. The difficulty of providing an appropriate curricular range for the small numbers of students enrolled at the senior secondary levels in isolated rural schools is acknowledged in the special staffing formula used by the Education Department to allocate resources and staff to schools in rural areas. The initiatives undertaken through the Country Education Project in providing mobile resource centres and visiting specialist teachers and the experiments in electronic means of linking students and teachers offer some valuable means of expanding the curriculum. Widespread support was expressed in country areas for the building of specialist resource centres with associated hostel facilities to which students from surrounding schools could travel for weekly periods.

8.5 The unit-based curricular structure recommended in Chapter 4 of this Report would enable country students to undertake studies not provided at their schools through spending blocks of time at TAFE colleges, other schools or specialist resource centres. The nature of the facilities provided requires investigation as there is little point in duplicating, for example, the sorts of facilities now found in technical schools and many TAFE colleges, which have become increasingly inappropriate to the future labour requirements of the Victorian economy. We recommend:

Recommendation 33: That the Education Department, drawing where appropriate on the expertise of the Country Education Project develop, implement and evaluate electronic means of expanding the curricular range available to students attending schools in rural areas.

Recommendation 34: That an appropriately designed specialist resource centre and associated hostel facilities for the use of a number of schools be established in an area of rural Victoria at present educationally disadvantaged and lacking such facilities, and that it be evaluated with a view to establishing more such centres over the longer term.

Competing Provision

8.6 In larger provincial centres and in the metropolitan area different conditions have prevailed. The existence of three types of publicly supported secondary provision at the postcompulsory level—government high and technical schools and nongovernment schools—creates problems in curricular and resource terms and unduly restricts the options available to students at all locations. While the major area of recognised competition is that between secondary schools and TAFE where TOP programs are available, a long-running competition for the same group of students occurs between technical and high schools, and between government and nongovernment schools.

8.7 As Victorian schools are small overall, very small numbers of senior secondary students are located on individual sites. Table 7 of this Report shows that in 1984, only 28 per cent of Year 11 groups and 3 per cent of Year 12 groups in government schools had more than 120 students. At Year 12, 65 per cent of students in government schools were attending schools with 60 or fewer enrolments at that level. If the retention rates in Year 12 did not rise above 1984 levels, the declining numbers in the relevant age cohort would result in many schools having lower enrolments over Years 11 and 12 than they have now, although all schools, of course, would not be similarly affected. If the recommended target of 70 per cent participation in Year 12 were to eventuate, higher overall numbers would clearly be involved. This would still not result, however, in numbers sufficient in most schools to enable them independently to offer the recommended curriculum. Even very high retention cannot result in high numbers in Year 11 and 12 combined while the overall size of schools remains small.

New Organisational Forms

8.8 It is quite clear that no single way of reorganising educational structures presently draws wide support within the Victorian educational community, nor is everywhere feasible or desirable. The responses to the Discussion Paper and the Review's working party on organisational forms were divided on the issue of separate provision for senior students. While a majority of responses to the Discussion Paper either favoured some form of institutional separation of the postcompulsory age group, or was prepared to consider it as an option, there was a substantial minority that was opposed to any form of organisational restructuring that would involve such a separation. The strongest opposition came from the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association (VSTA) and individual high and technical schools, especially those in small country centres. There was strong support for separate institutions from the TAFE sector, and support was also received from tertiary institutions, the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, and a range of Education Department bodies, parents, and principals. The main areas of concern related to the professional satisfaction and industrial welfare of teachers, the effects on students in the compulsory years, the effect on student retention and the problems associated with isolated rural areas.

8.9 The common ground shared by almost all the responses was a recognition that structural issues need to be addressed in order to overcome problems of fragmentation, of small numbers of students on individual sites inhibiting curricular breadth, and of providing an appropriate educational atmosphere for postcompulsory students. Insofar as there was any consensus of opinion on this issue, it was that no single institutional form should be imposed across the state. A clear majority maintained that a diversity of structures should be allowed to take account of demographic and geographical factors, existing provision, and community wishes. Most recognised that central guidelines would have to be drawn up to provide a framework for local restructuring, and that local initiatives without overall guidance or direction were unlikely to produce lasting solutions.

8.10 The Committee believes that it is now timely to move beyond the modification of existing structures and to introduce new organisational forms. We believe that the creation of separate campuses and institutions for students in the postcompulsory phase could advance the principles of participation and equity, offering students access to a comprehensive curriculum in an educational environment which reflects their near-adult status. Three types of comprehensive upper secondary institutions deserve consideration.

(i) *Complexes of schools*, formed from the amalgamation of several adjacent postprimary schools, would have separate campuses for senior students. The complex could possibly operate under an umbrella council with individual schools retaining separate councils and administrations. Curricular planning would encompass the full secondary span and teachers would be appointed to the whole complex rather than to an individual campus and would, over their working lives, teach students at all year levels.

(ii) *Senior secondary colleges* would bring together Years 11 and 12. After completion of Year 10 students would move to a new institution which could be multi-campus or single-campus, and governed by its own council. Staff need not be appointed exclusively to such colleges but rather to groups of secondary schools within an area. Over time, staff could move between the earlier years and Years 11 and 12.

(iii) *All-age community colleges* would bring together Years 11 and 12, the full range of TAFE courses and the first years of science, arts and commerce/economics courses conducted at present in universities and colleges of advanced education. Colleges would be single-campus or multi-campus and governed by a single council.

8.11 It is apparent that these three types have common advantages. All three bring together larger numbers of students and teachers, thereby assisting curricular renewal at this level. The presence of more students means that more curricular options can be provided. Victoria's only senior high school at Bendigo offered its 327 Year 12 students twenty-eight HSC group 1 subjects, eight group 2 subjects and thirteen subjects for the Bendigo High School Certificate, a course with a secretarial emphasis developed by the school. TAFE colleges with large TOP enrolments also offer numerous subjects. The Ballarat School of Mines offered forty-six subjects in TOP in 1984. In the ACT, Erindale College offered fifty-seven subjects accredited by the ACT Accrediting Agency, thirty-seven of them for tertiary entry. Courses are offered in the areas of art/technology, English, behavioural sciences, English as a second language, foreign languages, history, physical education, mathematics/computing, performing arts, science, secretarial studies and social sciences. More than forty registered recreational or vocational courses, ranging from sports to cooking, stained-glass techniques, stage production, welding and photography are offered in the evenings as well as during the day, attracting adults with hobby interests as well as full-time students at the college. In Tasmania, Elizabeth Matriculation College in Hobart offers sixty-six subjects within five different 'lines'. This contrasts with between fifteen and seventeen subjects available to Year 12 students at most Victorian schools.

8.12 The economic and sure provision of a greater range of curricular options would not require the creation of very large institutions. Some preliminary work published in the second volume of this Report shows that, with a curricular spread one third larger than that now typically available, the rate of per student costs falls sharply until 300 student enrolments are reached and then shows a slow decline between enrolments of 300 to 600 students.

8.13 Separate campuses and institutions enable the provision of a less restrictive educational environment while maintaining a framework of pastoral care. Students can progressively assume more responsibility for their studies and for the time spent outside the classroom. Restrictions on study and personal habits should lessen over the two years to become no more stringent than those accepted in purposeful adult activities within the community. Students can participate significantly in the governance of the institutions they attend. Separately organised postcompulsory institutions have proved universally popular with the young people who attend them and their introduction in Victoria is likely to encourage more young people to

remain in school. Although a transition to a new institution or campus at the end of Year 10 may tempt students to drop out of schooling rather than transfer, many students have been prepared to transfer to TAFE colleges to undertake TOP, partly because it offers a new start. While retention rates reflect many factors, participation levels have risen where there are separate institutions for senior students. As opportunities for recurrent education are extended as an essential part of employment, to meet leisure and recreational needs and to satisfy a desire to know, those returning to study are unlikely to return to schools as presently constituted. Separate postcompulsory institutions or campuses could provide more congenial re-entry points.

8.14 Community colleges, which blend upper secondary schooling and a broad range of postsecondary courses, offer many additional advantages. As well as increasing the number of places in tertiary education, they provide familiarity with higher and further education for those who, themselves or through contacts, lack that familiarity. Blurring the boundaries between sectors and developing cross-crediting arrangements between them allows students to undertake some studies at an advanced level, thereby diminishing also the importance of the certificate awarded at the end of schooling in selecting students for higher education. Students could readily sample courses and could change curricular tracks without leaving the college.

8.15 We note that plans have been announced for the development in 1987 of the Western Melbourne Institute of Post Secondary Education, to be located in the western suburbs. It will offer degree and diploma courses and TAFE courses in such a way that students will be able to select subjects from all streams and to transfer from one to another. We strongly support this development which could provide a valuable pilot scheme for working through some of the issues which arise in the transfer of credits between two education sectors. We also believe that with the addition of upper secondary classes, it could form the basis for a post Year 10 community college. We recommend:

Recommendation 35: That, where feasible, all new provision in the public sector at the upper secondary levels be located in separate postcompulsory campuses or colleges.

Recommendation 36: That each region of the Education Department, after extensive public consultation in 1985-86, submit plans to establish complexes of schools in 1987.

Recommendation 37: That where locally favoured and where feasible, two examples of senior colleges and community colleges be established by the earliest possible date in areas currently educationally disadvantaged.

Recommendation 38: That priority be given to establishing Years 11 and 12 in association with the kind of provision planned for the Western Melbourne Institute of Post Secondary Education, to form a postcompulsory community college.

Issues Arising

8.16 These three forms of separate postcompulsory institutions also present various problems which must be resolved prior to their introduction. It is important to recognise that the introduction of separate institutions results in the creation of *two* new structures, both the Years 7–10 school and the senior college. We believe that the success of one form must not, and need not, be at the expense of the other. A rationale already exists for the compulsory years of schooling to be free from the constraints imposed by the credentialling requirements of the later years. There is some evidence that senior students take the available leadership roles regardless of their year level. While the most senior students can provide role models for junior students, it seems unfair to deprive older students of educational opportunities because their presence has beneficial effects on younger students. We note that flourishing Years 7–10 schools exist in the Catholic system and in Bendigo and that neither in those schools, nor in similar circumstances in Britain, do all the most accomplished teachers seek to transfer to the higher levels. Over the longer term, we believe that schooling will be more radically restructured. It is likely that the compulsory years of schooling will be organised within Years P–10 schools and that the postcompulsory years will be organised in a variety of modes which offer more flexible pathways to a variety of postschool destinations. However, in the interim, positive steps need to be taken to avert any difficulties which could arise.

8.17 Any restructuring of educational provision will affect teachers' working conditions and careers. Schools, teachers' unions and a range of other respondents were concerned that being confined to teaching classes at any one level may have an adverse effect on teachers' morale, job satisfaction and stress; that promotion prospects and mobility may suffer; that divisions would be created in the teaching service, possibly leading to an elite group of teachers with different conditions; and that industrial problems could arise where teachers under different awards were working in the same institution. Lack of mobility between junior secondary and senior schools has become a problem for teachers in the ACT as teachers of older students are reluctant to move, and the teaching service has been further fragmented in Tasmania.

8.18 It is our view that the negotiation of satisfactory arrangements for teachers would be greatly enhanced if a single union were to cover all teachers in secondary schools in the public sector. At present, teachers in high schools are members of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association (VSTA) and those in technical schools and TAFE are members of the Technical Teachers Union of Victoria (TTUV). Both unions have negotiated industrial agreements with the government and there is some variation of conditions between teachers in high and technical schools. If teachers in all schools are to derive increased job satisfaction from any changes to schools, it is important that a single union represents them and acts on behalf of their professional interests. The amalgamation of high and technical schools and the rationalisation of responsibilities between schools and TAFE will assist this process. On this basis we are confident that solutions to professional and industrial problems can be found. Teachers could be appointed to a whole complex of schools, not just to the senior campus within it, or to a region rather than to any particular school. Appointments to separate postcompulsory institutions or campuses could be made for fixed periods of time, for example for five years, so that teachers would not be permanently excluded from teaching at certain levels. While we note that many teachers seek appointment to Years 7–10 schools in the Catholic sector and evince

great professional satisfaction, teachers who prefer appointment to schools covering the full secondary span should have that option. Teachers are already employed within a variety of organisational forms. We recommend:

Recommendation 39: That the Education Department immediately establish a task force with substantial representation from the teachers' unions to identify and resolve any industrial and professional issues relating to the restructuring of upper secondary provision.

8.19 The role of the nongovernment schools is also an issue in any restructuring. We consider that it is vital that nongovernment schools should be fully involved in any planned restructuring in order to increase curricular options for all young people, to reduce the costs of competing provision at this level and to increase further the levels of co-operation. Many nongovernment, especially Catholic, schools have co-operated with government schools and have contracted with TAFE for the supply of services at this level. It is apparent that nongovernment schools will be further affected by the establishing of new structures and by the proposed elimination of TOP. Small schools will encounter greater difficulties in providing the comprehensive curriculum advocated and may wish to form closer curricular associations with government schools. In certain areas, some nongovernment schools may wish to discontinue their upper secondary levels. In the case of religiously based schools this move would, in turn, require the inclusion of religious education or religion studies as curricular options within any comprehensive postcompulsory institution.

Implementing Structural Change

8.20 If all students are to have access to a comprehensive curricular range, all resources at the postcompulsory level in an area will have to be considered in their totality. Existing provision in government and nongovernment schools and in TAFE would need to be surveyed. Information to be gathered would include:

- overall enrolments and retention rates, and enrolments and retention rates on individual sites, by course and subjects;
- projected enrolments overall and projected enrolments on individual sites over a ten-year period;
- facilities available on individual sites;
- numbers of EFT teachers involved, by region and by individual site;
- labour market developments in the area and destinations of exit students;
- arrangements already existing designed to increase students' access to curricular options and evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses;
- schools and colleges so geographically placed as to make co-operating arrangements among them feasible at this level of provision, paying attention to preferred groupings expressed by institutions themselves.

8.21 The implementation of any restructuring has been considerably simplified by the proposals to transfer responsibility and resources for all government sector provision at Years 11 and 12 to the Education Department, to consolidate high and technical schools, and to consolidate all TAFE activities within TAFE. Extensive consultation with all affected, including students and those who have left school,

parents, teachers, school councils, TAFE providers and the wider community must precede any planning and must be reflected in the plans developed. Local restructuring, including that proposed or already underway, must proceed within policy guidelines. All plans for restructuring must:

- take into account present and projected demographic trends within an area;
- guarantee all students access to publicly provided postcompulsory schooling throughout Victoria;
- be designed to encourage increased participation at the postcompulsory level;
- grant all students access to courses carrying significant credentials with wide currency for employment and future study;
- encourage the provision of a more adult atmosphere for students of postcompulsory age;
- make possible part-time and discontinuous participation in Years 11 and 12 as well as continuous and full-time attendance;
- combine institutionally separated academic and other streams and ensure that combinations of theoretical and practical/vocational study are made available to all students, while allowing degrees of specialisation in either;
- bring together provision in high and technical schools where both exist, and in schools and TAFE in an overall plan of comprehensive curricular development for students in the area;
- increase the comprehensiveness of the range of study modes and options to which individual students realistically have access; (reviews and plans should, to the maximum degree possible, offer students access to the humanities, social sciences, mathematics, science, languages, creative and performing arts, and practical activities having vocational and broader relevance; the curriculum should include experience in socially valuable activities within the wider community);
- seek jointly to resolve the situation in smaller communities where public/private competition at postcompulsory level results in a limited curriculum discouraging higher retention in both sectors;
- include comparative costings of existing and proposed arrangements.

We recommend:

Recommendation 40: That each Regional Board of Education immediately appoint a small committee with representation from the nongovernment schools within the region and the Regional TAFE Board to survey existing educational provision and to develop plans for restructuring within the policy framework outlined in this Report.

9 The Next Stage

9.1 This Review points to a new direction for the education of young people in the postcompulsory years of schooling. Major changes have been suggested in curricula, certification and the structures of schooling. These changes are intended to enable postcompulsory provision to have the following characteristics:

- It must be such that more students want to participate in it and see purpose in it.
- It must be designed within a comprehensive curricular rationale defining a range of options and common studies to which all students should have access to the maximum degree possible.
- It must include significant, practical, work-related studies within a framework of continuing general education.
- It must not be so rigidly tracked into 'academic' and 'non-academic' streams that it excludes students from participating in both.
- It must promote equity in participation in schooling.
- It must give all students access to a common and significant credential.
- It must lead into all forms of postschool study and into employment and citizenship.
- It must have demonstrated relevance to major issues of the contemporary world and to the concerns of students entering it as adults.
- It must relate theory to its applications where appropriate and locate ideas in a social and historical context.
- It must allow for participation of varying kinds—discontinuous and part-time as well as continuous and full-time.
- It must be conducted in ways which move decisively over the two years away from those appropriate to early adolescence towards those operating in task-centred adult associations.

9.2 We believe these changes are necessary if the great majority of young Victorians is to participate purposefully in the full span of schooling. We have argued that this participation should be encouraged in order to promote equity; to enhance personal satisfaction and fulfilment; and to lay the basis for a more highly skilled and productive workforce. The development of all talents is valuable to the society and the skills and talents of today's young people form the basis of the future well-being and prosperity of the society. However, the development of these human resources is a lengthy and expensive process. It is clear that the improvements in the education of young people at the upper secondary level which this Report foreshadows have considerable resource implications. We believe that the Government must now commit the necessary resources to implement the recommendations of this Report.

9.3 There are, of course, considerable social, personal and financial costs also involved in continuing with present policies. Without a comprehensive curricular range and associated changes in the credential, increased participation is unlikely to encompass those young people who are presently excluded from TAFE vocational courses and who find academic courses at the upper secondary level in schools

unattractive. Nor will young people seeking a less embracing supervision of their lives than that characterising compulsory schooling be attracted to continuing participation unless upper secondary schooling is conducted on new terms. A proportion of those discouraged from continuing with their schooling by present offerings and arrangements will not only experience immediate difficulty in finding work, but will be permanently dependent members of the society, or casual employees, throughout life. Increased participation and improvements in the quality and range of courses and in learning outcomes are essential to avoid the costs associated with failure to prepare the mass of the age group adequately for changing and uncertain workforce requirements and for a more politically and personally demanding future.

9.4 The net financial costs of the changes proposed are difficult to estimate precisely. Increased retention into Year 12 will carry costs which would have to be met anyway, irrespective of the recommendations of the Review. The cost of the changes will nevertheless be considerable, although offset to some degree by reduced recurrent costs per student at upper secondary levels. Even within the restricted curricular range to which most students now have access, relatively small numbers on individual sites have resulted in an average size of teaching groups in government schools at Year 12 of around twelve students. Recurrent costs per student at Year 12 are 78 per cent greater than those at Years 7–10. If present structures of schooling are unaltered, the provision of a wider curricular range would raise unit costs even if levels of retention increased. Structural changes which allow curriculum to be designed and delivered over larger groups of students than at present could give students access to a wider range of options at somewhat lower unit costs than those presently operating. Without such structural changes, however, both dimensions of this outcome could not simultaneously and universally apply. Organising Years 11 and 12 as a curricular entity with many semester units available to all students over the two years could marginally increase the variety of students' options within relatively stable per student costs. Even with this change, preliminary estimates (see Appendix 8) indicate some 300 students at Years 11 and 12 combined would be needed to increase options significantly without large rises in recurrent costs per student. Some individual schools will reach such enrolment levels. The great majority, however, will not. The curricular changes recommended are a necessary condition of higher and more purposeful participation to the end of Year 12. Any reduced recurrent costs per student which could result from associated structural changes are a bonus rather than a major objective.

9.5 The costs of establishing and operating the recommended Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board will be greater than those presently involved in running VISE. The budget allocation to VISE in 1984–85 was \$5.7m, of which half is spent on conducting external assessment for the HSC. These costs would not diminish while external examinations are retained, and the extension of moderation to all subjects would require greater resources. The development of a common credential recording achievements over Years 11 and 12, the associated curricular development tasks and the negotiation of aspects of the credential with all relevant postsecondary providers is clearly a major and crucial operation which will involve additional costs in the initial period. Responsibility for the major curricular development projects which have been recommended in mathematics, science/technology and the study of work will be borne by this new authority. The Committee estimates that over the longer term, these additional costs will be of the order of \$2.5m a year in constant dollars in addition to the cost of those resources already present within the budget of the Curriculum Branch of the Education Department

that could be notionally allocated for the Board's use. In addition, we propose that the cost of curricular projects recommended for immediate development be partly met by a renegotiation with the Commonwealth Government of the terms of operation of the Participation and Equity Program.

9.6 As suggested in Chapter 1, the major changes proposed in this report provide the necessary policy underpinning for achieving the objectives of PEP. Victoria draws \$11m a year from the Program. Present guidelines governing the expenditure of funds within the Program require that 75 per cent be spent in 40 per cent of schools in geographical areas where participation in postcompulsory and postsecondary education is relatively low. The capacity of the individual institution to promote higher and more equitable participation is severely constrained unless considerable central effort is put into the development of curricular schemes and materials of high quality, into changing the Year 12 credential and into promoting structural changes which will give students access to a comprehensive curricular range. These changes are urgent and could be assisted, at least in their initial stages, by the reallocation of a higher proportion of the Program's funds towards system initiatives of a specified kind, perhaps involving matching funds from state sources. We believe that the terms of the Program's operation need to be redefined to give more emphasis to system-level initiatives. We recommend:

Recommendation 41: That \$2.5m additional to the present costs of operating the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education be allocated over each of 1986, 1987 and 1988 to fund the establishment and operation of the new Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board, in addition to a negotiated portion of the budget of the Curriculum Branch of the Education Department representing resources within the Department that could be notionally allocated for use by the Board.

Recommendation 42: That the Victorian Minister for Education enter discussions with the Commonwealth Minister for Education with a view to securing 50 per cent of the funds allocated to Victoria under the Participation and Equity Program in 1986 and 1987 for use in system-level initiatives in postcompulsory curriculum as recommended in this Report.

9.7 Structural changes recommended have a number of associated costs. In the short term, and in most areas, we do not envisage the acquisition or building of new colleges. The declining size of the secondary age group has already resulted in surplus physical capacity in many areas, enabling an existing campus to be refurbished for use by senior students. The legacy of prolonged parsimony in school buildings in the public sector is that many buildings are poorly constructed and inadequate and have already exceeded their projected period of use. Schools generally lack recreational and other facilities appropriate for the use of near-adult students. Further, the teaching of a broader curricular range incorporating practical and vocational studies is hampered by the lack of facilities. Resources for the performing and creative arts are grossly deficient and many of the facilities for technical studies in both technical schools and TAFE are outmoded in kind and insufficient in quantity. There is a pressing need to provide the resources to ensure a wider curricular range for all students, in both rural and urban areas of the state. The structural reforms envisaged overcome the need to provide these facilities on every site in Victoria. Nonetheless we believe that the Government must provide the resources to survey existing provision within each region, to identify gaps and to develop plans after wide consultation at the local level for the best use of resources. These tasks will be the major responsibility of regionally based officers, assisted where necessary by

consultants seconded for short terms. The costs of establishing complexes and secondary colleges will be borne by the Victorian Government, but the capital costs of providing community colleges will be shared with the Commonwealth Government which is responsible for the provision of facilities for postsecondary education. We recommend:

Recommendation 43: That the Victorian Government allocate \$10m in 1986 and \$20m in 1987 and in 1988 to support the restructuring of educational provision at the upper secondary level.

Implementation of the Review

9.8 The implementation of the recommendations of this Review will require policy co-ordination at the central level. We are aware of the plethora of authorities, agencies and committees that already exist in all education sectors in Victoria and that tender advice to the Minister. As a result, and because of the segmented and specialised nature of the agencies, problems of overall co-ordination have arisen within the educational sectors and between education, training and employment. We are aware that the Minister for Education is considering the creation of a small, expert ministerial policy unit to co-ordinate advice and data collection, to develop overall policies relating to education and training and to maintain liaison among education sectors and between education and the labour market. We strongly support this initiative.

Recommendation 44: That the Minister for Education establish a ministerial policy unit at the earliest possible date.

9.9 Within this context, a small committee is required for a limited period of time at the central level to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of this Review. We propose that a committee chaired by the Minister for Education and composed of the Director-General of Education, the Director of the Catholic Education Office, the Chairman of the State Board of Education and the Chairman of VISE, replaced after an appropriate transition period by the Director of the proposed Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board, should assume this role. The Committee would advise the Minister on the allocation of tasks arising from the Review to existing agencies and supervise their implementation, and oversee the establishment of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board and the management of the transition from VISE to the new Board. It would also ensure the necessary co-ordination between the compulsory and postcompulsory levels of schooling and would maintain oversight of the postcompulsory phase as a whole.

Recommendation 45: That a committee chaired by the Minister for Education and comprising the Director-General of Education, the Director of the Catholic Education Office, the Chairman of the State Board of Education and the Chairman of VISE, replaced after an appropriate transition period by the Director of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board, be responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of the recommendations of this Report.

Recommendations

9.10 The recommendations which follow set a new direction for postcompulsory schooling in Victoria.

Recommendation 1: That increased participation in schooling to the end of Year 12 energetically be pursued with the objective that by 1995, 70 per cent of an age group will complete Year 12 of schooling. The Victorian Government should commit itself to the realisation of this target and to the support of changes necessary to make it effective.

Recommendation 2: That the Victorian Government pursue with all urgency changes in the Commonwealth policies of financial support for young people so that, for those in financial need, continued educational participation, at least to the end of Year 12, be made as attractive as unemployment benefits.

Recommendation 3: That within the public sector the Education Department be responsible for all schooling at Years 11 and 12 and that the allocation of resources between the Education Department and TAFE reflect this responsibility. Resources used to provide Years 11 and 12 courses in TAFE should be frozen at present levels pending evaluation and transfer.

Recommendation 4: That from the beginning of 1987, courses in Years 11 and 12 be organised as a course of study over two years in semester-length units, not assigned to a particular year level except as required by sequential studies composed of more than two semester units.

Recommendation 5: That all students in Years 11 and 12 have access to a comprehensive curricular range, including a variety of optional studies within each of the major areas of arts/humanities, science/technology and mathematics; and to a range of activity-based studies.

Recommendation 6: That students, within twenty-four units of semester length taken over Years 11 and 12, follow at least one three-unit sequence of study in each of the areas of arts/humanities, science/technology and mathematics.

Recommendation 7: That all students be strongly encouraged to take at least one unit over the two years in activity-based studies; and that units within these areas be associated with related theoretical units to form the basis of some two-unit and three-unit sequences.

Recommendation 8: That studies in the major curricular areas in Years 11 and 12 be so designed as not to prevent students from taking only the first unit of a sequence. No sequence should exceed three units although provision can be made for additional specialist units.

Recommendation 9: That a major curricular project be mounted by the new Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board (the establishment of which is later recommended), in each of the areas of mathematics and science/technology; and that each project survey and evaluate present courses in its area of reference, and propose and develop a number of courses in each to include both applied courses and courses suited to the general education of students not following further specialist studies in either area.

Recommendation 10: That the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board negotiate with major providers of postsecondary courses to establish agreement about the content of studies in mathematics, physics and chemistry commonly applicable to the range of courses they offer, and to make special arrangements for any additional prerequisites for particular courses.

Recommendation 11: That cross-crediting of units of study in the upper secondary curriculum into TAFE certificate courses and apprenticeship be further encouraged, and that the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board negotiate with the Industrial Training Commission and the TAFE Accreditation Board with the objective of reaching agreements facilitating such arrangements.

Recommendation 12: That groupings of occupations which could provide a basis for practically oriented vocational studies having relevance for a number of occupations and for the development of applied studies within the area of mathematics and science/technology be investigated by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board.

Recommendation 13: That the study of work in society occupy two compulsory and sequential semester units over Years 11 and 12; that it be pursued in the contexts of technological change since the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century and in present day Australia; that it involve direct observation and experience; and that it include the study of work undertaken in domestic units, in unpaid and paid capacities, and affecting women and men.

Recommendation 14: That a major curricular development project underwriting the above study be mounted, beginning in 1985.

Recommendation 15: That the study of English occupy two compulsory and sequential semester-length units over Years 11 and 12 for all students.

Recommendation 16: That standardised tests in oral and written communication and in the basic mathematical processes be developed and used consistently over the period of schooling to enable teachers and parents to identify and assist in rectifying deficiencies in students' achievement in these areas.

Recommendation 17: That in content, learning modes and institutional practices, curriculum over the postcompulsory years be oriented towards the adulthood students are entering. In particular, institutional practices should enable students to:

- Contract voluntarily into courses with the acceptance of requirements associated with them.
- Increasingly over the two years be obliged to be present on campus only for contracted sessions.
- Assume active responsibility for their own learning.
- Move across locations for different aspects of study as needed.
- Assume collective responsibility for the organisation and rule of their own adult community outside areas of teachers' professional responsibility.
- Contribute routinely to curricular review through their responses to courses, learning modes and assessment practices.

Recommendation 18: That a single certificate marking the completion of secondary schooling and named the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) be introduced in Victoria in 1987.

Recommendation 19: That all units within the Victorian Certificate of Education be accredited by a central agency which should also oversee modes of assessment and the moderation of assessments across wider groups of students than those in individual institutions.

Recommendation 20: That the Victorian Certificate of Education be awarded to students who successfully complete twenty-four units within prescribed patterns which include sequential units, common studies and other studies.

Recommendation 21: That those leaving at any stage after the completion of any unit be issued with a certificate indicating partial completion of the credential and recording units satisfactorily completed.

Recommendation 22: That the Certificate record only the highest level of achievement gained in units attempted more than once.

Recommendation 23: That all studies presently included in the Higher School Certificate, the Tertiary Orientation Program and Technical Year 12 become part of the Victorian Certificate of Education in 1987 and over 1986 be accredited on an interim basis.

Recommendation 24: That by 1990 the new Certificate be fully operational and be based on the curricular policies recommended in this Report.

Recommendation 25: That elements of the Tertiary Orientation Program where they involve facilities and expertise available only in TAFE continue to be offered under interim accreditation and under contract to the Education Department; but that the Program as such cease to operate at the end of 1986.

Recommendation 26: That the Victorian Government urge the Commonwealth Government to restore the level of places in higher education to that representing at least 50 per cent of students enrolled in Year 12 in the previous year after allowance has been made for mature-aged and overseas students.

Recommendation 27: That funds from the Tertiary Participation and Equity Program be allocated to institutions of higher education to assist them to develop, implement and evaluate approved alternative means of selecting students and of assisting them to complete successfully the courses undertaken.

Recommendation 28: That students be deemed to be eligible for admission to institutions of higher education only if they have

- (i) satisfactorily completed the requirements for the Victorian Certificate of Education, as specified in Recommendation 20;
- (ii) satisfactorily completed three accredited preparatory studies assessed in equal proportions by external examinations and externally moderated teachers' assessment.

Recommendation 29: That a Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board be established with overall responsibility for the development and accreditation of curricula and for certification at the senior secondary level.

Recommendation 30: That the Director of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board be appointed by the end of 1985 and assume responsibility for the operation of VISE in 1986.

Recommendation 31: That the group charged with oversight of the implementation of the Review, as recommended in Chapter 9, in liaison with the Youth Affairs Bureau, advise the Minister regarding the location and structure of a well based and openly accessible education information service to assist young people and displaced workers in formulating study and training plans.

Recommendation 32: That the concept of comprehensive postprimary education be extended through the integration of the activities and programs of neighbouring high and technical schools under a single council from 1 January 1987; that all existing high technical or technical high schools become postprimary schools from that date; and that by January 1988 all schools become comprehensive rather than being designated, equipped or staffed as technical or high schools.

Recommendation 33: That the Education Department, drawing where appropriate on the expertise of the Country Education Project, develop, implement and evaluate electronic means of expanding the curricular range available to students attending schools in rural areas.

Recommendation 34: That an appropriately designed specialist resource centre and associated hostel facilities for the use of a number of schools be established in an area of rural Victoria at present educationally disadvantaged and lacking such facilities, and that it be evaluated with a view to establishing more such centres over the longer term.

Recommendation 35: That, where feasible, all new provision in the public sector at the upper secondary levels be located in separate postcompulsory campuses or colleges.

Recommendation 36: That each region of the Education Department, after extensive public consultation in 1985-86, submit plans to establish complexes of schools in 1987.

Recommendation 37: That where locally favoured and where feasible, two examples of senior colleges and community colleges be established by the earliest possible date in areas currently educationally disadvantaged.

Recommendation 38: That priority be given to establishing Years 11 and 12 in association with the kind of provision planned for the Western Melbourne Institute of Post Secondary Education, to form a postcompulsory community college.

Recommendation 39: That the Education Department immediately establish a task force with substantial representation from the teachers' unions to identify and resolve any industrial and professional issues relating to the restructuring of upper secondary provision.

Recommendation 40: That each Regional Board of Education immediately appoint a small committee with representation from the nongovernment schools within the region and the Regional TAFE Board to survey existing educational provision and to develop plans for restructuring within the policy framework outlined in this Report.

Recommendation 41: That \$2.5m additional to the present costs of operating the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education be allocated over each of 1986, 1987 and 1988 to fund the establishment and operation of the new Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board, in addition to a negotiated portion of the budget of the Curriculum Branch of the Education Department representing resources within the Department that could be notionally allocated for use by the Board.

Recommendation 42: That the Victorian Minister for Education enter discussions with the Commonwealth Minister for Education with a view to securing 50 per cent of the funds allocated to Victoria under the Participation and Equity Program in 1986 and 1987 for use in system-level initiatives in postcompulsory curriculum as recommended in this Report.

Recommendation 43: That the Victorian Government allocate \$10m in 1986 and \$20m in 1987 and in 1988 to support the restructuring of educational provision at the upper secondary level.

Recommendation 44: That the Minister for Education establish a ministerial policy unit at the earliest possible date.

Recommendation 45: That a committee chaired by the Minister for Education and comprising the Director-General of Education, the Director of the Catholic Education Office, the Chairman of the State Board of Education and the Chairman of VISE, replaced after an appropriate transition period by the Director of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board, be responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of the recommendations of this Report.

Conclusion

9.11 The changes proposed in this Report, while constrained by present realities, particularly by those relating to selection into higher education, will support teachers in the efforts they have been making over two decades to give postcompulsory schooling purpose for the great majority of the age group. Looked at over the longer term, the Committee believes that new patterns of education will emerge in which the major distinction will be between compulsory schooling and all forms of education and training after it. Bringing general education and vocational training into a new relationship within a common Year 12 certificate should be seen within this perspective. It aims to erode rather than consolidate the boundaries between postcompulsory schooling and all subsequent educational opportunities. In the future, people of all ages will combine work and study throughout their lives more flexibly, assisted by shorter overall working lives and work shared through shorter hours. While following the recommendations made here will not bring the best of all possible worlds into being, the Committee believes that the changes it has recommended will be a considerable improvement on present arrangements. They will provide a basis for many young Victorians to participate more fully in their society and will contribute to the development of all young people as knowledgeable, skilful and caring citizens.

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Appendix 1: Population Projections—Victoria, persons aged 15–19 years, 1981, 1986, 1991, and 1996

<i>Age</i>	<i>1981 (a)</i>	<i>1986</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>1996</i>
15	66 457	76 750	63 750	64 757
16	68 072	72 341	65 918	62 840
17	69 554	73 601	68 969	63 653
18	70 972	69 694	70 960	64 062
19	70 681	69 313	75 725	65 223
15–19	345 736	361 698	345 322	320 536

Population Growth 1981 to 1996

<i>Age</i>	<i>1981 to 1986</i>	<i>1986 to 1991</i>	<i>1991 to 1996</i>
15	10 293	—13 000	1 007
16	4 269	— 6 423	— 3 078
17	4 047	— 4 632	— 5 316
18	— 1 278	1 266	— 6 898
19	— 1 368	6 412	—10 502
15–19	15 962	—16 376	—24 786

Note (a): 1981 population is 'actual'.

Source: Forecasts Project Team, *Preliminary Population Projections, Victoria, 1981 to 2001, October 1982* ABS, Series C.





**Ministerial Review
of Postcompulsory Schooling**

**REPORT
Volume 2**

Report

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APPENDIX 2

RESPONDENTS TO THE REVIEW'S DISCUSSION PAPER

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Executive Director

Curriculum Branch

Curriculum Programs Section

Research and Development Section

Victorian Inservice Education Committee

Curriculum Committees:

Dance Taskforce

Drama

Education of Women and Girls (and the Equal Opportunity Unit)

Education of Students with Disabilities

Environment Education

Health Education

Outdoor Education

Personal Development

Post Primary English

Primary Education and Infant Education

Science

Secondary Education

Social Education

Talented and Gifted Children

Technical Education

Traffic Safety Education

The Arts

Work Education

Equal Educational Opportunities Branch

Child Migrant Education

Student Services Branch

Student Services, CG&CS, Geelong

PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES

Facilities Branch

REGIONS

Regional Directors

Regional Offices

Eastern Metropolitan

Maroondah

Northern Metropolitan

South Central

HIGH SCHOOLS

(Includes high technical schools;
several responses were received
from some schools)

Albert Park

Alexandra

Apollo Bay Higher Elementary

Ararat

Ashwood

Bacchus Marsh

Bairnsdale

Ballarat

Balmoral

Balwyn

Beaufort

Beechworth

Bell Park

Belmont

Benalla

Bendigo

Berwick

Boort

Brighton

Camberwell

Castlemaine

Casterton

Charlton

Cheltenham

Cobram

Colac

Corio North

Corryong

Dandenong

Debney Park

Derrinallum

Donald

Drouin

Echuca

Edenhope

Eltham

Essendon

Euroa

Fitzroy

Flemington

Frankston

Gardenvale Central

Geelong

Gisborne

Hallam

Hamilton

Hampton

Hawkesdale

Heywood

Highett

Hopetoun

Horsham

Huntingdale

Hurstbridge

Kaniva

Karingal

Kealba

Keilor Heights

Kensington

Lake Bolac

Lavers Hill Consolidated

Lorne Higher Elementary

Macleod

MacRobertson Girls

McKinnon

Maffra

Mallacoota

Melton

Merbein

Moe

Monbulk

Mortlake

Mount Waverley

Myrtleford

Newborough

Norwood

Princes Hill

Rainbow

Richmond Girls

Rosanna East

Rushworth
Rutherglen

Secondary Correspondence
Seymour
Shepparton
St Arnaud
St Helena Post Primary
Stawell

Tallangatta
Terang
Timboon
Watsonia
Wangaratta
Warracknabeal
Wendouree
Wondonga

Yarrawonga

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

(Several responses were
received from some schools)

Aspendale
Ararat

Bairnsdale
Ballam Park
Ballarat North
Bell Park
Boronia
Brighton
Brunswick

Caulfield
Cobden
Colac
Cranbourne Meadows

Echuca

Geelong

Hamilton
Heidelberg
Horsham
Huntingdale

Irymple

Keon Park
Knox

Macleod
Maryborough

Mildura
Mt Evelyn
Morwell

Niddrie

Oakleigh

Portland

Sale
Sebastopol
Shepparton
St Albans
Stawell
Sunshine
Sunshine North
Swan Hill
Swinburne

Templestowe
Tottenham

Wangaratta
Warrnambool
Warrnambool North
Werribee
White Hills
Wodonga

OTHER SCHOOLS

Kingsville Primary
Trawalla Primary
Watsonia Special

NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

ORGANISATIONS

Association of Independent Girls' Schools of Victoria

Association of Teachers in Victorian Catholic Secondary Schools

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria

Catholic Education Office, Sale

Diocesan Education Advisory Council, Sale

Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria

Headmasters Conference

Principals Association of Victorian Catholic Secondary Schools

Victorian Association of Teachers in Independent Schools

Victorian Federation of Catholic Mothers' Clubs and Parents' Associations

SCHOOLS

Camberwell CEGGS

Camberwell CEGS

Fintona Girls School

Geelong College

Geoghan College

Goold College

Ivanhoe Grammar

Killester College

Kilmaire College

Mandeville Hall

Marian College

Melbourne CEGS

Mount St Joseph College

Salesian College

St Joseph's College, Echuca

St Joseph's College, North Melbourne

St Patrick's College

Siena College

Sion College

Tintern CEGGS

TAFE

ORGANISATIONS

Accreditation Board

College Councils Association of Victoria/Conference of Principals of Victorian TAFE Colleges

Midvoc

Office of the TAFE Board

Off-Campus Network

Services Board

Student Services Association

TAFE Board

TOPAC

REGIONAL BOARDS

Central Metropolitan
Goulburn North-Eastern
Loddon-Mallee
Northern Metropolitan
Upper Murray
Western Metropolitan

COLLEGES

Ballarat
Bendigo
Box Hill
Collingwood
Dandenong
Footscray
Footscray TOP Division
Frankston
Gordon
Homesglen
Moorabbin
Newport
Pahran
RMIT
Shepparton
Sunraysia
Swinburne
Victorian College of Agriculture & Horticulture
Wangaratta
Warrnambool
Yallourn

HIGHER EDUCATION

Ballarat College of Advanced Education
Bendigo College of Advanced Education

Chisholm Institute of Technology, School of Education
Deakin University
Deakin University, Community Liaison
Footscray Institute of Technology
Hawthorn Institute of Education
Institute of Catholic Education, Oakleigh
La Trobe University
La Trobe University, Board of Studies of School of Physical Sciences
La Trobe University, School of Education
Melbourne College of Advanced Education
Monash University
Monash University, Faculty of Arts
Monash University, Modern Language Departments
Phillip Institute of Technology
Phillip Institute of Technology, Centre for Youth and Community Studies
Swinburne Institute of Technology
University of Melbourne
Victoria College, Faculty of Teacher Education
Victorian College of Pharmacy
Victorian Colleges Committee for Art and Design
Victorian Vice-Chancellors Committee
Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education

ORGANISATIONS

Ararat Community Group

Ararat Uniting Church

Association of Councils of Technical Institutions in Victoria

Association of Neighbourhood Learning Centres

Association of Principals of Victorian Technical Institutions

Australian Council for Educational Administration

Australian Council for Education through Technology

Bairnsdale and District Regional Working Party

Barwon-South Western Region Association of Post Primary School Councils

Birchip Community Education Complex

Career Education Association of Victoria

Colac Rationalisation Committee

Committee of Principals of Schools and Services for Hearing Impaired Students

Conference on Youth and Responsibility

Country Education Project

Echuca Education Council

J. Gadsen Australia

Geography Teachers Association

Gippsland Post Primary Principals

History Teachers Association

Indonesian Cultural and Educational Institute

Institute of Engineers, Australia

Institute of Family Studies

Latrobe Regional Commission

Melbourne Municipality Association of Community-based Children's and Youth Service Groups

Ministerial Advisory Committee on Multicultural and Migrant Education

Modern Language Teachers' Association

National Council of Women of Victoria

Participation and Equity Program

Scope: Latrobe Valley Continuing Education Committee

Shepparton-Mooroopna Shared Resources Committee

Shire of Ripon

STC Group

Social, Educational and Employment Sub-Committee of the Deafness Foundation, Victoria

Technical Teachers Union of Victoria

TTUV Branch, Cranbourne Meadows Technical School

Victorian Association for Multicultural Education

Victorian Colleges Staff Association

Victorian Commercial Teachers Association

Victorian Council of School Organisations

Victorian Division of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences

Victorian Federation of State School Parents' Clubs

Victorian High School Deputy Principals Association

Victorian High School Principals Association

Victorian Institute of Secondary Education

WISE Group 1 Textiles Subject Committee

WISE HSC Art Subject Committee

Victorian Teachers Union Education Committee

Victorian Outdoor Association of Victoria

Victorian Secondary Teachers Association

VSTA Branch, Ferntree Gully High School

VSTA Branch, Geelong High School

VSTA Branch, Richmond High School

INDIVIDUALS

Amos, E.
Appleby, N.F.
Bailey, B.
Bardsley, B.
Bennett, D.
Benson, M.
Bunting, W.
Box, K.
Camillo, J.
Cavey, M.
Cousland, M.
Cross, I.S.
Donaldson, M.J.
Evans, A.T., MLA
Fogarty, W.F., MLA
Freeman, M.
Gorman, P.
Hallett, K.
Harris, C.
Heberle, S.
Hennington, L.
Hill, R.
Hooley, N. and others
Hore-Lacey, I. and others
Howe, J. and others
Hutchinson, C.R.
Jenkins, L.

Juniel, R.H.
Kimberley, M.
Krane, H.
Keller, R.H.
Longworth, W.R.
Marmion, R.G.
McCormack, R.
McGregor, P.
Micallef, C.
Moraitis, P.
Mullen, J.
Nettelbeck, C.
Parsons, B.
Rich, P.S.
Russell-Young, P.
Ryan, B.
Sargeant, J.
Saulwick, J.
Stitt, A.
Teese, R.
Thornton, D.M.
Trembath, R.
Waters, P.
Webster, D.L.
Westlake, D.
White, J.G.
Wright, K.I.M., MLC

APPENDIX 3

CONSULTATIONS HELD WITH MAJOR RESPONDENTS

Association of Principals of Victorian Technical Institutions
Technical Teachers Union of Victoria
Victorian Council of School Organisations
Victorian Federation of State School Parents' Clubs
Victorian High Schools Principals' Association
Victorian Secondary Teachers Association
Victorian Teachers Union

Association of Teachers in Victorian Catholic Secondary Schools
Catholic Education Commission of Victoria
Principals' Association of Victorian Catholic Secondary Schools

Association of Heads of Independent Girls' Schools of Victoria
Association of Independent Schools of Victoria
Headmasters' Conference
Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria
Victorian Association of Teachers in Independent Schools

Curriculum Branch (Programs), Education Department
Curriculum Branch (Research & Development), Education Department
Equal Educational Opportunities Branch, Education Department
Equal Opportunity Unit, Education Department
Regional Directors, Education Department

Victorian Institute of Secondary Education

TAFE Board
TAFE College Councils Association of Victoria
Conference of Principals of Victorian TAFE Colleges

Conference of Principals of Colleges of Advanced Education
La Trobe University
Monash University
University of Melbourne

Group representing private employer interests

APPENDIX 4

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO THE DISCUSSION PAPER

1. Three hundred and ninety responses to the Discussion Paper were received and analysed. The first step taken was a thorough review of 120 of these responses in order to gain a reliable indication of the broad categories of concerns and issues that were addressed. A number of headings in each of the three areas of structures, credentials and curriculum were devised to cover these areas of concern, and the contents of each response categorised under them.
2. A major difficulty was the ambiguity of many of the responses. Because they were not asked to reply to specific questions, respondents adopted a variety of approaches. Some made general comments about the Discussion Paper without giving a clear indication of the developments they considered desirable. Others raised issues at an abstract level or disputed questions of fact relating to current provision without addressing the question of what should be done in the future. Many respondents did not address the full range of matters raised by the Discussion Paper, concentrating on the areas they felt most strongly about or those which were most pertinent to their own concerns.
3. There was general agreement that a review of postcompulsory educational provision was necessary, although many respondents thought this should be extended to a review of the compulsory years as well. While some respondents questioned the Discussion Paper's analysis of some aspects of their own sector of provision, the majority considered it to be accurate and timely in its analysis of the existing situation and its pinpointing of current problems and future needs. The majority felt that there was a need for a new and comprehensive rationale for postcompulsory schooling in view of the changed social context and patterns of participation at this level, and that the curriculum offered, the credential acquired, and the institutional structures adopted, should reflect this rationale.
4. The issue which elicited the strongest reactions was that of organisational structures, and this was also the issue on which there was the least consensus of opinion. While a majority of respondents either favoured some form of institutional separation of the postcompulsory age group, or was prepared to consider it as an option, there was a substantial minority opposed to any form of organisational restructuring which would involve such a separation.

The strongest opposition came from the VSTA and individual high and technical schools, especially in small country centres. There was strong support for separate institutions from the TAFE sector, and support was also received from tertiary institutions, a range of Education Department bodies, parents, and principals. The main areas of concern that were raised were the professional satisfaction and industrial welfare of teachers, the effects on students in the compulsory years, and the problems associated with isolated rural areas.

5. Insofar as there was any consensus of opinion on this issue, it was that no single institutional form should be imposed uniformly across the state. A clear majority maintained that a diversity of structures should be allowed to take account of demographic and geographical factors, existing provision, and community wishes. Most recognised that central guidelines would have to be drawn up to provide a framework for local restructuring, and that local initiatives without overall guidance or direction were unlikely to produce lasting solutions. The preferred structure amongst those favouring institutional separation was the trialling of all-age community colleges. TAFE providers in particular favoured this option. Most of those opposing institutional separation favoured some form of co-operation between existing institutions such as clusters, networks, movement of staff or students between institutions, shared resources, link programs, or joint use of central facilities. There was majority support for comprehensive provision at the postcompulsory stage rather than separate technical and academic institutions operating in isolation. The common ground shared by almost all of the responses was a recognition that structural issues needed to be addressed in order to overcome problems of fragmentation, small numbers inhibiting curricular breadth, and the provision of an appropriate organisational atmosphere for postcompulsory students.

6. The recognition that educational structures should be provided in such a way as to maximise the curricular opportunities offered to students reflected the support given by respondents for a new rationale for the postcompulsory curriculum. The majority favoured the treatment of Years 11 and 12 as a continuous curricular phase. There was considerable support for the proposition that curriculum should be general rather than specialised or occupationally specific, and that all students should have the opportunity of a breadth of learning and experience linking both theory and its application in practice.

There was similarly widespread support for a curricular structure consisting of common elements to be taken in some form by all students and a range of optional units. More than three-quarters of the responses preferred this structure, although there was little detail given as to the proportions of time to be devoted to core and optional units, and some concern as to the balance between and status accorded to each.

A number of respondents specified that the areas of study to be undertaken by all students should not necessarily be taken at the same level or in the same fashion, but that a variety of learning modes and levels of difficulty should be available. Tertiary institutions, and some schools and curricular bodies were concerned that there should be some recognition of the need for sequential development in certain areas of study, and that prerequisite learning for tertiary subjects should not be neglected. There was also some concern that the worthwhile features of current offerings should be preserved and possibly extended in any curricular structure.

7. Most respondents considered that the study of society should be undertaken in some form by all students, although there was some concern that it should not be allowed to develop in a manner lacking in structure and challenge. There was also considerable support for studies in the areas of mathematics, science/technology, humanities and the arts to be undertaken by all students. Work experience and community service were considered to be essential components of the curriculum by a number of respondents. There was some questioning as to what was meant by broad vocational specialisms. TAFE colleges and technical schools considered that the option of occupationally specific courses should be maintained, and that vocational studies should have some links with apprenticeship, industry and commerce, and TAFE vocational courses. The major concerns raised were the necessity for curricular support and in-service education for teachers, the application of any changes to all schools, state and independent, and the need for acceptance and credibility within the community, tertiary institutions and employers.
8. A single credential was favoured by the majority of respondents, to replace the multiplicity of credentials now available. There was strong majority support for such a credential to be a cumulative record of student achievement, identifying completion of units of work over the postcompulsory phase, with some units at least to be sequential. As with the curricular structure, very few specified the proportions of core and optional units to be taken. Considerable support was given to the concepts of redeemability of failure, re-entry at any point with credit for units completed, and flexibility of time in which to complete the credential.
9. There was widespread support for greater use of criterion-referenced assessment, either alone or in conjunction with norm-referenced assessment in some areas of the curriculum. Opinion was divided on the question of school-based as opposed to external assessment. There was considerable agreement that some form of moderation was necessary, and that it must be credible and reliable, but most responses did not argue for specific moderation procedures.

10. Tertiary entry was acknowledged as a major area of difficulty. Most respondents thought it would not be desirable to allow a situation to develop in which tertiary institutions set their own tests, and that the credential must therefore provide some basis for tertiary selection. A significant minority of responses, including the teachers' unions, favoured open entry to tertiary institutions for all those holding the credential, with selection for particular courses postponed until the end of the first tertiary year. Other suggestions included confining tertiary preparation to a small component of the course, streaming of tertiary aspirants, stipulating extra work in all subject areas for tertiary selection purposes, using norm-referenced testing in some areas to obtain a ranking, and ranking on the basis of fewer best scores. Selection on the basis of the credential in conjunction with other procedures such as zoning, queueing, weighting of profiles, interviews and references was also suggested. A small number of respondents felt that the credential should not be associated with tertiary selection at all.
11. The main concern expressed by respondents was that the credential should have credibility independent of the institution at which it was acquired. There was a widespread view that a hierarchy of esteem among institutions should not be allowed to develop to the disadvantage of students attending particular schools and to the advantage of others, particularly in relation to tertiary entry and selection for employment. Another concern expressed was the need for acceptance of the credential by the community, employers and tertiary institutions. It was considered that care should be taken in the way changes were mounted to ensure this acceptance. As well, some schools and tertiary institutions stated the need to maintain standards and to protect the interests of tertiary aspirants within the framework of the common credential.
12. Only a minority of responses addressed the question of what agency or agencies should be ultimately responsible for the provision of postcompulsory education, for the curriculum offered, and for the credential issued. The majority viewpoint amongst these respondents was that there should be a single central agency, representative of major interests, to be responsible for the provision of curricular guidelines, support and accreditation and for the granting of the credential. There was also a call for greater co-ordination, and in some cases for amalgamation, between the Education Department, the TAFE Board, and VISE, with regard to legal responsibilities for postcompulsory provision, staffing and resources.
13. It can be concluded that there was considerable support in the responses for the major directions of development proposed by the Discussion Paper. Most respondents saw a review of postcompulsory schooling as being necessary and

supported a comprehensive approach rather than isolated additions or alterations to existing forms of separate provision. The major concerns expressed by respondents were that any changes should maximise the learning opportunities for all students, that the professional interests of teachers should be protected, and that geographical and community differences should be taken into account. There was also concern that changes should not lead to a hierarchy of esteem between different institutions, and that postcompulsory schooling should culminate in a credential with comparability, community credibility, and relevance to a wide range of users. There was a widespread view amongst the respondents that postcompulsory schooling should be relevant and appropriate, as well as challenging and worthwhile, for the large and diverse student body participating in it, and that organisational structures, curriculum and credentials should be designed to maximise the benefits of such an education for all students.

APPENDIX 5

REPORT OF THE CURRICULUM WORKING PARTY

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. THE POSTCOMPULSORY YEARS OF SCHOOLING
3. DESIRED DIRECTIONS OF CHANGE FOR THE CURRICULUM OF POSTCOMPULSORY EDUCATION
4. GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING CURRICULUM PROPOSALS
5. RESOURCES FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGES
6. ISSUES FOR FUTURE RESOLUTION

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX: THE RESPONSE

5 December 1984

Mrs Jean Blackburn
Chairperson of the Co-ordinating Committee
Ministerial Review of Postcompulsory Schooling
2 Treasury Place
MELBOURNE 3002

Dear Jean

We have pleasure in forwarding to you the attached report of the Curriculum Working Party. Our pleasure derives from the opportunity the Working Party gave us to share in what we all regard as a critical issue for Victorian education and from the sense of relief we have at finishing a task which had to be crammed into what are already full lives.

The latter aspect has placed quite severe limitation on the extent to which we have been able to work through many of the aspects that turned out to be important. Accordingly, we draw attention later in our report to a number of issues that will require much more detailed work. It may be that some of these concerns will also be addressed by the other working parties.

If the much needed reforms we are recommending are to be implemented with positive benefits for the senior students of Victoria there are two general points to which we would urge the Co-ordinating Committee to give special attention.

The first relates to the positive climate for reform that we believe exists very widely in Victoria. The interest in the ideas of the Discussion Paper that has been shown through the responses and more generally in schools and the community is remarkable. The Government and the Minister, particularly, should be advised very strongly of these indications that the time is ripe for change, and that the changes being recommended are in line with directions that have already been explored in the educational community. The next step, we believe, will require quite firm and clear commitment from the Government so that the momentum that exists is not dissipated.

Finally, change is always difficult to implement successfully. The reform of post-compulsory schooling is a very major change. Much has been learnt in the last 25 years about how educational change, and curricular change in particular is successfully brought about. The Co-ordinating Committee should take care to recommend a pathway for change that makes use of this knowledge about change for without it our best hopes could easily be lost.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Peter Fensham'.

PETER FENSHAM
Chairperson
Curriculum Working Party

1. INTRODUCTION

The Working Party on Curriculum was set up as a part of the second stage of the Ministerial Review of Postcompulsory Schooling.

The first stage of this review began in June 1983 when the Minister of Education invited Ms Jean Blackburn to chair a Review of Postcompulsory Schooling in Victoria. That stage led to the publication of a Discussion Paper in April 1984. In it three broad sets of issues were identified - curricular, credentialling and organisational issues.

The second stage began with the establishment by the Minister of three working parties which were respectively to consider in more detail the issues in these three broad areas that had been identified in the first stage and to report back to the Co-ordinating Committee of the Review as a whole.

Each working party had two sets of terms of reference. The first set was general and applied to all three working parties.

1. To advise the Committee co-ordinating the Review on the issues raised by and directions of change suggested in relevant sections of the Discussion Paper.
2. To receive, analyse and take into account public responses to the Discussion Paper in the particular area with which each working party is concerned.
3. To conduct or supervise investigations relevant to the area under consideration and to consult with individuals and groups having relevant experience, interests and competence.
4. To liaise on a regular basis with other working parties on matters of common concern.
5. To outline a staged plan of possible action by:
 - (i) the government
 - (ii) relevant agenciesin support of preferred options for change in the area under consideration.
6. To report formally to the Co-ordinating Committee by the end of September 1984 (later extended to the end of November 1984) and to discuss progress with it at each of its monthly meetings in the interim. The chairperson of each working party or his or her nominee should attend Co-ordinating committee meetings as necessary for this purpose.

The second set was particular. Within the framework of Chapter 3 of the Discussion Paper the Curriculum Working Party was asked to examine and advise the Co-ordinating Committee regarding:

1. The desirability, feasibility, and consequences for credentials of:
 - (a) Regarding Years 11 and 12 in schools as an integrated curricular stage.
 - (b) Associating TAFE courses covered by the Review with those available at Years 11 and 12 in schools as an integrated postcompulsory stage.
2. The desirability, feasibility and consequences of a structure of common and optional elements in major curricular areas at this level.
3. The desirability and feasibility of 'broadly vocational specialisms' as a possible approach to optional aspects of general education at this level.
4. The means of encouraging greater participation at this level with more equal opportunities and outcomes.
5. The means of supporting all teachers in curricular development at the postcompulsory level and the agencies through which this should operate.

Membership

Membership included people drawn from teacher and parent organisations and from the major agencies involved in postcompulsory schooling, and others having expertise and experience relevant to the examination of options, and the working through of concrete proposals for action.

Professor Peter Fensham (Chair)

Ms Jean Blackburn

Ms Ann Borthwick

Sr Anne Boyd

Mr Peter Clarkson

Mr Peter Gebhardt

Dr Lindsay Mackay

Mr Bruce Mackenzie

Dr Colin Moore

Mr Rod Moran

Dr Jeff Northfield

Dr Helen Praetz

Dr Max Stephens

Mr Gerry Tickell

Ms Marion Russell/Ms Clarice Ballenden (Executive Officer).

Meetings

The Working Party met on ten occasions and much work has been undertaken by its members between meetings. Draft papers on many topics have been prepared and discussed as the Working Party explored the issues. It has on occasions been able to consult particular persons, and through several of its members it has participated in the on-going activities of the overall Co-

ordinating Committee.

Public Response to the Discussion Paper

From September onwards the Working Party has been informed by the large numbers of written submissions that have been received by the Co-ordinating Committee as part of the public response to the Discussion Paper. The Chairperson has also been present when some of the responding groups and organisations were engaged in face to face discussions with the Co-ordinating Committee. A large number of these submissions have addressed curricular issues specifically and almost all touch on them by clear implication in relation to various comments they make on postcompulsory schooling, its present practices and future needs.

A major task has been the analysis of nearly four hundred responses. This has been undertaken in several ways and one of these is presented in an Appendix to this report. This summary of the curricular responses has been based on a number of categories that relate to particular issues that are commonly referred to in the responses.

The Working Party throughout its period of work, has been greatly impressed by the level of interest, both within and outside the educational system, that the Postcompulsory Review has generated. Members have participated in the last six months in a number of small and large gatherings, in schools and in the community, in public discussions of the issues. These meetings have also been a significant source of information for the members as well as providing them with the elements of interest, concern and hope that this Review has generated.

The form of this report is now outlined. In Section 2 the Working Party outlines a number of positions about postcompulsory schooling which have been very much to the fore in their deliberations. Section 3 sets out a number of changes concerning the curriculum of schooling in the postcompulsory years that the Working Party believes are desirable and are in some cases urgent. Section 4 addresses the sorts of general principles and guidelines that would be necessary if such changes are to occur. These principles and guidelines would assist those responsible for developing curricula to be accredited for use, and would be reference points for their assessment and moderation in use.

Section 5 discusses ways to support teachers in their development and implementation of curricula and to the sorts of agency or agencies through which this should operate. Section 6 is an acknowledgement of the intricacy of the task that confronted the Working Party including a range of issues and areas of concern which can only be briefly discussed. Finally the various threads of the report are drawn together in summary statements that relate to the specific terms of reference of this Working Party.

This Report does not repeat aspects of postcompulsory education and its contemporary social context that have already been identified and well expressed in the Discussion Paper. It is of course to be read as an extension of that paper.

2. THE POSTCOMPULSORY YEARS OF SCHOOLING

The Discussion Paper on page 3 lists the aspects of postcompulsory education with which the Review is concerned. These are Years 11 and 12 of schooling and a number of educational programs within the TAFE sector, namely VOP, TOP and courses mounted for the young unemployed which do not give access to mainstream TAFE credentials¹. All of these are postcompulsory in the sense that all the students in them are beyond the age of 15, prescribed in Victoria as the point at which formal education ceases to be compulsory.

The majority of students in these various educational arenas have moved into them directly from the experiences in Years P-10, compulsory schooling. There is, however, a significant minority of the students in postcompulsory schooling who have had a break from formal education. An increasing number of these over the past decade have been older persons for many of whom these studies are indeed a second opportunity and attempt at learning after experiences that have included varied levels of success and in some cases a considerable sense of failure and rejection in school.

The Working Party has been conscious that there are also large numbers of students in the compulsory years of schooling at the present time who may need postcompulsory education but for whom the present provisions in terms of curriculum and/or access and availability are not sufficiently attractive or flexible. Likewise, there are similar groups among the school leavers of recent years and among the older and wider community as a whole. This report addresses all these populations of current and potential students.

Ministerial Paper Number 6 has recently been issued by the Minister of Education following advice from the State Board of Education. The Paper does not address in any detail the postcompulsory years of schooling and its reference to them is that its broad principles should provide a basis for planning for Years 11-12. It acknowledges that school councils (and this must include TAFE college councils), in planning programs for Years 11 and 12 may need to adapt the guidelines to take account of the particular requirements of the HSC, TOP, Technical Year 12 and the prerequisites for entry to all postsecondary education. Furthermore, it recognises that these years are under the review of which the present report is a part.

Footnote 1. The first year of certificate courses in TAFE come into this category in a sense and were not excluded in the Discussion Paper. This Working Party believes that they are more closely related in character to those courses like apprenticeship or nursing that have direct links to employment. There are important possibilities for cross accreditation between the type of curriculum we are proposing and these sorts of courses. This issue needs further exploration. Apart from that we prefer to exclude this year of certificate courses from our considerations here.

The Working Party recognises that for the majority of students there is an important sense in which the education of the postcompulsory years of schooling should be seen to be and be experienced as continuous with what has preceded it. In this same sense, the early years of secondary schooling should have a continuity with the later years of primary schooling although for most students this transition is associated with a change of school. The Ministerial Paper does not distinguish between primary and secondary schooling.

There are, however, a number of senses in which postcompulsory schooling is distinguishable from compulsory schooling. One is that students in the postcompulsory years study in a legal sense as a result of their own or their family's volition. Their education, therefore, should reflect this, e.g. by giving them significantly greater opportunities to share in decisions about how they will learn in order to give them a sense of being co-participants with the other students and their teachers in processes of voluntary education.

A second distinctive feature is the imminence of the interface between the education in this period and participation as adults in the society at large. This participation takes a variety of forms including paid employment and the many types of tertiary education.

A third feature has been referred to already in this section, when the diversity of the population of students was acknowledged. Unlike compulsory schooling which has a homogeneity in the sense that it is concerned with learners between the ages of 5 and 15, postcompulsory education is concerned with learners whose ages and experience of society can be much more varied, e.g. the large numbers of full-time students who are also part-time workers.

Students in the postcompulsory phase often have a more developed sense of purpose about their educational endeavour than students in the compulsory phase of schooling. This sense of purpose can include an awareness of the need to prepare for future work roles and sometimes takes the form of an interest in a specific area of work. Narrow occupational specialism is clearly contrary to the notion of encouraging a breadth of study which was advocated in the Discussion Paper and which has been endorsed by the Working Party. However there is a recognition that many students in the postcompulsory phase are engaged in studies with a vocational focus. One of the challenges before the Working Party was to initiate a curriculum that could exploit this vocational direction while at the same time maintaining a breadth of general education which allowed for both common experience and the flexibility of outcome the labour market now requires.

Compared with a decade ago the characteristics of contemporary Australian society are such that postcompulsory education has become important for many more persons. Although Australia compared with a number of OECD countries has a large number of 15-19 year-olds in paid employment, an increasing number of others have been unable to find employment on leaving school or

have experienced periods of unemployment after short or unsatisfying experiences of employment. Accordingly many students who would have left school in earlier times need to be encouraged to stay on at school and to be engaged in further appropriate education. The distinctive effect of this post-school unemployment has not fallen equally on all sections of society and very often has been the aftermath of less successful experiences at school.

It is also widely believed that the extension of the use of technology of various sorts in Australia (and particularly the new information technologies) will alter in ways that are by no means well understood, the patterns of work and the forms of employment that will be available to many workers. Three consequences of this situation seem likely. The first is the likelihood that many more people than in the past will have a variety of types of employment during their working careers. The second is that some people will need new knowledge and understanding about the increasingly technological character of society. The third is that the proportion of the population employed in direct production will decrease further and that there will be a continued increase in the proportion employed in service and information areas.

It is possible that the majority of occupations in the future will require less training than currently. Even in high technology areas skills are segmented and for those increasing numbers outside the technological areas, specific vocational skills seem less important than more general intellectual and social ones. Changes in the society have affected the kind of education required in the postcompulsory years. If there is to be greater participation in postcompulsory education and if this is to be appropriate to Australia's changing society, the nature of the curriculum is fundamental. Improved access via structural changes and greater equity via a credential which affirms broader ranges of achievement will not alone improve the nature of the learning and the levels of achievement.

Currently much of what is available as a curriculum in the postcompulsory years has its origins in the preparation and selection of students for specific tertiary studies. It will be clear already, from the above, that the Working Party believes the role and function of postcompulsory education should be far more than this. Nevertheless, if the changes we envisage are successfully implemented, there will be even more students wishing to pursue tertiary studies. It is important to emphasise that tertiary education will have to accept the challenge to change and that planning for this change should begin immediately.

Firstly, an expansion in the number of tertiary places will be required. Secondly, as the curriculum of the postcompulsory phase moves in the directions we propose tertiary institutions, particularly universities, will need to be far more specific about prerequisite learning they require for the sorts of studies that they wish to provide. In some cases it may be necessary to limit these prerequisites for postschool study in order to

provide a sound general education for students in Years 11 and 12. If tertiary requirements can be clearly articulated in terms of specific items of knowledge and types of skills, we believe education in the postcompulsory phase will then be able to provide educative functions that at present are so often squeezed out by the vague but all embracing requirements of university selection. Thirdly, tertiary institutions will have to devise selection procedures which are more responsive to the range and worth of learning experiences in which students have engaged rather than simply to the normative ranking procedures that can be applied to the present sorts of recognised subjects or courses.

3. DESIRED DIRECTIONS OF CHANGE FOR THE CURRICULUM OF POSTCOMPULSORY EDUCATION

In this section, after an introductory statement, a number of desired directions of change for the curriculum of postcompulsory education are stated. For each one a brief explanation or justification is attempted so that the rationale behind the Working Party's advice will, to that extent, be open.

The recommended directions of change in this section are concerned with the role, functions and purpose of the curriculum for learning in the postcompulsory phase. In the next section we set out guidelines for changes in the curriculum itself. These guidelines are concerned with detailed features of the curriculum that the Working Party believes will lead to actual programs of learning in the school within the context of the role we state for the curriculum as a whole.

The last two decades in Victoria have seen major changes in the ways in which the curriculum has been determined. There has been a general increase, at all levels of education, in the extent to which individual schools and tertiary institutions (and individual teachers within them) have been able to determine the nature and character of curriculum.

Ministerial Paper Number 6 acknowledges, and extends, this local decision making in relation to the curriculum in schools. In doing so it also sets out a new framework in which these initiatives and responsibilities are to be exercised. The Working Party has endeavoured to set out in this report the details of the sort of framework it believes is appropriate for the postcompulsory phase.

The response to these opportunities to devise curricula, particularly at Year 12, has been a proliferation of subjects and courses. More than 50 group 1 subjects for HSC have been joined by more than 40 known as group 2. Whole course programs exist in some secondary schools as STC, in some technical schools as T 12 and in TAFE Colleges as the variety of TOP courses. This diversity of avenues for learning represents a great many initiatives from teachers, schools and colleges.

The TOP and HSC offerings in TAFE Colleges have added to the

diversity and attracted a number of students who have come from both government and non-government secondary schools. Group 2 subjects, STC courses and Technical Year 12 courses have proved attractive alternatives for an increasing number of students, many of whom, it seems likely, would not have continued with schooling in the absence of these courses. The diversity of curricular offerings for Year 12 in Victoria has in these ways led to higher participation in schooling.

However, as the Discussion Paper points out, this diversity of response has no overall rationale. No school or college in Victoria can offer anything like the full range of current approved programs for learning. Indeed the majority of students have access to a very limited range of them.

There is a great deal of overlap in the learning intentions of many of these courses and subjects. Despite the diversity, there is surprisingly little variety in the ways that the content for learning can be acquired and its acquisition demonstrated. Thus it would seem that many students face the divorce between theoretical and applied learning to which the Discussion Paper draws attention. The resources to widen approaches to learning or to offer some desired additional programs are not available in most Victorian schools.

The worth of these many alternative subjects and courses (although all approved for Year 12) is perceived and treated very differently by employers and tertiary institutions. Thus many students find themselves handicapped, in terms of future outcomes, by the particular credential they obtain from their school or TAFE College. Their actual learning in these studies is not the determinant of these outcomes.

Proposed Changes

In outlining the following changes it wishes to see in education in the postcompulsory phase, the Working Party is very conscious of the need to preserve the very many good features of existing curricula in Victoria. The valuable experiences from these developments need to be drawn upon in any future arrangements involving a common credential.

1. **The curricula of postcompulsory education (in schools and TAFE) should enhance the quality of the learning and the achievements of all students in this phase of education.**

Ministerial Paper Number 6 affirms "that all students should have access to educational experiences that are challenging, purposeful and comprehensive and that result in all students improving their educational achievement". We endorse these intentions and believe that there is scope to use the curriculum to improve the quality of the learning of all persons who study in the postcompulsory phase of education.

A number of ways in which learning can be improved are mentioned later in this section. We are also conscious of the fact that so

much of the learning that occurs in many existing curricula at these levels is concerned with simple recall, with too much emphasis on rules and with low-level comprehension. Too little attention is given almost universally to higher cognitive learning that is associated with problem-solving skills, analysis and synthesis and which enable ideas and concepts from one context to be applied in other related but different areas.

2. The curricula of postcompulsory schooling (in schools and in TAFE) should accord value to an increasingly broad range of student aptitudes, purposes, experiences and interests in learning.

The majority of the curricula available at present to postcompulsory school students accords worth to only certain sorts of content and ways of learning. Many aspects of the history and experience of significant sectors of the population do not find a place in the content of the curriculum despite the fact that Australia is interested in engaging more students from these backgrounds to continue into these most advanced years of schooling.

Certain aptitudes for learning are highly valued in present curricular offerings. For example students with aptitudes and interest in the mathematical areas can allow these subjects to dominate their studies in Years 11 and 12. There is similar scope and encouragement for students whose aptitudes and interests lie in the learning of historical and literary content from written sources. There is limited encouragement however for students whose aptitudes and interests lie in the creative arts or for those who are more interested in applied modes of mathematical or literary endeavour to study these subjects at a group 1 level. These discrepancies and inconsistencies in the curricular approaches available to most students need to be eliminated.

The current practice of certain group 1 subjects being both pre-requisites for some tertiary studies and the basis for selection into these courses gives additional status to those subjects, reinforces the value of certain modes of learning and inhibits the development of more creative approaches to the subjects.

3. Curricula should become increasingly available to students in ways that make further learning in this stage attractive and appropriate to more of them.

Many students by the end of Year 10 have lost most of their motivation for learning in the manner in which the postcompulsory curriculum has hitherto been presented in schools. Some may have a clear vocational field in mind and continued learning that does not acknowledge this orientation is unattractive. The way some TOP and other TAFE courses, and some HSC courses of study like Secretarial Studies have been successful for these students suggests that the idea of broad vocational emphasis is a useful general direction to follow.

In addition some may have found that they learn well in real

contexts or in practical situations, and the curriculum of their school seems to reject both of these. Both STC and Technical Year 12 courses have provided interesting examples of these sorts of learning that again point to a worthwhile direction for change.

There is evidence from a number of TAFE courses as well as from experimental*or alternative curricula in some schools that a significant number of these sorts of students can be encouraged to extend their learning successfully if they are offered new approaches to teaching/learning and new ways of demonstrating its acquisition. Nor are these successes limited to alternative, lesser, or "watered-down" content for learning. In some schools the traditional content has been learnt by these nontraditional approaches along with other knowledge that stems directly from the alternative mode of learning itself. A number of the options in HSC group 1 subjects are examples, in some schools, of new approaches to learning.

4. **Curricula should provide all students with access to practical as well as theoretical studies and with experience of interaction between the two.**

There has been a long tradition in Victoria of divorcing theoretical studies from practical ones. More value has been placed on the former in such a way that those engaging successfully in the latter have had fewer outcomes and options available to them. Conversely, while theoretical studies have been accorded high status, students successfully learning them are often frustrated by their inability to apply the knowledge gained.

Even subjects like science which have traditionally involved practical work in the postcompulsory years in schools remain 'theoretical' in the sense the term is being used here. TAFE courses provide some of the best examples of practical applied situations which are used both as the source of and the rationale for this sort of theoretical knowledge.

There is now a growing body of evidence that suggests that both sorts of learning can be more successful and certainly more meaningful if the teaching/learning experiences integrate much more closely doing and knowing and knowing and applying.

5. **Curricula should seek to include a breadth of study and experience thus avoiding narrow specialisms and the limitation of possible outcomes that are the current experiences of many students.**

There has been a growing awareness that students in Victoria have not been well-served by the narrowness of learning in Years 11 and 12 that many experience. For example, some senior secondary students study only mathematics and physical science in Years 11 and 12 apart from compulsory English, and others undertake no further studies in these subject areas after Year 10. Again, there are students in some TOP courses whose intensity of specialisation is such that it is closer to specific occupational

training than it is to a broad vocational base through which a rounded and general education is continued.

There are, of course, serious consequences of these sorts of specialised studies in terms of limited aspirations and personal flexibility as well as limited vocational outcomes and options for further study. Another concern is that students may be unprepared for future roles. An example of this is to be found in the case of those students who enter post-secondary institutions in order to prepare for primary teaching who have experienced senior secondary education that has excluded mathematical and physical science studies from the curriculum. These persons in due course are to be responsible for the basic learning and attitudes of primary school children in relation to these essential fields of knowledge for the technological society. Ministerial Paper Number 6 emphasises the importance of these fields for all learners throughout schooling yet at present these gaps in the teachers' own learning persist.

Participation in the sort of society Australia is and promises to move towards will require persons who have confidence in seeking knowledge from a wide range of sources. Accordingly it is most important that students in their final years at school - the postcompulsory years - be encouraged in the practice of such learning.

6. Curricula should enable students to undertake immediate tasks that confront them in the post-school years (employment, lack of employment, further study, social responsibilities, etc.) and to adapt to the likely changes in their jobs and life styles they will face in the future.

Despite the fact that a number of students have a vocational perception of the purpose of education in the postcompulsory years relatively few of them experience a curriculum that provides any explicit learning about the nature of work or the labour market in Australia. In addition those students whose purpose is to prepare for and to gain selection into tertiary studies may find (as do their tertiary teachers) that they are not well equipped in knowledge or skills for what they meet a few months later in universities and colleges.

Except for those few students who choose the elective of HSC Politics (or an equivalent study in one of the even rarer alternative programs) the great majority of students emerge from their postcompulsory years of study with no explicit learning about the political and democratic procedures in which they are very soon to participate. They are also bereft (except via the one compulsory subject of English that clearly cannot be responsible for everything of this nature as well as communication skills) of studies at these levels which enable them to engage with the great social issues we all face - the environment, the technological revolution, multicultural Australia, the changing nature of the family, etc. It is not that such learnings are not possible. Rather they have been excluded from the curriculum of postcompulsory schooling and they

need to have a place.

7. Curricula should assist more students to participate at this level by recognising a diversity of learning contexts, including community and work experience outside the education system.

Australia has always had, through its apprenticeship schemes and a number of other programs, educational programs paralleling the postcompulsory years in which some time is spent in formal education in schools and colleges and some in active learning 'on the job' or in a context other than school. Nursing and police cadet training are two other examples that involve persons in the 15-19 age group.

More recently schools have included periods of 'work experience' during the school year for many students but rarely has it been possible for students to gain credit towards a credential for learning that occurs in these out-of-school contexts. Guidelines for the Commonwealth Participation and Equity Program in schools suggest that ways of credentialling work experience should be explored. A recent article on new directions for science education referred to its contexts for learning being the laboratory, the field and the workshop. Only the first of these has been acknowledged in most postcompulsory science curricula and then the learning in it contributes only very marginally to the measure of worthwhile knowledge.

The development of education in this state has shared certain resources for learning very differentially between TAFE colleges, secondary technical and secondary high schools. Link arrangements make possible some extension of the availability of these resources to students of other schools but this has not been exploited to any significant extent in postcompulsory education. The remarkable growth of neighbourhood houses and community learning centres in Victoria in the last decade also testifies that many mature-aged learners find these more congenial contexts for learning than schools and other providers have traditionally offered such re-entrants to learning.

8. Curricula should have and should maintain the confidence of relevant groups and bodies from the postschool environment.

In the less complex days of the 1950s, successful learning in Years 11 and 12 led to credentials that gave automatic entry to certain vocations or to technical colleges, teachers colleges or universities. Since that time some of the automatic confidence in school offerings by those beyond the school has become blurred or lost entirely for certain sorts of curricula. Students successfully learning within these programs find themselves without access to a number of outcomes they may wish to pursue. The diversity of approved subjects and courses has been well intentioned, but the different treatment accorded to the various courses has underlined the importance of maintaining the confidence of post-school option providers in future course developments.

9. There should be opportunities for students to share in the planning and implementation of various aspects of their educational experience.

Many schools and colleges have made student negotiation a key feature of their curriculum for the 15-19 year old group. The meaning and extent of student negotiation in the curriculum process is not always clearly understood and it has been an area where clarification was required for members of the Working Party.

In one sense student negotiation at the postcompulsory level is inevitable. Students are required to make choices among subjects to form courses and often among options within subjects. Many of the desired directions in learning imply other senses in which student negotiation is expected. Throughout this report learning is presented as an active process. Students are at school because they have made a decision to continue. They bring a range of out-of-school experience to their formal education and they are likely to have a growing awareness of their strengths and weaknesses as learners. Several of the guidelines direct attention to the need to take student diversity in aptitude and interests into account and to assist them to have more understanding and control in their learning. These ideals can only be facilitated when students have opportunities to make real decisions in their educational program.

However, it is important to realise that student negotiation can only occur within the framework of an accredited program and the content of constituent units and the agreed assessment procedures. The accreditation process and the associated credential will need to retain public confidence.

Student and wide community involvement is regarded as desirable in preparing a proposal for accreditation and many schools and colleges have experience in gathering and incorporating a range of views on curriculum.

10. Schools and colleges should provide curricular programs that satisfy the guidelines set down in Section 4.

The growing development of school and college autonomy in curricular matters has been supported in the recent series of Ministerial papers. For the compulsory levels of education a policy of school-based curricular development provides a broad framework in which schools are carrying out their curricular responsibilities.

At the postcompulsory level at least two new factors become important when considering the school and college responsibility in curricular development and implementation. In addition to the responsibility schools and colleges have to all their students they have direct responsibility with respect to post-secondary and employment opportunities. The credential at the end of the postcompulsory stage must have widespread credibility in the community and extend to all schools and colleges providing programs for the common credential. The interests of all

students need to be protected and a wide divergence of curricular programs would make this aspiration difficult to achieve.

The Working Party has carefully considered the desired balance between prescribing postcompulsory programs and allowing schools and colleges to develop their own programs within broad guidelines. The position recommended requires schools and colleges to prepare programs within a series of central guidelines designed to achieve the changes listed in this section. The accreditation process is intended to ensure that each group seeking accreditation satisfies each of the guidelines. Schools and colleges should be able to expect substantial support as they respond to the guidelines. The Working Party's decision not to translate the guidelines into precise curriculum programs in this report is a recognition of the key role of the accreditation process and the fact that professional expertise within schools throughout the state will be important in translating the ideas into programs.

Schools and colleges will vary in their capacity to respond to the curricular opportunities provided by these guidelines. Curricular change in its fullest sense is most likely when those responsible for implementing the change develop a personal understanding and commitment to that change. To achieve this situation, the approach has been to:

- o Specify guidelines, each of which must be met in the accreditation process.
- o Advocate a significant support procedure to enable schools to prepare for accreditation and implementation (see Section 5).

The aim is to engage schools and colleges actively in curricular change within clear guidelines which will give the community confidence in the curriculum and its credential at this level.

4. GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING CURRICULUM PROPOSALS

The guidelines which are set out in this section are intended to provide the basis for developing school programs which are responding to the desired directions set out in Section 3.

These desired directions for curricula were:

1. The curricula of postcompulsory education (in schools and TAFE) should enhance the quality of the learning and the achievements of all students in this phase of education.
2. The curricula of postcompulsory schooling (in schools and in TAFE) should accord value to an increasingly broad range of student aptitudes, purposes, experiences and interests in learning.
3. Curricula should become increasingly available to students in ways that make further learning in this stage attractive and appropriate to more of them.
4. Curricula should provide all students with access to practical as well as theoretical studies and with experience of interaction between the two.
5. Curricula should seek to include a breadth of study and experience thus avoiding narrow specialisms and the limitation of possible outcomes that are the current experiences of many students.
6. Curricula should enable students to undertake immediate tasks that confront them in the post-school years (employment, lack of employment, further study, social responsibilities, etc.) and to adapt to the likely changes in their jobs and life styles they will face in the future.
7. Curricula should assist more students to participate at this level by recognising a diversity of learning contexts, including community and work experience outside the education system.
8. Curricula should have and should maintain the confidence of relevant groups and bodies from the post-school environment.
9. There should be opportunities for students to share in the planning and implementation of various aspects of their educationalexperience.
10. Schools and colleges should provide curricular programs that satisfy the guidelines set down in this section.

The reasons for advocating movement in these directions were argued in the previous section and the guidelines in this section provide a way in which schools and colleges can implement these ideas. In developing these guidelines, we have also worked on a framework and a set of processes whereby decisions about the curriculum and accreditation for the postcompulsory phase can be

made.

The success of this review of postcompulsory schooling will be judged by the support and encouragement the schools and colleges receive as they translate these guidelines into curricular programs.

Proposed Framework for Curricular Development and Accreditation

This proposal starts from the assumption that individual schools and colleges or groups of schools and/or colleges will continue to 'determine the general educational policy of the school within the guidelines issued by the Minister', as required in the amended Section 14 of the Education Act (1958).

It recognises that clear central guidelines not only assist schools but also ensure that the interests of all students are protected as they prepare for life after school.

The quality and clarity of these guidelines and the effectiveness of their implementation is what will provide and maintain public confidence in the curriculum at this stage of education and in any credential that is issued.

The proposed framework is based on the view that:

- A. Schools and colleges have the responsibility for the implementation of the curriculum designed within the centrally provided guidelines.
- B. In order to ensure community confidence in the credential, accreditation of curriculum proposals for this stage of education from schools and colleges formally resides with a central authority.

While accreditation is a formal decision of approval made at a given time and in a properly constituted manner by the central authority, it should also be seen as a process in which the central authority and schools and colleges may work together in the developmental stages. The central authority would have a critical role to play in translating the guidelines and directions for change into programs in schools. In this capacity it could produce a range of curricular models which schools and colleges would adopt.

The proposal encompasses the curricula of the postcompulsory levels of secondary high and technical schools (both government and non-government) and of TAFE colleges (to the extent we have indicated earlier.

Proposed Process for Curricular Development

- 1. Each school or college is responsible for presenting a curricular proposal appropriate to the needs of its students that is consistent with the central guidelines.
- 2. The curriculum for the postcompulsory years from which a

school wishes the common credential to be awarded must be accredited by the central authority.

3. Schools and colleges will be entitled to issue the common credential on the authority of the recognised central agency.
4. Appropriate assessment procedures for the units of the curriculum will be developed along with its other aspects and be subject to the same accreditation process.
5. Assessment procedures will need to be consistent with the educational intentions of the various units and appropriate for the purposes for which students may wish to use the credential beyond school.

The framework and the processes will be taken up in more detail after the guidelines have been presented.

GUIDELINES FOR THE POSTCOMPULSORY CURRICULUM

We regard the sorts of curriculum that these guidelines are designed to promote as the most appropriate means of providing for all students the extension of general education into the postcompulsory years.

Five guidelines will be presented that relate to the total curriculum for each student in this phase of education. The components of the total curriculum will then be specified in more detail with more precise guidelines.

Guideline 1: The curriculum should normally be completed over four semesters or 24 months:

The total curriculum that we propose is such that it requires this amount of time for learning. Some of the learning in each of its components will benefit greatly by the development that can occur over a two-year period. On the other hand, we believe it is important that students should not be locked into one particular choice of curriculum at this stage of their education. A two-year period, in which semesters are used for units of learning, will, we believe, allow students the opportunity to make changes to their programs of study if they wish.

Four semesters should enable each student to achieve a balanced curriculum - one which combines studies that require sequential learning with those that may not have such requirements. In this way students should benefit from both continuity and diversity of learning experiences. The four-semester arrangement might also facilitate the implementation of the curriculum proposed in this document by enabling schools to combine Years 11 and 12 students for some units.

Flexibility in completing the total curriculum will be encouraged if the credential is so conceived and organised that credits can be allowed to accumulate for each student. Those students who may discontinue their studies before the end of two years should be entitled to receive a record from the central authority of

the learning achieved and units undertaken.

The possibilities for gaining credit for work completed in other educational institutions and community settings within the overall education program devised by the school or groups of schools should be explored by each group seeking accreditation for its curriculum. It is expected that the accredited school, college or cluster of schools and colleges would be able to determine some of the units which could be available from other institutions and the units they would be prepared to accept as counting in their program. Conversely some units in this category may be accredited by TAFE and other post-secondary institutions towards TAFE certificate or other courses. This aspect of accreditation is elaborated in Section 6 of this report.

Guideline 2: The total curriculum should continue the learning achievement of all students.

It should ensure that all students will have the opportunity in the postcompulsory phase to increase and extend their knowledge, their skills, and their sense of themselves as learners beyond that achieved thus far in schooling. An important feature of the more detailed curricular planning that would be needed after this review will be the exploration of means for achieving improved standards of learning excellence for all students.

Guideline 3: In presenting proposals for accreditation schools should have incorporated a range of learning modes in the curriculum. These learning modes should:

- (i) provide opportunities for students to negotiate goals, content, learning approaches and modes of assessment.
- (ii) include a range of learning approaches and involve different learning contexts.
- (iii) allow for individual interests and abilities, for paid employment opportunities where possible, and for remedial and extension work where appropriate.
- (iv) provide opportunities for students to develop skills of intensive and independent learning and to take responsibility for their own learning.
- (v) be organised to give all students opportunities to broaden their perspectives and to learn by:
 - o understanding cultural perspectives beyond their own
 - o developing links between what they are learning and other areas of learning
 - o experiencing different approaches to learning with different combinations of theory and practice: knowing and doing, doing and knowing, knowing and applying

- o accepting different levels of understanding
- o having a wide experience of learning settings (e.g. work experience, field study)
- o having learning develop from a social context and develop implications and applications from the learning experience
- o extending ideas beyond the particularities of the immediate learning situation

Guideline 4: The total curriculum of each student should include explicit consideration of the nature of work and labour force issues in Australian society.

This guideline has been evolving over a number of years through work experience and career guidance, but the phenomenon of unemployment and the changing nature of work and employment warrant a much clearer articulation for all students in their final years at school of these issues and should go beyond the concerns which most careers guidance courses currently address.

Guideline 5: The total curriculum for each student should consist of three parts: (a) a common component, (b) a core component and (c) an optional component

Each component should continue across the two years. The common component should be at least one unit in each year and it will be expected that the core and optional components will occupy about equally the remaining learning time.

(a) The Common Component

All students in an accredited program should take at least one unit each year which is common for all students. This common unit should have contemporary social relevance and should provide a meeting ground of learning for all the students at this level. Its content for learning will be a deliberate attempt to contribute to students' capacity to participate in modern society. Specific guidelines and resources for the common component will be provided by the central authority for all schools. The detailed presentation of these units for learning will need to be developed at the school level with the features (i), (ii), (v) of Guideline 3 in mind.

(b) The Core Component

The core component of the overall curriculum for each student should include studies in each of the following areas:

- o Language and Communication
- o Mathematics
- o Science/Technology
- o Humanities and the Arts

o Social Sciences

This aspect is a response to the desired change in Section 3 (No 5) for greater breadth in the learning of all students in the postcompulsory years. Each of these areas of study is seen as having both theoretical and practical aspects.

In a subsequent stage of the planning for the curriculum of the postcompulsory years, it will be necessary to provide further detailed guidelines for these areas of study. These detailed guidelines will assist schools and students to know to what knowledge and learning these areas of study refer. They will also need to indicate the range of learning within them that is appropriate for these years of schooling.

These areas of study will be able to find their place in students' core curriculum in a variety of different ways, but a proposal for accreditation will need to show how the units in each student's core program achieve this breadth of study. Guidelines 3 (i) (ii) (iv) and (v) are important features for schools to consider in planning these core programs.

It will be important for each school, college and group of institutions to ensure that sufficient alternative units for this core component are provided, so that those students who already have a vocational and practical interest or orientation can complete this part of their overall studies in a way that recognises these interests. In relation to this sort of provision of the core component of the curriculum, three groupings of broad vocational interests - the arts and social sciences, business and economics, and the sciences and technology have been identified and a number of such broadly vocational programs can be envisaged under each grouping.

The idea of basing units of the core curriculum on broad vocational interests can be seen as an effort to link vocational and practical aspirations with academic studies. For those students whose predominant goals at this stage are vocational, we believe that academic studies will be more relevant and useful when set in a vocational context.

On the other hand, programs for this core component which are based more directly on the five areas of study or which combine these five areas of study can be seen as an evolution from the present academic curricula in many schools. Such crossdisciplinary programs for the core component, in addressing Guideline 3 will be building links between the concepts of academic study and their vocational and practical applications.

It is likely that a number of units in the core curriculum will contribute to the programs of students who have chosen their core studies on different bases. There is the possibility that some students will undertake units in the core component which include knowledge and skills that are prerequisite for various postsecondary courses, although the optional component will also provide for these studies.

(c) The Optional Component

The units making up this component of a student's overall curriculum may be:

- o Special-interest studies
- o Core-related studies
- o Prerequisite studies (for employment and tertiary courses)

Students, in choosing their optional studies, should be encouraged to maintain the breadth of study that has been built into their core components. Guideline 5 should also be used by schools in planning these optional parts of their total curriculum. In particular, Guideline 3 (iii) should be heeded so that students can keep options for their future open.

Special-interest studies:

This category provides opportunities for the development of units which cater for student, staff and community interests. Many art, craft, music, physical education, language studies, rural studies, work experience, field-study units may be presented in this category depending on the core curriculum structures which have been designed. Some units proposed in this category may be the results of cross-accreditation with certificate, apprenticeship or tertiary courses provided by other institutions.

Core-related Studies :

Included in this category would be units designed as remedial, prerequisite or extension studies for the core. The types of units that fit into this category will depend on the nature of the core. A unit classified as a core-related study for one student could be classified as a special-interest study for another student.

Pre-requisite studies for employment and post-secondary courses:

It will be necessary for prerequisite studies to be clearly stated and justified in terms of the knowledge content of postsecondary courses so that secondary level institutions can plan their total curriculum.

It is expected that units designated as prerequisites should aim at a high level of mastery. They should be assessed in terms of criterion referencing and not used as isolated bases for selection, but as a required element of the overall credential.

IMPLEMENTING THE CURRICULAR PROPOSALS

The implementation of the ideas that have been outlined in the form of the above guidelines is going to require a great deal of time, patience and support at the school level. The Working Party has used a number of ideal models, diagrams and curricular

structures as aids to its own thinking. The presentation of such ideal models or structures as part of this report would, we believe, unfortunately constrain the potential in the ideas and give unnecessary attention to what are only some ways in which a curriculum within these guidelines might be offered.

A better next step might be to develop the ideas with a number of schools and colleges and then to make their responses available more widely, not as ideal models but as ways schools could see themselves presenting such a total curriculum.

To explore the level of support required to translate these ideas into curricular programs, it may be possible to begin work immediately on the following tasks:

1. Develop further the guidelines and the details of the components of the postcompulsory curriculum.
2. Continue negotiations with tertiary institutions and employer organisations to specify prerequisites more precisely.
3. Consult with schools as they begin to consider the implications of the working party reports and explore the possibilities for curricular change.
4. Develop models of curriculum for adoption by schools. These models should manifest the desired changes and show their evolution from the present postcompulsory offerings of schools.
5. Work with a small number of pilot schools which express interest in implementing the curricular guidelines.

Experience and information is needed about the level and types of support different schools and colleges will require to prepare for and undertake the accreditation process. In the past educational changes have been limited because of under-estimation of the resources and support needed for implementation, and in particular the school and teacher-development requirements. In Section 5 the implementation procedures are further developed.

Further Details on the Proposed Framework and Processes

It is now appropriate to present more details about the framework and processes proposed earlier for the development of the new curricula for postcompulsory schooling.

The two main bodies in this framework are the central authority and the school or college. By listing below the responsibilities of these two bodies we will also be providing a clearer picture of the processes of co-operation, development, accreditation and implementation which we are proposing.

Below is a list of responsibilities which we suggest would rest with the central authority and the schools and colleges.

The Central Authority

The central authority should combine the following functions:

1. Accrediting curricula including assessment procedures
2. Authorising credentials
3. Supporting curricular development
4. Assisting students in the transition from school and college to work and further studies
5. Ensuring the involvement of representatives from schools and colleges with those from postsecondary education and the community in the work of this central authority
6. Establishing regional or district groups, representative of the central authority and the schools in the area, which may serve as a basis for inservice activity and moderation of curriculum development and assessment

More specifically the central authority should:

- (a) establish the broad framework and the specific requirements which schools must follow in developing curricula for accreditation;
- (b) assist schools and colleges to understand and implement the guidelines in their development of curricula;
- (c) convene and support curriculum reference groups to develop the more detailed guidelines for the five areas of study;
- (d) work with schools and the communities beyond school to establish appropriate assessment procedures that have the confidence of all parties;
- (e) develop appropriate curricular models and publish and publicise good curriculum materials;
- (f) establish and maintain a moderation unit which will assist schools and colleges in geographical districts to moderate their curricula;
- (g) carry out research into relevant matters;
- (h) negotiate the acceptance of a common credential, acknowledged by tertiary education authorities and employers and authorise schools and colleges whose curricula have been accredited to issue the credential;
- (i) ascertain from tertiary education the specific pre-requisite knowledge and skills for various tertiary studies;

- (j) provide each year the theme for the common units of study for all Years 11 and 12 students. The theme should be selected through a process of consultation with community groups.

The School/College

The school or college or group of these institutions should:

- (a) provide a curriculum within the central guidelines;
- (b) provide a sufficient range of units for the core curriculum so that the orientation and interest of all students are recognised;
- (c) demonstrate that its curricula meet the criteria laid down;
- (d) submit its proposal for accreditation;
- (e) participate (as a condition of accreditation) in consultation and moderation with other schools or colleges (in the same area) whose curricula have been accredited;
- (f) arrange contracting with other institutions for some studies within their curriculum to be taken outside the school itself.

5. RESOURCES FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGES

When comparing the arguments and guidelines with other reviews of postcompulsory schooling there is considerable agreement about the important issues and directions institutions should follow. Schools and colleges that have been responding to recent trends should find further encouragement, clarification and guidance to continue their review and efforts at change and improvement. However, we should not underestimate the task ahead if we are to implement the required changes. It is essential that there is commitment to providing the level of support required to bring about widespread change at the school and college level.

The recommendations for supporting schools are based on the following assumptions about educational change of the type presented in this report.

1. No curricular development as envisaged can occur without the commitment and support of all teachers and this will entail significant professional development to support the change.
2. The key challenge is to have teachers adopt a personal understanding and commitment to a view of curriculum which is congruent with the guidelines for postcompulsory schooling developed in this report. In the absence of this, implementation of new curricular approaches will be unlikely to be effective.
3. Change is most likely if schools and colleges are involved in an accreditation process which can extend over a long period of time (e.g. more than one year). Attempts at prescribing precise curriculum details are less likely to result in fundamental change although schools will vary in the amount of specific guidance they require in the early stages.

At this stage the Working Party has declined to present detailed curriculum models based on the guidelines. Instead it appears desirable to begin working in school and college situations to produce real responses to the guidelines and increase understanding of the process required to bring about change.

Initially the central authority should work with schools and colleges to ensure that the ideas and guidelines contained in this report are understood by all parties concerned. The process by which the guidelines are implemented in schools should be the result of dialogue and collaboration between schools and colleges and the central authority. Support and resources for this initial phase will be necessary.

Two more functions will be crucial to schools and colleges in the early stages. The central authority should engage in discussions with interested groups in the community in order to provide the detailed guidelines for the core areas of study. Secondly, discussions with tertiary institutions and employer organisations will be necessary to establish specific curricular details for optional units. Widespread planning cannot occur until these

tasks have been completed. This interaction with outside agencies forms an important stage in increasing understanding of the intentions and organisation of the new curricular arrangements.

When schools and colleges are engaging in the process of accreditation it will be important to include professional development programs for staff as part of the curricular development requirement. Our approach would be to establish professional development teams with a role of facilitating and conducting professional development programs for groups preparing for accreditation. It will be necessary to address ways of harnessing the professional resources in schools in such development programs i.e. such programs should not be solely resourced from outside the school, but rather jointly resourced. The designation of a professional development officer in each school or college might be an important step in this.

When the curricular accreditation process is established it should be a two-way process in which the curriculum is negotiated between the central agency and the school, thus providing continuing support for the schools in evolving curricula. Provision of support for teachers developing curricula should be co-ordinated with course accreditation, dissemination and sharing of accredited course materials and credentialling. If consensus moderation involving clusters of schools or networks becomes an element of the credentialling process, this will provide an important focus for teacher development activities.

The agency responsible for the co-ordinated functions outlined in the previous two paragraphs would preferably be an independent agency controlled by a board on which the interest of all relevant groups would be represented. Such groups should include the Education Department, government schools, nongovernment schools, TAFE, teachers, parents, students, employers, postsecondary education providers and other general community interests. This agency should also be required to:

- o develop links with pre-service education institutions to facilitate appropriate preparation activities for new teachers;
- o maintain effective liaison with tertiary institutions and employer groups;
- o maintain close links with related programs (e.g. PEP, SIP)

All the proposals outlined above have considerable financial implications. Without appropriate resourcing, it will not be possible to bring about the intended changes in the curriculum. These proposals should be translated into financial and resource estimates before decisions are made to proceed further with the Working Party recommendations.

6. ISSUES FOR FUTURE RESOLUTION

In the process of designing major reforms to the curriculum of a very important part of schooling, the Working Party became aware of a number of problems and issues that relate to this curriculum but belong to broader policy areas. In some cases it is probable that resolution of these problems and issues is necessary if curricular reform at this level is to be genuine. The Working Party has had neither the time nor the resources to explore these issues. Some of these are indicated in this section so that they will not be neglected in the planning and policy formulation that will need to follow this review.

The Education of Teachers

The nature and content of teacher education will require close scrutiny and modification if these curricular reforms are to be achieved. Since most teachers for the next two decades are already in the schools and colleges, inservice education will be essential; pre-service education however will also need to be adapted.

It is most important that teachers be provided with assistance in developing curricula which promote the interactions between the theoretical and the practical that are emphasised in both the Discussion Paper and in this report. These interactions refer to sources and forms of knowledge and to modes of learning.

Many possibilities can be envisaged for these purposes but to date few have become central in teacher education. Experience of community and youth work could provide important links for teachers between the school and the wider community. Much needs still to be done with regard to the critical role language plays in learning. In addition, new horizons for teachers are now available if microelectronics can be harnessed to transform the curriculum in positive ways.

It is inevitable with such a reform that a number of teachers will need substantial retraining. This retraining should go beyond what is possible in inservice programs. Teachers will need to keep abreast of knowledge in both teaching methodology and their substantive fields. The need for retraining will also arise from changes in society. An obvious example is the fact that the skills and experience of teachers in trade, industrial arts, and commercial areas can be rendered obsolete almost overnight by technological changes occurring in relation to these areas in society.

Appropriate provision for all these sorts of education and retraining will need to be provided so that teachers are adaptable and can maintain quality contributions to the curriculum.

The Administration of Education and Schooling

Any thorough reform of the postcompulsory years will require

modification to the existing managerial/administrative styles in many schools and colleges. For example, our proposals will require a more creative relationship between the administration in schools and the staff involved in the development and implementation of curriculum. School and college administrators will also require assistance and retraining in comparable ways to those listed above for teachers. The new powers and responsibilities that have been conferred on school communities by recent Ministerial reform, are imposing great strains on all those who are required to exercise leadership in schools. In addition, the reform of the curriculum we are recommending will only achieve the desired educational outcomes if those in leadership are helped to understand it, to become committed to it, and to acquire the skills for its implementation.

The Secondary/Postsecondary Interface

A reform of the curriculum of the upper levels of schooling of the magnitude we are recommending will inevitably have repercussions on the postschool environment and in particular upon the postsecondary systems of education. In the report we have suggested that we believe that students could be better prepared for postsecondary studies than currently is the case. One aspect of achieving this will depend on universities, colleges and TAFE being more specific about what sort of preparation they require and being prepared to justify these prerequisites on educational grounds. More generally what will be needed is the willingness to co-operate in many aspects of the reform. One possible direction for this co-operation is the credit that postsecondary institutions may wish to give to students who have successfully completed certain units in Years 11 and 12 which might overlap with learning that is normally part of the postsecondary programs. Another aspect is a more flexible approach to the selection of students for postsecondary study.

The broader education advocated in the new curriculum should provide an improved educational experience as well as offering more options to many more students than at present. While many students from the postcompulsory phase will, we hope, go straight into employment better educated than at present, there are likely to be an increasing number who will wish to take up the options that postsecondary education provides. It is essential that more opportunities for further education are provided and a failure to do so would be a cruel negation of our intentions.

If there is a more explicit emphasis on theory related to practice as we have advocated in the postcompulsory years, there will also be a strong case for this emphasis in tertiary studies. Tertiary institutions and particularly the colleges and universities that provide so many future teachers should be encouraged to review their own curricula in the light of developments in secondary education. Again the potential for using microelectronics in tertiary education needs urgent attention if secondary schooling and postsecondary education are not to be out of phase.

Public and Private Education

The curriculum of postcompulsory education should be a source of unifying Victoria's young people who are in both the public and private sectors of the overall education system. This should continue to be a primary goal for the curriculum of the postcompulsory phase. Accordingly, the proposals of this report are intended to apply to all schools in Victoria at this level.

Any re-organisation of postcompulsory schooling and any reform of the curriculum for this phase should occur under conditions that enable these changes to lessen the inequities that exist between schools. It is also most important that these changes should not lead to the uneconomic use of scarce resources. Co-operative use of resources should be encouraged so that costly and unnecessary duplication is avoided.

We have been conscious of the issues that relate public and private education to the postcompulsory curriculum. The issues are undoubtedly difficult but they are quite clearly central to serious and enduring reform.

CONCLUSION

In the report the specific terms of reference for our Working Party (section 1) have, we believe, each been addressed. Rather than attempt to summarise, and hence lose much of what has been written and argued in in the earlier chapters, we indicate where in the report there is substantial reference to the substance of each term of reference.

Terms of Reference

1(a)	Sections 2, 3, 4
1(b)	Section 2
2	Sections 3, 4
3	Sections 2, 3, 4
4	Sections 3, 4
5	Sections 4, 5

Finally, we would make two comments. There has been remarkable interest in the Discussion Paper and the work that has followed it. Such a climate is one that is encouraging for a reform of this magnitude. If the interest and momentum for reform are not to be lost the Minister and the Government must act clearly and with strong commitment.

Secondly, much is known, after two decades of fairly continuous attempts at curricular change, about good strategies for managing and implementing these changes so that they reflect the original intentions and have endurance. It is vital to utilise this knowledge in relation to the curriculum of postcompulsory schooling.

APPENDIX - THE RESPONSES

- 1 Three hundred and ninety responses to the Discussion Paper were received and analysed. The first step taken was a thorough review of 120 responses in order to gain a reliable indication of the broad categories of concerns and issues that were addressed. A number of headings were devised to cover these areas of concern, and the contents of each response categorised under them. The process was as objective as possible, summarising only the issues raised by the response itself. No assumptions were made unless they could be reasonably deduced from the written evidence, and no attempt was made to fit the responses to any predetermined conclusions.
- 2 A major difficulty was the ambiguity of many of the responses. Because they were not asked to reply to specific questions, respondents adopted a variety of approaches. Some made general comments on the Discussion Paper without giving a clear indication of the type of curriculum they preferred. Others raised issues at an abstract level, or disputed questions of fact relating to current curricular provisions, without addressing the question of what should be done in the future. Most responses dealt with only certain aspects of curriculum; few addressed a full range of issues. This made any reliable quantitative analysis impossible. However, it was possible, without distorting the content of the responses, to discern trends in their attitudes to major issues and to gain an impression of major concerns.

Principles of Curricular Development

- 3 There was considerable support in the responses for the proposition that curriculum at the postcompulsory stage should be general rather than specialised or occupationally specific, and that all students should have the opportunity for a breadth of learning and experience. The linking of theory and practice also received widespread support. Other broad principles that were endorsed by the majority of respondents were those of mutual support and co-operation in the place of individualised, competitive approaches, increased opportunities for students to assume responsibility for their own learning, collaborative approaches between students and staff, and student participation in decisions affecting their learning. Most responses also supported the proposition that all studies should be challenging and pursued with rigour.
- 4 While these principles were supported by the great majority of respondents, there were some dissenting opinions. Less than one-quarter of the responses opposed the concept of a broad general education. A very small number, mainly employers, some tertiary and TAFE institutions, and some independent and high schools considered that a stress on mutuality and co-operation did not reflect the competitive nature of society and would not help students to adapt to

it. A small number of schools also questioned the participation of students in decision making, mainly on the grounds that they were not mature enough.

Curriculum Structure

- 5 The overwhelming support for the concept of a broad general education was extended to similarly widespread support for a curricular structure consisting of common elements to be taken in some form by all students and a range of optional units. The preferred length of units was one semester. More than three-quarters of the responses favoured this form of basic curricular structure, although very few went into any details as to the proportions of time to be devoted to core and optional areas, and some raised concerns as to the balance between, and status accorded to, each type of unit. A number of responses specified that the areas of study to be undertaken by all students should not necessarily be taken at the same level or in the same fashion by everyone, but that a variety of learning modes and levels of difficulty should be available. Tertiary institutions, and some schools and curricular bodies, were concerned that there should be some recognition of the need for sequential development in some areas of study and that prerequisite learnings for tertiary subjects should be included. A small number of responses considered that notwithstanding a focus on the general curriculum, opportunities for specialisation should still be available. Technical school respondents and those involved in particular programs were concerned that the worthwhile features of current offerings should be preserved, and possibly extended, in any new curricular structure.
- 6 Less than a quarter of the respondents were opposed to this form of curricular structure, and there was not a consensus of opinion amongst them as to the structure to be adopted. Some respondents favoured different course structures for students seeking different destinations, with no common ground between these separate specialised streams. A small number questioned the need for any common or core studies and thought that all subjects should be optional. An even smaller number, primarily from those concerned with alternative offerings, considered that there should be no division of the curriculum into subjects, but that it should be structured around issues of major concern studied in an integrated fashion. Many of them, however, did not state any preference, but maintained that the propositions put forward in the Discussion Paper would reduce the content of existing courses, lower standards, reduce preparedness for tertiary study or work and opportunities for in-depth study, and fail to stimulate students at either end of the ability range. Some tertiary institutions, and some independent and high schools were the main respondents who raised these concerns.

Breakpoint

- 7 Most responses either explicitly or implicitly favoured a curricular breakpoint at the end of Year 10, with Years 11 and 12 as a continuous curricular stage. However, a small proportion questioned this curricular breakpoint. The majority of these considered that secondary schooling should be continuous from Years 1 to 12, and smaller numbers based their argument on the concept of a P-12 curricular continuum. A very few favoured Year 9 or Year 11 as the curricular breakpoint.

Content

- 8 The vast majority of respondents considered that the study of society should be undertaken in some form by all students. Only a small number of respondents expressed caution in relation to it, pointing out that it could become merely a 'grab bag' of current issues lacking structure and challenge, and that vested interests could seek to include particular content in it, unless it was firmly grounded in contributory disciplines. There was also considerable support for studies in the areas of mathematics, science/technology, humanities and the arts to be undertaken by all students. Some respondents added to this list, or emphasised the importance of particular aspects of it, primarily English and communication skills, craftwork and creative arts, music, physical skills and human development. A number of Catholic schools and organisations favoured the inclusion of values and moral education or the study of religion in the list of areas of study to be undertaken by all students. Considerable support was given to work experience and community service as essential components of the curriculum, although a small number of respondents pointed out that current regulations made initiatives in these areas difficult.
- 9 Tertiary institutions were concerned that prerequisite studies in areas such as the science, mathematics and language be maintained at a sufficient level, and that contemporary studies should not be emphasised at the expense of such subjects as ancient history, foreign cultures and languages. There was some questioning as to what was meant by broadly vocational specialisms. Technical schools and TAFE colleges considered that the option of occupationally specific courses should be retained, and that broadly vocational options should involve some links with apprenticeship, industry and commerce, and TAFE vocational courses. TAFE respondents also emphasised the need to study such matters as the impact of new technology, the nature of work, and 'life skills'. Organisations concerned with the needs of the disabled were concerned that special units should be available for them, as well as appropriate modes of learning in other areas of study.

Major Concerns

- 10 The main issue raised was that teachers are crucial to the success of any curricular changes, and there would need to be considerable attention given to teacher inservice and preservice education, significant curricular support for teachers, and increases in the staffing and resources made available to schools. Another concern raised was that any major changes to the curricular rationale and structure should apply to all schools, whether state or independent. There should be no opportunity for particular schools to opt out and concentrate on particular areas, for example, tertiary preparation, as this could detract from community acceptance of the curriculum and lead to inequities and differentials of prestige. A third commonly raised issue was that the curriculum should have widespread acceptance and credibility within the community, tertiary institutions, employers, and other postschool destinations, and that these bodies should be involved and co-operate in any changes made. Many responses also emphasised the need to retain the worthwhile features of current offerings in any new structure, but to extend their benefits to more students.

Agency Responsible

- 11 Few responses addressed the question of the agency to be ultimately responsible for curricular policy, accreditation and support. Most of those who did stressed the need for some central agency to be responsible for the issuing of curricular guidelines, for the accreditation of curriculum, and the provision of curricular support. Few thought that each school should be individually responsible for its curriculum without any external support services, guidelines or accreditation procedures.

Conclusion

- 12 It can be concluded that there was widespread support among the responses for the concept of a broad general education at the postcompulsory level, linking theory and practice and based on the principles of mutuality and co-operation. The linking of Years 11 and 12 into a continuous curricular stage with units of study in some areas to be undertaken in some form by all students, together with a range of optional units, was also widely supported. The majority of respondents thought that all students should be exposed to the study of society in some form. It was also widely recognised that curriculum at this stage should take into account the interface with postschool destinations and participation; that teachers and schools should receive adequate curricular support; that concern should be with the mainstream of provision; and that any change should be based on the best features of existing provision.

APPENDIX 6

REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON CREDENTIALS

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1. A YEAR 10 CREDENTIAL
2. A COMMON CREDENTIAL FOR
YEARS 11 AND 12
3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMMON CREDENTIAL
4. ACCREDITATION, ASSESSMENT AND
MODERATION OF UNITS
5. SELECTION FOR TERTIARY ENTRANCE
6. IMPLEMENTATION

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX : THE RESPONSE

La Trobe University

VICE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE TELEPHONE 478 3122



6th December, 1984.

Mrs. Jean Blackburn,
Chairperson of the Co-ordinating
Committee,
Ministerial Review of Postcompulsory
Schooling,
2 Treasury Place,
MELBOURNE. VIC. 3002.

Dear Mrs. Blackburn,

The accompanying report from the Credentials Working Party
is offered to the Co-ordinating Committee as advice on the matters
which it referred to us.

Yours sincerely,

J.F. SCOTT,
Vice-Chancellor.

Encl.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of reference applying to all three working parties

1. To advise the Committee co-ordinating the Review on the issues raised by and directions of change suggested in relevant sections of the Discussion Paper.
2. To receive, analyse and take into account public responses to the Discussion Paper in the particular area with which each working party is concerned.
3. To conduct or supervise investigations relevant to the area under consideration and to consult with individuals and groups having relevant experience, interests and competence.
4. To liaise on a regular basis with other working parties on matters of common concern.
5. To outline a staged plan of possible action by:
 - (i) the government
 - (ii) relevant agenciesin support of preferred options for change in the area under consideration.
6. To report formally to the Co-ordinating Committee by the end of September 1984 (later extended to November 1984) and to discuss progress with it at each of its monthly meetings in the interim. The chairperson of each working party or his or her nominee should attend Co-ordinating Committee meetings as necessary for this purpose.

Terms of reference particular to the Credentials Working Party

Within the framework of Chapter 4 of the Discussion Paper, the working party is asked to examine and advise the Co-ordinating Committee regarding:

1. The development of a single credential marking the completion of Year 12 of general education in schools and TAFE and providing a basis for entry to the work force or to further education and training.
2. How to provide for tertiary selection within this focus.
3. The introduction of a credential at the end of Year 10 which may include criterion-referenced assessments of literacy and numeracy.
4. Methods of moderation of credentials.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership included people drawn from teacher and parent organisations and from the major agencies involved in postcompulsory schooling, and others having expertise and experience relevant to the examination of options and the working through of concrete proposals for action.

Professor John Scott (Chair)
Dr Ian Allen
Mr Kevin Blachford
Ms Jean Blackburn
Mr John Braddy
Miss Nina Crone
Mr Ken Fraser
Mr Bill Hannan
Mr John Jamieson
Mr John Kemp
Professor Kwong Lee Dow
Mr Bill Maxwell
Ms Heather Murray
Dr Helen Praetz
Mr Bernard Rechter
Ms Marion Russell (Executive Officer)

Meetings

The Working Party met on nine occasions each of a half day's duration.

Public Response to the Discussion Paper

Each member of the working party received a copy of the relevant pages of every response received by the Review. The analysis of public response to the credentialling issues is provided as the appendix to this report.

INTRODUCTION

It would be true to say that the Credentials Working Party when it first met in May 1984 found its task daunting. Within a period of five months, we had to design a new comprehensive credential that would satisfy the mixed, and sometimes quite opposite, needs of a liberal and general secondary education, of traditional standards and views, of tertiary education and selection, of the wide variety of postcompulsory education as evidenced in the Discussion Paper, including what is provided in the TAFE sector and, above all, the students, their families and communities both urban and rural.

While our own discussions were progressing, we were aware that VISE was reviewing the curriculum and assessment for HSC in Year 12, that some tertiary institutions were modifying selection procedures and that both commonwealth and state governments were devising policies to promote participation and equity.

Our task was made a little easier by two factors. First, the Co-ordinating Committee for the Review extended our period for reporting back by two months and indicated that it required only broad rather than detailed recommendations, and, secondly, by the co-ordination of the three working parties by the efficient services of the Review's consultant, Dr Helen Praetz, its executive officer, Ms Marion Russell, and its secretariat. Nevertheless the Working Party has found it difficult, within its time scale to give the consideration deserved by the responses and to dovetail our recommendations to those of the other working parties, particularly the Curriculum one. We would have dearly liked to have done so, but we have now to leave those aspects to the Co-ordinating Committee.

For these reasons, the Working Party has not commissioned any major new investigations, though we have been much helped by the supporting documentation and, in particular, the analysis of responses carried out by Dr Jenny Matthews.

The Working Party's Advice in Relation to the Discussion Paper

It was fortunate that the Working Party found itself in sympathy with the broad thrust of the Discussion Paper. We accepted the concept of bringing together Years 11 and 12 into an integrated program involving both schools and TAFE, the desirability of a single credential, the necessity of providing a general education at this stage, and the provision of information to institutions of higher education to assist them in the selection of students.

Our discussions and advice are formulated within this framework. It is also clear from the responses received and the analysis of their contents that this framework received overwhelming support. Documentation of support for the first and third items is found in Appendix 1 of the report of the Working Party on Curricular Issues and, for the second and fourth items, in Appendix 1 of this report.

1. A YEAR 10 CREDENTIAL

1.1 One of the Working Party's terms of reference was to examine and advise the Co-ordinating Committee on the introduction of a credential at the end of Year 10 which might include criterion-referenced assessments of literacy and numeracy. A minority of the responses was in favour of such a credential, citing arguments that it had value as a 'rite of passage', enabling planning of Years 11 and 12 courses and estimation of their benefits for individual students to take place on a firmer basis; that it would improve the public image of the schools and would impose an accountability mechanism on the school system in general.

1.2 However, the Working Party felt that the counter arguments presented by responses and by its own members carried more weight. It felt that a Year 10 credential would have low market value and would not be an encouragement to increased participation in later years; that the credential would be used as a basis for selection, regardless of its content and relation to the purpose for which selection is required; that the testing of 15-16 year olds may justifiably cause public concern about examination stresses on the young; that low achievers would be further stigmatised and disadvantaged; that such a credential could encourage a narrowing of the content and processes of curricula in the compulsory years; and that other adverse factors pointed to the rejection of such a credential. Nevertheless the Working Party considers that it is important to ensure that all students (with minor and justifiable exceptions) emerge from their period of compulsory schooling sufficiently competent in oral and written communication and in the basic arithmetical processes to their places confidently in the society and to participate in serious studies beyond the compulsory phase. To assist teachers in ensuring that students possess such competence and to assist teachers in the identification and rectification of particular deficiencies, tests should be developed and consistently used over the compulsory years.

Recommendation 1 A statewide centrally controlled Year 10 credential is not advised.

Recommendation 2 Tests should be developed to assist teachers in ensuring that all students (with minor and justifiable exceptions) emerge from their period of compulsory schooling sufficiently competent in oral and written communication and in the basic arithmetical processes to take their places confidently in the society and to participate in further serious studies; and to assist teachers in the identification and rectification of particular deficiencies. These tests should be used consistently over the compulsory years.

2. A COMMON CREDENTIAL FOR YEARS 11 AND 12

2.1 An overwhelming majority of the responses supported the concept of a single credential. It is obvious that the variety of credentials and agencies is serving to confuse the community and that individual types of credentials, because of this confusion, are not always fulfilling the purpose for which they were designed. Equally, few responses advocated turning the clock back and forcing all institutions catering for students at this level to conform to the same narrow structure.

2.2 The Working Party agreed with these views. It was evident, both from the statistics contained in the Discussion Paper and from the experience of members of the Working Party, that TAFE played a highly significant part in providing opportunities and credentials, such as TOP and middle-level and trade (apprenticeship) certificates at the postcompulsory level, together with non-credit programs such as EPUY, PVC, VOP etc. It seems clear that this alternative to more conventional schooling will continue, and may well expand. The Working Party did not want to inhibit this important area of postcompulsory schooling.

2.3 Although at the present time TOP is the credential issued within TAFE which most clearly fits within the common credential for Years 11 and 12, nevertheless, over time, it seems important that certain aspects of apprenticeship and certificate courses, and also of courses conducted for the young unemployed, should become related to the common credential for Years 11 and 12, through cross-crediting arrangements.

2.4 There was considerable disillusionment with the lack of public recognition of HSC Group 2 subjects including programs like STC within HSC, however beneficial they may be. It would enhance the status of these options for Year 12 study if they could be accommodated within a common credential with a common scheme for accreditation and assessment.

2.5 The Working Party agreed that to accommodate the variety of programs briefly mentioned above and to provide a credential for the general education envisaged in the Discussion Paper it would be necessary for this common credential to have a high degree of flexibility. The task of providing flexibility and variety within the certificate would be made easier by designing the credential to assess work at both Years 11 and 12. In our judgement it is not possible to design a single credential providing variety and flexibility on the basis of Year 12 work only.

Recommendation 3: There should be a common credential administered statewide for Years 11 and 12, or equivalent, covering a wide range of institutions and users.

2.6 It is easy to formulate a general recommendation like this, which in any case is contained in the Discussion Paper; it is much harder to produce a structure that will enable this recommendation to be implemented. The Working Party early in its

discussions established some clear principles: we wanted the credential to be cumulative and to be based on a wide range of units or subjects and we wanted failure to be redeemable.

2.7 The Working Party was firm in its conviction that the credential should be cumulative and provide a profile of the holder's work at this level. A pass in one or two units may be all that some students want and a certificate indicating this success should be issued. Students should be able, at any stage in their careers, to add to their certificate by gaining satisfactory attainment in other units and having this recorded. Not many years ago, such a program of continual addition and accumulation to every student's certificate would have been a bureaucratic nightmare with long delays before a certificate was amended or a new one issued. Now such continuous updating becomes a relatively simple task for a central computer to handle and delays in recording and providing up-to-date print-outs should be minimal. We can see little problem in recommending, therefore:

Recommendation 4: The common credential should follow a structure that allows students to accumulate items at any subsequent stage in their careers and have all their attainments recorded.

2.8 Failing an examination can be a shattering experience. However, some candidates will fail to reach a satisfactory standard and in some form this has to be acknowledged. What is disastrous for self-confidence and the possibility of pursuing further study is to have a failure recorded for all time with no chance of redeeming it. The Working Party believes that while the credential must record performance in any unit, students who have failed any unit should be given the opportunity to try alternative ways of achieving the unit's objectives without penalty and, indeed, that any grade or mark may be improved by a later attempt.

2.9 It may be argued that while repeats may be desirable, the fact that they are second or third attempts should be recorded or indicated. There is some evidence that repeating is itself an indicator of poor future success and so, it may be claimed, the information should be known. We disagree: the new credential will be earned by a wide range of students with differing backgrounds and ages. A failure redeemed by success on repetition a year later may indicate one thing for a seventeen year old school student, but convey a different impression when the holder is a twenty-one year-old apprentice who first took the unit at school, has since been to a TAFE college and has now repeated it with success by attending evening classes in his or her own time. The credential should portray what has been actually achieved and not, of itself, the path by which any success was attained.

Recommendation 5: Any performance in any unit of the credential may be improved by later repetition and the credential will show only the best result in the unit.

2.10 It will be seen that although the primary purpose of the credential is to record achievement in the work of Years 11 and 12, the Working Party does not envisage it being restricted to these years. We believe that the credential must subsume TOP programs now conducted mainly in TAFE colleges, allow for the transfer of credits in specified units to some other TAFE programs, e.g., middle-level certificates and apprenticeship, and cater for the increasing proportion of students who leave formal education at an early age only to return later. This is the justification for the flexibility engendered by recommendations 4 and 5. The Working Party is designing a credential that is not necessarily a school leaving certificate or a tertiary entry selection tool. It is a measure of the achievements and a profile of the performance of the holder in the general education for which every citizen of Victoria should strive.

Recommendation 6: The common credential should be named The Victorian Certificate of General Education (VCGE).

3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMMON CREDENTIAL

3.1 With the changes planned in secondary school term dates in Victoria, the Working Party believes that there will be an increasing tendency for the teaching year to be organised in semesters. We therefore believe that it is reasonable to plan a credential on the basis of a specified number of units to be studied by a full-time student in Years 11 and 12 on a semester basis. The working party was reluctant to recommend a precise number of semester units with associated hours of contact time until the recommendations of the Curriculum working party were known and until discussions with teachers were held. However twenty-four or twenty units were envisaged with contact time of three to four hours per week per semester, or its equivalent.

3.2 The Working Party was also reluctant to be very specific about the nature of these units, since this is the province of the working party on curriculum. However, it was obliged throughout its discussions to imagine fairly specific possible schemes in order to clarify its own ideas. As a result of having worked through these schemes, the Working Party found that it had wide agreement among its members on the following principles which it believes could and should inform the structure of a common credential:

3.2.1 Courses should be designed to be flexible, so that schools will be able to adapt them to their particular circumstances and population. This means that the centrally accredited course should consist of guidelines and prescriptions concerning the scope and work load of the course but that actual content and teaching methods should be framed in such a way that individual schools may both choose among options or devise their own variations to suit local conditions.

3.2.2 Although the credential should include all units successfully completed, the central authority should prescribe a pattern of units required for full certification.

3.2.3 There should be a substantial element of common studies provided for in both Years 11 and 12. For full certification, these common studies should represent about one third of the total time allotment for a full course.

3.2.4 Specialist studies should include both academic studies (such as those presently set for HSC) and vocationally oriented studies (such as many of those currently taken in TAFE colleges). All specialist studies, however, should be broadly conceived to ensure that students will have a general grounding in the subject, see the subject matter in its historical and social contexts and understand and where possible practise applications of knowledge in real situations.

3.2.5 For full certification students should be required to take a broad course covering the humanities, sciences and practically or vocationally oriented studies.

3.2.6 A serious attempt must be made to limit the influence of tertiary entrance requirements on the overall structure of the credential and on specific course content and teaching methods. The Working Party agrees that full certification should be a basic requirement for tertiary entrance, and accepts that particular subject assessments should play a significant role in tertiary selection. However, it believes that these uses of the credential should not be allowed to dictate the structure of the credential or the modes of assessment. The structure of the credential should be derived primarily from the broadest considerations of the educational needs of the full range of students.

3.3 We would not in general designate some units to be taken in Year 11 and others in Year 12; but would encourage planning student programs to ensure a spread of common and specialist studies over Years 11 and 12. The order in which units are taken should be decided by institutions and students according to local curricular and organisational backgrounds. This does not imply that there should be no sequential units. Indeed, the Working Party is quite clear that the issuing of a full Victorian Certificate of General Education would be dependent on completion of some sequences of units.

Recommendation 7: A credential representing full completion of Years 11 and 12, or their equivalent, should contain a profile of performance and attainment in a specified number of units, each conducted over one semester or the equivalent.

Recommendation 8: Except where constraints arise in developing sequences of units, or in the timing of consensus moderation, units towards the credential shall not be restricted to be taken at any particular period in Years 11 and 12.

Three Types of Units

3.4 The Working Party presents the following scheme to provide an illustration of the principles outlined in 3.2 above. This scheme is not a prescription we expect to be followed in detail. Nevertheless, while recommendations 9 - 12 and recommendation 14 depend to some extent on the curricular scheme we have used as illustration, they do indicate the general principles which the working party agreed should be adopted. The scheme comprises three types of units: common studies, specialist studies and additional studies.

Common Studies

3.5 The common studies are intended to provide a basis of general education as envisaged in the Discussion Paper. We are particularly concerned with three areas that should be main components of common studies. These are communication, numeracy and the study of society.

3.6 In communication, we do not simply mean knowledge and use of the English language, although this must be a major part. We also imply a familiarity with elementary logic and analysis, structure of language and the creative use of both the spoken and written word, supplemented by some knowledge of literature. By numeracy, we imply a knowledge of basic mathematics, but also a sense of number and its importance to everyday life, the role and scope of computers together with their limitations, and an appreciation of very elementary statistics. The study of society should relate to the world of work, the obligations of citizenship, the culture of our society and its economic and social history, and to the international context in which Australia lies.

3.7 These three components constitute the minimal level of common studies which we believe essential to a general education. We would have no objection to it being enlarged to include, say, general science and technology or cultural and aesthetic appreciation, but this could lessen the time spent in the other areas. The Working Party recommends that the three components of the common studies should contribute fairly equally to approximately one-third of the complete course. These would not necessarily be sequential and could well be developed to offer considerable flexibility.

Recommendation 9: Common studies shall be the first of three major types of units and shall as a minimum provide three components in communication, numeracy and the study of society.

Recommendation 10: Each component of common studies shall comprise a specified number of semester units. Common studies should comprise approximately one third of a full credential.

Specialist Studies

3.8 Within this second classification of units, the Working Party envisages the inclusion of those usually regarded as academic and those usually regarded as vocationally oriented, and thereby the inclusion of subjects in the present HSC and TOP programs and many of those in other school and TAFE programs. The specialist studies component of the credential provides the focus for preparation for higher and further education and scope for cross-accreditation of units with some TAFE courses; but would cater also for those without higher or further education in mind. They will include sequential units in, for example, mathematics, physics, chemistry and other sciences; English and other languages; art and design, performing arts, building

studies, machine shop practice; geography, history, legal studies; technology; environmental studies, food studies, computer studies, and so on. Not all units will be sequential and some may well be terminal courses. Course designs for all units should require a balance of theoretical and applied/practical work and treat the subject matter within its historical, social and applied contexts. For full certification, the Working Party recommends that units belonging to the specialist study group should comprise at least one third of the complete course.

Recommendation 11: Specialist studies shall be the second of the three major types of units, and should include those usually regarded as academic and those usually regarded as vocationally oriented. Course designs for specialist studies should require a balance of theoretical and applied/practical work and show the subject matter in its historical, social and applied contexts. At least one third of the units of a full credential should be of this type.

Additional Studies

3.9 This third classification of units is intended by the Working Party to provide a wide spectrum of possibilities. These units may utilise or relate to studies in the first two types, or specifically provide experience of the society into which students are to move and skills which they will find valuable. Examples might range from creative writing, through creative art, dance or music, computer studies, to driving skills and car maintenance, first aid or bushcraft. They may also include work experience, community service or the work component for those students undertaking part-time work with part-time study. They might also include, as explained later, transitional studies to higher and further education although the distinction between additional studies and specialist studies will have to be clarified in such cases. The remaining one third of the total course should ideally be of this type.

Recommendation 12: Additional studies shall be the third of the three major types of units. These may utilise or relate to the common and specialist studies but can provide a wide range of further options for students to sample. About one third of the units of a full credential should be of this type.

Flexibility and constraints

3.10 The Working Party has already recommended (through Recommendation 4) that the credential should allow complete flexibility in recording achievements whatever they might be without constraining them to fall into certain areas. This, then, logically leads us to a number of other recommendations.

Recommendation 13: Although a balance of types of units should be mandated for full certification, this is not a constraint on the credential being issued whatever the numbers and types of units attempted.

Recommendation 14: A credential which meets the yet to be specified number of completed units and which satisfies the restrictions on types of units in recommendations 10 to 12, or other restrictions that may be developed, shall be endorsed as satisfying the requirements laid down for the issue of a full Victorian Certificate of General Education.

Recommendation 15: The precise restrictions referred to in recommendation 14, which may also include restrictions on areas of study, e.g., a range of studies covering sciences, humanities and arts, etc., shall be developed as a result of discussions with schools, parents, employers, tertiary institutions, TAFE and others.

4. ACCREDITATION, ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION OF UNITS

4.1 The Working Party's recommendations in this section are based on the following agreements:

4.1.1 While maintenance of an element of external assessment by public examination is supported in the community at present, it was felt that by the end of this decade the pressure for the continuation of this mode will have moved away from Year 12, given the variety of institutions involved and the acceptance of other forms of moderation by the public. There is no long-term future need for externally conducted public examinations.

4.1.2 All units should be accredited by a state accreditation board with the widest possible public representation. Accreditation should include methods of assessment as well as content and processes.

4.1.3 There is a need for continuation of some grading of assessments to meet a number of purposes including that of providing a basis for tertiary entrance.

4.1.4 It is appropriate to have different arrangements for accreditation, assessment and moderation for different types of studies on the understanding that for full certification students will need to take studies from each type. To illustrate its intentions the Working Party again uses the curricular scheme outlined in section 3. While recommendations 16-18 depend to some extent on the curricular scheme we have used as illustration they do indicate the general principles which the Working Party agreed should be adopted.

Common Studies

4.2 In relation to units included in the common studies, the Working Party envisages the development, on a statewide basis, of curricular guidelines which mandate broad areas of knowledge and processes to which all students have right of access. What may vary is the teaching details of these curricula which may well be developed within a consortium of regionally based schools. While we would not wish to prohibit individual institutions developing common studies units, they play such an important role that institutionally based options should be limited to later units in common studies. All units in common studies should be assessed by a variety of modes (formal examination, 'take-home' exercises, research, theses, etc.) which should form part of the accreditation process. Where possible we would hope criterion-referenced testing and goal-based assessment could be used in the common studies, resulting only in gradings of satisfactory or unsatisfactory and a profile description.

Recommendation 16: Common studies units should be based on statewide curricular guidelines and be accredited by the central authority. There should be a variety of teaching methods and options within these guidelines and a variety of criterion-referenced modes of assessment. Assessment would be conducted by each institution with the attainment of students being classified as satisfactory or unsatisfactory and accompanied by a profile description of the student's performance.

Specialist Studies

4.3 The specialist studies offer more scope for variety, although the Working Party hopes that the accreditation authority would not allow too much diversity, especially in the earlier units of sequences. Groups of institutions may want to develop curricula that built on strengths contained in those institutions and we would encourage this. Nevertheless, we believe there must be coherence of level and standard. It would be extremely unfortunate, to say the least, if a unit labelled 'Advanced Mathematics' meant one thing in Gippsland and something completely different in Warrnambool. We would therefore see the accreditation authority insisting on some essential content and processes for curricula in all these units. As it is within the specialist studies that the Working Party sees the most scope for cross accreditation of some VCE units with the units of some TAFE certificate and apprenticeship courses the new accrediting authority will need to plan such arrangements in co-operation with the TAFE Accreditation Board.

4.4 It is within specialist studies that the Working Party believes that grading is necessary. This is not only for the purposes of selection into higher and further education but also for other uses of the credential that the community wishes to make. Employers generally want to be able to shortlist candidates for a position on the basis of the credential without proceeding to a second stage with all candidates; many students want to have such a judgement of their ability. The Working Party agrees that grades should not give a false impression of accuracy nor dominate the assessment procedures; that investigations should be made into the number of points needed for summative grading and into the consequences of using summative grades accompanied by profiles; and that discussion and negotiation with interested parties are necessary before a final decision is taken.

4.5 The Working Party believes that external consensus moderation could be a desirable mode of assessment for units within the specialist studies category. However, it is clear that more experience in the use of consensus moderation needs to be gained before it can become the sole means of comparing students across areas and schools.

Recommendation 17: Specialist study units should provide variety and flexibility under the control of a central accreditation authority. Broad curricular aims

would need to be laid down by the authority, as would the necessity for a variety of modes of assessment. The expectation is that assessment would be conducted by each institution but that these assessments would, for purposes of comparing students across institutions, be subject to statewide consensus moderation. However, whether consensus moderation could become the sole means of comparing students across all institutions, and what number of summative grades of performance is appropriate, should be further investigated and discussed.

Additional Studies

4.6 The Working Party envisages the additional study units as being largely school- or institution-based both in terms of content and assessment. The central accreditation authority, while preserving ultimate authority and responsibility, might well devolve the detailed consideration to other bodies. The variety of possible units is such that moderation and modes of assessment are difficult to prescribe in general. For work experience or community service all that might be necessary is a verification that it has taken place; for music, woodwork or computer studies a specimen work might be produced; while for keyboard skills or car maintenance, a criterion-referenced test could be appropriate. It should perhaps be recorded that a reading course in abstract algebra, symbolic logic or French literature might be an entirely appropriate unit within additional studies.

Recommendation 18: Additional study units shall be institutionally based and assessed, subject to appropriate accreditation. Statewide moderation is not prescribed.

Relationship to Present Programs

4.7 Nothing has been said as yet on the effect of our recommendations on the various types of credentials at present available in Victoria. Part of our conviction is that appropriate elements of TAFE be included in the common credential. We believe our broad outline makes this possible for the TOP though, of course, there would have to be some changes as there would have to be for all existing credentials. One of the reasons for our recommendation 15 is to accommodate this and other programs. We also believe that with other TAFE courses, particularly certificate and apprenticeship programs, there could be considerable cross-accreditation. If more young people are to continue their schooling to the end of Year 12, thus delaying entry to TAFE certificate and apprenticeship courses it is important that their extended schooling be taken into account on entry into such TAFE courses. It is also important to maximise the opportunities for all students to pursue multiple goals simultaneously. For these reasons, the Working Party recommends that TAFE must be intimately involved with accreditation procedures and in the discussion consequent on the final report of the Ministerial Review.

4.8 The Working Party believes that most of the present HSC group 2 subjects can easily be assimilated within the proposed structure and that this will enhance the status of these subjects. The present VISE group 1 HSC subjects might well move with little modification into the specialist studies. The STC and T12 provide somewhat more of a problem. Nevertheless, it is certainly possible to accommodate them within the credential; whether it will be possible for these programs to be endorsed under recommendation 14 will depend on the more detailed recommendations.

Recommendation 19: Accredited units should encompass a broad range of studies and a variety of modes of learning and assessment. Co-operation between the TAFE Accreditation Board and the future accrediting authority will be necessary for cross-accrediting purposes.

5. SELECTION FOR TERTIARY ENTRANCE

5.1 Undoubtedly the proceedings of the Working Party would have been much shorter, and possibly would have produced different recommendations, had there been no need of selection for entry to tertiary institutions, for instance had there been an exact match of students and appropriate places. However, the problem is there and in our judgement will continue to exist for the foreseeable future.

5.2 The Working Party was well aware, through responses, through its membership and from oral evidence, of the apprehensions of some higher educational institutions. It was also aware of the comments in the Discussion Paper (section 4.7) of the dangers that either the institutions or non-government schools might develop an alternative credential if there were not an adequate basis for tertiary selection. Equally, we were aware of the strong opinion that tertiary selection and the present HSC dominate Year 12 and encourage narrow specialisation.

5.3 It is not for the Working Party to tell colleges and universities how to select their students. However it believes that it has made recommendations that will enable as successful a selection process to continue in the future as has occurred in the past, even though some changes in procedure will be necessary. We wish to make four points:

5.3.1 The grades for the specialist studies and the classification as satisfactory in the common studies units provides a wider profile of ability than exists at present, together with reasonable detail. We note that in England, where competition for places in higher education is stronger than in Australia, institutions are able to select students on the basis of three subjects graded from A to E, with, incidentally, a number of autonomous examining bodies without inter-group moderation.

5.3.2 Since the Working Party has recommended a cumulative credential, with results being credited on a continuous basis, it should be possible to commence selection considerably earlier than at present. This would not only allow ancillary aids to selection to be used for marginal cases, but would make possible acceptance on a provisional basis with transitional work to be done as some of the additional studies units. A pilot study might be conducted between now and 1990 to investigate the precise prerequisite background (beyond completion of certificate requirements) needed by students to enter certain courses claiming the need for it; and should such prerequisites not be met by units within the specialist studies type, bridging courses could be devised to supply this background. Such bridging courses could be accredited as units within the additional studies category.

5.3.3 While tests such as ASAT should not be part of the credential or of any scaling mechanism within it, the Working Party considers that the future credentialling authority should explore, with the higher education authorities, the use of such tests for their selection practices.

5.3.4 This Working Party records the desire to have tertiary institutions insist on applicants completing the requirements for the Victorian Certificate of General Education (i.e. the required balance) as a basis for selection; and recommends the fullest possible discussion and consultation over the details of the credential with the tertiary institutions, within the broad framework of the ultimate recommendations.

Recommendation 20: As a result of recommendation 4 the credential for an individual should be built up continuously as each result is to hand within the limits of practicability. Thus, a partial credential can be used for provisional tertiary selection or for employment at any stage.

Recommendation 21: We emphasise the necessity of detailed discussions with the universities and colleges to minimise the difficult problems of selection.

6.

IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The Working Party does not believe it practicable to introduce the new credential (VCGE) before 1990. In the intervening five years it would see discussions covering two phases. In the first phase, lasting for about a year after the final report, there would be discussions covering a wide range of issues in the three areas of curriculum, credentials and structures with a view to determining the details within the broad outlines of the recommendations of the Ministerial Review. While it is not for us to recommend the composition of the group or groups handling these discussions we note, first, that there is already a wealth of documentation in the responses to Discussion Paper and, secondly, that we have found the separation of curricular and credentialling issues a major obstacle and do not recommend its continuance.

6.2 The second phase, which does concern this Working Party, is the establishment of a broader accrediting and certifying body. The Working Party does not believe that this body should simply be VISE with a TAFE additional representation. We have recommended a substantial change to the credential and it would be best for this to be seen as the responsibility of an agency in which schools and TAFE are partners. It is essential that the future body should contain representation from schools, TAFE, universities, colleges of advanced education, employers, trades unions and the general (rural and urban) community. Its role is vital since we have proposed a flexible and varied credential. It will gain credence within the community only if it is seen to be administered with the highest attention to standards.

Recommendation 22: VISE and the TAFE Board should establish a joint curriculum and accreditation committee. This committee should recommend on

- o the studies which could make up a common credential at Years 11 and 12
- o method and procedures of accreditation of courses
- o acceptable modes of assessment
- o styles of recording assessments on a credential
- o cross-accreditation of studies.

The committee should also recommend on the composition of a body to superintend accreditation and certification on a permanent basis.

This committee, though necessarily expert, should be composed to cover major interest groups and be required to consult regularly with both the users and providers of the credential so that in 1990, credentialling can be conducted with full public support.

6.3 Finally, the future accrediting and certifying body will have an immense task in accrediting a multitude of courses covering a variety of topics. While it must retain its ultimate responsibility for this process, in practice it will be necessary to delegate some work to regional or other area bodies, which may well include TAFE boards.

Recommendation 23: The future accrediting and certifying body should be organised so that it can delegate some of its routine work to regional or area sub-boards.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: A statewide centrally controlled Year 10 credential is not advised.

Recommendation 2: Tests should be developed to assist teachers in ensuring that all students (with minor and justifiable exceptions) emerge from their period of compulsory schooling sufficiently competent in oral and written communication and in the basic arithmetical processes to take their places confidently in the society and to participate in further serious studies; and to assist teachers in the identification and rectification of particular deficiencies. These tests should be used consistently over the compulsory years.

Recommendation 3: There should be a common credential administered statewide for Years 11 and 12, or equivalent, covering a wide range of institutions and users.

Recommendation 4: The common credential should follow a structure that allows students to accumulate items at any subsequent stage in their careers and have all their attainments recorded.

Recommendation 5: Any performance in any unit of the credential may be improved by later repetition and the credential will show only the best result in the unit.

Recommendation 6: The common credential should be named The Victorian Certificate of General Education (VCGE).

Recommendation 7: A credential representing full completion of Years 11 and 12, or their equivalent, should contain a profile of performance and attainment in a specified number of units, each conducted over one semester or the equivalent.

Recommendation 8: Except where constraints arise in developing sequences of units, or in the timing of consensus moderation, units towards the credential shall not be restricted to be taken at any particular period in Years 11 and 12.

Recommendation 9: Common studies shall be the first of three major types of units and shall as a minimum provide three components in communication, numeracy and the study of society.

Recommendation 10: Each component of common studies shall comprise a specified number of semester units. Common studies should comprise approximately one-third of a full credential.

Recommendation 11: Specialist studies shall be the second of the three major types of units, and should include those usually regarded as academic and those usually regarded as vocationally oriented. Course designs for specialist studies should require a balance of theoretical and applied/practical work and show the subject matter in its historical, social and applied contexts. At least one-third of the units of a full credential should be of this type.

Recommendation 12: Additional studies shall be the third of the three major types of units. These may utilise or relate to the common and specialist studies but can provide a wide range of further options for students to sample. About one-third of the units of a full credential should be of this type.

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Recommendation 14: A credential which meets the yet to be specified number of completed units and which satisfies the restrictions on types of units in recommendations 10 to 12, or other restrictions that may be developed, shall be endorsed as satisfying the requirements laid down for the issue of a full Victorian Certificate of General Education.

Recommendation 15: The precise restrictions referred to in recommendation 14, which may also include restrictions on areas of study, e.g., a range of studies covering sciences, humanities and arts, etc., shall be developed as a result of discussions with schools, parents, employers, tertiary institutions, TAFE and others.

Recommendation 16: Common studies units should be based on statewide curricular guidelines and be accredited by the central authority. There should be a variety of teaching methods and options within these guidelines and a variety of criterion-referenced modes of assessment. Assessment would be conducted by each institution with the attainment of students being classified as satisfactory or unsatisfactory and accompanied by a profile description of the student's performance.

Recommendation 17: Specialist study units should provide variety and flexibility under the control of a central accreditation authority. Broad curricular aims would need to be laid down by the authority, as would the necessity for a variety of modes of assessment. The expectation is that assessment would be conducted by each institution but that these assessments would, for purposes of comparing students across institutions, be subject to statewide consensus moderation. However, whether consensus moderation could become the sole means of comparing students across all institutions, and what number of summative grades of performance is appropriate, should be further investigated and discussed.

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- o styles of recording assessments on a credential
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The committee should also recommend on the composition of a body to superintend accreditation and certification on a permanent basis.

This committee, though necessarily expert, should be composed to cover major interest groups and be required to consult regularly with both the users and providers of the credential so that, in 1990, credentialling can be conducted with full public support.

Recommendation 23: The future accrediting and certifying body should be organised so that it can delegate some of its routine work to regional or area sub-boards.

APPENDIX : THE RESPONSE

1. Three hundred and ninety responses to the Discussion Paper were received and analysed. The first step taken was to thoroughly review 120 of these responses in order to gain a reliable indication of the broad categories of concerns and issues that were addressed. A number of headings were devised to cover these areas of concern, and the contents of each response were categorised under them. The process was as objective as possible, summarising only the issues raised by the response itself. No assumptions were made unless they could be reasonably deduced from the written evidence, and no attempt was made to fit the responses to any predetermined conclusions.
2. A major difficulty was the ambiguity of many of the responses. Because they were not asked to reply to specific questions, respondents adopted a variety of approaches. Some made general comments on the Discussion Paper without giving a clear indication of the forms of credentialling they preferred. Others raised issues at an abstract level, or disputed questions of fact relating to current credentialling procedures, without addressing the question of what should be done in the future. Most responses dealt with only certain aspects of credentialling; few addressed a full range of issues. This made any reliable quantitative analysis impossible. However, it was possible, without distorting the content of the responses, to discern trends in their attitudes to major issues and to gain an impression of major concerns.

Staging Point Credentials

3. Only 74 responses mentioned the possibility of staging-point credentials at levels earlier than Year 12. Of these 51 were in favour of some staging point credential and 23 were against. Almost half of those against a credential at Year 10 level were technical schools, and VICSSO was opposed to any credential at a level lower than Year 12. Of those in favour of a staging-point credential, 24 specified the end of Year 10 and the remainder did not specify any year level, favoured both Year 10 and Year 11, Year 11 alone, or a combination of other year levels. Thus less than a quarter of the responses thought it an important enough issue to comment on, most of those who did comment were in favour of a staging-point credential (mostly at Year 10), and there was considerable rejection of the idea by technical schools. This must be viewed in the context that most respondents wanted students who left at any stage before the end of Year 12 to do so with some statement of their achievements and credits for work completed.

A Single Credential

4. There was overwhelming support for a single credential at the end of secondary schooling, subsuming or replacing the multiplicity of credentials now available. Only a small

minority of responses explicitly opposed such a credential, and an even smaller number were non-committal but predominantly negative in the comments they made. The great majority of responses either explicitly favoured the development of a single credential or made comments on the assumption that there would be such a credential and that this would be a desirable development.

The small minority of responses which opposed the development of a common Year 12 credential favoured a multiplicity of credentials for different purposes, retention of HSC examinations for tertiary aspirants and development of another credential for others, or the retention of the credentials with which they were individually concerned, primarily TOP, Technical Year 12 and STC. Opposition came from a number of tertiary institutions, some schools and Education Department committees, and a small number of TAFE bodies. The reasons given included the benefits of flexibility, the assertion that one certificate could not do everything and the purposes it was expected to fulfil were to a degree incompatible, and the fact that students have different aspirations and needs.

The Credential

5. While there was considerable support for a single Year 12 credential, there was less agreement on what this credential should represent and what form it should take. Many responses provided no details other than affirming that the credential should provide valid and reliable information about the students' achievements and be relevant to a wide range of users. Of the minority of responses which did specify further, most favoured the credential as a cumulative record of student achievement identifying completion of units of work over the postcompulsory phase, with units being a semester in duration and some, at least, sequential. A very few specified the proportions of optional and compulsory, or general and vocational, units to be taken. There was considerable support for the notions of redeemability of failure and re-entry at any point with credit for units completed, and for flexible time in which to complete the credential. However, a small number of tertiary institutions and schools considered that time taken and previous failure should be recorded, as they presumably influenced the likelihood of future success. Similarly, a very small number of respondents expressed opposition to the division of courses into units of study, and to the cumulation of credits for the credential. There was support from a small number of schools and individuals for the credential to be a descriptive profile of the student, containing information negotiated between the student and the school, and including examples of work and other information.

Accreditation

6. Very few responses addressed the issue of accreditation of courses, but of those who did, most considered that some form of rigorous accreditation by a central accrediting body was necessary. Cross-accreditation was also considered desirable. Several TAFE colleges favoured regional accreditation by tertiary institutions as in TOP programs. Only 2 responses, including that from VISE, specified the issues that should be taken into account when accrediting courses. These included the objectives of the course, the experiences to be undergone and the assessment procedures to be used. There was negligible support for individual school accreditation of courses.

Assessment and Moderation

7. There was considerable support for greater use of criterion-referenced reporting of assessment, either alone or in conjunction with some areas of norm-referenced assessment. This, however, was the only area of agreement in the assessment area. A small number of responses explicitly stated that all assessment should be internal and school-based, and more implied that this would be the case. The VSTA, a number of Education Department curriculum committees, some schools, and the PEP program were particularly in favour of school-based assessment. On the other hand most tertiary institutions, many high schools, particularly in country areas, and independent schools and organisations considered that some component of external examination would be necessary to ensure comparability between schools to avoid a hierarchy of esteem, and to maintain the portability and credibility of the credential. There was considerable agreement that some form of moderation of assessment was necessary, and that this must be credible and reliable. A small number explicitly stated a preference for consensus moderation, but most did not specify any details as to moderation procedures. A very small minority wanted the assessment and moderation procedures of STC, Technical Year 12 or TOP universally applied.

Agency Responsible

8. Less than a quarter of the responses addressed the issue of what body was to be ultimately responsible for credentialling. The great majority of these felt that there should be a single body responsible for the accrediting and credentialling of all postcompulsory courses, and that TAFE, tertiary institutions and other interested bodies should be involved.

Tertiary Entry

9. The issue acknowledged as being most difficult to resolve was that of tertiary entry. Most respondents pointed to the difficulty of reconciling curricular responsiveness with the

requirements for tertiary entry but few were able to offer any solution to this problem. A majority, however, considered that it would not be desirable to allow a situation to develop in which tertiary institutions set their own tests or procedures for entry, and that the credential must therefore provide some basis for tertiary selection. The teachers unions, some high and technical schools, several tertiary institutions, the STC group and a range of other respondents favoured entry to tertiary institutions by all those holding the credential, with selection into particular courses postponed until the end of a common tertiary year. Such procedures as zoning, queuing, weighting of profiles, interviews and references used in conjunction with the credential were also favoured by a small number of respondents. Confining tertiary preparatory studies to a small component of the course, streaming tertiary aspirants and ranking only amongst this group, stipulating extra work in all units for tertiary entry purposes, using norm-referenced assessment in limited areas of the curriculum to secure a ranking, and ranking on the basis of fewer best scores were also suggested by small numbers of respondents. Some schools, individuals and organisations were against the credential being used in any way for tertiary selection purposes, and had no objections to tertiary institutions instituting their own testing procedures, in some cases suggesting the use of ASAT type tests. These responses were mainly from institutions and individuals who were not concerned with the teaching of tertiary aspirants, and must be contrasted with the majority view that it would be a retrograde step for tertiary institutions to set their own tests.

Major Concerns

10. The main concern expressed by respondents was that the credential should have credibility independent of the institution at which the student acquired it. There was a widespread view that a hierarchy of esteem amongst institutions should not be allowed to develop to the disadvantage of students attending particular schools and to the advantage of others, primarily independent schools. This was most strongly felt in relation to tertiary entry and selection for employment. High schools, especially in the country, were particularly concerned that independent schools should not be consolidated as the main route to tertiary education and the professions. The possibility of the credential being unsatisfactory to tertiary institutions, who would therefore select primarily from schools they regarded as having high standards, was not regarded with equanimity. Another concern expressed in a number of responses was the need for community acceptance of the credential, as well as acceptance by employers and other relevant interests. It was considered that care should be taken in the way changes were mounted to ensure this acceptance. Responses concerned with disabled students pointed to the need for measures to enable them to benefit from the credential as well, for example flexible time,

credits for parts of units completed and the inclusion of special units. Some tertiary institutions, high and independent schools saw the need to protect the interests of tertiary aspirants, ensure the continuation of specifically tertiary preparation studies, and maintain standards.

Conclusion

11. It can be concluded that there was a consensus of opinion in favour of a single common credential at the end of Year 12, providing full and reliable information relevant to a wide range of users, including employers and tertiary institutions. There was considerable support for greater use of criterion-referenced reporting of assessment, and widespread agreement that the credential should be comparable between institutions. Opinion was divided on the issues of moderation and external assessment. Tertiary entry was seen as a difficult and contentious issue, and while a small proportion of respondents sought to shift the selection problem into the tertiary institutions themselves after a common tertiary year, most recognised that the credential itself should provide some basis for selection, either alone or in conjunction with other information.

APPENDIX 7

REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ORGANISATIONAL FORMS

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PREAMBLE

1. POLICIES FOR RESTRUCTURING
2. ORGANISATIONAL OPTIONS
3. EVALUATION OF ORGANISATIONAL FORMS
4. IMPLEMENTATION

REFERENCES

APPENDIX: THE RESPONSE



Ministerial Review of Postcompulsory Schooling

2 Treasury Place, Melbourne, 3002. Telephone: (03) 651 1205, 651 2508

30 November 1984

TO THE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

MINISTERIAL REVIEW OF POSTCOMPULSORY SCHOOLING

The accompanying report from the Working Party on organisational forms is offered as advice to the Co-ordinating Committee on the matters which it referred to us.

The Working Party met on eleven occasions and took the responses of the Discussion Paper into account in its deliberations.

Jean Blackburn

JEAN BLACKBURN

Chairperson

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of reference applying to all three working parties

1. To advise the Committee co-ordinating the Review on the issues raised by and directions of change suggested in relevant sections of the Discussion Paper.
2. To receive, analyse and take into account public responses to the Discussion Paper in the particular area with which each working party is concerned.
3. To conduct or supervise investigations relevant to the area under consideration and to consult with individuals and groups having relevant experience, interests and competence.
4. To liaise on a regular basis with other working parties on matters of common concern.
5. To outline a staged plan of possible action by:
 - (i) the government
 - (ii) relevant agenciesin support of preferred options for change in the area under consideration.
6. To report formally to the Co-ordinating Committee by the end of September 1984 (later extended to November 1984) and to discuss progress with it at each of its monthly meetings in the interim. The chairperson of each working party or his or her nominee should attend Co-ordinating Committee meetings as necessary for this purpose.

Terms of reference particular to the Working Party on Organisational Forms

Within the framework of Chapter 5 of the Discussion Paper, the working party is asked to examine and advise the Co-ordinating Committee regarding:

1. The desirability, feasibility and consequences of:
 - (a) The staged development of comprehensive senior colleges which would include Years 11 and 12 of schooling and TAFE courses paralleling them, in a number of areas of the state.
 - (b) Alternative means of meeting the same curricular purposes.

In advising the committee, the working party is asked to pay particular attention to:

- o Relevant differing circumstances across the state.

- o Implications for industrial, professional, financial, resourcing, and intersectoral arrangements.
 - o The relationship of structures for the postcompulsory stage to existing structures in Victorian primary, secondary, TAFE and higher education; and any implications arising.
 - o The reduction of provision which restricts capacity to meet the needs of all students at this level.
 - o The avoidance of institutional separation of the age group into academic and other futures.
 - o The promotion of more equal opportunities and increased participation in postcompulsory and postsecondary educational and training provision.
 - o Guidelines within which the governing bodies of grouped institutions should operate in the development of phased plans moving towards new structures.
 - o The governance and institutional characteristics of postcompulsory institutions.
2. The means of identifying a limited number of locations where such institutional provisions as may be recommended as a result of (1) above might be immediately feasible, and the means of advancing the development of such provisions.
 3. The desirability and feasibility of developing on a pilot basis, in a metropolitan and a major provincial area at present educationally disadvantaged, a comprehensive postcompulsory institution which would overlap into postsecondary courses.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership included people drawn from teacher and parent organisations and from the major agencies involved in postcompulsory schooling, and others having expertise and experience relevant to the examination of options and the working through of concrete proposals for action.

Mrs Jean Blackburn (Chair)
Dr Graham Allen
Professor Richard Bates
Sr Cecilia Bridgeman
Ms Patricia Caswell
Ms Judy Clements (until September)
Mr Kevin Collins
Mr Graham Marshall
Mr Jim Maslen
Mr Les O'Brien (from September)
Dr Helen Praetz
Mr Ian Predl
Ms Pat Reeve
Ms Barbara Spalding
Mr Rex Thompson
Dr Noel Watkins
Ms Marion Russell (Executive Officer)

Meetings

The Working Party met on eleven occasions each of a half day's duration.

Public Response to the Discussion Paper

Each member of the Working Party received a copy of the relevant pages of every response received by the Review. The analysis of the public response to these issues is provided as the appendix to this report.

PREAMBLE

Assumptions made about recommendations from other working parties

1. The structures within which educational provision is made for students at the postcompulsory level (narrowly defined for the purposes of the Review as Years 11 and 12 of schooling and parallel TAFE courses), can only be considered in terms of what they make possible in curricula. For that reason, the Working Party has been obliged to operate on some assumptions about the nature of recommendations which the working parties on curriculum and credentials will make.
2. The following discussion is based on the understanding that the other working parties will:
 - o Emphasise the need to give all students access to a comprehensive curriculum at this level in order to provide more appropriately for the full range of students already continuing their studies into Years 11 and 12, to encourage more students to do so and to respond to the known desires of many students at this level for studies more closely related to activities in the adult world and to their own occupational futures.
 - o Favour a common credential marking the successful completion of twelve years of initial schooling; that the credential will be cumulative in units over Years 11 and 12; will frame units over a spread of studies within areas of study having common and optional units; will encourage and support broader options in content, learning modes and assessment than those presently available; will include units articulating into higher education, employment and TAFE studies as well as units chosen freely for their intrinsic interest to students.
 - o Exclude certificate courses in TAFE from consideration as part of the postcompulsory transition phase on the grounds that students in them are already committed to occupational preparation, and that the certificates and the scale of admission to them are closely tailored to employment requirements.
3. While operating on these expectations, this Working Party has also gone beyond them to consider how what it believes to be well grounded assumptions about the future of work and patterns of life and study in the society bear on structures of postcompulsory educational provision, and how a commitment to greater equity in the provision of opportunities within that future affect the consideration of structures. What is immediately feasible in the way of adaptation of existing structures to meet requirements emerging from the (assumed) recommendations of other working parties is thus placed within a perspective which also looks to the 1990s and beyond.

1. POLICIES FOR RESTRUCTURING

1.1 The structures of educational provision are not ends in themselves. They represent accommodations among conflicting pressures within a distribution of social power and are means of meeting educational and societal purposes which change over time in response to economic factors, social expectations and prevailing social philosophies. In re-examining present structures of educational provision for 15-19-year-olds in Victoria, the needs of young people must have pride of place, but serious consideration of their desires and purposes must be interpreted within the broader context into which they are moving as adults. The question which now arises is whether the changes suggested by the context in which we find ourselves and the future we want to make require radical reassessment of the structures themselves.

1.2 Since the middle 1960s, response to the significant social changes which have been taking place and to associated changes in the size and composition of the student body at postcompulsory levels has impelled groups of adjacent schools around the state to consider ways of making more effective use of the total resources available in an area. Inevitably, changes have been accommodated within existing structures of provision with some partial linking of schools and of TAFE in some places. While the Working Party commends the strenuous efforts made to adapt organisational forms in order to enhance the range and type of curricula available, we believe that it is now urgent that schools and TAFE jointly examine the overall provision of postcompulsory schooling. Co-ordinated plans for the use of the totality of resources within an area must be framed within central policy guidelines which reflect the broad context within which educational institutions are located. This chapter outlines aspects of this context and recommends policy guidelines for the restructuring of postcompulsory schooling at the local level.

THE CONTEXT

Demographic Factors

1.3 The Victorian population aged 15-19 increased from 311 556 to 345 746 over the period 1971-81. Projections to 1996 show the overall size of the age group as increasing by nearly 16 000 to 1986 and declining thereafter. By 1991 the overall numbers are expected to decline from their 1986 level by over 16,000, and by 1996 by more than 41 000. Initially, the decline will be greatest for 15-year-olds, but this will transfer up the age group to the age 19 level by 1996, as the following table shows:

Table 1: Population projections - Victoria, persons aged 15 to 19 years, 1981, 1986, 1991, and 1996, FPT - Principal Projection

<u>Age</u>	<u>1981(a)</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1996</u>
15	66 457	76 750	63 750	64 757
16	68 072	72 341	65 918	62 840
17	69 554	73 601	68 969	63 653
18	70 972	69 694	70 960	64 062
19	70 681	69 313	75 725	65 223
15-19	345 736	361 698	345 322	320 536

Population Growth 1981 to 1996

<u>Age</u>	<u>1981 to 1986</u>	<u>1986 to 1991</u>	<u>1991 to 1996</u>
15	10 293	-13 000	1 007
16	4 269	- 6 423	- 3 078
17	4 047	- 4 632	- 5 316
18	- 1 278	1 266	- 6 898
19	- 1 368	6 412	-10 502
15-19	15 962	-16 376	-24 786

Note (a): 1981 population is "actual".

Source: Forecasts Project Team, Preliminary Population Projections, Victoria, 1981 to 2001, October 1982
ABS, Series C

1.4 The situation, will, of course, vary from region to region and area to area, making changed organisational arrangements more or less urgent as a means of providing a wider curricular range. For this reason, the following regional population projections are included in Table 2.

Table 2: Population projections and percentage annual average growth rates, Melbourne region and country regions of Victoria, persons aged 15 to 19 years, 1981 - 1996

Region	1981 (actual)	1986 (projected)	o/o growth 1981-86	1991	o/o growth 1986-91	1996	o/o growth 1991-96
Total Melbourne	249 381	258 197	0.7	243 179	-1.2	222 728	-1.7
Barwon South Western	27 164	27 768	0.4	26 921	-0.6	25 187	-1.3
Central Highlands Wimmera	15 275	15 609	0.4	14 879	-1.0	13 583	-1.8
Loddon Campaspe Mallee	18 996	20 700	1.7	20 544	-0.2	19 958	-0.6
Goulburn North Eastern	18 737	21 001	2.3	20 945	-0.1	20 144	-0.8
Gippsland	16 602	18 426	2.1	18 856	0.5	18 940	0.1
TOTAL VICTORIA	346 155	361 698	0.9	345 322	-0.9	320 536	-1.5

Notes: (a) Separate projections for each metropolitan region are not available.

(b) Projections are based on preliminary 1981 Census data and are on a resident population basis.

Source: Forecasts Project Team, Preliminary Population Projections, October 1982, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

1.5 Even if and where the size of the relevant age cohort is not declining, the relatively small size of Victorian public secondary schools results in peer groups at individual schools which often make it impractical to provide a curricular range at Years 11 and 12 which responds adequately to the range of interests and abilities of students already staying to senior levels. Increased numbers of students remaining to complete the full span of secondary schooling are likely to increase the size of classes over the present offerings rather than expand the range. The Discussion Paper noted the strong correlation in all schools between size and the number of curricular options at the postcompulsory level. Clearly, changes in the Year 12 credential will affect the balance of the curriculum in schools but the proposal to combine Years 11 and 12 in order to extend the curriculum available to both years will not create large groups of senior students in government schools as Table 3 shows:

Table 3: Distribution of high and technical school Year 11 and Year 12, February 1984, February 1989

		1984			1989 (Projected)		
		SEPARATED		COMBINED	SEPARATED	COMBINED	
		11	12	11 - 12	11	12	11 - 12
E	1- 20	20	77	10	23	73	11
N	21- 40	34	71	19	41	83	26
R	41- 60	46	73	32	61	59	32
O	61- 80	45	61	30	53	66	45
L	81-100	71	37	39	64	42	42
M	101-120	71	14	40	62	14	44
E	121-140	50	3	46	48	7	30
N	141-160	33	4	40	26	4	32
T	161-180	17	-	35	15	1	32
	181-200	4	-	32	8	-	35
R	201-220	2	-	24	2	-	24
A	221-240	1	-	19	1	-	18
N	241-260	1	-	9	-	-	7
G	261-280	-	-	11	-	-	8
E	281-300	-	-	4	-	1	8
	301-320	-	-	1	1	-	3
	321-340	1	2	1	-	-	6
	341-360	-	-	3	-	-	0
	>360	1	-	2	1	1	3

Source: Education Department

Hence the Working Party recommends that:

1. Plans for restructuring postcompulsory schooling must take into account present and projected demographic trends within an area.
2. Plans must guarantee all students access to publicly provided postcompulsory schooling throughout Victoria.

Equity Issues

1.6 Present educational structures were established when most young people left before completion of the full secondary span and entered the labour market. Over the past ten years, many of the jobs which young people entered have disappeared, others have become part-time or casualised and youth unemployment has reached new heights (Stricker and Sheehan 1981, Windschuttle 1979). More and more young people have remained at school or transferred to TAFE to gain the credentials which give a competitive edge in the labour market. Those who leave school early are relatively disadvantaged as education levels rise, for while the possession of education qualifications cannot guarantee jobs, lack of qualifications excludes people from them. Further, the structural changes in the labour market and the likely impact of technology on it point to the need for high levels of initial education on which further training and retraining can be built (Ford 1982). A workforce immobilised in skill levels is not in the best interests of the society as a whole, nor of those caught in its lower compartments. However, as things now stand, both TAFE and schools offer highly selective courses. Those who are not interested in either pursuing the traditional subjects generally available in schools at this level or in entering the training opportunities which TAFE offers are not catered for and are excluded from further education. This has serious consequences for the future well being of the society.

1.7 While increased participation is not an end in itself, irrespective of the concurrent and future value to students and to the society of courses offered and experience gained, it must be an important consideration primarily for equity reasons. Continued participation at postcompulsory levels is influenced by factors beyond the control of providers. The availability and perceived availability of employment, the net actual and perceived economic gains of continued participation when opportunities foregone and direct costs of participation have been taken into account, previous success in and liking for school, financial support for students as compared with unemployment allowances for those over sixteen, family income and expectations and the geographical accessibility of provision influence decisions independently of action taken by educational providers.

1.8 Nonetheless, participation in postcompulsory schooling in Victoria is not only a matter of personal inclination but also the result of structural inequalities in our society. Raising levels of retention means that those who are least advantaged at present will no longer be excluded. Yet while we should be

encouraging as many students as possible to complete at least twelve years of initial schooling, combinations of subsidised work and study should equally be encouraged. It is likely that many who have sought work unsuccessfully will be returning to study both full-time and part-time and that recurrent educational opportunities will be extended as an essential part of remaining employed, to meet leisure and recreational needs and to satisfy a desire to know. Those who are returning to study are unlikely to return to schools as presently constituted and there is considerable evidence to show that young people also find institutions attractive which more closely reflect their near adult status (Anderson, Saltet and Vervoorn 1980, Axton 1983, Campbell 1973, Pettit 1983, Reid and Filby 1982). Further, there are good reasons for arguing that, for young people, voluntary relationships entered into for some specific purpose are a better bridge to adulthood than are closely supervised activities. Over the full span of schooling and within an institutional framework of pastoral care, students should assume considerable responsibility for their own studies. At the upper secondary level, students should voluntarily contract into courses of study and should, in turn, meet all requirements associated with all the contracted agreement on which they entered the course. Restrictions on study and personal habits should be no more stringent than those accepted in purposive adult activities within the community and students in the postcompulsory period should participate significantly in the governance of the institutions which they attend. Hence we recommend that:

3. All plans for restructuring must be designed to encourage increased participation at the postcompulsory level.
4. All students should have access to courses carrying significant credentials having wide currency in terms of employment and future study.
5. Proposals should encourage the provision of a more adult atmosphere for students of postcompulsory age.
6. Proposals should make possible part-time and discontinuous participation in years 11 and 12 as well as continuous and full-time attendance.

Divided or Comprehensive Provision

1.9 The present education provision evolved in response to different circumstances. The institutional separation of 'academic' and 'applied' studies represented a form of early tracking closely associated with social class and contributed to the apparent belief that academic schools need not be concerned with the continued education of students deemed to be non-academic. The deeper limitations of the division have become more evident as the composition of the workforce has changed with the decline in the agricultural, manufacturing and industrial sectors. The long term effects on the workplace are disputed (see Jones 1982 and Rumberger 1984) and lie beyond this discussion but there is a discernible ambivalence in Victoria about the purpose of many of the studies for which secondary

technical schools are equipped. Manual dexterity, craft and leisure pursuits have largely replaced the employment-related 'technical training' among the justifications given and there is widespread doubt about whether technical schools have the facilities to impart future workforce skills.

1.10 The maintaining of separate technical schools has also resulted in a failure in Victoria to provide adequately in high schools for practical activities of all kinds, whether their focus is cultural or associated with the making of high quality objects. The most recent information shows that the performing and creative arts and technical and practical studies are generally absent from the curriculum. At Year 11 in high and nongovernment schools, 15.4 per cent of all students study art, 4.1 per cent study drama, and 4.8 per cent study music; home economics is taken by 11.9 per cent of students, graphics by 8.7 per cent and 15.3 per cent of students take other practical studies. (SCOPE 84). A further regrettable consequence of regarding some institutions as places where you 'learn' and others where you 'make and do' is that the 'learnings' are too often abstracted from their applications in 'productive' activities (and applications are considered a second-rate activity). Despite the efforts which have been made, making and doing are narrowly confined rather than becoming 'knowledgeable practice' through which problem solving related to the activity leads out to broader understandings.

1.11 There are now more than pragmatic reasons for wanting to bring together theoretical and practical/applied studies at the postcompulsory level. The old divisions between 'learning' and 'making and doing' are no longer functional in economic terms nor socially empowering for those following 'practical' courses. All students should have the opportunity to participate in the creative arts and practical skills formation and to engage in socially valuable activities while studying, and the continuing development of skills of communication, of quantitative and non-quantitative reasoning and of research should be seen as important for all of them at this level.

1.12 The choice between a divided or comprehensive approach to the upper secondary years is a fundamental issue. Whatever the challenges of its realisation, the Working Party believes that the comprehensive approach is essential on both democratic and productive grounds. Its development will require radical rethinking of present curricular approaches and the inclusion of elements of what is provided in TAFE as well as in schools. As the choice between the two approaches is basically a political one, it must be taken by governments rather than at the local level. Hence the Working Party recommends that:

7. The age group should not institutionally be separated into academic or other streams and arrangements should ensure combinations of theoretical and practical/vocational study for all students, while allowing degrees of specialisation in either.

8. Proposals for restructuring at the postcompulsory level should bring together provision in high and technical schools where both exist, and in schools and TAFE in an overall plan of comprehensive curricular development for students in the area.
9. Plans must increase the comprehensiveness of the range of study modes and options to which individual students realistically have access. Reviews and plans should, to the maximum degree possible, offer students access to the humanities, social sciences, mathematics, science, languages, creative and performing arts and practical activities having vocational and broader relevance. The curriculum should include experience in socially valuable activities within the wider community.

Competing Provision

1.13 The continuance of competing provision at upper secondary level unduly restricts the options which students have at all locations. The extension of technical schools into Year 12 is contributing further to the effects of this competition, however good the programs offered may be in themselves. Particularly in areas of declining youth population and in country areas, the existence of three types of publicly supported secondary provision at the postcompulsory level - government high and technical schools and nongovernment schools - creates problems in curricular and resource terms. While the major area of recognised competition is that between secondary schools and TAFE where TOP programs are available, the long running competition for the same group of students between technical and high schools, among government schools and between government and nongovernment schools, cannot be overlooked in considering future plans.

1.14 This problem is not confined to small country towns, though its effects may be particularly obvious where a high and a technical school are across the road from each other, or even occupy the same campus, each providing for small numbers of senior students and each competing in turn with one or more nongovernment schools of similarly small enrolments. Within the metropolitan area it is not unusual to find adjacent high schools and nongovernment schools each offering the same very limited program for small groups of students. The Tertiary Orientation Program in TAFE draws students from both government and non government schools at Year 12 level, provides an alternative route to HSC into tertiary studies and experiences a continuing high demand for places.

1.15 Competing provision particularly at Year 12 between schools and TAFE needs to be considered from the perspective of effects on curricular options for the whole age group and in terms of resource usage. Specialist facilities are not required by the majority of students enrolled in TOP in TAFE colleges and, unlike school students, those enrolled in TOP are not automatically funded on an open-access basis. The relative and

distinctive contributions of two separately funded agencies, schools and TAFE, now need to be clarified. The Working Party recommends that:

10. Proposals for restructuring should address the issue of the most effective use of the totality of public resources devoted to postcompulsory schooling in schools and TAFE where several forms of provision are drawing on the same potential student body.
11. In smaller communities where public/private competition at postcompulsory level results in a limited curriculum discouraging higher retention in both sectors, plans made should seek jointly to resolve this situation.
12. All plans for change should include comparative costings of existing and proposed arrangements.

Conclusion

1.16 The Working Party recommends that the following policy guidelines should form the framework within which restructuring of postcompulsory educational provision should proceed at the local level.

1. Plans for restructuring postcompulsory schooling must take into account present and projected demographic trends within an area.
2. Plans must guarantee all students access to publicly provided postcompulsory schooling throughout Victoria.
3. All plans for restructuring must be designed to encourage increased participation at the postcompulsory level.
4. All students should have access to courses carrying significant credentials having wide currency in terms of employment and future study.
5. Proposals should encourage the provision of a more adult atmosphere for students of postcompulsory age.
6. Proposals should make possible part-time and discontinuous participation in Years 11 and 12 as well as continuous and full-time attendance.
7. The age group should not institutionally be separated into academic and other streams and arrangements should ensure combinations of theoretical and practical/vocational study for all students, while allowing degrees of specialisation in either.
8. Proposals for restructuring at the postcompulsory level should bring together provision in high and technical schools where both exist, and in schools and TAFE in an overall plan of comprehensive curricular development for students in the area.

9. Plans must increase the comprehensiveness of the range of study modes and options to which individual students realistically have access. Reviews and plans should, to the maximum degree possible, offer students access in the humanities, social sciences, mathematics, sciences, languages, creative and performing arts and practical activities having vocational and broader relevance. The curriculum should include experience in socially valuable activities within the wider community.

10. Proposals for restructuring should address the issue of the most effective use of the totality of public resources devoted to postcompulsory schooling in schools and TAFE where several forms of provision are drawing on the same potential student body.

11. In smaller communities where public/private competition at postcompulsory level results in a limited curriculum discouraging higher retention in both sectors, plans made should seek jointly to resolve this situation.

12. All plans for change should include comparative costings of existing and proposed arrangements.

Extensive consultation with all affected must precede any planning and the needs and desires of those intending to quit education at the end of Year 10, of those who have done so, and of the young unemployed should be given careful consideration. Those at present enrolled in postcompulsory schooling in TAFE colleges must also be consulted.

The next chapter reviews the restructuring planned or currently under way in Victoria.

2. ORGANISATIONAL OPTIONS

2.1 This discussion draws on the experiences gained in the vast amount of restructuring which has taken place and which is currently under way in Victoria. Operational plans have been formulated in many local areas, including Shepparton-Mooroopna, Wodonga, Horsham, Morwell, Ballarat and West Heidelberg, and the range of structural options proposed has proved most helpful to the Working Party. Many other experiments, supported by the major agencies and by special initiatives, including the Choice and Diversity Project, TEAC, the Country Education and Community Education Projects, have been carefully documented and evaluated. Members of the Working Party visited many areas of Victoria and considered the organisational forms of schooling in Bendigo, in some Victorian Catholic schools, and in other Australian systems, especially in the ACT and in Tasmania, which maintain separate schools for senior students. Organisational forms which had resulted from an overhaul of secondary education were also monitored. Policy perspectives and organisational arrangements in Scandinavia, the United Kingdom and North America were of particular interest and useful consultations were held with experts from those countries.

2.2 Organisational forms designed to increase participation and broaden curricular options for students in the postcompulsory phase can be classified according to the degree to which existing institutional boundaries are maintained or eroded. Restructuring initiatives can be ranged along a continuum, with curricular reorganisation within an individual school or college at one pole, a variety of inter-institutional linkages in the middle and structural arrangements or institutions which overlap present sectoral boundaries at the other pole. This continuum provides a framework for discussing restructuring options which are illustrated by concrete examples wherever possible.

Modification of Internal Arrangements

2.3 Numbers of isolated schools in Victoria have developed curricular structures which offer students within them a much broader range of options than would be available by conventional means. Vertical grouping of students has been pioneered in a number of schools, including Mt Beauty, Tallangatta and Yarrawonga high schools and Lorne higher elementary school, where students undertake term-length units offered at a number of levels of difficulty and gain points accordingly. Some spread of studies and sequences are usually required. By these means, the whole curriculum of the school is available to all students up to Year 12, which is usually separately organised. Alternatively, Years 11 and 12 could be treated as a unit and all options made available to all students at this level. While this pattern is particularly well suited to geographically isolated schools which have received, and will continue to receive, higher levels of staffing and resource allocation than provincial or metropolitan schools, this form of restructuring is dependent on the levels of staffing, expertise and resources available within the school. Certain small rural schools, for example Omeo and Corryong high schools, have drawn resourcing levels reflecting their isolation,

but which would appear to be unjustifiable in more densely populated areas.

2.4 Individual schools have also augmented their curricular offering through the introduction of off-campus studies for senior students. The Correspondence School supplements the Year 12 curriculum of many small government and nongovernment schools but is generally regarded as an unsatisfactory alternative for students. Although studies by correspondence appear essential for HSC students at Manangatang high school, recourse to its services is harder to defend at Mount Waverley high school. However, the use of technology presently available, including two-way audio and video, and the applications of electronic technology could readily extend learning opportunities for the whole population including those enrolled in educational institutions. All of these initiatives are strongly commended by the Working Party as they extend the range of options for students in country areas. These possibilities for distance education are under investigation by many groups including the TAFE Off-Campus Network, the Commonwealth-State Advisory Committee on the use of Communications Technology and the Country Education Project. The innovations planned by TAFE authorities in East Gippsland and the Wimmera may prove fruitful avenues for extending curricular options. Teleconferencing which brings large numbers of widely dispersed students and institutions into contact offers exciting possibilities for remote students and schools. The experiments already underway, as between Orbost and Bairnsdale high schools, deserve encouragement and careful monitoring by education authorities.

2.5 More mundane and less expensive alternatives involve the use of specialist teachers from the Education Department or TAFE who visit schools to conduct classes using the facilities available at the school. This is a common pattern in all rural areas and presents few administrative or practical difficulties within the school, maintains peer grouping and shares scarce teacher expertise. It also has been widely adopted by a number of metropolitan nongovernment schools, for example at Kildara and MLC, at which teachers from TAFE colleges conduct courses, including the first year of certificate courses, at the school, providing an economical method of extending the curricular range for these students. In country areas, perceived shortcomings include the intermittent contact that is possible between visiting teachers and students and the travel time involved which causes administrative difficulties and which either lengthens teachers' working days or shortens students' class time. Teachers of subjects in high demand often cannot be supplied by TAFE or the Education Department or facilities are lacking at the school.

2.6 Mobile resource centres, including workshops, libraries and craft facilities have overcome this last difficulty and have been extensively used in country areas and through the Country Education Project. Yet where new subjects and especially technical subjects have been introduced by these means, they have often remained as frills or extras for those who are uninterested

in mainstream course offerings. This seems inevitable under the present system. In contrast, the mobile learning centres in British Columbia which serve regions of low population density bring teachers to the students in vans equipped with video and audio facilities and materials, a micro computer for computer and keyboard training, a laboratory and a small reference library. Students also gain access to the telecourses available through the Knowledge Network via satellite and cable television. Such developments appear to offer rural students more equitable access to learning opportunities and deserve close study and appropriate action by education authorities and governments.

Radial Linkages

2.7 Resource centres shared by a number of schools entail a higher level of co-operation and planning between education providers within an area. In Victoria, the Charlton technical facility provides the only example of a separately staffed resource centre used by a number of surrounding schools which jointly manage the centre. Students are bussed to the Centre for classes which are block timetabled to minimise travelling. Hostel facilities accommodate students from distant schools. While some schools complain of consequent timetabling difficulties within their own schools, the Centre is acknowledged to provide a range of technical specialisms which could not be provided to small numbers of students on single sites. The Centre is at present being evaluated by the Education Department's Curriculum Branch (Research and Development) but it is apparent that it enjoys wide support from participating schools. The fact that the Centre is not owned or controlled by any one school seems to contribute to its successful operation. Peer grouping is maintained and students are not compelled to leave their local schools in order to pursue technical studies. The perceived shortcomings, including the intermittent contact between teachers and students, the long distances travelled by some students, the institutional separation of technical and non-technical students and the limited range of specialisms available could be ameliorated if more, and more broadly based, centres were built. Centres could also be used by adults returning to study and for recreational courses.

2.8 Some types of skills centres, such as those in Michigan in the United States, could provide a model for curricular enrichment for Victorian schools if the necessary resource costs were met. Skills centres are well equipped with specialist facilities and staffing to offer a wide variety of specialisms to surrounding high schools. Students are bussed to the centre on a daily basis for lengthy periods of time and gain credits towards the high school diploma which is issued by the school. The centres are open for extended hours and some are available for community use. The strategic placement of similar centres could increase the specialisms available to school students in both city and country areas of Victoria and, if used to full capacity, could provide an attractive option in economic terms.

2.9 In the absence of a network of community resource centres, some high schools and nongovernment schools have

initiated shared resources programs with neighbouring technical schools. Under these arrangements, students are bussed to the facilities and teachers of the technical school which acts as a resource centre with the shortcomings noted above. In addition, visiting students can be regarded as intruders by the home school's students and staff. Block timetabling, peer grouping and the availability of transportation are all essential to the success of these arrangements which are dependent on the continued involvement of key personnel. Nonetheless, courses available to outside students are often determined by the surplus capacity of the host school rather than by the wishes of the client school. Further, the type of specialist facilities which usually characterise technical schools relate predominantly to traditional trade areas. Although some excess capacity will become available in technical schools if the preference for high schools among Year 7 students in 1984-85 continues, the present facilities and expertise, outmoded in terms of future workforce skills, are unlikely to be popular options with students.

2.10 These limitations have led many schools to organise cross-sectoral link programs with TAFE colleges, which act as resource centres, supplying expertise and the use of facilities to a number of adjacent government and nongovernment schools. School students are usually transported to the TAFE colleges to undertake specially designed courses, as at Wangaratta, or an existing course, as at Corio and Warrnambool. Link programs have been evaluated by TEAC and by the TAFE authorities and a number of deficiencies have been highlighted, despite the availability of transportation and block timetabling and the maintenance of peer grouping. As TAFE colleges do not receive payment for the services rendered, their surplus capacity has determined the courses offered to schools. Students and schools seeking courses in electronics may have to be content with woodcraft, with the result that link courses are perceived as peripheral options for unmotivated students. Co-ordinating arrangements between colleges and schools have proved fragile so that TAFE-based programs have, in some cases, overlapped courses offered at the school. There has been a general failure to regard link courses as part of the school curriculum and little attempt has been made to integrate TAFE offerings into a coherent program. Link programs are also dependent on the geographic accessibility of TAFE colleges, which are unequally distributed throughout the state. Many TAFE colleges are increasingly reluctant to provide link programs which must be financed from their own resources. TAFE authorities have suggested that payment for TAFE services to schools would enable colleges to supply the desired specialisms and would give added status to link courses in both schools and TAFE.

2.11 A more equal inter-sectoral partnership in the education of 15-19-year-olds could be gained by the successful completion of courses undertaken in both schools and TAFE. In this case, both providers would collaborate in the design, planning, teaching and assessment of curricula. Students could spend a substantial proportion of time in both institutions, thereby easing students' transition to further education and enhancing the possibility of credit transfer into TAFE courses.

Where TAFE providers are accessible and able to contribute, well organised link programs offer an immediately feasible method of extending the curricular range of students in school. As TAFE and schools are separately managed, a separate legal structure with representation from both sectors may be required. Present resource allocations would have to be adjusted to reflect the costs borne by each sector in the education of these students.

Lateral Linkages

2.12 Over the past ten years, a large number of postprimary schools have formed clusters which seek to encourage the movement of senior students to pursue curricular specialisms available at one school. These arrangements range from an exchange of HSC students at two schools for certain subjects (at Myrtleford and at Colac for example), the co-ordination of the offerings of a number of schools within an area (the Brusec, Doveton, Horsham and mid-west clusters) and between schools and TAFE (at Corio, Warrnambool and Wodonga). At the simplest level, clusters extend the curriculum available to students through co-ordinated timetabling and rationalisation of curricular offerings across schools. The longer established clusters, for example Brusec and Warrnambool, have encouraged each school to develop a distinctive curricular orientation. Certain subject areas, for example music or languages, or certain courses, including HSC group 1 subjects, STC, Technical Year 12, TOP and certificate courses are offered at one site but are available to all students in the cluster. By pooling resources and expertise a comprehensive range of programs can be offered economically to all students regardless of school attended. Special curricular projects, for example in equal opportunity or community languages, can be jointly mounted by the cluster. Experience has shown that clusters which rely on student movement between providers work best when sizeable numbers of students are bussed between schools for extended periods of time. No more than seven schools of roughly comparable size, resources and esteem should form a cluster. Clusters should be managed by a co-ordinating group or council drawn from all providers and project officers should be employed to maintain liaison between cluster schools.

2.13 While clusters have gained in popularity over recent years in Victoria, serious reservations have arisen about the effectiveness of this method of broadening curricular options for senior students (Choice and Diversity Report 1984). It is clear that most students prefer to stick with the curricular options provided by their own school even at the Year 12 level. Very few students are prepared to travel to a new setting to undertake specialisms even when transport is provided and movement is encouraged. Even fewer students are prepared to change schools to gain access to desired courses. Those who do venture into foreign classrooms may feel unwelcome and frequently drop out as the year progresses. Transport difficulties can increase this attrition rate. Further, schools may discourage the movement of their students to other sites, regarding themselves as competing for students with other providers, including TAFE colleges. However, co-ordination is also difficult and time consuming among schools which are attempting to share students and resources in

order to maximise curricular options.

2.14 The maintenance of links between cluster members depends on the efforts of project officers and teaching staff in promoting inter-school co-operation. Staff turnover can mean that clusters falter, change direction or even collapse. Linkages are more difficult to sustain as the number of co-operating institutions increases. Although increased resourcing and especially the appointment of project officers to all of them could assist in overcoming some of these difficulties, the unwillingness of students to move between sites remains an obstacle to curricular expansion. Equally seriously, as the curriculum collectively available to all the students of the cluster depends on the resources and expertise of each participating school, the refusal of one school to join a cluster limits the options available to all. At present, each school and TAFE council is legally responsible only for students enrolled at that institution. They are not required to consider their curricular offering in relation to that offered in adjacent schools or colleges or to co-operate with other providers in mounting an overall curriculum for an area. Clusters of schools may require legal status in order to assume collective responsibility for all young people including those not enrolled in educational institutions.

Possible Lateral Organisational Forms

2.15 The creation of complexes of schools in urban areas has been proposed as a solution to many of the problems, which to a greater or lesser extent, are associated with clusters in their present form. Under this arrangement, a number of adjacent postprimary schools should form a multi-campus organisation which would maintain liaison with TAFE and negotiate for the provision of some specialisms desired by students. Within the complex, some campuses may cater for students only at the 7-10 or 11-12 level but curriculum planning should encompass the full secondary span. Teachers should be appointed to the whole complex rather than to an individual campus and should be able to teach students at all year levels over their working lives. Individual campuses could retain their present school councils but an umbrella council should be created to manage the whole organisation. This model would create few industrial or professional difficulties for teachers and would not necessitate a transition for students after Year 10. The creation of senior campuses within the complex would bring together larger numbers of students on single sites, obviating the need for students to travel to gain access to school-based specialisms and enabling the economic and assured provision of a greater range of options. The institutional atmosphere of both senior and junior campuses could vary, reflecting the ages of students, thereby encouraging the return to schooling of the mature-aged.

2.16 Complexes do not resolve certain organisational issues however. As described, complexes are inter-school organisations which negotiate with TAFE for the provision of services. Within the complex, considerable energy is needed to maintain contact between campuses as with any multi-campus organisation. The

proposed two-tier structure for the governance of complexes over time may yield to a more powerful co-ordinating council which controls the complex overall.

2.17 Institutions which bring TAFE and schools together have been proposed in the Discussion Paper, by planning committees in Shepparton-Mooroopna, Ballarat and Wodonga, in the Swan-McKinnon Report (1984) in NSW, the Keeves Report (1982) in South Australia, and in a report to the TAFE Board (Beswick and others 1983). Secondary colleges would bring together students at present in Years 11 and 12 in schools with VOP, TOP and the transition courses in TAFE; or alternatively, Years 11 and 12 with all TAFE courses. After completion of Year 10, students would move to new institutions which could be multi- or single-campus, governed by a single council. This arrangement reunites the technical and academic streams, giving students access to a broader range of options and to specialised resources and equipment. The bringing together of larger numbers of students and teachers could stimulate curricular renewal and facilitate the moderation of units and assessments. It is difficult to indicate precisely the student numbers required to provide a comprehensive curriculum on a single site (McKenzie and Keeves 1982). Preliminary studies are being undertaken to determine optimal size. Separate postcompulsory institutions are popular with students in Australia and elsewhere, providing congenial re-entry points for young people and adults resuming their education (Kintzer 1984).

2.18 Despite these advantages the creation of separate secondary colleges involves significant difficulties. This structural change creates two new institutional forms, and while it is readily demonstrable that secondary colleges or related institutions offer substantial benefits to students who are in them (Anderson, Saltet and Vervoorn 1980, Axton 1983, Campbell 1973, Collins and Hughes 1982, Dean and others 1979, OECD 1983, Pettit 1983, Sallis 1982) the impact on Years 7-10 schools has been frequently detrimental as they were relatively neglected compared with the senior colleges (Steinle 1983, Axton 1983). Some observers argue that the separation of senior students from junior students deprives the latter of leadership, guidance and example (see Reid and Filby 1982), but there is other evidence that the senior students in the school take available leadership roles regardless of age level (Steinle 1983). A P-10 grouping could help to resolve the problematic role and nature of junior secondary schools but flourishing junior schools exist in the Catholic system. It is feared also that the need to transfer to a new institution could deter students who are neither committed school stayers nor leavers to discontinue their schooling.

2.19 The Discussion Paper urged consideration of establishing all-age postcompulsory community colleges as a more radical means of increasing participation and broadening curricular opportunities for young people. This proposal would mean that, on completion of Year 10, students would enter a single or multi-campus community college offering the full range of TAFE courses, those presently located in Years 11 and 12 in schools, and in addition, the first years of science, arts and

commerce courses at present conducted in colleges of advanced education and universities. Community colleges could associate upper secondary schooling with a broad range of postsecondary courses taught by staff from postsecondary institutions, or community college courses could be accredited. Some professional and industrial difficulties could be foreseen if teachers from different sectors employed under different conditions and salary levels are brought together. Community colleges could provide more places in tertiary education and bridging opportunities into further education for those whose networks lack familiarity with higher education. This blurring of boundaries between sectors could allow students to undertake some studies at an advanced level, thereby diminishing also the importance of the Year 12 credential in selecting students for higher education. Students could readily sample courses and could change curricular tracks without leaving the college. Community colleges could attract young people and adults returning to study on a full-time or part-time basis and hence would become all-age institutions.

Conclusion

2.20 This chapter has discussed present and proposed organisational forms under consideration in Victoria. To summarise,

Modification of internal arrangements include:

- o Vertical grouping of students across Years 7-12 or 11-12 and a shared, unit-based curriculum
- o Off-campus studies which use electronic media and the correspondence school, one-way and two-way audio and video and teleconferencing
- o Visiting specialist teachers
- o Mobile resource centres, including libraries, workshops and craft centres which visit schools.

Radial linkages between schools and central facilities include:

- o Resource centres offering specialist facilities used by a number of schools and open to the general community
- o Shared resource programs between individual high schools and nongovernment schools and adjacent technical schools
- o Link programs between schools and adjacent TAFE colleges.

Lateral linkages between institutions include:

- o Clusters of schools which share resources and special projects

- o Clusters which include TAFE programs and providers.

Proposed organisational forms include:

- o Complexes of schools with a co-ordinating council managing separate campuses, some of which may include senior year levels. Teachers would be appointed to the whole complex which could negotiate with TAFE for some specialisms.
- o Secondary comprehensive colleges which would bring together postcompulsory studies in schools and TAFE. Institutions could be multi-campus or single-campus located in TAFE or governed by a single council.
- o Community colleges offering the full range of TAFE courses and those presently located at Years 11 and 12 in schools with the first years of courses presently conducted in colleges of advanced education and universities. These institutions could be either single-campus or multi-campus and would be governed by a single council.

The next chapter discusses these possibilities in detail, drawing on the discussions in the Working Party and on the response received to the Discussion Paper.

3. EVALUATION OF ORGANISATIONAL FORMS

3.1 As the Discussion Paper stated, no single pattern of postcompulsory schooling is either possible or desirable. Nonetheless, in the light of the experimentation which has taken place in Victoria over the past ten years in a variety of specific situations including isolated rural schools, schools located in areas of declining and of expanding population, areas with and without accessible TAFE facilities, schools with small and large numbers at the senior secondary level and those with a range of facilities, resources and staffing certain organisational forms can be endorsed as having greater potential for achieving the goals of higher levels of participation and a comprehensive curriculum for those in the third phase of schooling.

3.2 Any evaluation of organisational forms must be set within the present policy context in Victoria. Authority to determine curricular policies has been devolved to individual schools within guidelines issued by the Minister from time to time. In TAFE, curricular initiatives are taken by individual colleges and other special interest groups which initiate courses many of which require formal accreditation if they are to be funded through recurrent funds. In this framework co-operation and resource sharing between institutions is pursued only when students' needs cannot be met within the resources of an institution. The sheer difficulty of establishing and sustaining liaison between autonomous institutions often leads them then to revert to their 'real' task which is within their own boundaries. Inter-institutional co-operation is thus inherently fragile.

3.3 In areas in which inter-institutional co-operation is deemed the most feasible method of increasing options for students, institutions should be required to enter into collaborative arrangements. Resource incentives, including extra staffing, higher per capita recurrent funding or special purpose grants could be offered to schools forming clusters or complexes to meet explicitly stated targets in curricular expansion. Publicly supported or subsidised institutions would be required to co-operate in sharing resources for the use of students in the postcompulsory phase. Resources could be jointly allocated over a number of institutions for the education of all postcompulsory students and teachers could be appointed to clusters or complexes rather than to individual schools. This proposal would require changes to the legal status and governance of schools but deserves further investigation to determine its feasibility. Although schools' curricular self determination could be curtailed by these means, curricular opportunities for all young people within an area would be greatly increased.

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1. Sr Cecilia Bridgeman noted that the free choice of parents should be respected and the essential character of nongovernment schools preserved.

3.4 Given the manifest difficulties which attend any cross-institutional liaison, together with the unsuitability of these arrangements in many areas of the state, a possible alternative to the creation of large, well equipped schools lies in the provision of community resource centres which could be used by school students and the community. Some capital outlay and recurrent funding for several strategically placed education resource centres would provide a more economic option than resourcing all schools to an equivalent standard. Free-standing centres would offer access to a variety of users and could be established in association with TAFE colleges. Some investigation would be required to determine what were the most important facilities to be provided in this way, given the limitations of existing technical facilities even in TAFE.

3.5 Developments in telematics could also provide access to broader learning opportunities although the present high costs of interactive and two-way systems may lead to policies which grant preferential access to isolated students. Experiments in information technology should be encouraged and adopted where appropriate by education authorities. Although technological advances could eventually address the problem of small numbers of students in Years 11 and 12 on individual sites, adjacent schools with shrinking populations may have to be amalgamated so that a sizeable senior group can be created. Some opposition to the creation of large schools in Victoria could be expected.

Separate Postcompulsory Institutions

3.6 All of these forms of restructuring are extensions of present practices and represent feasible methods of increasing the curricular options for students where current provision is deficient. Much more controversy surrounds the proposals to move towards the creation of separate postcompulsory institutions. Both the responses to the Discussion Paper and the Working Party itself were divided about including separate postcompulsory institutions as possible options for consideration by local communities in formulating plans for restructuring.

3.7 Support for separate postcompulsory institutions in appropriate locations came from 16 high, 11 technical and 6 non-government schools and a school cluster, and 9 schools volunteered to pilot a college. Strong support came from 13 TAFE colleges which volunteered to pilot the scheme and from the TAFE Board, Office of the TAFE Board, TAFE Student Services, the TAFE College Councils and Principals Association, and 4 Regional TAFE Boards. Nine tertiary institutions and the Victorian Colleges Staff Association, 19 individuals, 3 Catholic educational associations, employers, VICCSO and the Federation of State School Parents' Clubs favoured the proposal. A number of sections of the Education Department, including the Regional Directors and several regions, the Research and Development Section of the Curriculum Branch, several curriculum committees and subject associations, the principals associations, and committees for the disabled, equal opportunities and multicultural affairs favoured separate postcompulsory institutions.

3.8 Opposition to separate institutions came from 64 high and 32 technical schools, 13 nongovernment schools and organisations, 4 TAFE colleges and the TAFE off-campus network, 4 tertiary institutions, 16 individual responses and 21 others, including the VSTA and 3 VSTA branches, the TTUV, the Country Education Project, the STC group, the Association of Councils of Technical Institutions of Victoria, the Association of Principals of Victorian Technical Institutions, several curriculum committees of the Education Department and a number of country-based community and education groups. Teachers' unions in government secondary and technical schools pointed to the professional and industrial problems which could result. They contended that teachers' professional satisfaction is enhanced by teaching students across the full range of the secondary school and that separate junior secondary schools are potentially disadvantaged in terms of status, resources and staffing when compared with their senior counterparts. The desirability of the P-12 curriculum was also advocated. It was feared that the management of large institutions can often result in the tracking of students.

3.9 Some of the opposition to the proposal of postcompulsory institutions arose from the mistaken belief that they were envisaged as a universal organisational form to be introduced regardless of local wishes or circumstances. The opposition from country areas reflected fears that young people would be deprived of existing senior school classes and would have to travel long distances to larger centres to attend colleges. If certain preconditions were met, especially wide consultation with those affected, a majority of respondents was prepared to consider the option of piloting postcompulsory institutions. For example, while the TTUV strongly favoured the extension of present organisational forms the possibility of secondary colleges was not excluded provided it was in response to local demand and under appropriate conditions. In contrast, the VSTA opposed any consideration of separate comprehensive secondary colleges and urged the extension of community resource centres and complexes as a means of resolving inequities in provision.

Three Models Discussed

3.10 Complexes represent one of the forms which comprehensive upper secondary institutions could take in Victoria. One of the campuses forming the complex would cater for senior students, enabling the provision of a broader range of options and a less restrictive institutional ethos. In particular, students at present enrolled in TOP, VOP and transition courses could more readily be accommodated within the secondary system. In view of its statutory responsibilities and orientation to industrial training, TAFE may withdraw from providing essentially secondary courses. Young people at present enrolled in VOP and TOP are unlikely to return to schools as presently constituted (Cashman and Scarfe 1984) and complexes could offer students an attractive method of continuing their schooling. Complexes also offer an organisational solution to the widely expressed concern about the effects of separate senior

colleges on the residual 7-10 schools and do not create a new transition for students. However it does seem that the co-ordinating council would have to assume overriding powers for the effective operation of any complex. The appointment of teachers to the whole complex rather than to individual schools within it would allow them to spend their professional lives over the full secondary span but it would seem that undesirable curricular consequences could follow if teachers were to teach across a number of campuses at the same time. Means of resolving this issue could include appointment to various levels for limited and renewable periods of time.

3.11 Another feasible option would involve the expansion of TAFE's role in postcompulsory schooling. Postcompulsory institutions located in or associated with TAFE colleges have some advantages. Some TAFE buildings and facilities are under-utilised during the daytime and may offer superior accommodation to that available in schools. Some TAFE colleges would welcome the proposal to locate a broader range of postcompulsory schooling options in TAFE if funding were allocated in a similar fashion for students in either schools or TAFE, but there are some industrial and professional implications. However, this model would associate postcompulsory schooling with TAFE alone rather than with the full range of postsecondary options available.

3.12 A third model involves the creation of new comprehensive institutions governed by single councils. Both comprehensive senior colleges and community colleges would offer secondary and postsecondary courses, bringing together theoretical and applied studies and facilitating cross accreditation of courses and the movement of students across curricular tracks. Teachers could be appointed to these institutions for fixed or renewable terms. Concern for the 7-10 institutions would remain and the effect on retention levels is uncertain. Industrial issues arising from bringing together into the same institution teachers with different salaries and conditions could be foreseen. Inter-sectoral co-operation would be required but experiments with community colleges have been recommended by the CTEC report for the 1985-87 triennium and by the Participation and Equity Program Guidelines, and are consistent with proposals of a working party of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee which is considering the structure of tertiary courses.

3.13 The three models of comprehensive upper secondary institutions, namely:

- o complexes of schools which encompass a senior student campus,
- o postcompulsory institutions located in or associated with TAFE colleges,
- o separate postcompulsory institutions governed by single councils,

all offer possible ways of shaping postcompulsory schooling for young people in Victoria. While a minority of members of the Working Party were opposed to the development at this stage of separate comprehensive postcompulsory institutions whether in TAFE or as independent entities, most supported the development of monitored examples of each of these models where those locally involved favour it.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 It is quite clear that no single way of providing a more diverse curriculum at Years 11 and 12 presently draws wide support within the Victorian educational community, nor is everywhere feasible or desirable. It is also clear that planning for change must pay heed to local circumstances across the state and especially to the significant variations in existing educational provision. Much useful preliminary work has already been done in the Education Department and in TAFE to map the current position and to canvass options for action. These analyses have been made in response to practical problems which have arisen in certain areas and have been frequently spurred by demographic factors. It is now proposed that the principles in Chapter 1 should guide all planning for postcompulsory schooling. These include:

- o the encouraging of increased levels of both full-time and part-time participation;
- o increasing the number of curricular options and courses carrying significant credentials to which individual students realistically have access;
- o the bringing together of academic and technical schools and schools and TAFE; and
- o the provision of an educational environment suited to young adults.

Within these guidelines, the Education Department, TAFE and the non-government schools should collectively examine and evaluate the present arrangements and formulate plans for the education of all young people. Intersectoral co-operation is required at the central, regional and local levels to plan and implement the structural changes envisaged in this report.

4.2 A central task force is required to facilitate the implementation of recommendations relating to postcompulsory schooling throughout the State. We propose that the State Board of Education and the TAFE Board should jointly establish a committee to:

- o research and further develop policies relating to restructuring, including legal and administrative changes required, the size, scope and governance of any new institutional forms, professional and industrial issues involved and the means of providing a comprehensive curricular range for students in country areas;
- o consider the overall budgetary implications of any changes proposed and of a changed relationship between schools and TAFE;
- o establish priorities between regions regarding the support and resources required for restructuring initiatives;

- o assist in the development of local plans through information exchange and research support;
- o monitor the implementation of the guidelines throughout Victoria.

4.3 Regional Boards of Education and Regional TAFE Boards have recently been established with responsibilities for educational co-ordination and planning within regions. We therefore propose that Regional Boards of Education and Regional TAFE Boards in each region jointly appoint a small committee with representation from the nongovernment schools in the area to monitor the implementation of the guidelines within the region. Other tasks are to

- o survey the overall provision of postcompulsory schooling within the region;
- o facilitate wide public discussion of organisational options, resolve conflicts which arise between competing providers and assist in the preparation of plans by local groups;
- o advise on, or establish where appropriate, educational priorities within the region;
- o evaluate any new structural arrangements which result in response to local demand according to agreed criteria, including their comparative effects on levels of full and part-time participation, on the range and type of curricula provided and according to the levels of satisfaction expressed by students, teachers and the community.

4.4 Surveying the present provision in government and nongovernment schools and in TAFE is an urgent initial task. Professional officers located in regional offices can collate much of the necessary data including

- o overall enrolments and retention and enrolments and retention on individual sites by course and subjects;
- o overall projected enrolments and projected enrolments on individual sites over a ten-year period;
- o facilities available on individual sites;
- o numbers of EFT teachers involved by region and by individual site;
- o labour market developments in the area.

Locally based consultants should be appointed to assist local communities consider existing and possible options for postcompulsory schooling in government and nongovernment schools and in TAFE. Issues would include

- o arrangements already existing designed to increase students'

- access to curricular options;
- o destinations of exit students;
- o evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses;
- o schools and colleges so geographically placed as to make co-operating arrangements among them feasible at this level of provision, paying attention to preferred groupings expressed by institutions themselves.

Costing Estimates

4.5 Some preliminary work on costing has been undertaken but this task will need to be extended and lies beyond the resources and time of the Working Party. It can be noted that governments can proceed in two ways when funding new initiatives. First, specified sums can be devoted to particular projects, for example, to the creation of a certain number of community resource centres. The capital and recurrent costs of initiatives of this type can be readily costed. Secondly, a government can respond to plans drawn up by local communities which require additional resources despite some potential savings. This second option is more difficult to cost, as proposals would be based on filling in the gaps in the present provision to which students have access within an area. The estimation of costs beyond capital and equipment are difficult to foresee as a broader curriculum might encourage higher participation and the marginal costs per student might well be below average costs per student in many locations. This form of responsive costing would need to allow for:

- o the direct costs of supporting change, including recurrent education for teachers and management training for administrators;
- o capital and equipment costs involved in cases where no suitable facilities exist to support an expanded curriculum within an area;
- o marginal costs of any increased participation.

The open-ended nature of responsive costing means that it must be expected that a government will budget a limited amount to cover all proposals.

4.6 If higher levels of participation in schooling are to be encouraged on the grounds of equity and as a necessary basis for the development of a highly skilled work force (Victoria: the Next Step 1984), then the Government must accept that increased resources will be required to educate an increased proportion of the population. An education system which seeks to promote excellence in a broad range of endeavours and to render young people knowledgeable and competent in a variety of ways cannot be funded cheaply. There are, of course, substantial costs attached to the present schooling system which excludes large numbers of young people from further education. Some of

the more obvious of these costs derive from unemployment which is an expensive option for government in economic and societal terms. Those who have an inadequate basis of initial education will require lengthy training over their working lives. Disaffection and alienation from the society and a lack of personal competence can result in the greater use of a range of social services including custodial, health and welfare services. Making schooling more attractive to all young people could well be the most economic option for governments in the longer term.

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APPENDIX: THE RESPONSE

1. Three hundred and ninety responses to the discussion paper were received and analysed. The first step taken was to thoroughly review 120 of these responses in order to gain a reliable indication of the broad categories of concerns and issues that were addressed. A number of headings were devised to cover these areas of concern, and the contents of each response categorised under them. The process was as objective as possible, summarising only the issues raised by the response itself. No assumptions were made unless they could be reasonably deduced from the written evidence, and no attempt was made to fit the responses to any predetermined conclusions.

2. A major difficulty was the ambiguity of many of the responses. Because they were not asked to reply to specific questions, respondents adopted a variety of approaches. Some made general comments on the Discussion Paper without giving a clear indication of the types of structure they preferred. Some took up a single issue, mainly that of institutional separation of the postcompulsory age group, and elaborated on why they did or did not prefer it. Yet others raised issues related to educational structures at an abstract level, or disputed questions of fact related to current provision without addressing the question of what should be done in the future. This made any reliable quantitative analysis impossible. However, it was possible, without distorting the content of the responses, to reliably discern trends in their attitudes to major issues, and to gain an impression of major concerns.

Separate Postcompulsory Institutions

3. The main issue addressed by the respondents was whether or not there should be any form of institutional separation of postcompulsory schooling. To gain an overall impression of the level of support for this idea, responses were excluded which were sent in support of other responses (e.g. from members of parliament or shire councils supporting a particular school's response), multiple responses which came from the same institution and responses which came from a particular branch or component of an organisation and duplicated the approach of the parent organisation.

4. The overall impression gained was that 168 respondents opposed the idea, 117 were in favour of it, 49 were non-committal and 33 did not comment on it. Of those against the idea, 14 specified that they would not object to it being implemented in other places, but would in their own area. The responses listed as being neither for nor against raised general issues but did not either actively oppose separate institutions or adopt a predominantly negative tone in their comments about them. Overall, it can be considered that 154 respondents were against the idea in principle, although some of these opposed it if it were to be universally imposed; 117 were in favour of it, and the remainder were non-committal, would not oppose it if occurred elsewhere, or did not feel strongly enough about the issue to comment. Thus while a substantial minority of all responses

opposed institutional separation, the majority was not prepared to rule it out as an option.

5. The strongest opposition came from the VSTA, TTUV, high schools, particularly in country areas, and some technical schools for whom the major concern was retention of technical schooling in its present form. In a small number of cases, opposing attitudes were adopted by the staff and council of the same school. Support came from TAFE colleges and administrative bodies and organisations, many of whom considered that TAFE colleges could form the basis for future developments. Education Department central and regional structures were also predominantly in favour, as were tertiary institutions, parents organisations and principals. Attitudes to this issue were closely related to the interests of the respondent. It was also observed that the further removed from a particular institution the response was, the more likely it was to favour separate postcompulsory institutions. Central or regional administrative bodies and organisations covering a wide constituency were more likely to be in favour than were, for example, individual schools. It must also be noted that attitudes to this issue were somewhat more negative in rural than in metropolitan areas, and that within the rural category, large provincial centres were more in favour than were isolated country towns.

Responsibility

6. Insofar as there was any consensus opinion in the responses, it was that no single institutional form should be imposed uniformly across the state. A clear majority maintained that a diversity of structures should be allowed to take account of demographic and geographical factors, existing provision, and community wishes. A minority of the responses considered that decisions as to institutional forms should be made at the local level. A smaller number thought decisions should be taken at a regional level and all developments co-ordinated by a regional Education Department or TAFE offices. The majority recognised, however, that central guidelines would have to be drawn up to provide a framework for local restructuring, and that local initiatives without overall guidance or direction were unlikely to produce lasting solutions. This point was emphasised more strongly at the consultations held with major respondents by the Co-ordinating Committee of the Review.

7. Only a small number of respondents raised the issue of which administrative body was to be ultimately responsible for postcompulsory schooling. Those who did address this question considered that there was some need to rationalise the divided responsibilities of the Education Department, VISE and TAFE, in relation to legal issues, resource provision, staffing and curricular policies.

Breakpoint

8. Most respondents who favoured separate postcompulsory institutions considered the end of Year 10 to be the logical

breakpoint. However, a very small number preferred a breakpoint at Year 11, largely on the grounds that this was an established practice in technical schools and Year 12 students could be readily subsumed into existing postcompulsory structures. These responses were mainly from TAFE colleges. A slightly larger number favoured an earlier breakpoint, most commonly the end of Year 9, or suggested other combinations of year levels. These numbers were insignificant.

Difficulties

9. The major difficulties perceived by respondents in establishing separate postcompulsory institutions were their effects on the compulsory secondary years, staffing and industrial issues, and the particular problems of isolated rural areas. Most responses were concerned that the compulsory secondary schools could be drained of resources, lose access to specialist facilities and teachers, and suffer from a reduction in curricular breadth and expertise. Loss of senior students would also deprive students of leadership, example, and a sense of direction, and have a deleterious effect on behaviour, motivation, and relationships with teachers.

10. Schools, teachers unions and a range of other respondents were concerned that being confined to teaching junior classes may have an adverse effect on teachers' morale, job satisfaction and stress if they were confined to teaching junior classes; that career paths, promotion prospects and mobility may suffer; and that it could create divisions in the teaching service, possibly leading to an 'elite' group of teachers with different conditions. It was also pointed out that industrial problems could arise where teachers under different awards were working in the same institution.

11. Country respondents were concerned about the viability and effect of postcompulsory institutions in rural areas. Only large towns would be able to support such institutions, causing loss of students from smaller centres, with consequent loss of community support for the local school, family and community disruption, and added costs to families in terms of travel, time, accommodation and inconvenience. It was also considered that it would exacerbate inter-town rivalry. On the other hand, many country respondents recognised the problems of fragmentation of provision and small numbers, and sought solutions to them.

12. There was also some concern that the fact of changing institutions may have an adverse effect on retention, that an extra transition point would be created with attendant trauma, and that there was a need for continuity in pastoral care, guidance and relationships. The benefits of a mix of age groups were pointed out, as were the dangers of student alienation in large adult-oriented institutions. A very small minority based their arguments on the proposition that curriculum should be continuous from Preparatory to Year 12.

13. Technical school respondents were concerned that the traditions and distinctive contribution of technical education

should be retained, and most thought technical schools should continue as separate entities. This, however, must be considered in the context that the great majority of responses were against the perpetuation of separate high and technical schools, whether they were in favour of separate postcompulsory institutions or not. Nongovernment schools, high schools, especially in country areas, and tertiary institutions were concerned that organisational structures should not disadvantage academically inclined students and tertiary aspirants. High schools were particularly concerned that the drift to private schools may be exacerbated if adequate provision were not made for these students.

14. While these concerns were raised mainly in relation to the question of separate postcompulsory institutions, their frequency enables a deduction to be made as to the general position of the respondents in relation to structural initiatives. With the exception of technical schools, most were in favour of some form of comprehensive provision. Most also felt that the professional interests of teachers, the needs of students in the compulsory years, and the situation of isolated rural schools should be taken into account. There was also a general feeling that variety in institutional forms should be permitted to suit the circumstances of different areas.

Institutional Forms

15. The preferred structure amongst those favouring institutional separation was the trialling of all-age community colleges. TAFE providers in particular favoured this option, and supported their development from TAFE colleges in areas where they existed. Tertiary institutions and some schools, while favouring the community college concept, were opposed to them overlapping into the first years of tertiary courses. Some respondents favoured multi-campus arrangements combining a senior high school and a nearby TAFE college, while others favoured co-operation between administratively separate TAFE and senior secondary colleges. There was also some support for the idea of one high school in an area becoming an upper secondary college with several junior schools feeding into it, and for the formation of complexes with senior provision made on one site and compulsory level provision on several.

16. Most of those opposing institutional separation favoured some form of co-operation between existing institutions, by such means as clustering, networks, movement of staff or students between institutions, shared resources programs, link programs, or joint use of central facilities. The second most preferred option was that of comprehensive Years 7-12 postprimary schools combining existing technical and high school provision. Internal school reorganisation was seen as the solution by a very small minority of responses, and an even smaller number favoured retention of the status quo. Few responses gave any attention to implementation strategies.

Conclusion

17. The general conclusion that can be reached is that most responses recognised the need to address structural issues in provision for the postcompulsory age group in order to overcome problems of fragmentation, small numbers inhibiting curricular breadth, and the provision of an appropriate organisational atmosphere. While a substantial minority were against any restructuring which involved separation from the compulsory years of secondary schooling, their major concerns were the preservation of their own institutions, industrial issues, the effects on the Year 7-10 schools, and the problems associated with provision in isolated rural areas. The consensus view was that no single institutional form should be imposed uniformly across the state, but that variations to suit local circumstances should be allowed, and that guidelines or directions were necessary in order for local restructuring initiatives to be successful.

APPENDIX 8

POSTCOMPULSORY SCHOOLING: SOME ISSUES AFFECTING
EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURE IN VICTORIA

Phillip McKenzie, Australian Council for Educational
Research, and

Gerald Burke, Education Faculty, Monash University

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Postcompulsory Schooling

INTRODUCTION

This paper is concerned with some aspects of the costs of postcompulsory schooling in Victoria. It comprises:

- 1 a discussion of the effect on costs of changes in curriculum structure, class size policies, teachers' contact time and size of enrolment group;
- 2 an examination of enrolment projections for Victorian post-primary schools over the next decade.

The paper does not address the broad educational and social questions that have been raised in the general debate on postcompulsory schooling. Its brief is much more narrow, namely, to consider the enrolment context within which Victorian postcompulsory schooling can be expected to operate over the next decade, and to identify factors likely to affect the costs of its operation. For the purposes of the discussion that follows, postcompulsory schooling is defined to comprise Years 11 and 12 in secondary schools and the equivalent programs in Technical and Further Education (TAFE). However, the cost estimates in the first section are based because of data availability on government high schools, though the approach could be used to consider all postcompulsory education.

PRESENT LEVELS OF RESOURCES

Just over 80 per cent of government recurrent expenditure on Victorian government schools is allocated to teachers' salaries. Accordingly, the factors that influence the allocation of teachers largely determine the distribution of resources between year levels. The most important of these factors is the number of classes that are formed at each year level and the consequent average class size. Other factors equal, the larger the number of classes formed, the smaller will be average class size, the greater will be the number of teachers required to provide those classes and the higher will be per student expenditure.

Table 1 combines estimates of the distribution of teaching and other resources between year levels in Victorian secondary schools. Since there is relatively little difference in average class sizes in each of Years 7 to 10, they are grouped together in the table. As can be seen, average class sizes in Years 11 and 12 are considerably lower than for Years 7 to 10. Since there is a direct relationship between average class size and the equivalent student-teacher ratio, the smaller class sizes at the senior year levels translate into higher levels of expenditure on teachers' salaries per student. Assuming that non-teaching resources are distributed in line with teaching resources this means higher levels of overall recurrent expenditure per student.

Table 1 Estimated Resource Provision in Victorian Government Post-Primary Schools by Year Level⁵

Year level	Average class size ¹	Student-teacher ratio ²	Teachers' salaries (\$ per student) ³	Total recurrent expenditure (\$ per student) ⁴	Index (Yrs 7-10=100)
7-10	21.6	14.4	1740	2210	100
11	17.0	11.3	2210	2810	127
12	12.1	8.1	3090	3930	178

- Notes:
- 1 Derived from data on February 1982 class formation supplied by the Education Department.
 - 2 Assumes an average teaching contact ratio of two-thirds of the teaching week.
 - 3 Assumes an average teaching salary of \$25,000.
 - 4 Based on the Commonwealth Schools Commission (1981) estimate of professional salaries in Victorian secondary schools as 78.6 per cent of total recurrent expenditure.
 - 5 The resource usage estimates shown in Table 1 should only be regarded as approximations because they were derived from a sample of schools and required a number of assumptions in regard to teaching contact time, teachers' salaries and so on. Costs for Years 11 and 12 might be somewhat reduced to the extent that students do not attend class for the whole week. But the allocation of more senior teachers to those years may offset this.

The table indicates that just under 30 per cent more resources per student are involved in the operation of programs at Year 11 than in Years 7-10. Even more striking is the difference between Year 12 and other year levels. Overall, on the basis of these estimates, Years 11 and 12 combined entail the provision of just over 40 per cent more expenditure per student than do Years 7 to 10.

INFLUENCES ON THE COSTS OF POSTCOMPULSORY SCHOOLING

Teachers are the major resource involved in the provision of schooling and it is the factors influencing the number of teachers provided that will be the primary determinants of school operating costs. These factors can be grouped into four broad categories:

- 1 curriculum structure,
- 2 class size policies,
- 3 non-contact time policies, and
- 4 the size of the enrolment group.

Each category will now be discussed in turn.

Curriculum Structure

Two aspects of curriculum structure that appear particularly important are the extensiveness of the curriculum and the spread of enrolments across the various parts of the curriculum. Although these aspects are related, it is useful to discuss them separately.

Curriculum extensiveness This refers to the number and type of curriculum units that are made available for students. In terms of the quantity of teaching resources that a given curriculum entails it is the number of curriculum units, rather than their type, that is of major direct importance. The distribution of curriculum units between subject areas will certainly affect the desired composition of the teaching force, and particular units would be more likely to require higher levels of non-teaching resources than others. However, apart from the possibility that certain types of curriculum areas may necessitate different class size policies (an issue that is discussed below), in most instances it is the number of units that is offered that is the key resource consideration.

A useful measure of curriculum extensiveness is the ratio of the number of curriculum units provided to the number that each student is expected to study. At present, at Years 11 and 12 in Victorian high schools, this ratio averages around 3:1. The average level of provision at Year 11 is for around 18 subjects to be offered out of which students choose six, while at Year 12 the corresponding level of provision is for about 15 subjects to operate, of which each student on average studies five. A small number of relatively large schools would offer more subjects than this, but for most Year 11 and 12 students the curriculum

range which they experience is effectively circumscribed by the 3:1 ratio. Of course, because of the existence of subject pre-requisites and the problems of timetabling various combinations of subjects, for many students the range of effective curriculum choice would be lower than the 3:1 ratio suggests.

The ratio of subjects offered to subjects taken is of key importance since it gives rise to the number of classes that need to be formed. For example, if the ratio of subjects offered to subjects taken by each student was increased to 4:1, around 20 per cent more classes would need to be formed at Year 11 and about 30 per cent at Year 12 on existing Year 11 and 12 enrolments. Were teaching contact ratios to be maintained, such increases in the number of classes would necessitate corresponding increases in the allocation of teaching resources to the senior year levels. This suggests that attempts to significantly broaden the curriculum range offered in the senior secondary year levels would, given the existing enrolment sizes of the schools, require a considerable increase in the resources allocated to the schools.

The organisational basis of the units which comprise the curriculum (that is, whether they are organised on a term, semester or full year basis) is likely to make little difference to the quantity of personnel resources required to provide the curriculum. In other words, it would not matter that (say) 15 full-year length subjects were offered from which students studied five, or whether over a year 45 term-length units were provided of which each student took 15. The fact that in both instances the ratio of classes provided to classes taken is the same (i.e. 3:1), would mean that both types of curriculum would require the same quantity of teaching resources for their provision to a given number of students.

The only real exception to this is that a system characterised by a high degree of student flexibility (such as is often permitted by term and semester length curriculum units) may require some additional personnel resources to provide counselling to students on appropriate curriculum choices during the year, and to cope with the possibly larger administrative load that such a system may entail. As a possible offset however, is the prospect that a flexible system of curriculum organisation could, by facilitating greater enrolments, particularly of part-time students, enable more effective use of capital facilities.

Spread of enrolments across the curriculum Thus far it has been implicitly assumed that student enrolments are spread evenly across the classes that are on offer. The question now arises of the teaching resource implications of variations to this assumption. In particular, will it affect costs if certain parts of the curriculum are compulsory for a sizeable number of students, if not all?

If a given number of curriculum units were provided, specification of one or more units as compulsory would generally require more classes than if no compulsory units were present. However, this is only likely to be of real concern at relatively small enrolment levels. As enrolments rise the proportionate impact of the additional classes due to the compulsory components would tend to become progressively smaller. As such, there is probably no great effect on resource requirements if compulsory units were to be present in any restructured postcompulsory curriculum.

There is however, one important aspect of the resource implications of compulsory units (or, in the absence of compulsion, those units that attract relatively large enrolments) that does warrant some attention. It has been well documented that in curriculum structures where some components are compulsory and others optional, the average class size in the compulsory elements tends to be much higher than that which applies in the optional areas. This raises the question of whether it may be desirable to differentiate class size policies so that lower maximum class sizes would apply in compulsory subjects such as English than in optional curriculum areas.

Class Size Policies

Other factors equal, the lower the permitted maximum class size levels, the larger the number of teaching groups that will need to be formed and thus, the greater the volume of teaching resources that will be required to provide a given curriculum. For example, were the maximum permitted class sizes in Years 11 and 12 to be reduced from 25 to 20, and it was desired to maintain the existing number of subjects, between about 10 and 20 per cent additional teaching resources would be required for Years 11 and 12. In general, the need for additional teaching resources would be greatest in schools with relatively large year level enrolments since such schools would tend to have a greater number of classes approaching maximum permitted levels of students.

As an aside, it can be argued that there may be educational advantages in a less rigid adherence to maximum class size policies in the formation of classes. These advantages are suggested by the analyses reported in Glass, Cohen, Smith and Filby (1982). The shape of the relationships reported between class size and various indicators of educational outcomes indicates that the educational 'gains' from a lowering of class size from a given point exceed the educational 'losses' associated with an equivalent increase in class size from the same point. In other words, the disadvantages of large teaching groups would be more than outweighed by the advantages arising from participation in very small groups that the teaching resources freed by the large groups would facilitate. Such an approach to the structuring of teaching groups would seem to have particular appeal in the postcompulsory year levels where the age of students could permit the formation of quite large teaching groups for certain activities and small ones for others.

This suggests that there may be advantages should debate on class size focus more on desirable average rather than maximum class sizes. In this context it is worth noting that acceptance of the average class size concept as a way of allocating resources within schools need not entail any diminution of teachers' working conditions. The average class size possible in a school is in fact a mathematical outcome of the student-teacher ratio used to staff the school and the level of non-contact time for teachers. Once the values of these two variables are set, the average class size level follows automatically. It can be argued that it is the student-teacher ratio and non-contact time proportion which shape the major elements of teachers' working conditions, and that once these are established at the school system level, the actual allocation of teaching resources within the school and the resultant distribution of class sizes should be best left to the school according to its perception of local needs. However, it is recognised that parents and teachers fear that permitting some larger classes may lead to inequitable distribution across year levels and perhaps acceptance of larger classes as the norm.

Non-Contact Time

There is a direct relationship between non-contact time and the number of teachers required to provide a given curriculum. For example if average non-contact time increased by 5 per cent, teacher numbers would need to rise by a similar proportion to maintain existing class sizes. At present in secondary schools non-contact time averages about one-third of the teaching week. How this may change in a new institutional setting is difficult to determine in advance. Some guidance may be provided by a detailed study of postcompulsory institutions in other locations such as the ACT and Tasmania.

Size of the Enrolment Group

The general relationship between size of the enrolment group, curriculum range and teaching resources (expressed in per student terms) is shown in Figures 1 and 2 for curricula of varying extensiveness. The measure of extensiveness is the ratio of the number of subjects provided at the year level to the number of subjects taken by each student. For example, the curve designated as 3:1 in Figure 1 indicates that it refers to a curriculum in which (say) 18 subjects are provided for Year 11 students from which each student chooses six. On the same basis, the 4:1 curve in the same figure describes a curriculum in which 24 subjects are provided from which students choose six, and so on. Current class size and non-contact time policies are applied in each case.

The vertical axis in each Figure indicates the quantity of teaching resources per student for each curriculum ratio. The actual level of teaching resources currently allocated to each year level (as indicated by Table 1) is set at 100 and represented by a horizontal dotted line.

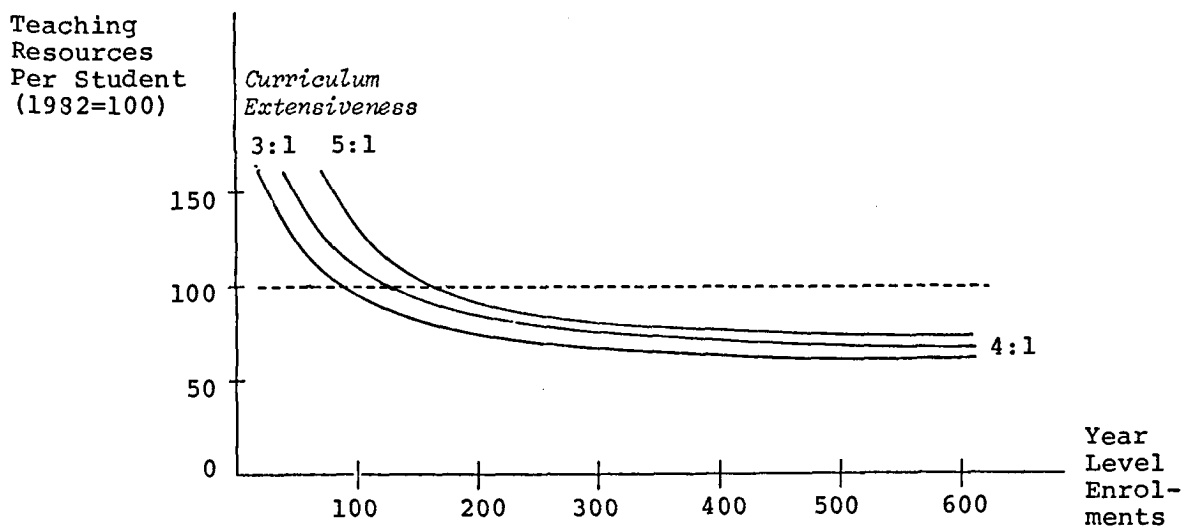


Figure 1 The Relationship Between Per Student Personnel Resource Usage and Enrolment Size for Illustrative Year 11 Curricula

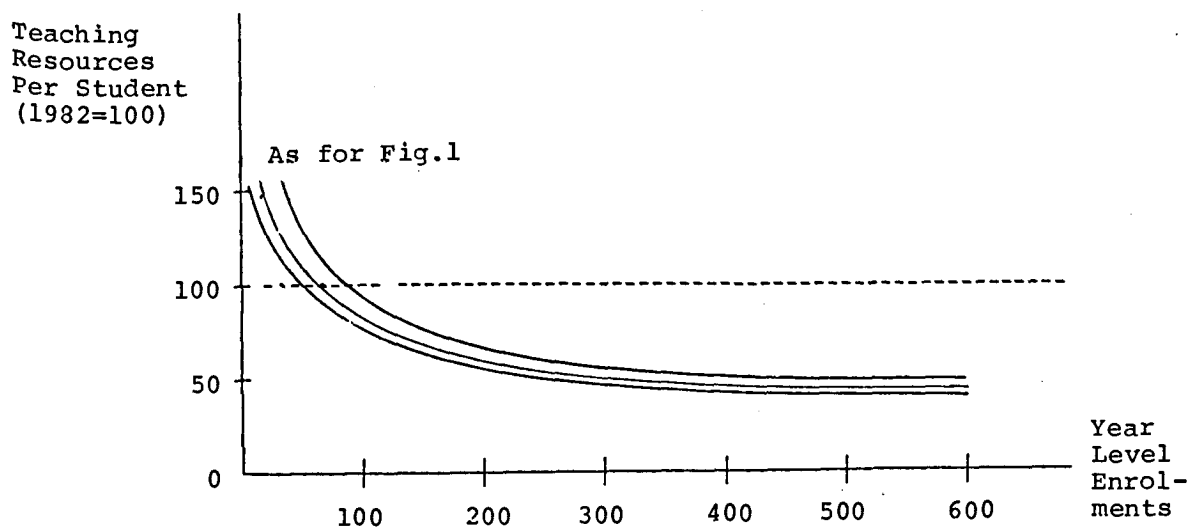


Figure 2 The Relationship Between Per Student Personnel Resource Usage and Enrolment Size for Illustrative Year 12 Curricula

Implications To avoid undue repetition, the qualification of 'assuming other factors are held constant' will be presumed to apply for each of the following points.

- 1 The more extensive a curriculum as represented by the number of subjects on offer, the greater will be the quantity of teaching resources required to provide that curriculum.
- 2 The larger the enrolment size of the year level group, the lower will be the per pupil cost of the teaching resources required to provide a given curriculum. At low enrolment levels, average class sizes will be small and thus per student costs of provision will be high. As enrolments expand, a higher proportion of the enrolment capacity of those classes will be used and per student costs will fall accordingly.
- 3 The rate of decline in per student costs decreases as enrolments expand. For example, in the case of the 4:1 curriculum shown in Figure 1, per student costs of provision decline some 25 per cent between year level enrolments of 50 and 100 students, but only by about 7 per cent between the enrolments of 300 and 600. This phenomenon suggests that there may be an enrolment range beyond which further increases in size bring relatively little in the way of advantage in resource use.

Integrated provision for Years 11 and 12? The curriculum analysis contained in Figures 1 and 2 assumed that Years 11 and 12 students were taught in separate groups. If there were greater opportunities for students from each year level to combine for teaching purposes, it would increase the size of the student pool within any one institution that is available to take particular curriculum units. Accordingly, the total size of an institution containing both Years 11 and 12 students would not need to be as large for economical operation when some integrated teaching is possible.

If there an optimal enrolment size? On the basis of the available evidence about the relationship between enrolment size, educational outcomes and operating costs, the Commonwealth Schools Commission (1984) has argued that 500-900 students is a desirable enrolment range for a secondary school. This recommendation referred to secondary schools that cover a full five or six year levels, and it is likely that a desirable enrolment range for senior colleges would, if anything, be lower than the 500 to 900 span. The full-span secondary school, because of the greater diversity of programs that it would be compelled to provide, would tend to require a higher level of enrolments over which its costs could be spread.

In this context, it is worth noting that in Tasmania and the ACT, the two government school systems in which senior colleges have been established for some time, the 1983

average enrolments per college were around 480 and 570 respectively (ABS, 1984). In both systems, the average enrolment size of the four-year high schools were somewhat higher, at around 640 and 690 respectively. As a further point of comparison, the average enrolment size of the five and six-year secondary schools in the State government school systems as a whole was even higher still at about 800 students. These data support the contention that the more organisationally complex an educational institution, the larger will be the enrolment size considered necessary for economical operations.

Travel Costs

Any restructuring of postcompulsory provision needs to consider student travel time and costs. The larger institutional size, the greater will be the number of students whose travel costs will rise, and these costs need to be offset against any expected benefits of new forms of educational provision. Travel costs are likely to be most significant in areas not well served by public transport. Detailed study is required to determine their prospective extent.

MACRO ASPECTS OF ENROLMENT CHANGE

The previous section of the paper discussed the ways in which cost per student can be affected by decisions about the curriculum range and by the size of student groups. This section is concerned with changes in the total enrolments in post-primary schools and their distribution by type of school and region. If total enrolments fall then the burden of expenditure on the State budget is lessened. However, falling enrolments can give rise to increased cost per student, particularly in post-primary schools.

Enrolment Projections

Table 2 shows two projections of enrolments in government post-primary schools for the period to 1994. Projection A, which assumes no further increase in grade retention rates after 1984, shows a fall of 64000 or 25 per cent by 1994 (after which some increase would be expected because of the slight upturn in births since 1979). Projection B which assumes continued increases in retention rates - an objective of government policy - shows a decline of 48000 or 19 per cent. The decline in the late 80s occurs almost entirely in Years 7-10 and is largely the result of demographic change and the distribution of enrolments between government and non-government schools. In Projection B enrolments in Years 11-12 remain higher in 1994 than in 1984 so the decline for the period to 1994 is concentrated in Years 7-10.

Table 3 shows the lower enrolment projection (Projection A) for government schools together with projections for Catholic and other non-government schools. The projection

Table 2 Projected Enrolments in Victorian Government Post-Primary Schools 1984-1994 (February enrolments in 000s)

	Projection A			Projection B		
	Yrs 7-10	Yrs 11-12	Total	Yrs 7-10	Yrs 11-12	Total
1984 (actual)	201	56	257	201	56	257
1986	192	58	250	192	60	252
1988	172	59	231	173	67	240
1990	158	52	210	159	66	225
1992	149	47	196	150	63	213
1994	149	44	193	150	59	209

Source: Based on projections prepared by Education Department Victoria, Statistical Information and Research Section.

Notes: Projection A: year retention rates are maintained at 1983-84 rates: Year 9-10 at 94 per cent, Year 10-11 at 83 per cent and Year 11-12 at 48 per cent.

Projection B: year retention rates increased progressively after 1985 until 1991 to Year 9-10 to 96 per cent, Year 10-11 to 93 per cent and Year 11-12 to 73 per cent.

Both projections exclude TAFE.

for the whole non-government sector is shown to remain roughly constant for the period. Total enrolments for government and non-government schools combined are therefore shown to fall by 64000 or 17 per cent. Table 3 shows the recently published projection by the Department of Education and Youth Affairs based on 1982-83 year progression rates. It shows a much smaller overall decline in post-primary enrolments in Victoria - a decline of 42000 or 11 per cent.

The differences between the various sets of projections do highlight the uncertainty of future enrolments. We can feel sure that a marked decline will occur in enrolments in Years 7-10 in government schools up to the early 90s, the major cause being the sharp fall in births in Victoria from 1971 to 1978. But the decline might not be quite as great as projected. Changes in the pattern of interstate and overseas migration could have a substantial impact if sustained for a number of years. Projections of the 12-15 age group (which is largely in Years 7-10) by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show a decline of 19 per cent between 1984 and 1994 based on Victoria receiving a net 4.3 thousand per annum from interstate and overseas migration. At a higher rate of 16.7 thousand net gain per annum the total fall would be less at about 15 per cent. Migration from overseas to Australia fell markedly in 1983 but Victoria has been losing population to other States at a lower rate than in the past. The net gain from interstate and overseas

Table 3 Projected Enrolments in Victorian Government, Catholic and Other Non-government Post-primary Schools 1984-1994 (Enrolments in 000s)

	Projection A (February)				Projection C (July)
	Government	Catholic	Other Non-government	Total	Total
1984	257 actual	74 actual	44 actual	375 actual	368 projected
1985	255	75	46	376	371
1986	250	76	47	373	370
1987	241	76	47	364	364
1988	231	76	46	353	356
1989	219	75	45	339	346
1990	210	75	43	328	338
1991	202	76	41	319	332
1992	196	76	40	312	328
1993	193	77	40	310	325
1994	193	78	40	311	326

Sources: Projection A: Education Department of Victoria, Statistical Information and Research Section.

Projection C: Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs (1984). These projections are based on year progression ratios for 1982 to 1983.

Note: Both projections exclude TAFE.

migration has averaged about 13000 per annum since 1980 which is fairly close to the higher projection.

Enrolments in Years 11 and 12 are much more uncertain than those for Years 7-10. Table 2 shows that the high projection (Projection B) involves an increase of about 10 percentage points in the Years 10-11 retention rate. An increase of this size has occurred since 1980 but the closer the rate approaches 100 per cent the less scope there is for further increases. The rate for Year 11 to Year 12 shows an increase from 48 per cent to 73 per cent, or 25 points. It increased 10 points from 1981 to 1984.

Factors affecting retention rates include the job market for teenagers (which has been very depressed since 1982), the prospects of entering higher education or TAFE courses, the expected rewards from tertiary courses, and the level of student support, such as the Secondary Allowances Scheme. And it can be affected by the nature of post-compulsory schooling - its structure, curriculum and credentials.

It is not easy to be confident about a revival in the teenage job market. There is likely to be continued pressure from the lack of jobs for students to remain in school. Secondary Allowances will receive a further consideration from the federal government in its next budget after its review of income support for young people is completed. One might expect some but not a large extra inducement for prolonged schooling given the promises to constrain federal spending.

Prospects of entering tertiary education in the short term could be deteriorating. The number of extra places being made available in higher education (universities and CAEs) is very small in relation to the rapidly rising number in the final year of secondary school or in Tertiary Orientation Programs. Year 12 enrolments in all schools in Victoria have grown from about 24000 in 1982, to 26000 in 1983 and nearly 31000 in 1984.

Year 12 enrolments assuming no further increase in retention rates (i.e. Projection A) would grow to over 35000 by 1988. If retention rates grow as in Projection B the number would exceed 41000. These projected enrolment increases must be compared with a proposed growth in intake to higher education in Victoria of only about 300 in 1985. There is no certainty of further increases in 1986 and 1987: the Commonwealth guidelines provided for an increase of 1300 to 'commencing students' for the whole of Australia in 1985 and have only indicated that the 1985 intakes can be regarded as a minimum. Unless extra places are provided in higher education or unless there is a very substantial increase in places in TAFE - and perhaps development of new courses in TAFE - it is likely that increasing numbers of Year 12 students will fail to find places in post-secondary education. If this occurs it could tend to deter students from remaining to the end of secondary schooling.

CONCLUSION

Attempts to broaden the curriculum range at Years 11 and 12 with the existing structure of schools are likely to require additional resources per student. A major reason for this is the small enrolment in Years 11 and 12 in most schools. Even if retention rates increase considerably, total Year 11 and 12 enrolments in government schools are likely to grow only for the next few years and then decline to about present levels.

Total enrolments in secondary schooling are projected to fall in the next decade (rising again in the mid-90s). The fall will be concentrated on Years 7-10. Declining enrolments per school will tend to result in higher costs per student. But with existing staffing ratios, total expenditure could still be expected to fall both in real terms and as a proportion of government outlays. However, attempts to maintain and to broaden the curriculum and to meet the growing demands for TAFE will require additional expenditures. There will therefore be pressures to contain the growth in cost per student. Some restructuring of schools will be considered especially in the areas of most markedly declining enrolments.

As discussed in Section 1, restructuring to provide larger groups of Year 11 and 12 students is one way of expanding the curriculum range while containing costs. Increases in the combined size of Years 11 and 12 to say 300 students would appear to provide considerable advantages in this regard. This would be particularly the case should curriculum change facilitate more integrated teaching of Years 11 and 12 students. It would seem that there are few recurrent cost advantages in increasing institutional size beyond about five or six hundred students at Years 11 and 12.

If this enrolment be accepted as an upper level for planning purposes, it diminishes the need for the large-scale construction of new capital facilities since many existing Victorian secondary schools would already have enrolment capacities of that order. However, whether existing school facilities could provide adequately for the curriculum and other needs of Year 11 and 12 students is less clear.

It is important to note though, that the foregoing analysis has been conducted at a general level. Much more intensive and detailed work at a local level would be required to determine the most appropriate form, and costs, of educational provision in particular areas.

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